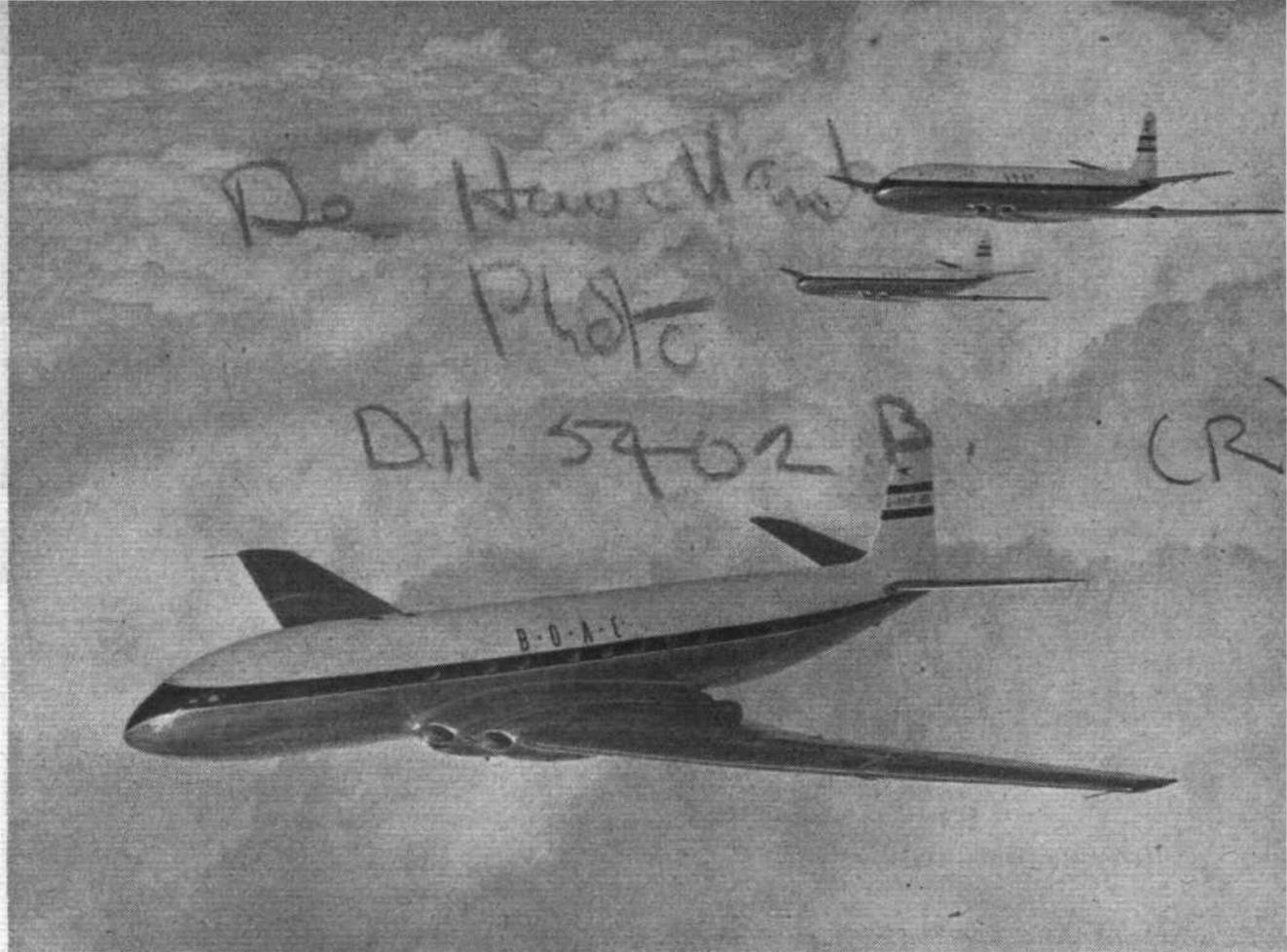


THE COMETS ARE COMING

Airborne together, the three completed Comets provide pictorial expression of de Havilland's unmatched progress in the jet-airliner field. In the foreground is G-ALYP, the first production Comet (seen now with smaller wing "fences") destined for B.O.A.C.'s scheduled services; the two prototypes, VG and ZK, cruise discreetly in the background. ZK, incidentally, was handed over to the Corporation at London Airport last Monday. On loan from the Ministry of Supply, it will be based at London Airport for crew familiarization and to give B.O.A.C. a "preview" of handling and maintenance technique. Normal proving flights and training will follow later. Its interior is not fully furnished or soundproofed and it has an orthodox undercarriage: the B.O.A.C. Comets will have four-wheel bogies.



CONTRACT FOR THE LEONIDES

FOLLOWING the selection of the Percival P.56 as the new R.A.F. basic trainer, Alvis, Ltd., announce that they have received a sizable contract from the Ministry of Supply for Leonides engines for these aircraft. Mr. John J. Parks, managing director of Alvis, Ltd., was to make an official statement regarding this contract on April 5th.

There are now nine separate aircraft types in this country which fly on Leonides power, and six variations of the Leonides have been developed and tested, of which some are horizontally-mounted units for helicopters. It may be presumed that, in view of helicopter requirements currently under discussion, the Alvis Company is also examining the possibilities of meeting a need for a radial of rather higher power than the Leonides.

THE AIRWAYS SYSTEM

THE final stage—Phase III—of the British "National Airways" system will be brought into effect in the near future; it will be introduced in two stages, the first coming into operation on April 12th and the second on August 1st.

With the introduction of Phase III the Liverpool and Manchester Control Zones will be merged into one and the Prestwick and Renfrew Zones replaced by a single "Scottish Control Zone".

By August 1st, therefore, the whole network of Britain's airways, which was begun last August, will have been completed, and the multi-carrier system of V.H.F. R/T which has been installed throughout the country will enable airline pilots on any lane of the airways to be constantly in touch with the appropriate ground-control organizations.

A description of the airways pattern after Phase II had been brought into operation appeared in *Flight* of February 15th.

I.F.A.L.P.A. CONFERENCE

THE sixth conference of the International Federation of Air Line Pilots' Associations is to be held in Amsterdam from April 9th to 13th, at the invitation of the Dutch Air Line Pilots' Association and the K.L.M. International Pilots' Association. Founded in London in April, 1948, the Federation numbers among its members some 19 separate associations.

Among the items on the agenda of the conference, which will be held under the chairmanship of Capt. W. L. Vickerstaff, I.F.A.L.P.A.'s president, are the problems of pilot-operated R/T systems, noise and lighting conditions in control cabins, the legal status of aircraft captains and the question of pilots operating when under mental stress. Additional subjects to be discussed are the carriage of excess fuel, the effects of pressurization on crews, flying hours and fatigue, the civil liability of pilots, uncontrolled

flights in civil air-lanes and the effects on air-traffic control problems of airports lying in close proximity to one another.

The British delegates will be Capt. C. G. Klimcke (B.E.A.), Capt. B. C. Frost (B.O.A.C.), and Capt. F. Ormonroyd (B.E.A.).

METEOR 8 ON THE AIR

BY recording the R/T comments of the pilot during climb and descent to and from 30,000ft, the B.B.C. provided listeners last week with a graphic impression of the performance of the Meteor 8. The recording was made during the Minister of Supply's visit to the Gloster Aircraft Company last week, and was broadcast on March 28th and April 1st. The voice of production test pilot Geoff Worrall was heard very clearly, with only a faint rush of air as background, as he ticked off the altimeter-readings to 30,000ft—reached in less than six minutes. His casual, matter-of-fact remarks during a very rapid descent and pull-out belied the discomfort he was undoubtedly feeling from negative-g effects.

ARMY WIN AT TWICKENHAM

SOUND tackling in defence and determined attack enabled the Army Rugby fifteen to beat the R.A.F. by 14 points to nil at Twickenham last Saturday. The Army's two tries and a goal came in quick succession in the second half. Previously a dropped goal had put them three points up at half time. A fuller report of the match will be given next week.

This was the last match in the season's Inter-Service Tournament, which has been won by the Royal Navy. Other results were: Royal Navy v. R.A.F., 6pt-5 pt; Royal Navy v. Army, 11 pt.-nil. The R.A.F.'s last victory over the Army was in 1947 by 8 pt.-to nil. Last year the Army won, 11 pt.-3 pt.

HIGHER LANDING-CARD CHARGES

THE M.C.A. has announced several modifications to the Royal Aero Club's annual landing-card scheme for private and club-owned aircraft using State-controlled airfields. The present arrangements, whereby landing cards, costing £5 each and valid for 12 months, are issued for aircraft not exceeding 6,000 lb a.u.w., have been cancelled with effect from April 1st, and the scale of detailed charges below is now in force.

For club machines not exceeding 4,000 lb a.u.w. cards are available at a cost of £5 per annum. Privately-owned aircraft have been divided into two categories; the card for those not exceeding 2,600 lb a.u.w. now costs £7 10s. and for those up to 4,000 lb a.u.w. £10.

The new charges apply to all cards issued after March 31st. Henceforth the Royal Aero Club scheme is inapplicable to aircraft of more than 4,000 lb a.u.w., for which—on expiry of current landing cards—normal fees at State-owned airfields will apply.