

# Popular Flying Weekend

## THE P.F.A. RALLY

THIS year's Popular Flying Association rally was a less competitive occasion than the event held at Sywell in 1957. Much as the entrants then had enjoyed dashing around the countryside visiting as many aerodromes as possible, the accumulated fuel bills had been formidable, and for the P.F.A. rally last weekend the Association chose Rhoose Airport at Cardiff as the venue, and the more hedonistic pleasures of a *vin d'honneur* as part of the competitions.

A feature of these rallies is the participation of the French *Reseau du Sport de l'Air*. But thanks to the wait for the contingent from France to arrive, lunch became a rather protracted affair which some bottles of wine seemed to help along. . . . So there should be *vin d'honneur* next year; and in any case the French kept winning bottles of whisky in the *concours d'elegance* held on the Saturday afternoon. The trim lines and beautiful finish of the Jodels and Emeraude quite outshone the competitive efforts of P.F.A. members with admittedly much older aeroplanes; and from a total of 39 competing aircraft, the seven French entries carried off the first three places in the *concours*. First prize went to M. Baritault in his Minicab F-PHUC (M. Baritault was a winner at the P.F.A. week-end last year); runner-up was M. Vieux with Emeraude F-BIAY; and M. Francis Couesnon's Emeraude was placed third. The best P.F.A. group aircraft was Birch's Argus G-AJOZ, from the Warwickshire Aeroplane Club, and Mrs. Joan Short's white Turbulent G-APIZ was highly commended. More booty from South Wales (bottled in Scotland) was carried off to France by M. H. Sornin, who won the arrival competition.

A dinner and dance was held in Cardiff in the evening, and the following morning the P.F.A. president, Mr. Peter Masefield, flew to Rhoose to attend the rally. Last year he commented on the sad lack of home-built British light aircraft, and although few are yet in evidence, several are under construction. The Rutherglen Flying Group's Turbi is proceeding quite well and, apart from a few details, the de Havilland Aeronautical Technical School's Turbi is nearly complete. Also announced at Cardiff (as in *Flight* a month ago) was the Crusader, an all-metal, low wing, side-by-side two-seater with a tricycle undercarriage that is being constructed by Condesco, Ltd., of Clock Chambers, London Road, Enfield. The firm intend to produce comprehensive plans (Turbi plans leave a good deal to the imagination) for amateur constructors.

French-designed aircraft figured prominently at the P.F.A. rally. Here are the Tiger Club's Turbulent and Emeraude F-BIMG.



## ELSTREE AT HOME

LAST Saturday, on the same day as the P.F.A. rally, Elstree Flying Club held their annual At Home. The French contingent to the rally, by lunching at Elstree, almost managed to attend both events, an operation also attempted by *Flight's* representative, who lunched at Rhoose before flying on to Elstree to watch a crowded afternoon of display events. There were a few changes in the programme and, sad to relate, the Mercury engine of the newly reconditioned Gloster Gladiator was running too roughly for the aircraft to appear. But an exciting surprise item was a fly-past by the Comet 4 and the remainder of the display ran with commendable despatch, amply fulfilling the expectations of the large crowd that had surmounted the bus strike to attend. Present in an unofficial capacity was the Under-Secretary of State for Air, Mr. Ian Orr-Ewing, who came to Elstree after opening a local fête.

A demonstration of the vintage Comper Swift G-ABUS, a tied-together Tiger formation (including a landing on Elstree's fairly narrow runway), a Magister race, an excellent delayed-drop parachute jump with a landing in front of the public enclosure and a really lively Chipmunk party-piece by David Ogilvy and Bill Bailey were among the varied bill. There is bound to be exciting flying when the Tiger Club are airborne, and a display of "Bishopbatics" and "Tigertactics"—the latter a Tiger race ending in a suspiciously close line-abreast finish after Beverley Snook had gained a substantial lead—were among the high spots of a spirited afternoon.

## PLYMOUTH DISPLAY

SET under high blue skies scarred by a Victor's contrail, the Plymouth air display on June 14 at Roborough, home of Plymouth Aero Club, was attended by over 10,000 spectators.

As Air Marshal Sir Philip Wigglesworth (retd.) opened the display, in from the west came the maroon and cream Jet Provosts of the C.F.S. led by F/L. N. H. Giffen. They put on a show of formation changing and aerobatics that set the pace for the afternoon's events.

The Gannet is no stranger to the Naval base at Plymouth, and 796 Squadron from Culdrose put their mounts through the usual Gannetry circus of fast and slow runs, all up or all down, with zest and immaculate formation-keeping. The next event was flown by W. Lucas and P. Cleife in the pupil-and-instructor act, the faltering mishandling of one Tiger compared with the effortless, polished flying of the other being a delight to see. A Hunter demonstration of high-speed aerobatics, a Dragonfly demonstration by Culdrose's Air Rescue Flight, and a five-Tiger Moth formation event led to a display of precision aerobatics by four Sea Venoms of 809, whose formation-keeping was of the highest standard. Making its debut at a West Country display was a Shackleton MR.3 from 220 Squadron, which made several low passes before leaving the circuit clear for what was unintentionally the highlight of the afternoon. Climbing to 3,000ft were two Tiger Moths carrying parachutists Peter Lang and Peter Lucas to make a delayed drop. There was a pause between the two jumps. Lucas's parachute opened after about 12 to 15 secs, but Lang continued on, and not until he reached 800ft did he release his canopy, to a sigh of relief from everyone watching. It was only later that it was learned that Lang's timing device had jammed after 12 secs, and it was seconds before he realized what had happened.

Still airborne in his Tiger, W. Lucas then dived in to give a crazy flying display, and a beautiful piece of silent aerobating was performed by G. Collins in an Olympia of the Cornish Gliding Club, culminating in a sibilant swish over the spectators. The final flying event—F/L. Phillips in a Vampire T.11 of the C.F.S.—brought forth superlatives from even the most hard-bitten air display enthusiast.

Below, left, Gannets of 796 Squadron, Royal Navy, perform at the Plymouth display at Roborough. (Below) At Elstree's At Home were (l. to r.) G/C. Eustace Miles (Association of British Aero Clubs) and Messrs. David Ogilvy (Elstree's manager), Ron Paine (Derby Aviation) and L. W. Farrer, who is a private owner at Wolverhampton.

