FROM ALL QUARTERS

Saunders-Roe Helicopters

TWO Scouts, powered by Blackburn Nimbus turbines, were delivered on May 1 by the Saunders-Roe division of Westland to the Army at Middle Wallop, where they immediately began intensive flying trials. Ten hours' flying were completed during the following day. Two further Scouts are being prepared for tropical trials and demonstration tours. Scout airframe production is the responsibility of the Fairey division of Westland.

The experimental Turmo-powered Skeeter is now flying with the full four-axis Newmark autopilot destined for anti-submarine Sea Scouts. Height during hovering is automatically controlled through the collective-pitch channel.

Construction of a batch of Hiller Rotorcycles for the US Marines and for Helicop-Air in Paris is continuing and two have been delivered to France. The first fully British-built machine—illustrated here—has flown. Four altogether have been completed, and at least two more are nearing completion.

Coventry was Britain's Busiest Airport

IN an hour and a half during the Shackleton Aviation Weekend at Baginton Airport, Coventry (reported in *Flight* last week), 142 aircraft took off from the single runway. Over the three days of the meeting there were 2,088 movements, and this is believed to be a record for any aerodrome in the United Kingdom at any time. Busiest day was Saturday, April 29, into which nearly half the total movements were concentrated; on that day 956 aircraft took off or landed. On the Friday the total was 412 and on the Sunday 720.

These movements were performed in weather that was at no time really good, and visibility was often less than two miles. Not every pilot, of course, was happy about this unprecedented activity; the number of demonstrations taking place frequently made the circuit area extremely crowded. On a number of occasions aerobatics were being performed over the airfield while other aircraft were in the vicinity. For the record, the number of movements at London Airport between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. on a Saturday in the height of the summer season averages about 400 to 420.

W. S. Shackleton (Aviation) Ltd, say that next year they hope to have available an even wider selection of new aircraft. There has been some criticism of the layout of the exhibition, so in 1962 some changes will be made. The new aircraft will be concentrated into about half the area used this year and will be grouped separately from secondhand and visiting aircraft. Additional bowsers should be available for refuelling, and it is intended to have a two-hour flying display on the Saturday only. This will leave exhibitors more time to carry out individual demonstrations and leave Sunday free for visitors to arrive by air throughout the day.

Shackleton also remark that two of the Airedales for which they have placed orders with Beagle-Auster have already been resold.

Balloonists 21 Miles Up

TWO officers of the US Navy last Thursday made a balloon ascent to a height of 113,500ft—more than 21 miles. The balloon, with an envelope 411ft high containing 10m cu ft of helium, carried an open gondola, and the two men wore pressure suits. The altitude, which is likely to be submitted to the FAI as a world record, considerably exceeded the existing record height of 102,800ft set up by Capt Joseph Kittinger, USAF, in August last year.

The ascent had an unhappy sequel; one of the two officers lost his life when the balloon—which had been launched from the carrier USS *Antietam*—descended in the Gulf of Mexico. Cdr Malcolm Ross was the pilot, but it was Lt Cdr V. G. Prather who was drowned when he slipped out of the sling of the retrieving helicopter.

APPOINTED DIRECTORS of the ATS Co Ltd, the Hawker Siddeley market information subsidiary, are Air Cdre F. R. Banks (left) and Mr P. G. Lucas (centre). Mr M. N. Golovine (right) continues as managing director. Details are given on page 620 of this issue

ROTORCYCLE WALK: Westland Saunders-Roe groundcrew carry the first Saro-built Hiller Rotorcycle back to its hangar at Eastleigh after a test flight. News of Rotorcycle and other Saro projects appears in Col 1

Record Quarter

OVER £41½m was the value of British aircraft industry exports for the first three months of 1961. This was a record for the first quarter of any year, and as a quarterly total it has been exceeded only once, in the second quarter of 1959. The March figure, £16½m, was the third highest monthly total ever achieved. It was largely due to record engine exports (over £8m) and the sale of Vanguards to Canada and Comets to the Lebanon. Details of March sales were as follows : aircraft and parts, £7,604,067 ; engines and parts, £8,185,735; electrical equipment, £327,786; instruments, £213,113; tyres, £94,228. Detailed sales for the first quarter of 1961 were: aircraft and parts, £17,332,950; engines and parts, £22,514,919 (a record figure) ; electrical equipment, £846,056; instruments, £702,925; and tyres, £231,319. Leading aircraft buyers were Canada, the Lebanon and the US; leading engine buyers the US, Canada and France.

Air-cushion Casualty Evacuation

THE scope of the air-cushion vehicle appears almost unlimited; in its latest application the air-riding machine enters the field of military medicine. Folland Aircraft Ltd—a member of the Hawker Siddeley Group—have developed "an air-supported stretcher carrier" in collaboration with the Royal Army Medical Corps.

The prototype vehicle is supported by plenum-chamber air cushioning in conjunction with flexible side-curtains. A flat-sided oval in plan form, and some 10ft in length and 7ft in width, it provides deck-space for a stretcher on each side of a fore-and-aft housing containing the two small industrial two-stroke engines which drive the fans. There is no "pilot," the vehicle being controlled by a man walking behind it and grasping two lawn-mower-type handles on which are the simple controls. Another in front helps to guide the carrier by means of similar handles.

The project appears to have obvious advantages. Initial evacuation of battlefield casualties is an arduous task often calling for four bearers to carry a single stretcher. The Folland device would enable two men to move two casualties, and the air cushion would give the patients a smoother ride over rough ground. Special attention has been given to reduction of vibration and to silencing.

Another Safety Award for E. S. Calvert

IN *Flight* for April 13 we reported that Mr E. S. Calvert and Mr J. W. Sparke of RAE had been awarded the 1961 Laura Tabor Barbour Air Safety Award in recognition of their development of the line-and-bar approach system and the RAE-Thorn visual glide-path indicator.

Now comes news that Mr Calvert has received another American honour—the Monsanto Aviation Safety Award, which was founded in 1957 by the Monsanto Chemical Co. Recipients are chosen annually by the United States Aviation and Space Writers' Association from a list of candidates nominated by an international selection committee of aviation experts. Mr Calvert, says the Association, was selected to receive the award because he had "greatly advanced the safety of aircraft landings through vigorous and imaginative research on the theory of visual judgements in motion,