

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GLIDING MOVEMENT IN POLAND.

By ZYGMUNT LASKOWSKI.



The "Lwow" flying over the Wasserkuppe.

[The following interesting account of the growth of the Gliding Movement in Poland has been written specially for THE SAILPLANE by Mr. Laskowski, of the Aero Club, Lwów, who was head of the Polish contingent at the Rhön Competitions this year. Mr. Laskowski has, unfortunately, since been killed in a gliding accident.—ED.]

The first attempts at gliding in Poland were made in 1923. In the summer of that year, the Association of Polish Airmen organised a gliding competition, which took place at Bialka in the Lower Carpathians. Nine machines took part in this meeting. The majority of the designers were either active or reserve officers of the Polish Air Force, while other machines were designed and built in Polish aircraft factories. One was constructed by the members of the Aeronautical Students' Association in Warsaw (the organisation which was responsible for constructing the winning machine in the last Round-Europe flight). It is remarkable that this last glider, although the first product of this now famous Association, was the only one on which a number of flights were carried out successfully. On this open type glider Mr. T. Karzinski (the same pilot who took part in the last International Touring Competition) established the Polish record, for that period, of 3 minutes 26 seconds. This flight was destined to remain the Polish record for the next five years.

Two years later, the Association of Polish Airmen intended to organise the second gliding competition. At that time the Germans had created several records at Rossitten, which is situated on the coast near the Polish

frontier. Accordingly the Association of Polish Airmen sent an expedition to find a soaring ground on the Polish coast. Considerable difficulty was experienced in finding anything suitable, and, finally, some hills near Czdynia were selected. This choice proved to be very unfortunate, for, although 21 gliders took part, some of which were of good construction for that period, not one flight exceeded one minute in duration.

The non-success of this competition had a fatal influence on the development of motorless flying in Poland. The young designers, particularly the Aeronautical Students' Association in Warsaw, began to work exclusively on power-driven aircraft. Thus ended the first period of Polish motorless flying.

The Second Phase.

At the end of 1926 there was only one small group of young men in Poland which continued working on gliding problems. This was the Aeronautical Students' Association in Lwów. One of the students, Mr. Wacław Czerwinski, designed a new type of glider, and with his companions worked on its construction in very difficult conditions for several years. It was intended to complete the machine in 1925, but it was not actually ready till 1927. There still remained, however, the question of a pilot and of a suitable soaring ground.

Just at this time Mr. Szczepan Grzeszczyk, a student from Warsaw, arrived at Lwów to study in the mechanical department of the Technical High School. This student