

FLYING REPTILES

(Continued from page 6)

probably found by our ancestors. It wouldn't be hard to be impressed with such a find. The flying lizards' heads were enormous, often with toothed beaks, oddly located eyes, and sometimes with enormous bony growths off the backs of their heads, horrible claws and terrific wings.

Aerodynamically speaking, the restorations of the animal indicate poor performance, control and maneuvering qualities. These would not aid them when the going got tough and the up currents too few and far between. They were *not* the fittest, and therefore, did *not* survive. On the other hand, those of the collateral line whose humerus bone was more highly developed so that they could flap their wings *were* able to survive and became, in time, our present day eagles, gold finches, chickens, ostriches and roast Long Island duck.

The change in the climate eliminated pterodactyls along with Tyrannosaurus Rex. But in their heyday, storms of tropical nature and violence were common to the point of occurring every few hours, and in between times, the air was good and turbulent. These jobs were rugged—imagine yourself in that spot—nothing counted but *distance and return* flights, a main spar made of a paper thin tube, no maintenance facilities, and launchings by the simple expedient of letting go of a cliff, turning head down, shouting, "Geronimo!" and then opening up your jib-sail like wings before you bashed into a rock. That over with, a few passes over the ocean were on the flight plan with a duel or two with fish that tried to pull you in while you tried to pull them out. If you won, you had to start to soar in dead earnest and get back to headquarters where you and the missus bragged about the way they, the "Pterodactylus Elegans," had a better L/D than the Jones boys next-door and, "whoever gave those power jobs (with flapping wings) a license to fly over our hunting grounds?"

So, you see fellows, our sailplanes "Yankee Doodle" and "Zanonia" et al. have a real past to live up to; our national and regional meets are carrying a torch that wasn't even glimmering for eons of time, even since before man existed on earth; our "Dunkers Club" which takes its members from those who have landed in seas and in lakes, is a reminder of grimmer days; and our prizes and records might seem inconsequential when written in the history of the ages.

Nevertheless, we have made progress; think of the basic improvements we have made. I can't think right now just what they might be, but there must be some! Maybe it is that we can get in and out of our flying machines at will and Pterodactyls couldn't.

TACTICAL USES OF GLIDERS

(Continued from page 3)

Another group of utility possibilities include the evacuation glider which carries wounded, and the various field dressing stations which can be neatly packed for delivery by glider. There are also many units which, while not designed specifically for gliders, are easily carried and could be loaded quickly when desired. An example would be the standard field kitchens which would enable one glider load to serve 150 men with hot food. There are also portable radio detection stations and weather stations which can be carried with their crews to any point within flying range for special reporting missions. There is obviously no limit to these possibilities, and we may soon see all sorts of service units provided by glider to front line outfits such as shower units, clothing and shoe repair shops, refrigeration units, and so forth.

OUR CORPORATE MEMBERS

These members help the Society fulfill its purposes; which is the development of all phases of gliding and soaring, the investigation of commercial and other uses of gliders and the dissemination of information pertaining thereto.

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