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# Seven students propose new flying lesson idea

The airpark concept proposals

called for by Rodenberger take

into consideration that disposable

income has been growing con-

stantly in the last decade and

money spent on recreation has

"Income expenditures related to

boating has doubled since 1966,"

the professor points out. "During

the same period, general aviation

sales have increased by only one

An innovation approach such

as an airpark would help establish

aviation as a recreation and in-

crease the number of persons who

so that it would be completely

safe to fly with a minimum

amount of instruction. Being re-

stricted to the airpark boundary,

it would not require licensing,"

Rodenberger added. "The theory

is that people would learn to fly

in a safe vehicle in the airpark

Built-in safety is the main fac-

designed by a student-team head-

ed by Charles W. Dickson III of

They designed the canard so

that it stalls - or loses lift -

before the wing stalls as the

plane approaches a nose-up at-

"But instead of stalling com-

pletely, the canard is designed to

gently lower the nose of the air-

craft to regain a safe flight speed," the students' report

states. The action of the canard

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"The aircraft would be designed

participate in flying.

general aviation."

Houston.

titude

been growing even faster.

certificated aircraft.

half."

Wednesday, June 3, 1970

Joe Blow, who has never set foot in an airplane cockpit and veteran of only two commercial flights, straps into the bucket seat of a two-place aircraft and starts a pre-flight check.

Page 4

College Station, Texas

Moments later, a rail-mounted ground truck eases into motion, a nylon rope tightens and the plane moves forward.

Speed builds, the canard-type glider rises silently into the air and the instructor turns the control stick of the 20-foot-long aircraft over to the fledgling pilot. Far ahead over the circular rail, another plane dips its wing into a gentle turn. The side perspective reveals a rather unusual airplane configuration.

A slender nose section carrying the stabilizer nine feet ahead of the wing tapers back to the sideby-side seating cockpit. The plane's 41-foot wing expanse is connected to the fuselage on the very back section. Twin rudders bracket an area in which a pusher-configuration engine could be mounted.

This scene is painted in a tech-nical proposal by seven Texas A&M aerospace engineering seniors. The idea and design answers Dr. Charles A. Rodenberger's "proposal request" for a recreational airpark at which people can learn to fly. Very safely and at low cost. Proposals tendered by two

other seven-member groups of students in the aerospace vehicle design course take more standard approaches to low-cost, high safety factor planes that could be flown in an airpark or sold as

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does not allow the wing to stall, eliminating spin and a major cause of airplane accidents.

THE BATTALION

The long nose, specially constructed to collapse like an accordion, provides a crash attenuating structure that lowers Gforces occupants of the craft might be subjected to if the ship should crash nose-first.

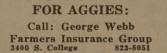
Dickson, Ronald L. Absolom of Smithfield; Craig Anderson and John L. Thaxton, Austin; Tom R. Hazel, Houston; Stephen T. Pollock, Alexandria, Va., and Daniel T. Whitt, Wellborn, noted that installation of a 60 to 65-horsepower engine turns the glider into a highly stable powered plane capable of 93 mph cruising speeds. They also designed a tow truck

operated on an industrial fourcycle engine that would pull the glider around the circular track a concrete embedded rail — at speeds of about 60 mph.

Using their design criteria and 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>-inch steel tubing as the rail, and thus be encouraged to enter the students computed that a franchisable airpark consisting of tor of the "backward flying" craft three gliders at \$4,320 each, three tow trucks at \$2,000 each and three miles of track at \$2,000 per hundred feet would require a financial outlay of \$214,560.

> "As can be seen, the profit margin will be low on a franchise basis, but with many franchises operating throughout the U.S., profits will be substantial," they pointed out.

> Side products such as glider kits for home construction, and such airpark facilities as a paradrop, kiddie merry-go-round or boat-towed riding kites, golf and picnic areas, the airpark could be a going concern, they believe. **AUTO INSURANCE**



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