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VICTORY FOR "PATROUILLE SUISSE"



On a blustery June day the Aerobatic Team of the Swiss Armed Forces crossed the English Channel in a friendly intrusion into British air space in order to demonstrate their skill at this year's International Air Tattoo in Newbury, Berks. on 23rd/24th June.

In the eight hours of the display, a large crowd saw around 260 aeroplanes, mostly military, from 22 countries.

It was the first time the Swiss Aerobatic Team had come to Britain to take part in the Air Tattoo and only the second time that they had participated in an air show outside Switzerland.

After the show "our boys" had reason indeed to celebrate, since they won first prize for their display.

Talking to the British team, the famous "Red Arrows", at a reception at the Swiss Embassy before the event, one noticed that the Swiss team was highly thought of. The "Red Arrows" were each presented with a Swiss army knife by the "Patrouille Suisse" and a new Swiss franc for good luck.

According to both teams, the good old "Hunter" which was used by the Swiss Aerobatic Team in the display, is still an extremely reliable plane of faultless design, acquiring nostalgia-value with the pilots who fly other types of aircraft now.

All members of the Swiss Aerobatic Team (founded 1964) are full-time military pilots of the Surveillance Wing. The team consists of six pilots, one to two reserve pilots and one ground supervisor officer. The aerobatic display in close formation lasts about 16 minutes. The training is achieved in one training session per week over eight months per year. The pilots of the "Patrouille Suisse" take part in five to six air displays per year. New recruits for the team are chosen by the existing members, and, according to Hauptmann Hochuli, as much emphasis is placed on team-spirit, personal character and temperament of the candidate as on his technical ability as a pilot.

Apparently the pilots are not concerned as to what speed they fly at (750–800 km/h), as long as the

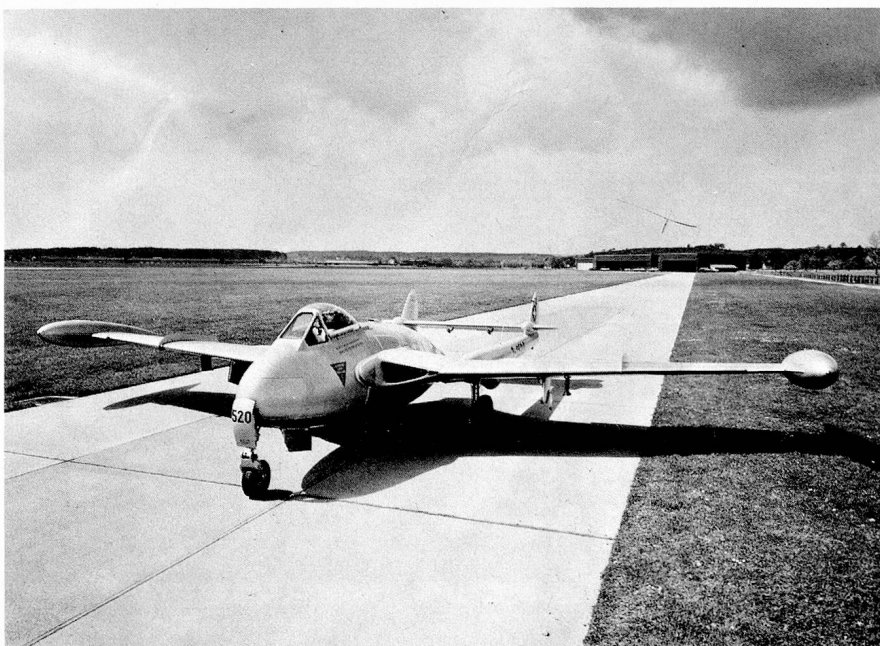
distance within the formation is maintained (three, sometimes only two metres between the planes). The instructions of the leader regarding choice of formation, speed, distance, etc. are followed with absolute accuracy.

We can hope that after this year's success at the Air Tattoo here we shall see the "Patrouille Suisse" again next year.

Also on the occasion of the Air Tattoo, Switzerland donated to Britain one of her "Venom" fighters – built 1956 and until recently used in the Swiss Air Force – for exhibition in the Hendon museum. Britain had no "Venom" in working condition left.

In the years immediately after the second world war Switzerland equipped her air force with three generations of British built fighter jets, the "Vampire", the "Venom" and the "Hunter", consolidating a long tradition of friendship between the air-force staff of the two countries.

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MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENT

The Swiss Benevolent Society and the Swiss Welfare Office for young people require a

Part-time Secretary

from 1st October, 1979, Swiss German mother-tongue, fluency in English, French speaking, if possible.

For information please ring: Mrs. A. R. Sharp, Tel: 01-387 2173 or Mrs. M. Lyster, Tel: 01-387 3608.

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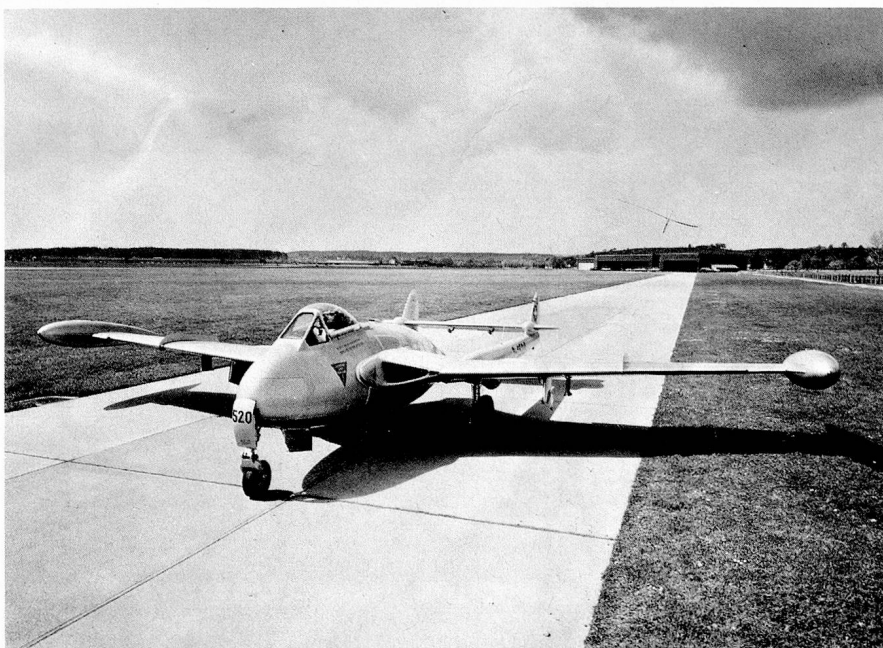
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