

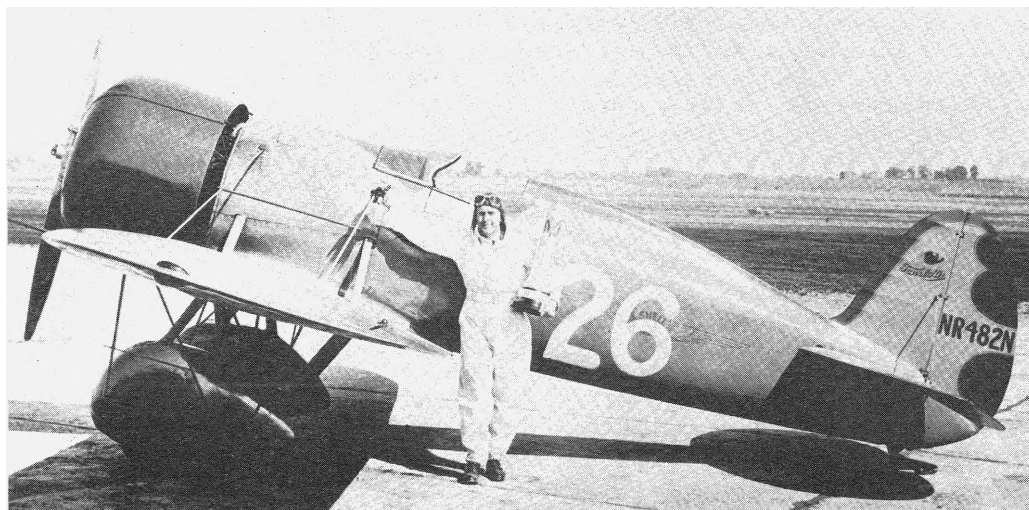
"RACEPLANES

MODEL R"

PART 2

By

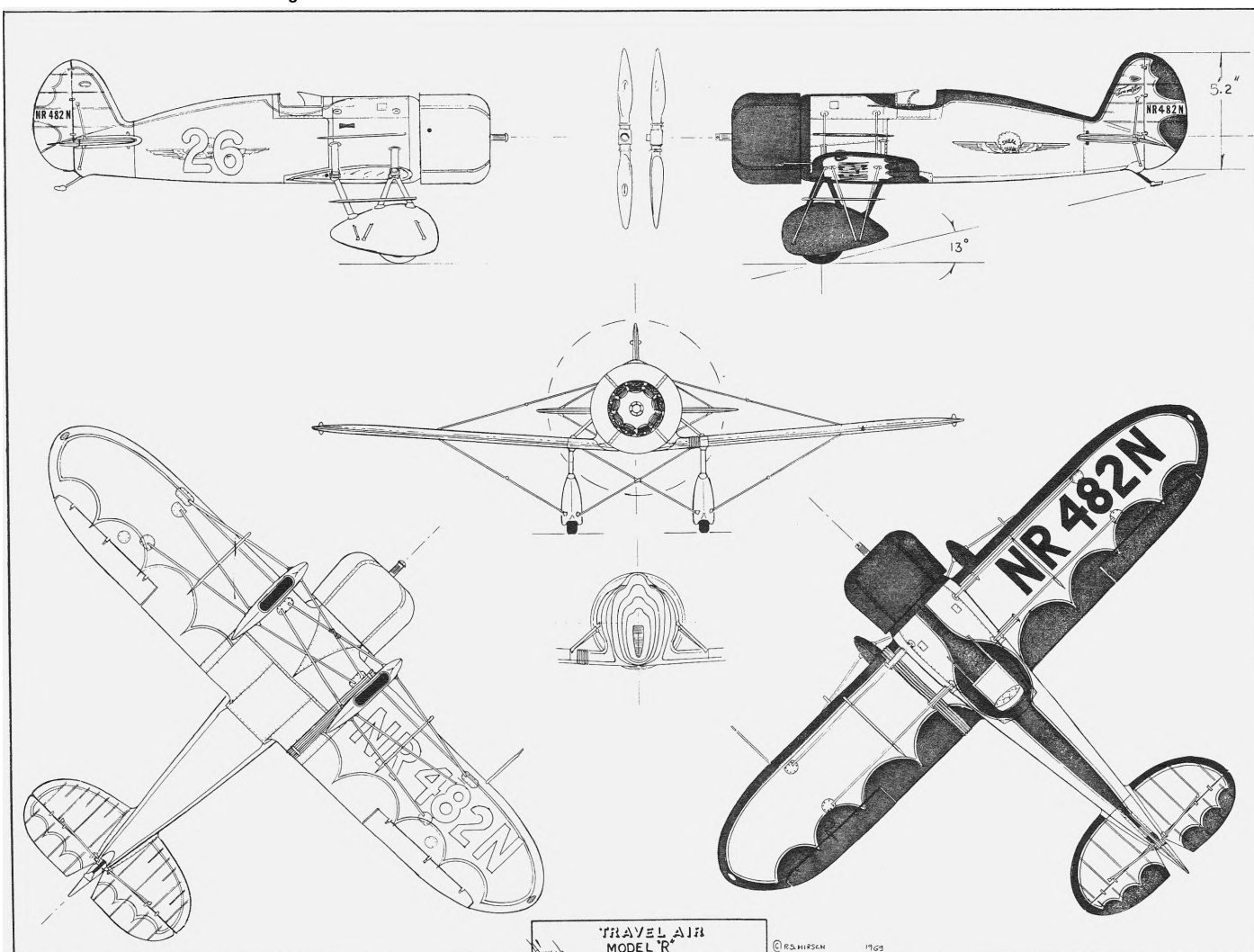
ROBERT S. HIRSCH



All photos courtesy of the author except as noted.

The shaded areas in the drawing below and on the opposite page are meant to be the familiar red of Shell Oil Co. Variations in the production process from which these two drawings were obtained resulted in the contrasting shades.

NR482N was delivered to the Shell Oil Company in April 1930 and was immediately taken on the New England Air Tour by Jimmie Haizlip. He won a trophy for aerobatics in the new airplane, shown here with 26 on the fuselage. Later in the National Air Races in September, held at Glenview, Ill., the airplane had Race Number 25, and Haizlip won Event No. 26, with a prize of \$1000.



With the success of the Model R at the 1929 National Air Races, both Shell Oil Company and Texaco placed orders for one apiece. These were built in 1930 and were available for the National Air Races held at Glenview. NR482 was entered by Shell in Event No. 26 with Jimmie Haizlip as pilot, and in which he won first place, a prize of \$1,000. His speed was a comfortable 183 mph. coming in over Speed Holman's 170 in the Laird Solution.

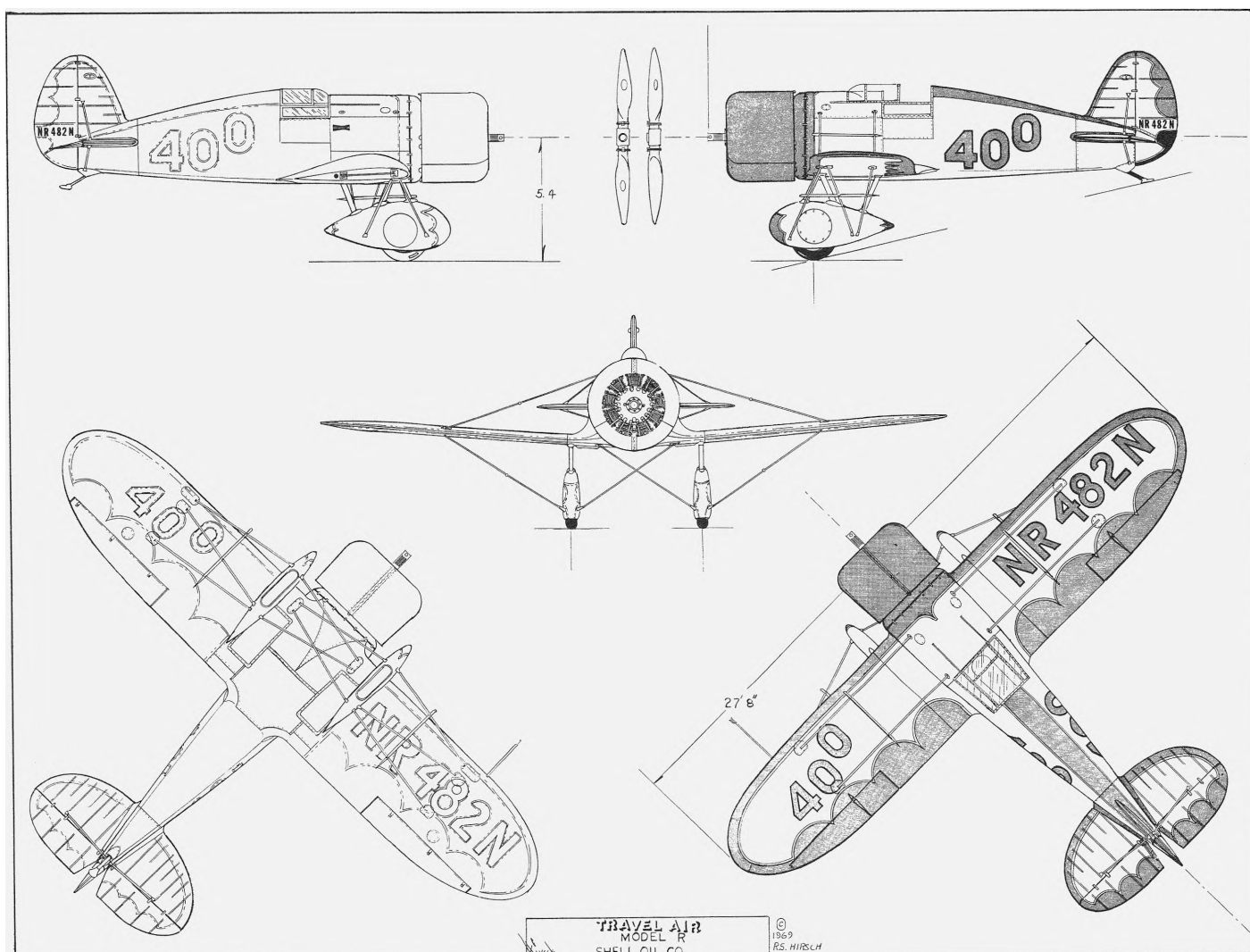
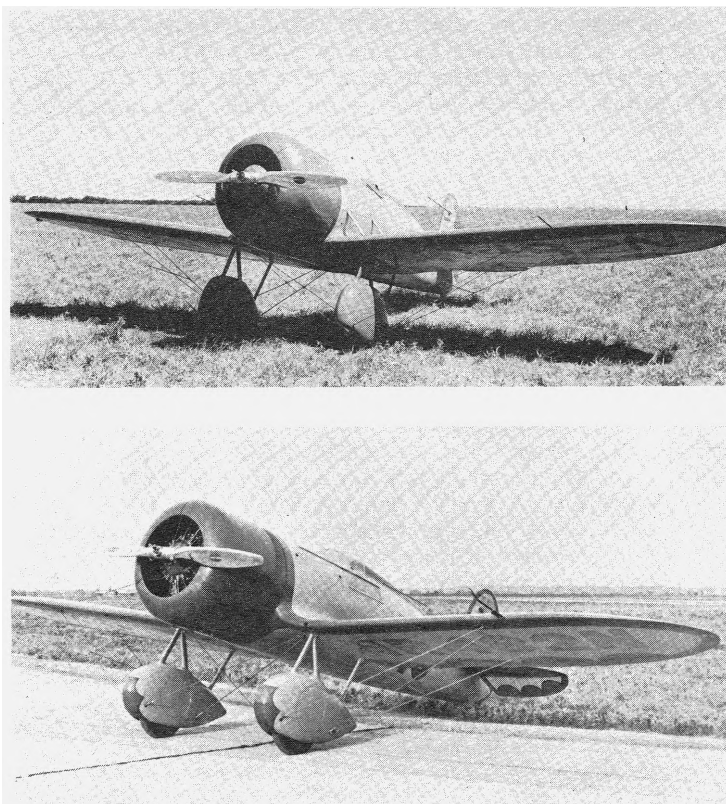
The Thompson Trophy Race, the big one, was Event No. 32, and it attracted both Haizlip, in the Shell Racer, and Frank Hawks in NR1313, of Texaco, the fourth Model R. The Thompson Trophy was won, however, by Speed Holman, again racing the Laird Solution, at a speed of 201.91. Haizlip came in at 199.80 and Benny Howard took third place at 162.80 in his Howard PETE. Hawks dropped out in the third lap with a faulty engine.

There were significant differences between the Model Rs of 1930 and those of the previous year. NR482, the Shell racer, has a fuselage faired neatly from firewall to fin post, with larger fin and rudder. NR1313 had larger wings, 30'-6" span, 5'-2" chord, gas tank capacity of 109 gallons instead of 43, and a closed cockpit. Both airplanes had more horsepower than the R613 or R614.

Upper, NR482N at factory rollout with full-length wings of 30'-6". Colors were the familiar Shell Company red and yellow.

Lower, after modification at Parks Air College, wings shortened to 27'-8", new engine and cowling, wing-to-fuselage braces not included. Color scheme same as before.

Below, increased wing fillet, canopy and wing changes are apparent.



Both airplanes underwent modification. After the New England Air Tour, flown by Jimmie Haizlip, NR482 was revised by Parks Air College at Jimmie Doolittle's direction, with marked changes in the aileron mechanism, wing fillet, and a new P & W R-985 engine, using special fuel to achieve 550 hp. The cockpit was enclosed, modifying the upper line of the fuselage since the enclosure was faired around the pilot's head. Doolittle bailed out of NR482N near St. Louis in mid-1931 during a flight test and the airplane was destroyed.

NR1313 was rebuilt almost immediately after rollout from the factory. Frank Hawks crash-landed and the airplane was badly damaged. After rebuilding, it had a new color scheme as the main outward difference.

The fifth and last of the Model R series from the Travel Air company was a duplicate of the Texaco airplane, even to the color scheme, and ordered by the Italian government. Final disposition of this airplane, after delivery to Italy, seems lost. It may be conjectured that the AIR-7, shown in the *Janes'-All the World's Aircraft* for the years 1933 to 1935, under "Russia," is the same as the Model R, or "Mystery S" as sometimes called, slightly modified.

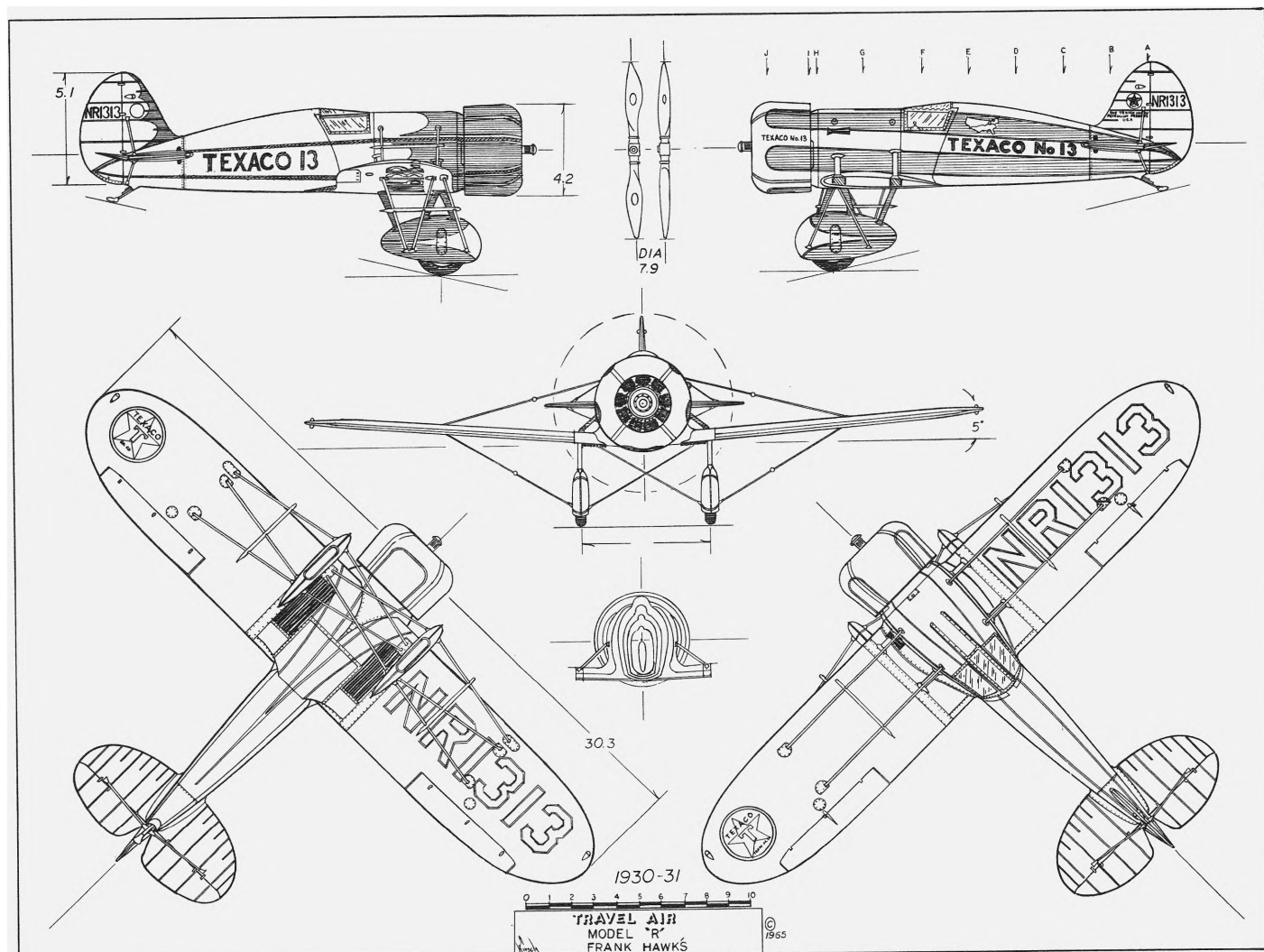
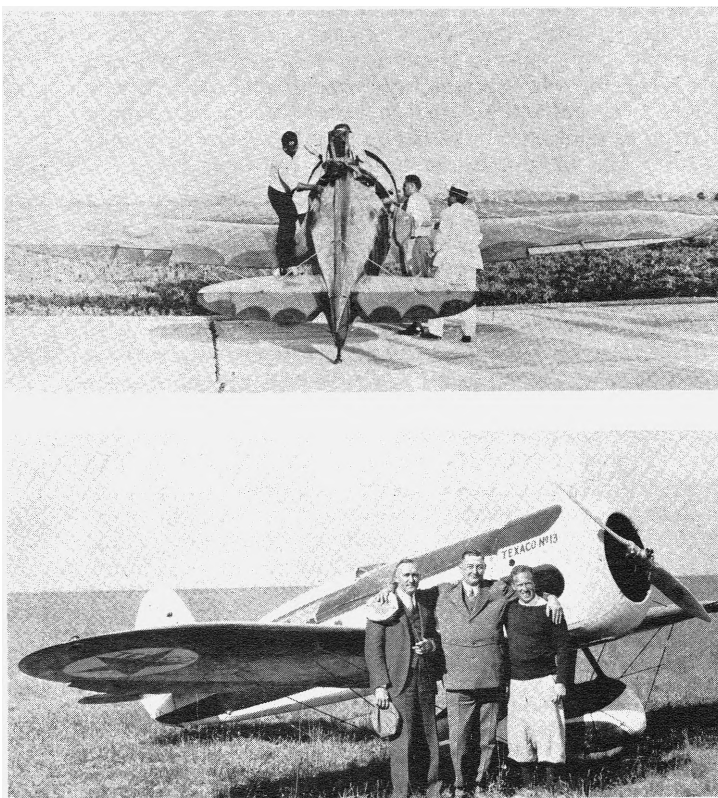
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Aviation Magazine, August, September, 1930.

Western Flying Magazine, September 1930.

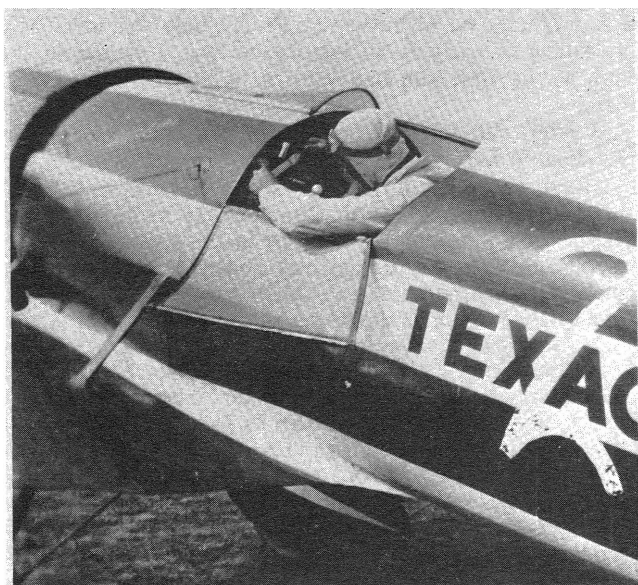
Upper: Preparing Doolittle's NR482N for test after modification. Lower: An informal pose of Walter Beech (left) with Bob Hutchinson and Frank Hawks. (Photo — Rudy Profant)

Below: The original tan and red color scheme of Texaco's R1313 is shown at left of drawing; scheme after modification, vermillion and cream, with thin blue separating stripe, at right and center.

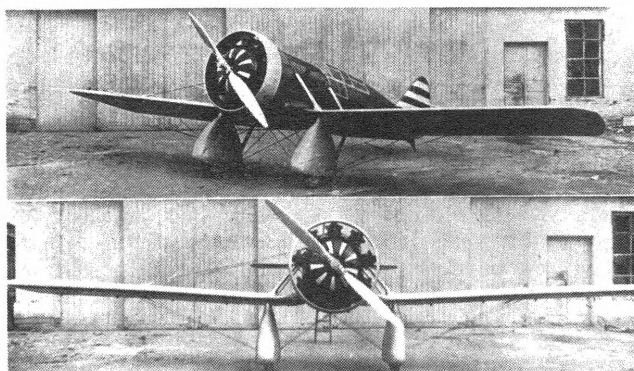




Frank Hawks' airplane was fitted with more than the usual complement of instruments for a racer, intended for cross country flying. Below, he sets up a lap counting system for the 1930 Thompson Trophy Race. NR 1313 was assigned race number 28 for the event.



Above right - NR 1313 after reconstruction. (Photo - Beech Aircraft Corp. 11806E dtd 8-24-30) Right center - Model R built for Italy. (Photo — Beech 8475A). Right lower — Russian AIR-7. (Photo - Janes' All the World's Aircraft 1934)



BELOW: NR1313 at factory rollout with its bright red and tan finish and regular Texaco emblem. Frank Hawks crash landed on the test flight.

