

The battle for supersonic supremacy moved to the sun-scorched desert of Libya with the arrival of the Supermarine "Swift" Jet Fighter at Castel Idris R.A.F. Station.

The plane was piloted by Lt-Commander Michael Lithgow, who was welcomed to Libya, for his record-attempt, by Wing-Commander Denis - the Station C.O. ~~and~~ losing no time, "Lucky" Lithgow, as he's called, took off for a practice run over the three kilometre course - a section of the road to Tripoli. ~~So~~ Less than three weeks after Neville Duke in the Hawker "Hunter" had set up a new record - the "Swift" was being checked and refuelled.

And Mike Lithgow (wearing a special heat-resisting suit) took off - hoping to better, (by the necessary one-per-cent) the 727 miles per hour of the "Hunter".

Verey Light signalled the first of the four runs over the course - sign-posted by the Bir Ghenem Oasis at one end, and a White Fort at the ~~other~~ other.

Then - timed by ~~the~~ <sup>Royal Aero Club</sup> Observers - Lithgow flashed over the desert at a height of only 130 feet!

~~And~~ ~~that~~ the Swift flew at 745.3 miles an hour on one run - which is faster than the average speed of a subsequent American attempt. Yet the ~~came~~ ~~looked~~ ~~unconcerned~~. <sup>THEY</sup> still hold the ground record for desert travel, *at any rate!*

The attempt over - "Lucky" Lithgow signalled his confidence to ground watchers by a victory roll - but, no doubt, to a desert dweller, it all seemed much ado about nothing.

<sup>3</sup>  
~~When~~ <sup>So</sup> Lithgow landed, he told how stifling cock-pit heat had restricted his use of an engine re-heating device to gain added speed. But his speed was 737.3 miles an hour - subject to confirmation. ~~So~~ Britain had done it again!