

PARADE OF LEADERS

Another of this Station's efficient leaders, who has an interesting service and civilian background, is Ralph A. Gordon, recently made Squadron Leader, but already well-known as Flight Commander, "B" Flight, 162 Squadron. The happy accomplishment of hard work and hard play has fitted Ralph as one of the Squadron's most capable and efficient officers.

Although a Toronto man by birth (bless him) Ralph spent the greater part of his youth in Bobcaygeon, Ont., where his parents moved when he was 2 years of age. It was in this famous beauty spot of Canada that he attended public school and developed his interests in sport and business. Later, he attended high school in nearby Lindsay where he began a lengthy series of successful competitive sports. The Lindsay Rugby Team, of which he was a member, twice won the Central

O.C. "B" Flight, 162



Sqn. Ldr. Ralph Gordon

and Eastern Ontario Championship, and competition in that circuit is keen, just as it is known to be in Hockey which he played, again with the Lindsay Team, which six times reached the finals in the hard-hitting Junior O.H.A. Hockey has proved a favorite sport with Ralph since those days.

While at Lindsay High Ralph chose Mechanical Engineering as his work and in 1936 journeyed to Hoboken, N. J., for his training, returning again to Bobcaygeon in the Fall of 1937, when he opened a machine shop in conjunction with the boat business which his Father had developed over the past years.

In the winter of 1938, Ralph's interest in boats led him, along with Brother Jack, to build an 18-foot v-bottom sport job which they entered in the highly

contested .225 cu.-in. class at the Canadian National Exhibition in 1930. There he raced against such top names in the business as "Pops" Cooper and Harold Wilson with his then famous "Miss Canada IV."

But war had already been declared and immediately afterwards Ralph turned to the Air Force and began his service career at the London Flying Club, while the B.C.A.T.P. was yet to be conceived. Five in that early class walked away with Canada's highest marks and Ralph was right in there with the leaders, paving the way for his career with the Air Force.

April, 1940, found him at Trenton, Ont., taking his elementary ground school course and in May journeyed to Camp Borden, travelling what was to prove a much trodden path for him. One of his classmates during his Intermediate Flying and Training at Borden was one Jack Sully and, on graduation with their "wings," they separated to meet again some 2 years later at Yarmouth.

From Borden in September, 1940, the road again led to Trenton for Advanced Flying Training, and completion of this course saw him marching Borden-wards again for Reconnaissance and Training and, believe it or not, Trenton saw him again shortly afterwards when he took his "Short N" course at 1A.N.S. Join the Air Force and see the world???

But more distant travel beckoned and in October, 1940, his posting as Navigation Instructor at No. 3 S.F.T.S., Calgary, came through and he was on his way. But there was one important stop-over in Toronto where he was married to Miss Esther Paret, of New York City, on October 10.

For the next 14 months Ralph was busy getting new arrivals in the Air Force on their way through to graduation and "wings" and on to varied services, wherever our ensign flies, playing hockey when time permitted and plugging on in the same hard way at work and at sport. One of his fellow instructors and team-mates was well-known S/L Foss Boulton, now O. C. the City of Oshawa Squadron, and busy as ever knocking down Jerry over England.

December, 1940, saw then F/O Gordon on his way from Calgary to No. 7S.F.T.S. at McLeod, Alberta, where he was categorized as Flying Instructor, and in March, 1941, he was transferred to No. 12 S.F.T.S. at Brandon, where he received his F/L and took over the duties of Flight Commander. From Brandon the road led to Rivers, Man.,

in April, 1942, and on to Yarmouth and 162 Squadron in June as Squadron Navigation Officer. Later he became O.C. "B" Flight.

His keen interest in sport has continued throughout his service and, while at McLeod, his Team walked away with the Alberta Championship. At Brandon the following Winter the Team of which he was made Captain won the Senior C.A.H.A. Perhaps he has degenerated since landing at Yarmouth, for ice hockey has been replaced with floor hockey, but he can still hit hard—and does. Anyway we won't believe of slackening of keenness for the 'fastest game' until we catch him playing the field variety on nice soft grass. Good luck, Ralph! May success continue!