WATCH OUT FOR THE SKY COPS

by Bob Hudson

The Indiana State Police spot unsuspecting traffic violators from the air using the "giant yardstick" as rule of the road

ONE-THOUSAND FEET below, a truck crossed a white line on U.S. 31, south of Indianapolis, Indiana.

At the same instant, Indiana State Police Sergeant Art Raney, at the controls of a red and cream Piper Cub, clicked a stopwatch button that started the hands moving.

Exactly 8.2 seconds later the truck crossed another white line. Raney, one hand on the control stick while his other held the watch, checked the elapsed time and consulted a chart on the control panel. He unhooked a mike and put it to his lips.

"Seventy-thirty-two," Raney said.

Trooper Fred Neal in Car 732 up the highway a mile answered.

"There's a black, flat-bed truck, about a '41 model, heading your way," Raney said. "I've timed it at 55."

Neal acknowledged. Raney gunned the Cub's engine, banked the plane into a turn and followed the truck along the highway.

A minute later, Raney saw Neal step out of his parked patrol car and flag the truck to a halt. Raney circled overhead, watching his partner tell the trucker he had been driving ten miles an hour over the truck speed limit.

This actual arrest by the Indiana State Police sky patrol is similar to others which occur every day the weather permits Hoosier State Police to fly. Indiana is a pioneer in this new technique of traffic law enforcement.

Of course, the airplane's role in police work is not new. Many nations have used airplanes to chase criminals and to regulate vehicle traffic.

For about ten years Indiana State Police have used airplanes each Memorial Day to regulate the tremendous traffic flow into the Indianapolis Motor Speedway for the 500-Mile Auto Race.

Two years ago Hoosier state cops tried the plane against truck violations. It worked so well that soon police sent air-ground teams prowling for all types of moving violations.

The first sky patrol "catch" was a 24-year-old woman. She told Trooper Don Gustin, who had waved her to the roadside from his patrol car, that her speedometer had registered "about 50."

Pointing to the State Police airplane circling above, Gustin said: "They say it was 81 miles an hour." Defeated, the woman nodded. She had been trapped in a gigantic yardstick—two broad white lines, one-eighth of a mile apart, on a troublesome stretch of highway.

To foil speed-bent drivers who equip their cars with mirrors rigged to provide a view of the sky, the plane crisscrosses the yardstick.

The pilot cuts his speed to about 70 m.p.h. and flys as low as safety allows, around 800 to 1,000 feet. From here he gets a bird's eye view. The sky cop clocks the interval between white lines. Then he refers to a table which indicates speeds for different clockings. The pilot radios a trooper in a black patrol car marked with big yellow numerals on top. The pilot describes the violator's vehicle and the violation, and the trooper makes the pinch.

A trucker, stopped by Trooper Malcolm Heuss for going 54 m.p.h. or nine m.p.h. over the speed limit, asked, "Yeah, but how did you know?"

"That bird told me," replied Heuss, motioning toward the circling Cub with the blue State Police shield on its fuselage.

THE STATE HAS posted signs along highways at strategic locations. The signs warn motorists they are watched from cloud level as well as ground level. While the sky patrol's main objective is to halt excessive speeds, this enforcement technique also is aimed at eliminating other hazardous violations such as following too closely, passing on hills and curves, improper turns, failure to observe stop signs, dangerously slow driving and weaving in traffic. In addition, air-ground teams help eliminate dangerous high-speed chases of violators by troopers over crowded rural and suburban roads.

Perhaps most important, a by-product of the sky patrol is to impress on the motorist that he must drive carefully, even when he is not traveling along the gigantic yardstick.

BUY HIGH

An important piece of the taxpayer's puzzle

SELL LOW

by Dick Martinsen

How would you like to peer at Venus or a *sputnik* through a prismatic refracting telescope with 3¼-inch achromatic objective, interchangeable 10X and 15X large diameter, highly corrected wide-angle eyepieces, and many other high-class features, that cost the U.S. Army $500? It's yours for precisely $49.

If you own a camp, how about an electric generator, driven by a Briggs-Stratton gas engine developing 500 watts, that cost the government $400? It's yours for $99, in the original box.

Maybe you own a boat and would like a better compass. Just $12.50 will buy you a compensating variety, built by Bendix to resist shock and hard usage. Eighteen dollars more will get you a navigational compass with horizontal and vertical correctors and built-in light, optimum accuracy guaranteed. Neither compass has been used. It is, in fact, still in the original box and cost the government $143.

Perhaps you can use a portable power unit with a rugged 5¼ h.p. four-cycle detachable engine, that cost the Army over $400? Just plunk down $65. Or how about a portable air-compressor, which the Navy bought at $295, after developing it at "tremendous cost"? Yours today, friend, for $59.95.

These are only a few of the items —the whys and wherefores of which are altogether baffling to the ordinary taxpayer—that have been advertised within the last three months by so-called "surplus" stores in the big cities.

During the war, Army and Navy procurement officers bought everything that wasn't nailed down at fancy prices, and nobody blamed them *much*. The public grew accustomed to giveaway surplus prices, during the postwar years, but we haven't been at war, officially, for quite a while. Yet the flood of alleged surplus, especially embracing high-priced machinery and instruments, is greater than it ever was. The reasons why some of these things were bought to begin