

# Flashback

## Wee Bee and Its Friend



Photo by Consolidated Vultee. Text by Andrea K. Dudney

After World War II, experimenters competed to produce ever smaller aircraft. The first to be called World's Smallest Flyable Airplane was Wee Bee, shown here circa 1948 (with a pilot) on the ramp near the Consolidated Vultee facility at Lindbergh Field, San Diego. This Bee Aviation airplane had a length of 14 feet, span of 18 feet, and a 30-horse power piston engine. The pilot flew the Wee Bee while lying flat

atop its fuselage, reaching a top speed of 82 mph. Looming over this little fella is Convair's XC-99 transport, the largest piston-engined, land-based transport aircraft ever built. Each of the big fella's 19-foot-long propeller blades exceeded Wee Bee's entire wing span. ■