

Soaring SITES IX

SCHLEY GLIDER FIELD

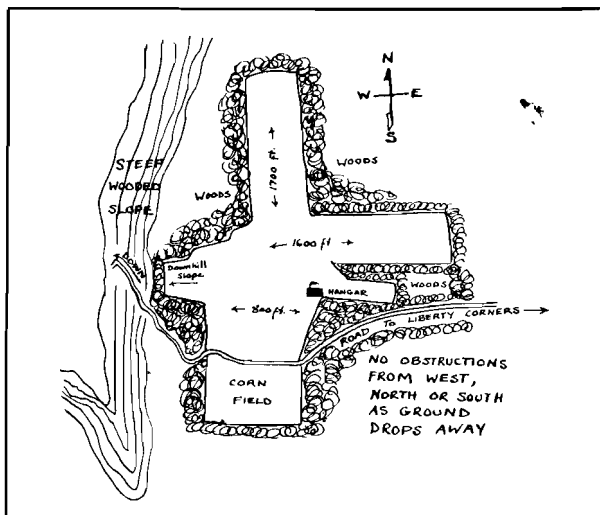
Located on top of a low ridge about five miles south of Bernardsville and two miles southwest of Liberty Corners in north central New Jersey, the Schley Glider Field occupies a position unique among American soaring sites. For one thing, it is part of a private estate. For another, it was literally carved out of the forest by the devoted labors of the members of the Aero Club Albatross and the Y Flying Club under the determined and inspiring leadership of Gus Scheurer, a director of the Soaring Society of America. As its name implies, it first served as a base of purely gliding activities until this year's annual meet of the Associated Glider Clubs of New Jersey which definitely established it as a real soaring site.

The curving ridge on which the field lies extends roughly 30 miles from Patterson to Somerville. Near Somerville, it bends to the west, and the field is approximately at the elbow of the bend. At no point is the ridge more than 600 feet high, and the heavily wooded slope down from the field is not much more than 300 feet above the level valley beyond. From the point of view of soaring in purely mechanically deflected slope winds, it is not a very good site, but for the much more important thermal soaring it seems to be excellent, as the ridge is sufficient to give the valley thermals the initial boost to rise to real altitudes.

Winch towing is used exclusively at the Schley Field. In fact, this is one of the first places in America where it was proved to be a practical method of glider launching. In this pioneering, we must again give credit to Gus Scheurer, who has done so much to develop winch launching which is rapidly becoming the accepted method at most centers of gliding and soaring activity for those who have passed the initial stage of instruction.

This gliding and soaring site can now be considered to have come of age. As the annual site for the most important meet on the Atlantic seaboard, it has taken its place among the important centers of our national soaring activity.

Sketch map of Schley Field



Upper: Road sign near Liberty Corners
Lower: Glider hangar at Schley Field

The Stanley Sailplane

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DISCUSSION:

The choice of a recent N.A.C.A. airfoil departs from classic Göttingen tradition, but has amply repaid itself. No bad stall characteristics were noted, wide speed range produced no adverse moment, exceptionally small flipper area was required, and, in general, the airfoil proved to be all that one might hope for. Inverted flight has not been attempted, but should be simple with such an airfoil. Dihedral was used to give adequate tip clearance to permit a certain degree of latitude to the pilot landing in small space. While dihedral is abhorred by most soaring pilots, I found it quite advantageous for blind soaring, the added stability permitting spirals hands off, without appreciable change of turning rate, and certainly it was most comforting when my rudder control became disconnected at 4500 ft. on my test flight at Elmira, permitting me to soar for forty-five minutes, turning with equal ease either way, and landing back at Harris Hill with the rudder jammed slightly off neutral. (Editor's Note: Having had a similar experience with a Minimoa, we are all for stability in sailplanes, also.)

It has always been my contention that the angle of incidence chosen should be that at which the airfoil maintains proper lift at the chosen cruising speed, rather than that angle which gives the best illusion of stream-

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