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# DECENNIAL CELEBRATION

In organizing the 10th Annual National Soaring Meet it was the desire of the contest committee to do two things. First, they wanted to make possible the maximum amount of flying with a minimum amount of effort by the high performance sailplanes, thus insuring the best possible group performances, and second, they hoped to make a place for the many good pilots who fly low performance or utility gliders. Since the latter class includes more gliders than all the sailplanes and primaries combined, it can easily be seen that the traffic problem and the handling and storage problem involved in such a contest would be acute. However, after due consideration, the committee decided that it could be done, and plans were laid for the largest and best contest yet to be held in the United States. The story of how the many and varied difficulties were met and overcome provides a most interesting and absorbing story.

Those who competed in the 1937 National Soaring Meet remember the hours of waiting while everyone else took off first. They remember watching the best soaring weather go past while they were still on the ground. They remember being forced down by the heavy traffic on the other hand, on the ridge. They remember the 1938 contest when all the gliders were not only in the air but were out of sight by the middle of the morning (much to the annoyance of the spectators). It was the problem of the contest committee to accommodate nearly twice as many ships as at the 1937 meet and to dispose of the traffic and handling problem as efficiently as was done in 1938.

After much discussion of ways and means of increasing the efficiency of the launching crews and methods, it was decided that three take-off sites should be made available for use simultaneously. Besides the Warren Eaton Field on Harris Hill, the American Airways Airport will be available for both winch and airplane tow, and a take-off site for winch tow has been established at the base of South Mountain. This will be the first meet in which take-off sites have been used that were not on the top of the ridge. This method solves the dilemma of the pilot who is unable to remain aloft and loses so much altitude that he is unable to land back on the ridge. A pilot in such a predicament is practically out of competition for the day, since it takes so long to retrieve his ship that he does not have sufficient time left to make a creditable score for distance and duration. This method has not been popular in the past because a ship which takes off in unfavorable weather does not have the advantage of the extra altitude afforded by a hill-top take-off. However it has been used so successfully by so many clubs and individuals in the past couple of years that it is now being tried out at the National Meet.

The use of winch take-offs at the airport for contest flights will also be an innovation. The plan was made before the Texas Meet had shown the remarkable possibilities of this method. The thermal conditions around Elmira are not as good as those in Texas but it is believed that excellent performance can still be made.

The problem of communications has been solved by