

The SOUTHWESTERN SOARING CONTEST

Wichita Falls, Texas

The expectations of the Southwestern Soaring Committee have been fulfilled to a gratifying extent by the success of the meet in the Mid-Central area. The committee was confronted with all the problems that might ever possibly arise from the sponsoring of a meet of this type. However, we tried to take care of the various problems to the best of our ability. Much aid was given by Jay Buxton, Harvey Stephens and Speed Westphal. We found that there was much to learn and learn we did. Our section of the country being very flat and almost treeless, and distances between cities being far, presented a problem to the pilots and their ground crews. A pilot making a flight of 180 miles or more was sure to be out of competition the next day due to his inability to get much rest between hops. Because of their having to fly every day to keep pace with the other contestants, they had little time to get that much needed rest. A flight of 180 miles meant 450 miles of traveling for the ground crew. Our estimate of ground crew travel for the meet was close to 9000 miles. P.S. (Wonder what the Oil Companies would say to this.)

Although facilities were somewhat limited at Wichita Falls as to the housing of pilots and ships, quarters have been promised for both at next year's meet. The pilots feel deeply indebted to Fulcher Armstrong, Manager of the Wichita Falls Municipal Airport, for all the courtesies extended during the meet. Mr. Armstrong made the entire port available to us and cut the power ship flying to a minimum. The machine shops were made available to the pilots.

Woody Brown, of La Jolla, California, arrived a week prior to the meet in order to get in a few days of flying before the contest started. On Wednesday, the 31st of May, Woody made a flight of five hours duration and



Dick Essery

made 9000 feet altitude. Woody kept the natives well entertained with flights over the city until the arrival of Jay Buxton with the Transporter, accompanied by Lucretia Buxton, Dick Essery and Paul Hepburn. In the remaining days before the meet, Dick and Woody made numerous flights above the city.

Dick Essery, of San Diego, California, landed his sailplane on a vacant tract southwest of the Oklahoma capitol and claimed a new record for motorless distance flight with a passenger. Excited state employees telephoned the capitol press room "a big red airplane has crashed." Essery took off at one P.M. from Wichita Falls, Texas, where the Southwest soaring meet was in progress. He landed at 5:20 P.M., and nonchalantly climbed out with his passenger, Jack Begley, of Wichita Falls. The distance from Wichita Falls to the municipal airport is 109 miles, but Essery figured he had covered between 126 and 127 miles in his flight. The record was the second passenger carrying distance Essery broke during the week.

Pilot	Distance	Duration	Altitude	Goal Flight
BROWN, WOODY	280	7:30	7600	Completed
ROBINSON, JOHN	200	Unreported at time of writing		
STEPHENS, HARVEY	195	5:5	4400	
ROBINSON, JOHN	182	6:16	5300	Attempted
ROBINSON, JOHN	150	5:49	7000	Attempted
BROWN, WOODY	129	4:25	5675	Attempted
ESSERY, DICK	118	3:45	6500	Completed
ROBINSON, JOHN	111	3:15	4400	Attempted
BUELL, BOB	91	2:57	5200	Attempted
ROBINSON, JOHN	89	2:45	6700	Completed
ESSERY, DICK	60	2:3	5000	Attempted
BROWN, WOODY	59 1/2	3:10	5000	
ESSERY, DICK	48	2:21	5900	Completed
BOOTH, DELBERT	48	2:00	5200	Attempted
BUELL, BOB	45	2:52	4875	Attempted
ROSS, VERNIE	43	1:52	5250	Attempted
ROBINSON, JOHN	43	2:43	3800	Completed
ESSERY, DICK	35	1:15	3000	Attempted
BUELL, BOB	28	1:14	5175	
ESSERY, DICK	27	1:17	5000	Completed
ESSERY, DICK	14	1:12	5365	Dis. & Ret.