

## NEWS FROM CLUBS AND MEMBERS

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last started an interest in light planes in the Valley in preference to gliders, because the fellows like to go to Phoenix and all that sort of thing. However, I have been thus given the opportunity to try my thermal theories out and I think I have discovered new possibilities for the sailplane that I have never dreamed of before.

The sharp rise to our mountains to towering heights causes the shadow of the sun to spread across the Valley with great rapidity at sunset, thus leaving all the shaded terrain still very warm. The ground generates heat and sends powerful columns of heated air upward with terrific force; a force strong enough to hurl the Aeronca up several hundred feet before passing through the area. And the ridges and plateaus and plowed fields around the valley are certainly a temptation to shut the motor off and let Mother Nature work her own miracles.

I saw the Grantland Sports reel of *Airhoppers* last night, and I could have sat through ten more reels of it.

## THE TENTH ANNUAL NATIONAL SOARING CONTEST

### RULES AND REGULATIONS

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category, a contestant merely uses the following equation:

Contestant's points equal 100 times his altitude, distance or duration divided by best altitude, distance or duration.

3. On days when poor soaring conditions prevail, and the National Contest Committee alters the requirements for contest flights, best performances in each category will receive 100 points and the same formula will be used for computing contestant's points.

4. If any such action is taken, it will be officially announced at the Pilots' Meeting on the day for which it is to be in force.

### XVII. Requirements for Cross-Country Soaring

1. Pilots planning on cross-country flying away from the immediate vicinity of Elmira will be required to wear parachutes. Pilots desiring to make arrangements for buying or renting parachutes may do so through the Contest Board.

### XVIII. Prizes and Prize Money

1. The official list of prizes and prize money will be announced before the opening date of the contest. The Contest Board has set a goal of \$10,000.00 to be raised, for which contestants may compete. As far as possible, this sum will be divided equally between a Donor's Point Award Fund and first, second and third prizes for altitude, distance, duration and goal flights.

The complete story of the meet, written by contest manager Bob Bailey, arrived too late to be included in this issue. However, we have been able to make enough space to include excerpts from his fine report.

Spectacular is the word most descriptive of the growth of Western soaring competition from the status of "meet", applicable to the past three get-togethers, to the rank of "contest" in which class this year's Western Soaring Contest most certainly belongs.

Amazing is the tremendous amount of work necessary to the staging of such a contest and gratifying is the way in which the various committees of the Southern California Soaring Association co-operated in making this the most successful contest ever held on the West Coast.

Passage of two fronts during the week between April 8 and 15 furnished a change in climate featuring a one-inch snowfall on the site and excellent Soaring weather. Soaring in a snowstorm proved an unusual experience for Dick Essery and Lucretia Buxton as they twice topped 5,000 feet on slope winds and thermals. The two contestants remaining on the hill during the week, Woodie Brown and Jay Buxton, had a field day with Woodie clocking off a 6½ hour flight and a 23 mile goal flight to Grapevine. Dick Essery flying "Transporter" and Paul Hepburn, SCSA Secretary, on Friday, April 14, made a remarkable 43-mile distance flight to Taft Airport, establishing a new national distance record for two-place ships. They reached 5,000 feet over the city and Dick logged a leg on his silver "C" with 5 hours and 20 minutes duration. This flight was outstanding in that it was made against the wind. We shall hope to hear more concerning this flight in a story by the pilots soon to appear in SOARING.

Unstable air still remained in the valley after passage of Wednesday's storm and encouraged by Dick Essery's flight in "Transporter" of Friday, several ships took the air after a 10:00 A. M. pilots' meeting for an attempt at distance. Woodie Brown reached his pre-announced goal of Taft after a flight of 3 hours and 48 minutes, a distance of 40.5 miles. John Robinson also completed a distance flight to Taft of 42 miles. Both boys circled very closely together during most of the flight but became separated shortly before landing and were downed several miles apart. These flights were remarkable in that these were made against the wind. Meanwhile, Dick Essery flying Jay Buxton's "Transporter" with Lucretia Buxton as passenger, made a goal and return flight to Arvin, a round-trip distance of 18 miles, reaching an altitude of 2,750 feet above release during the flight.

The last day of the contest was non-productive of soaring flights. Stable air conditions had settled over the valley with a pronounced temperature inversion precluding any possibility of thermal flying. No clouds appeared and very light ridge winds made even slope soaring impossible. 58 flights were logged however, and a bomb-dropping contest was staged with Frank Wolcott showing the boys how with a distance of 23 feet. Second was Lou Buxton with 53 feet and third was Woodie Brown with a

distance of 56 feet. A crack Eagle drum corps with shapely majorettes featured a snappy thirty-minute drill during a flat spot in the afternoon.

Perhaps of greater interest than the actual flying was some of the outstanding features of the organization and preparation of the contest as well as the program of events.

The contest committee, composed of Bob Bailey, Dr. Klemperer, Jay Buxton, Hawley Bowlus, Paul Hepburn and Harvey Stephens felt that The National Contests left something to be desired in the matter of entertaining the public attending the contest, so more than usual attention was paid to events of spectator interest. Printed programs containing names and numbers of all ships and pilots entered, together with the events scheduled and list of prizes and National Soaring Records were given to each spectator as he bought his admission ticket from the pretty ticket girls at the gate. Special events such as spot landing contests, bomb dropping contests, and a farmer and runaway glider stunt effectively staged by Speed Westphal, added to general interest. Even a pie-eating contest was held for the kids.

Newsreel companies were well posted in advance and turned out in force to produce some of the best plugs that soaring can receive.

Extremely worthy of note was the weather reporting and retrieving communication system. "Hams" all over the San Joaquin Valley furnished a network of communication points for pilots making distance flights and their landing locations could be radioed back to the hill as soon as the pilot telephoned to the nearest station. Weather reports were received from several airline stations as well as from Dr. Irving Krick of Caltech, the official weather-caster, via this system.

When the contest was over and the points were totaled it was found that Woodie Brown of San Diego had become the first Western Soaring Champion with a total number of pilot's points of 376, and will receive for one year the beautiful William Hawley Bowlus Perpetual Championship Trophy and the Kern County Junior Chamber of Commerce Perpetual Championship Trophy. Following closely on his heels was John Robinson with 337 points, Dick Essery with 298 points and Hawley Bowlus with 187. John Robinson received the City of Bakersfield Trophy for best altitude of 4,000 feet and the American Legion Trophy for greatest distance of 42 miles. To Dick Essery went the Western Flying trophy for best distance and return flight of 18 miles and to Woodie Brown the Arvin Booster Club trophy for best duration of three hours 48 minutes. Trophies and cash prizes from the points awards system were presented at an annual banquet held in Hollywood.

## WHY EDITORS GROW GRAY

Two weeks ago, somebody wrote in and asked for *Plane Sailing*. The express company was called on the telephone and agreed to pick up the box. Soon a very puzzled expressman was seen peering cautiously about the N.A.A. office in search of the Sewing Society of America.