

The EASTERN STATES Meet

The first weekend of the Eastern States Soaring Meet is over. While the weather was not any better than that which prevailed during the Frankfurt Meet, a good deal of flying was done. A south wind blew for the three days of the Labor Day weekend, permitting airplane tow takeoffs from the only runway of Schley Field which is suitable for this type of launching. This made possible some soaring flights in the weak thermals that would have otherwise been impossible.

Since the Eastern States meet is of a different character than most soaring contests, a few words of explanation of the setup will be in order. As is probably well known by most readers, Schley Field is located on top of a 400 foot hill overlooking a wide valley to the south, west, and northwest. Under reasonably good thermal conditions, there are few locations better suited for thermal soaring. However, if the thermals are poor, no soaring can be done. Therefore the meet is a combination airport and soaring contest. This year, since there are only two utilities entered, the only airport event listed in the point award system is spot landing. This is a test of skill and also keeps the spectators interested.

On Saturday, September 2, the contest was officially opened at 2 P.M. by a flight by Harold Pollacek in the Soaring Society Franklin. Harold was caught in a down-draught behind some trees while approaching for his landing and was unable to return to the field. The next flight was made by contest manager Les Bartin, who tried to soar on the ridge, and landed in the valley. After this, however, the boys got down to business, and after one round of trying out the field, the daily spot landing contest was begun. The best landing of the day was made by Edward Errickson, in the Soaring Society Franklin, with a distance of 5 inches from the center of the spot. There was no soaring all day although several attempts were made.

On Sunday morning, the field was enveloped by fog, but by the time the flying had started it had broken up to reveal low, rattered cumulus clouds. The soaring was as poor as it had been the day before, and the spot landings were begun again. However several airplane tows in the Airhopper's Schweizer sailplane and in the Lawrence sailplane showed that there was some thermal activity. Meanwhile Inspector Pettigrew of the C. A. A. had been persuaded to make a flight as passenger in the Soaring Society Schweizer, while several pilots were taking their written tests. The ship was towed to 3000 feet, just above the height of the cloud bases. At 2000 feet a thermal was encountered and the flight was prolonged to 44 minutes. Upon landing both pilot and passenger were rather surprised to hear their flight being proclaimed as a New Jersey record for duration with passenger.

Late in the afternoon Herbert Sargent of Jersey City was airplane towed to about 3000 feet in the Schweizer Utility of the Hudson Valley Glider Club, and put on his first public stunting exhibition. He was very well received by the large crowd of spectators.

On Monday, Labor Day, the winch was out of order

during the morning so the day's flying was started by airplane towing. The sky was nearly covered by cumulus clouds which started at an altitude of 1800 feet, but lifted to 3500 later in the day. The first four flights were supposed to climb above the clouds, but were cut short because the airplane was unable to climb through the small holes between the clouds, and the sailplanes were unable to follow the plane through them.

During the day Ed Errickson, Harold Pollacek, and Steve Orbon took their flight tests for their private licenses. Ed and Harold were two of the C. A. A. students at Elmira who took the soaring training course. Ed, who had made 5 inches on his previous try for the spot, made 72 feet and 187 feet on his two test flights, which were combined with the contest flights. On the first flight after his test was over he made 11 inches.

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Wightman had posted a \$10 prize for the best spot landing of the day, under the condition that flights be counted only when the pilot announced before taking off his intention to try for the prize. This was won by Harold Pollacek with a distance of 3 ft. 5 in.

One of the high spots of the afternoon was a flight in the Soaring Society Schweizer by Stanley Coes. Mr. Coes is the man on John Gambling's model airplane hour on station W.O.R. whom Mr. Gambling has widely publicized as weighing 480 lbs. While he may have reduced slightly since that estimate was made, we still admit having had extreme difficulty in finding a parachute to fit him. In spite of the large passenger list, we were able to keep the Schweizer aloft 27 minutes on a flight which had been limited to half an hour.

Late in the afternoon Jack Brookhart, in the Airhopper's Schweizer followed a thermal until he was out of sight of the field, and later appeared back again in one of the more spectacular flights of the day. He later put on an excellent stunting exhibition. The day's activity was brought to a close by Don Laurence's stunting exhibition in his Cadet.

While the weather prevented any outstanding flights from being made, and there have been no new developments worthy of note in the location or general setup, credit is due to all those who cooperated in making the meet a success. Stumps have been dynamited and the field leveled so that it is now possible for medium sized airplanes to land there. A separate parking field was provided by Mr. Schley, who owns the field, thus making possible the use of another runway for flying. The county repaired the roads leading to the field, and state, county and town policemen were present to help handle traffic and spectators. The Liberty Corner Boy Scouts did an excellent job of handling the parking and concessions, and also supplied very fine breakfasts and suppers for pilots and crews. The Boy Scouts are also to be commended for their work in preparing the field for the meet. If the weather man will help out as much for the second week-end as everybody else has for the first one, the contest will be the most successful of all of the New Jersey meets.