

# FIFTH ANNUAL WESTERN STATES CHAMPIONSHIP SOARING MEET

July 13 to 21, 1946

*"Just Wind"* by HERMAN STIGLMEIER

President S.C.S.A.

OUR Fifth Annual Western States Championship Soaring Meet was a grand success. We feel that we accomplished our goal in proving that sailplanes can go cross-country and gain high altitudes, and that the conditions are available in California for these performances.

The United States Navy gave the Southern California Soaring Association permission to use Condor Field at Twentynine Palms, California. This field was used by the Army in their glider training program during the war before being turned over to the Navy. Soaring conditions are extremely good in this area. The field is located in the Joshua Tree Monument just north of Twentynine Palms in the California desert. The elevation is 1761 feet above sea level. Permission was granted to use one of the large hangars on the field. This was a big help in keeping the ships under cover when not flying, a clean place for repair work, and a blessing for the ground crews for the temperature was quite high—especially in the sun.

John Robinson of Altadena, California, was winner of the meet. Raymond D. Parker, of San Diego, Cal., won second place. He also made the longest flight of the meet—207 miles to Wickenburg, Arizona. The highest altitude of the meet was made by Robert Thomas, of Glendale, California—21,000 feet above sea level. Herman Stiglmeier, of Inglewood, California, made the only goal and return flight—62 miles to Amboy, California. He also placed third in the meet. The first two winners of the contest flew single place ships; all other contestants flew two-place Laister-Kauffmanns, Schweizers, Cinemas or Pratt-Read planes.

Raymond D. Parker made the only Golden "C" of the meet—No. 6 in the United States. Richard V. Lyon made the only Silver "C" certificate.

Although the weather was reportedly not up to par, the contestants flew in all directions. With the excep-

tion of two absolutely clear days, the skies were overcast with thunderheads a plenty. At times it became necessary to take off before the cloud cover would move in. Thermal convention, due to this, was considerably retarded. Cloud base was generally between nine to eleven thousand feet above sea level. With all of these beautiful clouds, the pilots in the senior group ended up much the wiser for the experience gathered.

All in all it was a grand meet. Everyone did a lot of flying—all airplane tows, too—as well as hangar flying at night. The climax came with a swimming party, a big weiner roast and watermelon feed on the last Saturday night of the contest—nine days of flying and good fellowship!

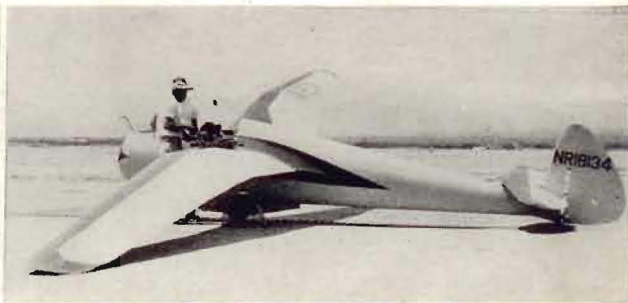
Point award money and merchandise prizes were awarded at a special Award Banquet on July 29 at Scully's Cafe in Leimert Park. The Twentynine Palms Chamber of Commerce donated \$500 for prize award money, and merchandise prizes were given by Irvin and Pioneer Parachute Companies, Schwein Engineering Corp., Air Stations, Inc., Spray Equipment Co., Fuller Paints, John Robinson, W. G. Briegleb, Tex Rankin Aircraft, Harris and Frank, and others. These were all greatly appreciated by the pilots.

Many thanks go to Reva Stiglmeier, Caroline Bowmar, Bill Putnam, Bob Thomas, E. J. Reeves, and Jack Edwards for the hard work they did to make this meet click so perfectly without the usual confusion.

Now that history has been made, every sailplane pilot in Southern California who has been talked to recently is convinced that the farther inland we go, the better the soaring conditions prevailing. The Pacific Ocean certainly puts up a tremendous inversion for us to combat. With these new ideas of soaring locations and our different types of equipment—more two-place and high performance planes—to work with, we are beginning to make plans for a bigger and better meet in 1947.



Contestant Eugart Yerian getting set for take-off during the contest. Note the level surface of the dry lake and the ridge which is used for soaring when no thermals are around.



John Robinson and his ship, Zanonia, loading up with water, anti-venom for rattlesnake bite, no less than three Robinson variometers, etc., preparatory to a takeoff.