

GLIDING IN CANADA, 1946

Report by the President of the Soaring Association of Canada, presented at the
Annual Meeting, Toronto, Ontario, February 1, 1947

THIS is a report to members of the Soaring Association of Canada on progress in gliding and soaring in Canada during 1946.

It must be realized that gliding in Canada is still in its infancy. We are still in the primary stages. Most of the work still remains to be done. We lack experience and we lack gliders and the gaining of both of these is difficult. We are also entirely on our own, having no Government recognition in the way of financial aid or any kind of indirect assistance. Therefore, what we achieve, we achieve by ourselves alone.

In 1946 great strides were made, solid work without headlines and without an accident worthy of notice by the press.

It is not easy to gauge progress accurately in such a many-sided activity as gliding. However, when I have told you what has been going on you will agree that things are moving in the right direction. I shall stress the activities of local groups, for the whole life of gliding depends on local groups. The National Organization, the SAC, exists only to assist such groups in their endeavors to do more and better gliding and soaring.

1946 saw the first contest held in Canada. The prize was given by the British Aviation Insurance Company. The contest was for the longest duration flight during the aero show at the deHavilland Airport at Toronto in September, 1946. It was won by Les Baranowski, in a Laister-Kauffmann with a flight of 1 hour, 54 minutes. The runner-up was Les Racey in the Sparrow with 1 hour, 32 minutes. These flights were made under difficult weather conditions and would otherwise have been longer.

1946 saw a further offer by the British Aviation Insurance Company of a trophy for Canadian soaring and a full announcement will be made in the near future.

The demonstration given by the Montreal Soaring Council in December was a step forward in good publicity. At this show the Principal of McGill University sealed his presidency of the McGill Gliding Club by flying in a Pratt-Read TG-32.

Les Baranowski was loaned a Laister-Kauffmann and entered the Elmira Soaring Contest in 1946. This is the second time that there has been an entry from Canada at this contest.

Apart from such public appearances of gliding the hard work of training and flying has been going on right across Canada. The greatest activities of the year were the operations of the Air Cadet League gliding schools in Winnipeg, Patricia Bay, Brandon and Fort William. At Winnipeg, over 3000 flights were made on two Schweizer SGU-1-19 Utilities. The Patricia Bay group flew over 1000 flights with two Cadets. At Fort William 113 flights were made on one Cadet. At Chater, near Brandon, 330 flights were made with one SGU-1-19. These schools have done fine work and it is to be hoped that the Air Cadet League will continue it.

The clubs have been less active and except for the

Montreal Club, not very articulate. By that I mean that they do not tell us much about what they are doing. The Montreal Soaring Council has sent in a fine analysis of their flying. Montreal flying has been concentrated on training in a Dagling and in this one machine over 800 flights were made. The equipment of the Montreal groups is now excellent, consisting of 1 Dagling, 1 Falcon, 1 Briegleb, 1 H-17, and 2 Pratt-Read TG-32s, not to mention a winch.

Among other clubs which have been active are the newly-formed Winnipeg Soaring Club, the Gatineau Club, and the deHavilland Club. As far as we know there has been activity in Victoria, Vancouver, Kingston and Halifax, but so far we have received no details for 1946. The formation of a gliding organization in Toronto apart from the deHavilland group is under active development.

During 1946 the formation of the Navy Gliding Club on the initiative of Commodore Harry deWolf, who is a director of the SAC, is a most interesting step forward. The thought behind this is parallel to the use of small sail boats for training in seamanship. Gliding will teach airmanship and has been adopted by the Royal Navy for this purpose. Here we see a good beginning and it is to be noted that the Navy has taken up gliding before the R.C.A.F.

During 1946 the number of gliders in Canada increased by 60 per cent. On the other hand actual numbers are few. Last year only 21 were counted and now there are 34. It is few, far too few, and we must have more if we are to glide more. Among these 34 gliders there is not one really high performance type, which although regrettable, is natural since we are trying to train rather than put up record flights.

Until recently there has been no source of gliders in Canada apart from private workshops. The recent offer of deHavilland of Canada to build Sparrows for \$1000 each is a great step forward. On the Sparrow one can train from the beginning to C Certificate and flights up to 3 hours' duration have been made on the prototype.

Other sources of supply are Schweizer gliders made in the U.S.A. and obtainable through Leavens Brothers in Toronto, and various English types direct from the manufacturers. So far we have not been able to obtain prices of the English types delivered in Canada. Until we can design and build our own high performance types we must depend on English and American types and it is hoped that in 1947 examples will be seen here in the air. There are always gliders being built by various people in their cellars or in small shops. This will continue and as far as I know there are at least 5 of various types being built now.

Four advanced training gliders (3 Grunau Babies and 1 MU-13) have been obtained from Germany by the National Research Council and will be made available to responsible gliding organizations willing and able to do serious technical investigations on them.

1946 saw the first introduction of privately-owned 2-