



Paul MacCready



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event in aviation, they set out to do it right. Sheppard Field lay baking in the Texas sun, with runways so long that some of the pilots never did see both ends at close range. Hangars as big as some city blocks, and barracks and mess-halls all lying ready for ships, pilots and crews. The site was truly an inspiration from the standpoint of facilities, weather, and terrain. One thing lacked; the people in the city must have been all glidered out during the war when the base was home to the giant fleet of big, lumbering cargo gliders, CG-4A's, CG-13's, and CG-15's. A frequent comment was, "why aren't the people coming out to see these beautiful daily exhibitions?"

The Junior Chamber of Commerce of Wichita Falls did a staggeringly big job. They broke all precedent in preparing for the event and the event was tremendous. As with all projects which rely on volunteer help, too much fell on too few, and some vital details went sadly untended. Nonetheless, there is one big impressive feather in the cap of the Jaycees and the co-directors should wear it proudly along with Porter Oakes, president, Jack Austin, secretary, and the faithful few. It is hardly a secret that the 14th turned out to be a much bigger job to handle than this fine group realized. It will always be a credit to Wichita Falls,

for they carried the ball and made the touchdown.

So fast and furiously did things happen, when on July 4th the curtain rose, and the skies started to fill up literally with sailplanes, that a story of events must needs be mighty brief to fit these pages. Touching only tops as daily events are summarized, here are some of the pictures that made up the 14th Annual National Soaring Contest.

The grand opener was one of America's greatest holidays—the Fourth of July. Fifty-four ships were on hand—sixty pilots—and they all got into the air for a limited contest day. No cross-country points were allowed, so the flying was a spectacle of soaring technique, accuracy maneuvers, and a time show to polish off the opening ceremonies. General Hoyt S. Vandenberg addressed a good, but not up to expectations, crowd. The show was a pretty good curtain raiser, but not quite up to hopes. Five flights were made in which more than 10,000 feet of altitude was gained. After the Fourth as a "warmer-upper," came the big cross-country spree which was to last for thirteen days (not counting two on which there was very mild thermal activity—only 5000-6000 feet!!). So on Saturday, the



Nessler, Abrial



Art Hoffman, Charles Wingfield