

onto the field the last day, there was some sober thought regarding the gate—at least in light of gates at previous contests. Let's put down population density and the quality of the exhibition as top points to worry over.

The Press Relations fell down—for some very good reasons. Many were those of our own lack of planning or shortcomings. But some members of the Press evidently tried to get the idea of what was going on at Wichita Falls. When a top New York paper, the wire services, a top popular weekly, the four news reels, and some others, all poked their heads in at the beginning and then slowly crept away like the Arabs, we should challenge something about our show or our procedures. The final results follow-up by the press was pitiful, if even existent. International records were broken. National records fell like flies before the flit gun. Did the stories filed by the local folks on the wire service tapes ever get beyond the next printer? There is little evidence that they did. We should do something about this, and it shouldn't be anything like begging, either. We gave the country a walloping lot of readable stuff. It was there for the press.

The daily exhibitions were weak. How about a professional team with no contest worries—just a job of impressing the public and drawing a gate? It would cost a goodly sum, maybe it isn't necessary, but the shows at Wichita Falls were slow. They got to be old stuff; the public couldn't get close enough to the line nor the ships (safely) to satisfy them. This is a big consideration.

The Field Communications broke down. Actually there was ample equipment for a good network. No one was available to keep it operating, to string lines, to check and replace batteries. In an operation as big as this was, a full-time paid man is indicated. The weakness was not in the shortage of equipment, but in keeping it going.

The telephone service set up for the operation was most inadequate. The cross-country spree put a demand on the telephone which would have taxed even three lines. Negotiations at the beginning of the meet—when the need for better service became apparent—broke down and the one poor instrument plus a "nickle phone" carried it all—and not at all efficiently.

The income was terrible. (A factor of the Gate, of course.) How often in retrospect one can offer a cure—especially after the patient has died. But maybe the American public doesn't want to pay to see a device fly around that it knows doesn't cost anything to operate. It doesn't make any gruesome roar or fall flaming at the foot of the grandstand. All right, it won't pay admission. It sure wouldn't buy a program (a beautiful thing, the 14th's) at Wichita Falls. But would it pay to park its car? Maybe we should try that.

SOME BRAGS

Oh, happy thoughts! The operations were splendid—or did we say that? The safety story should be a headline somewhere. The harmony and good sportsmanship was a downright tribute—even the pilots' meetings were happy, well-attended affairs. The warm glow of international good will was a keynote for the pride side of the ledger. The cases of bending over backwards to give a guy or a group a break were many and significant. Almost too few to remember were

the cases of feeling that a restraining or unfair action took place. Of course the biggest brag of all was our wonderful weather as well as the use to which we put it. And it wasn't Confucius who said, "Give soaring pilots good thermals and they are the nicest people!" The Texas hospitality was magnificent. Warm friendships grew, and pleasant memories will long remain the top impressions of Wichita Falls and the 14th. One brag we can conscientiously put in our notebook: We showed up mighty well against some of Europe's best, for Nessler is the equal of any in Europe. Some wished that the Central European experts had been with us too—or is our bragging getting the better of us? Then a good big brag is the one in our good fortune in getting a brace of new officers, well mixed with the old guard for our Soaring Society of America. E. J. Reeves, the new president, left the fine mark of his finger (and his fountain pen) through almost every page of the story of the 14th Annual National Soaring Meet. To say that even bigger things are coming soon is to be trite. The Fourteenth was really the First.

CERTIFICATES EARNED AT 14TH CONTEST

Silver "C"	Silver "C"	Golden "C"
MacCready	Wise	MacCready
Barnard	Krohne	Tuntland
Storer	Reeves	Compton
Pollard	Johnson, David	Steiglmeier
Wells	Watkins	Replogle
Skinner	Sparling	Comey
Brittain	Casey	Pollard
Lyon	Simmons	Charles
Wiberg	Darling	Ross
Trager	Bennis, Virginia	Trager
Coverdale	Ely	Maxey
	Santilli	

CERTIFICATES EARNED BY PILOTS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

Silver "C"—Rolf Buhler	Switzerland
Golden "C"—Charles Wingfield	England

KEY TO SAILPLANE IDENTIFICATION

Sailplane	Type	Design or Place Manufacture
TG-2	All-Metal	2 Schweizer
TG-3	Military	2 Schweizer
1-21	High Performance	1 Schweizer
1-20	Training Sailplane	1 Schweizer
TG-4	Military	2 Laister-Kauffmann
1NE-1	Military	2 Pratt-Read
Screamin' Weiner &		
Rigid Midget	High Performance	1 Culver & Nugent
Minimoa	High Performance	1 Schempp & Hirth
Super Albatross	High Performance	1 Bowlus
Excess Too	High Performance	1 Lawrence
AIR-100	High Performance	1 French
SO-P1	High Performance	1 French
Olympia	High Performance	1 D.F.S.

Official Totals 14th Annual Soaring Meet, 1947

Altitude Gained	2,551,811 ft.
Duration	1,743 hrs. 19 min.
Distance Flown	40,921 miles
The oldest active contestant	58
The youngest active contestant	21
The average age of the active contestants	33.36