

THE 14th NATIONAL

It is unfortunate that all of the members cannot attend SSA directors' meetings for many of them have an air of tenseness and excitement. The meeting in which the decision was reached to move the location of the 14th National from Elmira to Wichita Falls was one which provoked some soul-searing by all all those involved. Was it truly the best move for the Soaring Society—to move to the southwest? It would still be more than 1500 miles from California, making it only a little easier for the Californians to come. Would they come? We felt sure they would. Would the Easterners come? They had been spoiled by years of having it in their own backyard. Well, maybe not as many would come, but enough, and again time would tell. We felt badly about Elmira lest they feel we were ungrateful for the years they had played host to us but we were sure they would understand.

For the good of the whole the location of the contest had to go to a more central spot. The time was right for a move.

We felt certain that if not records, at least better performances would be made from Wichita Falls than from Elmira and that factor influenced us greatly. We were determined that the contest would be as well managed as possible and the later choice of Bob Blaine as director was satisfying to all. While six months time in which to prepare is still insufficient it was the best possible at the moment.

All of these factors were argued back and forth with increasing fervor. Finally a vote was taken—13 to 4 for Wichita Falls. The sigh of relief that went around the room was like the release of air from a toy balloon. The die was cast. The deed was done.

That evening in December now seems far away and much of the doubt that was in our minds would not have been there had we been able to foretell the extensive preparations that have been made by Wichita Falls. The responsibility of such a decision must always rest heavily upon the deciders. And it will be so again when some future directorate must decide that some other haven is greener than the one we have.

It is still too soon to say whether or not this will be a better contest for in prewar days there were some mighty good ones at Elmira. But whether or not records are broken, whether or not more miles are flown, if a greater feeling of unity and understanding between the east and west comes out of this meeting, then it will have been worthwhile.

T.M.B.

SOARING

THE JOURNAL OF
The Soaring Society of America, Inc.
and
The Soaring Association of Canada



VOLUME 11

NUMBERS 5-6

MAY - JUNE

A Survey of British Gliding	2
By Ann C. Douglas	
Bob Blaine Says	4
What's Cooking	5
By Emil Kissel	
Sailplane Performance Evaluation	6
By August Raspet	
Comments on Contest Rules	8
By Fritz Compton	
"We Don't Know From Nothin'"	9
By Walter H. Setz	
The Moswey VI	11
The Ross Ranger II	12
By Vernie G. Ross	

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Published bi-monthly by the Soaring Society of America, Inc., 210 Greenhill Avenue, Wilmington 99, Delaware. Entered as second class matter, May 12, 1945, at the Post Office at Wilmington, Delaware, under the Act of March 3, 1879.
Office of the Soaring Association of Canada, P.O. Box 851, Ottawa, Canada.

Membership in either organization is \$5.00 per year, \$3.00 of which is for a year's subscription to SOARING. Life membership in the Soaring Society of America, Inc., is \$100.00.

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