

News FROM Clubs AND Members

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND SOARING MEET

By Eugene Bardwell

ELMIRA, N.Y., June 6, 1947—More than 100 hours of soaring were enjoyed by 26 pilots competing in the three-day soaring meet over the Memorial Day week-end at Harris Hill, Elmira. Sponsored by the Elmira Area Soaring Corporation, and sanctioned by the Soaring Society of America, the contest was the first formal event of the season here at "The Glider Capital". All work in preparation and conduct of the meet was on a volunteer basis. The officers and committees of EASC spent much effort and many hours in the project, and their endeavors were rewarded by one of the most successful meets ever to be held here.

Perfect soaring weather on the first two days of the contest enabled the pilots to make some fine altitude and duration flights, to the delight of the crowds attending each day's show. Barring distance flights from the program of contest events so as to keep activity centered over the Hill paid off in enthusiastic praise from the public. Sunday's weather was pleasant, but devoid of thermals or ridge winds. However, 47 flights were made, many of them via airplane tow launching, and the spot landings and acrobatics kept the crowd entertained to the close of the meet.

A total of 166 flights made in the three days gave an average of 55 flights per day, or 22 per day more than the average number of flights from the Hill during the 13th National contest in 1946. Twenty-one ships were entered in the contest. Champ John Robinson, flying his "Zanonia" won Class A first place in altitude (8200 ft.), and accumulated duration, (15:31). He stayed aloft 8 hrs. 5 min. Friday, reaching 7,000 ft.; and 7 hrs. 26 min. Saturday, when he attained the 8200 ft. height. Clarence See of Syracuse soared his Orlik, Polish-built sailplane, for 3 hrs. 6 min. on opening day. Bob Taylor and Chuck Light, co-owners of a Wolf sailplane, made several flights in that ship. Miss Alberta Brown, Elmira public school teacher, and president of Elmira Faculty Glider and Aviation Council, Inc., flew the Schweizer 1-19 owned by that group, and built from a SGU 1-19 kit by students in Elmira Veterans School. A faithful old Franklin, also property of the Faculty Club made several flights during the meet.

Howard E. Burr won second honors in Class A competition for altitude, 5750 ft., in his Schweizer TG-3, and Frank Hurtt took second place in duration, 7 hrs. 48

min. flying a TG-2. Larry Creighton took third prize in duration and altitude (Class A), soaring his L-K 5,600 ft., and accumulating 7 hrs. 44 min.

George Tabery, won the final leg of his Silver C requirements with a duration flight of six hrs. 14 min. in his L-K, using thermals, rather than ridge currents. Entering the contest as a C pilot, he took first awards in Class B duration and altitude. William Frutchy, B-24 pilot in the war, who got his C license only a few weeks prior to the meet, was awarded the prize for "the most ambitious C pilot", with 19 flights, in addition to acting as field operations manager during the meet. Doing aerobatics for the first time in a glider, Bill won first place in that event on opening day, and placed second in aerobatics Sunday. Frutchy also took second place in Class B altitude and duration. He flew an L-K.

Besides the ships already mentioned, there were four Pratt-Read's, two Schweizer SGU 2-22's, a Schweizer SGU 1-20 (1-19 with tapered wings), and four additional L-K's, participating in the contest. Paul A. Schweizer, chairman of the Senior Activities committee of EASC was general chairman of the contest.

Of the pilots entered, eight from out of town joined 18 from this locality for the event. John Robinson, a Golden C pilot; and seven C pilots participated. The other contestants were C pilots.

The meet was one feature of a well-rounded program of activity on the Hill for the year. The next invitation meet will be for the championship of the northeastern states, August 23 thru Labor Day, September 1. In the meantime, every week-end, weather permitting (and it has been very cooperative this season), upwards of 20 pilots are on the Hill, trying their silent wings. This continuity of soaring and gliding activity at the famed soaring center is encouraged and fostered by the Elmira Area Soaring Corporation as part of its year-round program.

Valuable assistance is given these week-end flight activities by the boys of the Junior Activities committee of EASC, directed by Phillip Roberts, shop instructor at Thomas A. Edison High school, Elmira Heights, and faculty advisor of the Heights High School Glider and Aviation Club. These teen-agers act as crew, and perform other ground duties, including maintenance of a public address system which keeps spectators informed of what's doing on the field and in the air. These lads were much in evidence during the recent meet, their only reward being the fun they got out of being a part of things, and an occasional hop in a glider. These kids will be our pilots tomorrow.

Barnard L. Wiggin, meteorologist of the U.S. Weather Bureau at Buffalo, co-operated with EASC by adding some soaring weather information at the end of the daily forecast wired to Elmira newspapers during the meet. Barney is continuing this service, which of course is deeply appreciated by all concerned. The weather "prophet" hit the nail on the head every day of the meet, which causes admiration and almost awe on the part of laymen who marvel that a man in Buffalo can know what the weather will be like in Elmira, hours before the period covered by forecast.

Thirty-three cash and merchandise awards, contributed by industries and businessmen of Elmira to contest winners were distributed to the outstanding pilots in front of the Administration building at dusk, Sunday, as the meet closed. The social highlight of the three-day get-together was a dinner in the Harris Hill Administration Building dining room Saturday night. Bud Iszard showed movies which he took while serving in Europe during the war. About 80 persons attended this feature. Youston Sekella, EASC president and Paul Schweizer, contest chairman thanked all who contributed to the success of the meet. Appreciated was the assistance of the Association of Commerce, the Junior Association of Commerce, State and County police, the press and radio.

AWARD WINNERS

Class A—Golden and Silver C Pilots

Duration, John Robinson, 1st; Franklin E. Hurtt, 2nd; O. Lawrence Creighton, 3rd.

Altitude, John Robinson, 1st; Howard E. Burr, 2nd; O. Lawrence Creighton, 3rd.

Class B—C Pilots

Duration, George Tabery, 1st; William Frutchy, 2nd; Byron Baker, 3rd.

Altitude, George Tabery, 1st, William Frutchy, 2nd; Youston Sekella, 3rd.

Spot Landings

May 30: Maurice L. Waters, Jr., 1st; Bob Taylor, 2nd; O. Lawrence Creighton, 3rd.

May 31: Bob Taylor, 1st; Frank Hurtt, 2nd; Larry Creighton, 3rd.

June 1: Richard McGrath, 1st; Bill Frutchy, 2nd; Larry Creighton, 3rd.

Aerobatics

May 30: Bill Frutchy, 1st; Frank Hurtt, 2nd; Bob Taylor, 3rd.

May 31: Maurice Waters, 1st; George Tabery, 2nd; Youston Sekella, 3rd.

June 1: Maurice Waters, 1st; Bill Frutchy, 2nd; George Tabery, 3rd.

Special Awards

Most ambitious C pilot: Bill Frutchy.
Outstanding Woman Pilot: Miss Alberta Brown.

First C pilot to complete requirements for Silver C: George Tabery.