

On Wednesday, June 18, winds aloft backed to westerly and high velocities were still observed. Al-tocumulus lenticularis were again observed and other evidence of the standing wave east of the Sierra ridge. Myron Wells and Miss Betty McMillen set Reno for a goal flight. Miss McMillen was flying Symons' Pratt-Read glider and Symons accompanied her as a passenger for a two-place try. This was only Betty's fifth soaring flight, although she was a power-plane pilot for several years. Symons taught her to soar since she transferred to the Bishop Weather Bureau Office this year. Don Bernard, in his Bowlus Super-Albatross, picked Ely, Nevada, for a goal, but he was warned that the thermals customarily found over the Nevada plateau on the way to Ely, were very probably weakened by fresh to strong surface winds.

Wells towed to 8500 feet near Mount Tom, west of Bishop and found the wave. He reached 20,000 feet during his flight but, through inexperience, since this was his first attempt to soar on a wave, he had failed to provide himself with oxygen equipment and could not make full use of the lift. He also found this lift to be 1000-1500 feet per minute. He failed to reach Reno, because of head winds encountered north of Mammoth Pass, which he could not top due to lack of oxygen. He stated that the lift continued to be excellent, that it probably extended much higher, and that he was confident that he could have climbed above the unfavorable winds had he had oxygen. He turned back just short of Carson City and landed at Yerington, Nevada.

Don Bernard ridge-soared north from release near Mount Tom for 35 miles and then turned east for Ely. He failed to find sufficient thermal lift over the plateau and landed at Coalville, near Tonopah, Nevada. He completed all requirements but that of duration for his Silver "C" during the meet.

Betty McMillen towed to about 9000 feet near Mount Tom, found the wave and went to 13,300 feet in approximately five minutes. She then lost the wave, due to inexperience, but soared over the valley and south along the White Mountains landing finally at Lone Pine three hours and 15 minutes later. If she had a female passenger, she would have set a two-place distance record for women of 61 miles, duration record of three hours and 15 minutes, and a woman's two-place altitude record of 4900 feet above point of release.

The approach of the forecasted cold front on Thursday kept the contestants grounded. The frontal passage Friday afternoon was accompanied by a severe dust and sand storm. This storm was not forecasted, although strong winds were. Some slight damage to crops and trees resulted, but nothing was damaged at the airport. Only a few minutes' warning was given of the storm's approach when the dust cloud was first observed near Montgomery Pass. Wind at Bishop Airport reached 58 miles per hour in gusts and the visibility dropped suddenly to three-fourths of a mile in sand and dust. The storm passed during the night with only light gusts the next morning. The last time such a phenomenon was observed at Bishop was April 1, 1945, and was somewhat more severe at that time.



Caudill

RAY PARKER CHOSEN WESTERN CHAMPION

By VIC SAUDEK

The Western Glider Champion was selected as the pilot holding the highest number of first place awards amassed in the several soaring contests held in California in the year 1947.

The soaring contests considered for the championship include: Torrey Pines Contest held by the Associated Glider Clubs of San Diego on February 14, 1947,—Twenty-nine Palms Soaring Contest at "K" Field on March 22 and 23, 1947,—"El Mirage Soaring Festival" held on May 30, 31, and June 1, 1947 at El Mirage Field near Victorville, California by the Southern California Soaring Association,—Sixth Annual Western States Soaring Meet on June 14 thru 21, 1947 at Bishop, California, by the Inyo-Mono Soaring Association, Inc.

Several problems arose in considering a system for selecting the Western Champion. All pilots did not compete in all the meets and several different sets of rules were used. Nonetheless, it is felt that Ray Parker has definitely proved himself to be the "Western Soaring Champion of 1947" by winning five events out of two contests entered.

Generally poor soaring conditions were found Saturday, but Wells again used the wave motion over the Sierras to soar from Bishop to Independence and win the glider race and spot landing event with excellent timing at Independence. This event required excellent flying and knowledge of atmospheric conditions. An exact time is set for each pilot to cross the finish line at the goal and he must cross then or after that time or be disqualified. The pilot landing closest to his set time is the winner. Wells landed at Independence, 40 miles south of Bishop, just three-tenths seconds after his assigned time.

Sunday, the last day of the contest, was a good day. Bob Symons performed aerobatics in his sailplane and also won the glider race for that day. Harland Ross won the Spot Landing event.