



Harris Hill, scene of activity.

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# The Fifteenth National

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Contest Director

**T**HE Fifteenth National Soaring Contest was back at its old stamping grounds—Harris Hill, Elmira, New York from June 30 to July 11. Now in accordance with the custom, it is the Contest Director's job to give a report for SOARING and the SSA records, and also to give his "critique" or "second guesses" on the Contest for the possible benefit of future soaring contests. So, here goes:

The 15th National Soaring Championship was won by Paul B. MacCready of Connecticut and California, flying his Orlik sailplane, with 1042 points. Hard on his heels and in the lead at the early stages of the Contest was Johnny Robinson of California in his familiar Zanoia, with 943 points. Third place was won by Don Pollard in the Air-100. Defending Champion Dick Comey, now General Manager of the SSA, put service above self and worked on SSA matters at the Contest instead of defending his championship.

The high points of the 15th National were: (1) the keen competition and good fellowship that prevailed; (2) the largest prize fund on record (about \$12,500), and (3) good soaring weather for the full period of the meet.

July 8th was the greatest single day in Elmira soaring

history. The best flight was a 222 mile trip by MacCready to Middlefield, Ohio. This was the longest flight made from Harris Hill since 1941 and the longest flight ever made in a westerly direction from Elmira. On that same day eight other flights were made in excess of 100 miles and a total of 2,600 miles were flown.

This was possible as a result of a high pressure area centered right over Elmira, which permitted flights in almost any direction with little wind. If thermal activity had started earlier (the first ship was off that day at approximately 12:15 EDST), and if a stronger wind had prevailed, some records would surely have been broken.

While speaking about weather, we must mention the excellent meteorological service and interpretation given by Barney Wiggin. He was back with his morning sermons and dissertations on punctuality, attentiveness and other factors, and their effect on soaring pilots, which the soaring fraternity so enjoys. He and his assistant, Jim Collier, did wonders with the information at hand. During the first part of the contest not much data was available, as a result of a breakdown in the Western Union circuit and the delay in getting the airport courier service going. In general, the weather was