



The Richard C. duPont Trophy, given in his memory by his wife, Allaire C. duPont, and his father, A. Felix duPont. Dick was our National Soaring Champion in 1934, 1935 and 1937 and it is altogether fitting and proper that this trophy bearing his name should be awarded to our present and future Champions.

## 15TH HIGHLIGHTS

*Excerpts from the report of Capt. Ralph S. Barnaby, USN (Retired) to the Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics, Navy Dept.*

This year, after a most successful contest held on the wide plains of northern Texas last year, the National Contest was returned to the Elmira Area, the site of the first 13 National Contests. The Contest was sponsored by the Elmira Area Soaring Corporation, backed by the Elmira Association of Commerce, and sanctioned by the Soaring Society of America. Profiting by previous experience in former contests at Elmira, and by the experiences of last year's contest at Wichita Falls, Texas, and aided by splendid facilities and good weather, the Contest management put on what was undoubtedly the best-run glider contest ever held in this country.

While the 71 pilots and 51 sailplanes entered were not as many as at Wichita Falls last year, it comprised the greatest number ever assembled for an Elmira contest, and included five ships from the West Coast, an overland trailer trip of no mean proportion.

It is interesting that the sailplanes flown by the new National Champion, Paul MacCready and his runner-up, John Robinson, are both of pre-war vintage and more than 10 years old.

The "Orlik" flown by MacCready was designed and built in Poland, and brought to this country in 1938 or

1939. John Robinson's "Zanonia" was designed and built in this country by Harlan Ross and Harvey Stevens of California back in the middle '30's. With it Robinson has earned three National Championships, and last year set a new American distance record of 325 miles from Wichita Falls to Pecos, Texas.

This contest was outstanding for the large number of goal flights completed,—the longest, the flight to the Trenton Airport by Paul MacCready, 167 miles.

An innovation was the 100 kilometer speed event, based on a new sailplane record category adopted recently by the Federation Aeronautique Internationale. A prize of \$600 was posted by the Beech Aircraft Corporation for this event, which was held on the final contest day, Saturday, 10 July, 1948. It was handled as a goal flight to the Warren E. Eaton Airport, Norwich, New York, a distance of 76 miles almost due east from the take-off point. All entrants were towed to 2500 feet altitude and required to release west of a north-south line through the take-off site.

As soon as the 25 entrants had started on their way the timers proceeded by airplane to Norwich to time the arrivals. Although it was a well-below average soaring day with light haze and weak, dry thermals (no clouds formed at any time), 4 entrants completed the difficult trip, as follows:

1. Lyle Maxey (German "Minimoa") 3 hrs 20 m 55 sec
2. Paul MacCready ("Orlik") 3 hrs 21 m 00 sec
3. Fritz Sebek (Laister-Kauffman) 3 hrs 34 m
4. John Robinson ("Zanonia") 3 hrs 36 m

In addition, Comey, flying the I-21, landed three miles short of the goal with an elapsed time within the same limits. It seems amazing that in a flight of that distance and duration, pilots flying different type ships, and completely independently, should all have elapsed times within about 15 minutes of each other.

This event provoked great interest, and such races will undoubtedly be a feature of future contests. Since the finish is the spectacular part, it is probable that the races will be arranged to finish at the Contest site by using remote starting points, or by making them closed circuit events starting and finishing at the same point. Consideration is being given to development of the sailing-race type of start for such events so that the order of finish will determine the winners. This will add greatly to spectator interest.

We were privileged to have as a guest for the opening ceremonies, Vice Admiral John Dale Price, USN, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Air.

The main speaker at the final banquet was Rear Admiral A. M. Pride, USN, Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics, who gave a most interesting and well-received talk on the wartime glider program. Other speakers were Major General R. M. Webster, USAF, commanding the First Air Force; and Major General W. D. Old, USAF, commanding the Seventh Air Force. Present also was Congressman W. Sterling Cole.

Other interested visitors to the Contest included: Mr. Robert Ramspeck, Executive Vice-President of the Air Transport Association of America; Lt. Colonel J. A. de Vos, Air and Military Attache to the Legation of the Union of South Africa; Mrs. de Vos, Mrs. A. M. Pride, and Lt. Colonel A. Ladousse, Assistant Air Attache, French Embassy.