



Hal Cronkhite, Contest Director, with Ted Lang, weatherman, at his side harangues the pilot's meeting in the hangar.—Photo by E. J. Walty.

THE 17th NATIONAL CONTEST

by HAL CRONKHITE, CONTEST DIRECTOR

THE 17th National Soaring Contest held this year for the second time in Texas, started with the meekness of a lamb and wound up a great success. There were 59 registered contestants, 42 gliders, 30,000 feet of tow rope, business men, architects, doctors, engineers, Generals, blonds, brunettes, redheads, and baldheads; crews wives, sons daughters and mothers-in-law. All these fine people came from 16 different states for a grand lot of fun and to contribute their skills and talents to make the 17th National Soaring Contest one to be long remembered.

The much advertised Texas super-soaring weather was indisposed come the starting day of the contest Monday, August 2, and a no contest day was declared.

The first pilot's meeting was held Monday August

1. Contestants were briefed on the Contest Rules and Regulations. Bill Coverdale served as chairman during the discussion of Contest Rules. In general the rules were accepted as written with exception of the accelerated point award system for scoring. In lieu of the proposed accelerated method the contestants voted for and adopted the simpler straight point per miles 25 and 50 per cent bonus points for goal and goal and return flights, respectively. The contest executive board was established. Officials elected to serve on the board were Ben Shupack, Chief of Barograph and Statistics, Contest Director and three persons (serving alternately) chosen from among the contestants. The chosen three were Dick Lyon, Crew Chief; Paul Schweizer, and Herman Stiglmeier.

THE OPENING DAYS DRAG

AUGUST 2nd

Tuesday, August 2nd, opening day was very disappointing. At pilots meeting Ted Lange (U. S. Weather Bureau,) Contest weather forecaster, came up with a thumbs down report on the prospects for contest soaring. The Board declared the day as such. The balance of the meeting was devoted to discussions and the drawing of contest numbers. You may well guess the "boos" that arose when E. J. Reeves drew No. 1, but when Wally Wiberg drew No. 2 the roof rocked. After meeting adjourned pilots and crews scattered to go places, fly or work on ships or equipment.

AUGUST 3rd

Wednesday, August 3rd, Ted Lange offered a little

more encouragement in the weather. After his report was presented and some idea of where thermal conditions might be best the Contest Board established a set task using three goals to northwest. Goals established as task goals were the airports at the Texas cities of Bowie, Wichita Falls, and Quanah. Distances to each are 74, 122 and 190 miles respectively.

No goals were attained. E. J. Reeves turned in the best distance flight of the day of 99 miles landing at Henrietta, Texas. Thus Reeves took the lead. Johnson was next with 95 miles, followed by Coverdale with 80 miles for third place. Other standings were as tabulated.



Les Arnold and Ted Nelson of the Hummingbird team (foreground) join the ever-present swarm admiring the bold design, the sleek lines and the superb workmanship of the Prue 215 while . . .



Harry Perl, engineer and builder of the Hummingbird (with hand to face) stands guard over the equally ever-present swarm around his push button power job, the Nelson Hummingbird.