

h National Championships



Ollie Hakansson Photos

AKANSSON

Mia Klemperer

much promise, so it was decided to hold a speed race to Uppsala (93 miles). This however degenerated into a take-off and landing exercise. Most of the participants came down within 12 miles. Only Loef and Persson succeeded in battling their roundabout way to Uppsala during four long hours, while Nilsson had to land 25 miles short of the goal.

Monday, July 11: Although soaring conditions had improved, no outstanding distance flights could be expected; hence goal flights were prescribed. Most of the pilots chose Linköping (62 miles) to be safe. All had trouble getting away but eventually disappeared in a southerly direction. This time it did not take long for landing reports to come in. One after another they arrived at Linköping. Persson was first.

Tension grew when evening came with no report from Loef and Nilsson, who had been so bold as to pick Kalmar (187 miles) and Ronneby (205 miles) respectively. Finally, shortly before 8:00 PM, both reported in from Kalmar. This was a marvelous accomplishment, almost incredible in such weak weather. They had made a long detour to the east and were forced to fight for every mile. Toward evening Loef managed to find a small cloudstreet between the coast and the island of Oeland and drifted, circling carefully, to the airport of his goal, where he arrived with only 1000 feet altitude to spare. Nilsson did not quite make the airport and landed on the beach just below a castle. These remarkable flights moved the two civilians up into first and second place, ahead of the champion Air Force pilot. The

day's total was 1150 miles and 51 hours.

Tuesday, July 12, Wednesday, July 13, Thursday, July 14: Lovely summer weather but no thermals, restful days with a lot of swimming nearby.

Friday, July 15: Take-offs started around noon, after distance combined with altitude flights had been set as task for the day. Tage Loef made 155 miles, but as Pelle Persson had 1600 more feet of gain in altitude he became the victor of the day. Mileage for the day was 1580, flying time 82 hours and 43 minutes.

Saturday, July 16 (last day of contest): Standings were unchanged, with Tage Loef, Billy Nilsson and Pelle Persson in the lead, and everyone was prepared for a surprise. After the weather and pilot's conference goal flights were again prescribed. The meteorologist could promise only moderate and variable winds. Soaring conditions would be difficult. Persson was unhappy, since this kind of weather seemed to be Loef's and Nilsson's strong suit. Again there were many landings close by and hurried retrieving trips for repeat take-offs. Several had tough luck, among them Persson, who did not get beyond 15 miles on his second try but still remained third in the contest standing. Loef, with a goal flight to Nyköping (70 miles), stayed in the lead and Nilsson, with another flight of 95 miles, retained second place. Hamren, previously not well known as a soaring pilot, placed fourth, Jagaeus fifth, Sonesson sixth, Oesterdahl seventh and Hedman, whose ship had been damaged, caught up after his accident and placed eighth. The first six places went to Weihe sailplanes. An Olympia placed seventh.

The 1949 National Contest concluded with a glider air show on the last Sunday, combined with the awarding of prizes. General Secretary Col. Enell took great delight in distributing the eight new Golden "Cs."



Preparing for the day's flying—six Weihe's and an Olympia are visible in this picture.