

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

San Francisco

Dear Editor:

I don't know why editors are invariably expected to assume the functions of a crying towel, but in your case it is you, as editor of Soaring, who is at the nerve center of communications for the SSA, and perhaps able to route this along to someone else with a drier shoulder. (You, dear reader, Ed). It concerns, of course, the national meet at Grand Prairie last July.

There have been a lot of rumors, conjectures, grumbling, etc., regarding the way finances were handled, and the profits of the meet, if any, were distributed. In fairness to the TSA and all the people who contributed time and lots of work in trying to make the meet go, I think a statement of finances should be made available to not only all participants, but to all SSA members. If the accusations and rumors of inequitable handling of the finances are not borne out by the facts, then let the facts be known so all this beefing can be cooled and the good name of TSA preserved. If there is evidence that there is room for improvement in the management of future meets, then let's know about it, so that mistakes will be less apt to be repeated in the future.

The meager evidence I have at hand seems to indicate there is room for improvement. No criticism of the running of the meet, certainly no criticism of the effort expended on the part of all involved in running it. No criticism in the weather—beyond our control. Only criticism in the handling of the finances. Are we getting mercenary? Maybe. I believe it is a factor that is important enough, however, that its application could make or break a future national meet.

I believe the function of the SSA is to provide an association of members with the common interest of motorless flight, which can better serve their soaring interests as a unit than can the members working independently, and to stimulate, for their satisfaction, a growth of interest in soaring in this country. I believe that the national meet should be a function of the Society in which the members are afforded the opportunity to meet cooperatively in friendly competition once a year on a national basis. I believe that the local association which bids for the running of the meet should do so with the following compensations in mind: 1) boosting of soaring interest in their locality with attendant advantages gained to local members; 2) prestige gained by local group by having national meet, with opportunity to get chesty about local soaring terrain and conditions; 3) advantage of lower cost to local members in participating; 4) to individual members, prospects of financial gain indirectly through increased number of consumers in area; and 5) nothing more.

I believe that if the foregoing factors are not enough inducement to a

group to sponsor a meet they should forget about it. I do not agree with the concept of one local group gaining financially at the expense of other groups.

Let me point out that there were no promises at Grand Prairie that were welched on. There is a general feeling, however, that a system of partial recompense to pilots in the form of a point award system is set up at a national meet to serve as an inducement to attract more participants that might otherwise attend. If a large prize fund or list is promoted from outside, more power to the man who dug them up, for his is a very substantial contribution to the success of the meet. However, I think most pilots feel that if there is an actual profit over and above meet expenses, they are entitled to a portion of it to partially defray their own expenses in consideration of their contribution to the meet.

Let me also mention that a sanction is not a franchise or a concession, as some people seem to think. "It's none of their damn business where the money goes—they came to fly for fun and they got their fun. The managers ran the show, and if they were smart enough to show a profit, more power to them."

When I say that profiteering by one local group could have a great effect on future meets, I mean it. I have talked with several of the fellows who do not plan to attend future nationals run in this matter. Furthermore, the effect of such a deal as the last meet provided was to cause disruption in the unity of SSA and will cause suspicion to be cast on the intentions and sincerity of groups attempting to manage meets in the future. It has been a great disservice to SSA.

I hope there has been some element of construction scattered through the destructive criticism. I would like to mention and that while there was a fairly substantial prize list at the meet, and the efforts of those who secured the prizes are to be lauded, there was an omission which I would like to see corrected. It seems to me that those who placed highest should have something to show for their ability and effort which placed them there. True, first place snared a trophy. And a trophy is worth a lot more than its intrinsic value; for a nominal outlay some recognition of the first five places could and should be made, if it were only a pink piece of ribbon, at less cost, and to the greater satisfaction of the pilots. I think this should still be done for the benefit of the pilots who placed in the next four behind Johnson, and I am enclosing a check for \$15 which I hope others can see fit to add to for the purpose of recognizing second thru fifth places. This is intended for small trophies, ribbons, or some thing which should be more desirable as a symbol than some of the more practical prizes.

Yours,  
Thayer Smith

Dallas, Texas

Dear Eugart:

... We have caught up with all our unfinished business on the contest; I will send you a copy of the financial report. We will net first and last just over \$10,000 but that is shared 50-50 with the Civil Air Patrol. This puts TSA in a high state of solvency and I hope the future management will be such that its financial position will remain outstanding.

E. J. REEVES

Dallas, Texas

Dear Eugart:

... Regarding the problem of the National Contest, I have asked E. J. to prepare an article for SOARING giving our views on the subject (This article appears elsewhere in this issue, Ed.). As you may know we do not believe that soaring should be used either by contestants or contest operators for personal gain. The fact that we were able to raise funds by public subscription with which to pay the deficit of the contest is apparently misleading to some of the contestants; either that or they have their avocations and their vocations confused.

JON CARSEY

ED. NOTE: This seems to be the story: TSA estimated the cost of conducting the contest and raised the money by public subscription with the thought in mind that the contest could be successfully conducted regardless of gate receipts. The "\$10,000 net" resulted from a welcome but not-depended-upon take at the gate. See Mr. Reeves article in this issue.

### TUNTLAND MEMORIAL AWARD

In motorless flight as in every other human endeavor admiration and esteem demands a lasting tribute to those of our leaders who we no longer know except by fond memory of their leadership.

Such is the case of Paul Tuntland whose untimely tragic accident deprived the art of motorless flight in America of its most skilled scientific research pilot and one of its most ardent proponents of the sailplane as a research tool.

In view of Paul's keen personal interest in use of the sailplane in applied scientific research it is felt that consideration should be given to establishment of a suitable perpetual award in commemoration of his outstanding leadership and accomplishments in this field.

The following committee is appointed to consider the proposal to create an annual Tuntland Award for "The Sailplane Flight Yielding The Most Scientific Information Recorded Or Written By The Pilot." The Committee shall be:

E. J. Reeves, Chairman; Dick Lyon, Wm. S. Ivans, Jr., Ben Shupack, Dr. August Raspet, Richard S. Johnson, Alexis Dawydoff, Robert G. Thomas, and Joe Irvine.

The Committee should consider the advisability of the project, its proper title, the rules under which the