

# The 9th West Coast Soaring Championship

Dave Johnson made 614 points flying his Schweizer TG-2 two-place sailplane to win first place in one of the most performance-crazy soaring contests ever held anywhere. El Mirage Field was loaded with up currents as 36 pilots and 23 gliders competed for the West Coast Championships over the first four days of July. Per Meulengracht got 600 points to take 2nd place, John Robinson took 3rd, Lyle Maxey 4th, and Bill Ivans 5th.

Here is what was accomplished:

1. Multiplace Goal, U. S. Record applied for July 3, 1950—Dave Johnson, Bob Fronius. El Mirage to Overton, Nevada, 221½ miles—TG-2. (Previous record: Yerian and Ordway, 207 miles.)

2. Single Place Women's U. S. Distance Record applied for July 4, 1950, Betty Loufek, El Mirage to Valley Wells, Calif. about 123 miles; LK. (Previous record 94 miles).

3. Third Diamond to Johnny Robinson (believed to be the World's first 3 Diamond Pin) as a result of a goal flight to Overton, Nevada July 1, 1950.

4. Two Diamond C legs completed: Lyle Maxey's goal to Bishop, Calif., 191 miles and Bill Ivans's goal to Overton, Nevada, 221 miles.

5. Four Golden C's made, complete (more than 187 miles and 10,000 feet gained): Dave Boone, Bill Ivans, Gus Briegleb and Per Meulengracht.

6. Two Danish distance records: 199 miles single place; 183 miles two place were made by Per Meulengracht.

7. Two Golden C Altitude legs were made: Wally Loewen, and Emil Kissel.

8. Five Silver C legs were made (more than 3280 ft. or 32 miles distance): George Congdon, (altitude); Vic Saudek, (distance); Wally Loewen, (distance); Irving Gere, (altitude) and Dean McMillen, (distance).

9. Total Contest Flights: 92.

10. Total distance on 37 XC flights: 3481 miles for an average of 94.2 miles per XC flight.

11. Total Altitude Gained: 518,435 feet for an average of 5640 ft. gained per flight.

12. Total duration: 153½ hours, for an average of 1.67 hrs. per flight.

13. Total circuit flights completed: 16.

14. Maximum performances: Distance: 221 miles (three goal flights, 1 distance.) Altitude: 19,600 feet, A.S.L.—Lyle Maxey. Duration: 6 hours, 50 minutes—Dave Johnson. Maximum Rate of Climb for 3 minutes were experienced by Lyle Maxey: 3000 ft/min!

The heroes of the meet, (they put it on) were Bill Bowmar, Gus Briegleb, Tom Shannon, Betsy Woodward, John Keel, Caroline Bowmar, Jim Carr, Dick Eldredge, John Graves, Anne Briegleb, Stan Hall, George Cook, Irv Prue, John Robinson and Chester Horrocks. The tow pilots, Gus, Betsy, Tom Shannon, John Keel and Stan Hall deserve special mention. Theirs was a hard,

hot job under difficult conditions. Shannon rented the Stearman with money out of his own pocket from Perron's Flying Service just to help out. Betsy never had a chance to compete (not even one glider flight!), Gus had one glider flight (205 miles).

For the record: Last year's winner, Ralph Salisbury did not compete. Rumor has it that their car boiled over under the conditions hauling a TG-3 up hill and down wind at 105 degrees F. in the shade (no shade!), so they gave up the trip from San Francisco to El Mirage.

Betty Loufek always makes her records under handicaps: Her 21,000 foot flight in 1947 was made at Bishop without oxygen, her two place distance and duration in 1949 were made with the rear hatch off, and this year (she didn't know it until after she landed) she was dragging Bill Ivans's 300-foot tow line behind her for all of those 123 miles. Fortunately the cactus that it caught onto as she landed was pulled out by the roots—but not without a struggle.

The heat was terrible on the machinery. Bill Ivans set his sailplane up at night because the all-metal 1-23 was too hot to handle during the day. Everyone's car boiled over, and the long retrieves over mountains with loaded trailers were brutal. Devices to spray water from a tank onto a car's radiator were found to work very well. Those not able to swim at Gus's or at Albright's pools were in poor shape. It is not possible to put on a bone-crushing meet like that in the Mohave Desert without swimming pools!

The usual quota of yarns were spun, both by the pilots going cross-country and by their crews who did it the hard way. There was the usual perplexed G.I. who wouldn't believe 1, that a glider had landed at his Air Force Base, and 2, if it had, it didn't cross all those mountains—not without a motor! Bill Bueby suffered the only sailplane damage of the meet when he hit a fence post as he landed near Victorville. His sailplane was repaired too late to get back into the competition. It tore the fabric and fairing of his fuselage near the landing wheel.

We are indebted to our director, Dwight Whiting, who put up \$50.00 as a retrieve fund and to the following donors of prizes:

1. Mr. Paul Helms, donor of the Helms California State Championship Trophy. To Dave Johnson.

2. Air Parts, of Glendale, who gave a \$15 merchandise prize to Dave Johnson for best two-place goal.

3. Sky Store at Vail Field whose sunglasses prize went also to Dave Johnson for his new goal record.

4. Signal Pyrotechnics Co. of L.A. (SCSA member Charlie Schneider) gave a signal gun to each of the first three in contest points (Johnson, Meulengracht, Robinson), and a box of highway flares to each of the first 20 places in the meet.

5. Ray Pignet of Clover Field at Santa Monica donated 2 hours flying time in a Cessna to Per Meulengracht

for winning second place and setting two Danish records, getting his Golden C and making the 85-mile Barstow-Victorville circuit.

6. Pacific Airmotive of Burbank, Calif. donated a \$15 merchandise prize to John Robinson for making the first goal flight to Overton, Nevada.

7. Charles Gress of Clover Field at Santa Monica gave 3 hours of Link Trainer time to Johnny Robinson for attaining the 3 Diamond Rating, the first in the world!

8. Palley Supply Company of Glendale, Calif. presented a rate of climb indicator to Lyle Maxey for making a goal flight to Bishop, Calif. and to Las Vegas, Nevada, a distance flight of 182 miles.

9. Air Parts, Inc., of Glendale, gave a \$10 merchandise award to Bill Ivans for his goal flight to Overton, Nev.

10. The Mack Co. of 1800 Victory Blvd. donated a \$5.00 merchandise prize to Bill Ivans for his Diamond C goal to Overton, Nev.

11. Korey Supply Co. of Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica, Calif. donated a Sherrill Compass to Betty Loufek for her U. S. Women's distance record.

## Classified Advertising

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**ED. NOTE:** Copy or renewals for the following ads were received by Soaring about Nov. 15, 1950.

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