

# TWELVE HOURS IN A TG-3

By LES ARNOLD

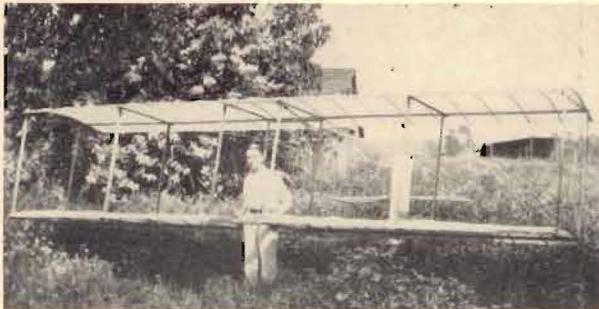
*The flight of 12 hours, 3 minutes, of Les Arnold and Harry Perl, made on April 29, 1951, has been accepted by the NAA as a new official two-place national endurance record.*

Saturday, April 28th was a good slope soaring day. Harry Perl had borrowed my ship and made his 5 hours for Silver C duration. He stopped by on his way home and commented on the flight. I had been observing the weather all day and it was still blowing in the evening. Joking I asked if he would like to try for a duration flight the next day. "Sure its O.K. with me," said Harry, "I guess I can stand another day of it". I called up the Weather Bureau for Sunday's weather prediction. They said it might blow early in the morning and should be fairly unstable.

So I called up Ralph Salisbury the operator of Warm Springs Airport to arrange for an early morning tow. I finally located two barographs so all was set. The ship was already assembled at the airport.

I set the alarm for 4 o'clock but on getting up it was so dark and no wind so I went back to bed for another hour. At five it was light but still no wind but at about 2000 ft. the clouds were sledding along at a fast clip. I called Harry to see what he thought. Let's try it anyway we decided.

As I gathered my warm clothes together, my wife fixed up some food. She gave us sandwiches, bananas, apples, hot soup, water and marshmallows.



**LES ARNOLD** with his first glider which he built in 1928 when he was 14 years old. It was 20 ft. wide, 12 ft. long, and made of spruce, muslin, stove bolts and galvanized clothesline, with starch for dope. It cost \$20. It was flown successfully a number of times, the longest free flight being about 300 ft. and 10-20 ft high. It was flown as a kite with 50 ft. ropes on each wing tip. Altitudes up to 40 ft. were gained in high winds. No one was ever hurt in the ship; it was never crashed but was dismantled at the insistence of parents of the gang.

When Harry arrived at the Ranch I was ready so off we went to the airport 20 miles away.

After a long wait for Woody Cook, the tow pilot, to gas the tow plane we took off at 7:40 A.M. but after releasing at 2000 ft. I finally worked my way down to 1500 ft and had to scoot back to the airport. After regassing the tow plane with another gallon of gas we took off at 8:15 and released at 8:26 at 2000 ft. This time the wind had increased enough to produce fair lift on our slope and we gradually gained altitude. After a few minutes the lift increased so we felt we were really off this time.

After the first hour we took turns at the controls and started to run up the slope to Mission San Jose and back to Warm Springs. We reached 3,500 about 10:00 o'clock. The weather was really improving now. The wind was blowing over 35 miles per hour and lots of cum. clouds around. We got hungry about 11. The hot soup was sure good as we were really getting chilled. It was 2-3° Centigrade in the cockpit all morning. About 11 o'clock Ted Nelson came up in the Hummingbird and waved us a warm hello. About 12 the Ames Club TG-3 came up to join us. We flew around for a while together. I believe the first 5 hours were the most uncomfortable; after that we got used to the cramped conditions.

In the afternoon conditions were wonderful. We flew up to Niles and out to the edge of San Francisco Bay; the whole area was going up. We reached 5000 ft. in front of clouds. It was quite a feeling flying over the top of clouds and not under them or in them as usual. The wind was now about 40 miles per hour at this altitude and at times we just hovered and even went back at times.

By this time we had just about finished up the food. One sure gets hungry flying all day. About 4 o'clock a very large cloud was over the hills with part of the hilltop in the cloud. We made a pass under it and found terrific lift. As I didn't want to fly into it I had to use full spoilers, and diving 80 we still went up 500 ft. per min. in very rough air. Finally we got out from under it and needless to say we gave that cloud a wide berth after that.

After five o'clock we were alone as the fellows had landed at Warm Springs. Also the conditions were now getting a little weaker and we had to stay nearer the hills. We had hoped to stay up over 12 hours and as it got dark at 8:30 we could see that we would have to land in the dark to do it. By 8 o'clock the sun had set and the wind was diminish-



**Harry Perl and Les Arnold. Warm Springs soaring ridge in background.**

ing; we had to fly very close to the hill now gradually losing altitude to 2300 ft. We finally left the hill at 8:20 and came over the airport. We could see the fellows had 6 cars lined up to give us light on landing. There was just enough light left in the sky to make out landmarks and faintly see the instruments.

It was a grand feeling as we came in and landed in front of the cars. We could see the ground very well with their lights, and made a perfect landing. After a lot of congratulations from the gang we

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