

THE 10th ANNUAL WEST COAST CONTEST

By John D. Graves

This year, the annual West Coast soaring contest was once again held at El Mirage, on the week-ends of August 25-26 and September 1, 2, and 3. Although the weatherman did not grace the participants with flying weather equivalent to that of last year's meet, some excellent flying was done and it seems that an enjoyable time was had by all.

Bill Beuby, flying his beautiful TG-2 "Serenade" took top honors with a total of 571 points. Following close behind in second place (525 points) came Les Arnold of the Northern California Soaring Association flying his TG-3A "Redwing." Third place was won by John Loufek with 417 points. John flew his modified L-K. A more complete tabulation of the final contest standings appears at the end of this article. Twenty-four sailplanes and twenty-eight pilots officially entered the meet, and there were a total of 112 contest flights.

The best soaring weather of the contest occurred during the first week-end and after getting the "feel of the air" on Saturday, some fine flights were turned in on Sunday, August 26th. Les Arnold made a Diamond C category goal flight to Overton, Nevada—a distance of 222 miles in 6 hours 25 minutes, with maximum altitude being 12,250 feet ASL. This flight produced the greatest distance, longest duration, and highest altitude of the entire meet. Bill Beuby also made an excellent Diamond C goal flight of 199 miles to Dry Lake, Nevada.

Lyle Maxey completed the most spectacular flight of the meet with his successful goal and return flight to Baker, California—total flying distance of 191 miles—in the modified Prue 160 with its increased wingspan. The return leg was made against a 20-knot breeze. On this day, also, Ted Nelson soared his "Super Hummingbird" 151 miles to Jean, Nevada, and Bill Ivans piloted his Schweizer 1-23 towards his goal (and home field) at Gillespie Airfield, near San Diego. Bill landed just a few miles short of his goal at Ramona Airport. John Loufek flew 168 miles distance to McCarrin Field, Las Vegas, Nevada, from an auto-tow launch.

On the following week-end — the Labor Day week-end — the weather was not too conducive to convection, and on Saturday, Sept. 1st, Bill Beuby made the best flight of the day by soaring to Calico Dry Lake, a distance of 51 miles. Les Arnold landed at Riley Airport, 30.5 miles from El Mirage. Sunday, Sept. 2nd, was a day similar to the previous one. John Loufek made a fine goal flight to Daggett Airport (48 miles), and Beuby flew 39 miles to Lucerne Dry Lake. On the last day of the meet, Monday, Sept. 3rd, the Contest Committee elected to declare a set task—goal flight to Palmdale Airport, 27 miles west of El Mirage. No contest points were to be given for speed, but the pilot having the shortest elapsed time was to be given two free dinners at the awards banquet.



Bill Beuby, West Coast Champion and his winning TG 2.

Thermal conditions were slow in developing, and it was not until 2:30 in the afternoon that Bill Beuby took off. He was followed closely by Les Arnold, who was in turn followed by John Loufek. Palmdale Radio reported later in the afternoon that Arnold and Loufek had landed at Palmdale Airport (Loufek made the better time), and it was generally thought that Bill Beuby had been forced down somewhere enroute. However, the next radio broadcast reported that he too had arrived at Palmdale. These three pilots were the only ones who completed the task. It was learned later that Beuby had had considerable trouble in getting over that "last hill" and was almost forced to land. Mrs. Beuby, his most faithful and most efficient crew, had stopped along the highway near where Bill was fighting it out with the elements, and fully expected that the flight would have to be terminated short of the goal. Les Arnold reported that the Palmdale flight was his most difficult of the meet. Conditions were just not favorable, but that is what very often "separates the men from the boys."

In the evening of this last day of the contest, the awards banquet was held at the Royal Palms Restaurant in Palmdale. Approximately fifty people attended.

This year at the meet, we were fortunate in having the President of the Soaring Society of America, Mr. Jon D. Carsey, and his lovely wife, Mary, with us as guests. Mr. and Mrs. Carsey have attended every

major regional soaring contest in the country this year, as well as the Elmira Nationals, and it was a real pleasure to have them with us. They brought along with them a guest from London, England, Mr. Roy Taverender. Roy was a big help in field operations, and it was nice to have the opportunity to meet him.

It seems that several important lessons were learned from this meet. From a safety standpoint, shoulder harnesses should be mandatory. Almost every ship in this area is now so equipped, but there are still a few lacking them. The one minor accident which occurred on the field involved the undershooting of a landing, and very rapid deceleration due to a violent ground-loop. The pilot had installed his shoulder harness prior to the day's flying, upon the insistence of the Contest Committee, and stated that he probably would have had serious facial injury had he not been restrained by the harness. As it was, he was uninjured although the ship suffered considerable damage.

Secondly, Herman Stiglmeier's idea of bringing a house trailer along for contest headquarters was an excellent one. It was very easy to move operations from one end of the runway to the other, and this was necessary several times due to changes in wind direction. Also the bunks in the trailer were soft for a good night's sleep after a hard day's work.

Third, as was discovered at the Nationals this year, the "demand system" for contest take-offs seems to work very well. The pilots were al-

FINAL CONTEST STANDING (First 10 Places)

Place	Pilot	Sailplane	Points
1	William C. Beuby	TG-2	571
2	Leslie R. Arnold	TG-3A	525
3	John Loufek	L-K	417
4	Lyle A. Maxey	Prue 160	382
5	Wm. S. Ivans, Jr.	1-23	367
6	Ted Nelson	Hummingbird	284
7	John Robinson	Zanonia	270
8	Carl Walters	TG-2	132
9	Irving Gere	TG-2	130
10	William Bowmar	Rigid Midget	108