

Regional Soaring Contests

Since 1930 a national soaring contest has been conducted during the summer months. To date only two states have been the scene of such contests: New York (Elmira) and Texas (Grand Prairie and Wichita Falls). Obviously with so much time in between national contests soaring pilots get a bit impatient. So the Soaring Society of America sanctions contests held in many states; and at various times of the year.

Annually at Torrey Pines, California, in the month of February, the Pacific Coast Mid-Winter Soaring Championships have been held. The sponsors of this contest have been the Associated Gliding Clubs of Southern California and the San Diego Junior Chamber of Commerce. The principal award has been the John Montgomery Memorial Trophy given in memory of that pioneer glider designer, builder and pilot. Seventeen gliders flown by nineteen pilots made one hundred twenty-six winch and airplane tows and a total of one hundred six hours of flying logged recently.

For the past few years at Dayton, Ohio, the Dayton Soaring Society assisted in staging an Annual Wright Memorial Gliding Contest. The contests were sponsored by Dayton Squadron Number One, Air Force Association. Sponsors of events at the contest were Boeing Airplane Company, Douglas Aircraft Company and Service Distributing Company of Dayton. Gasoline for the "tugs" has been donated by Shell Oil Company.

A Mid-South Soaring Championship Contest, held at Starkville, Mississippi, sponsored by the Junior Chamber of Commerce of that city produced many interesting results.

Again in California, in San Joaquin Valley, the Shafter Soaring Contest produced altitudes of over seven thousand feet, duration of over five hours, distances over sixty miles, and a goal-and-return flight of eighty miles.

Mid-West Soaring Contests sponsored by Toledo Gliding Club have had a long productive history. Each year more pilots and sailplanes are entered. Sufficient cash donations from Toledo corporations and individuals enable the Toledo Club to offset expenses.

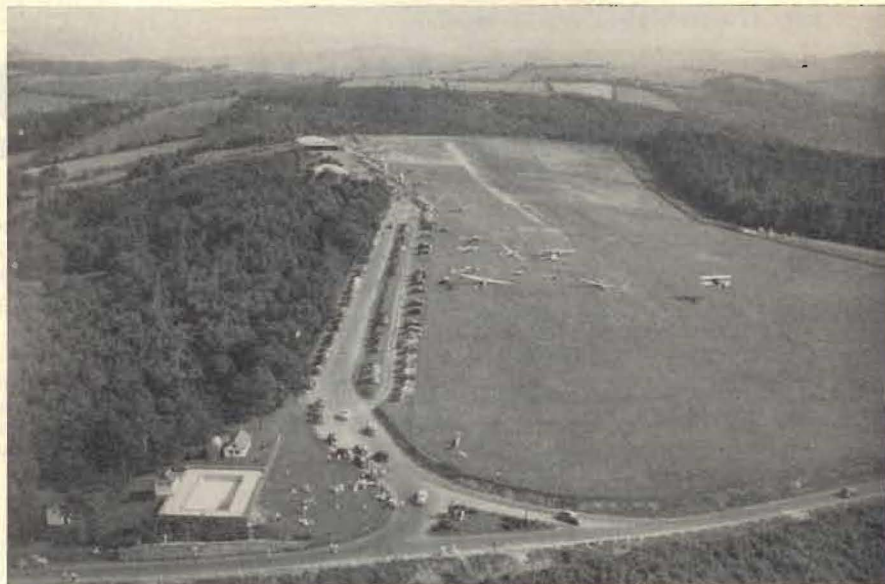
A Pacific Northwest Regatta, held at Arlington, Ellensburg and Richland, Washington (State) attracted pilots from all parts of that section; and at El Mirage, California Regatta, nineteen pilots and eleven sailplanes competed to close out a contest that started in a March weekend and continued for a total of six weekends.

The annual "Snow-Bird" contest held over the Thanksgiving weekend on Harris Hill, Elmira, New York, attracts glider pilots from many states on the East Coast, and has been held each year since 1938 except for the war years.

Many are the memories of soaring contests sponsored by the Detroit Gliding Council. Sites at Sleeping Bear Dune, Empire, Michigan, and Frankfort, Michigan, resulted in much activity. For groups of gliding and soaring pilots seeking vacationland, these sites await their coming.

Glider pilots from the New York City area utilize the Mt. Mongola site for many contests. Also they have staged many contests at the popular Wurtsboro, New York airport and soaring ridge with much success. Another active group sponsoring the Northeastern State Contest is the Rochester, New York Soaring Club. This group operates at Genesee Airport.

Below—Action at
Harris Hill
During Contest



Harris Hill

The Texas Soaring Association has successfully conducted contests at Grand Prairie, Odessa and Wichita Falls. Many are the records that have been set and broken; also these contests attracted glider pilots from many parts of the world.

The Soaring Association of Canada with facilities at Waterloo-Wellington airport is looking forward to more frequent participation by glider pilots from the States. A contest staged at the site in 1951 had sixty-five pilots in attendance with thirteen gliders. Total flight time was one hundred eighty-nine hours.

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