

Organized Regional Sponsors for Science-Sport

The question of when a "Regional Soaring Site" is eligible to become the site of a national contest is one that is answered by the community. The adherents of gliding and soaring have proven over the years they are willing to do the back-breaking work that goes into preparation. Furthermore, finances are needed and most of the costs of staging a national contest must be raised locally. The "return" to the community may not be tangible but is there, in more ways than one, providing the local interest is a continuing interest! Too often in the past such interest has been spasmodic and has hurt, rather than helped, gliding and soaring. For a community to develop a safe and adequate soaring site should not require any more finances than does the providing of a ski-run.

California leads alphabetically but also (as in many fields) activity-wise, with flat-land and ridge launching sites. To mention a few we should have to include Bishop Airport, site of the Sierra Wave, where a world altitude record of 42,100 was attained; El Mirage, which is no mirage at all when thermal flight is desired; Torrey Pines, long known to provide almost any type of gliding or soaring activity; Warm Springs Gliderport and on and on; all of which started with John Montgomery and subsequently was continued by Hawley Bowlus and Jay Buxton.

Massachusetts has the well-known sites along the shores of Cape Cod. Here was established a gliding and soaring school that left a very definite imprint upon subsequent events in the United States. Also from the "Land of the Sacred Cod" comes Dana Darling who is the senior contest pilot of the U.S.A.! Darling and his Greenfield, Massachusetts, group

were among the first to utilize a launching site near Deerfield, in that state.

Michigan probably is close behind California with names such as R. E. Franklin, Arthur Schultz, Dallas Wise, the Montgomerys and many others that space will not allow honoring. The ridges called Sleeping Bear near Empire City, Michigan, where countless contests were staged; Frankfort, Michigan, site of Mid-Western Soaring Contests; Benton Harbor, Michigan, in close proximity to where Chanute and Herring made their first attempts to prove the usefulness of gliders.

New York, internationally known as the state in which "Harris Hill" is located as part of the "Warren E. Eaton Gliding and Soaring Facility," has several other proven soaring sites; e.g., Dansville Airport right at the foot of a ridge used by groups from Rochester, New York. Another site is comprised of the combined facilities at Ellenville-Wurtsboro, New York, ten miles apart but workable as a ridge and airport site. From the ridge Lewin Barringer was launched on April 3, 1935, off Mt. Mongola, of the Shawangunk Mountain Range, about 2½ miles from Ellenville, New York, and soared to Pickettown, Pennsylvania, within ten miles of Harrisburg in the same state. Barringer's flight required seven hours for a 154:45 mile trip. Later, the Bennises—"Ginny" and Steve, operated a school on this site. The Wurtsboro half of the previously described site is a sod airport located within reach of the ridge Barringer used as described above.

New Jersey glider activities are mostly centered at Somerset Airport. Eastern States Contests have been conducted in this state. Gustave Scheurer sort of "fathered" gliding and soaring in this state, first flying at Millington, with Aero Club Albattross.

Ohio long has been an active state in gliding and soaring with a good start being made at Akron, Ohio.

Here was where Dr. Klemperer fostered interest that also produced gliders; e.g., Boker-McMillan "Cadet," the Frank Gross's two-place "Sky Ghost," and Gross four passenger glider. Toledo, Ohio, is also an active center of gliding and soaring. Edward F. Perry long having been a sponsor for group contests. Dayton Ohio, really the "cradle" of gliding and soaring has a very active group sponsoring contests dedicated to the memory of the Wright Brothers.

Pennsylvania first had a ridge site at Newmanstown which was used to good advantage. Then, the Philadelphia Glider Council and Gliderport at Hilltown got going and have staged many group meetings.

Next, Texas (all of the "Lone Star" state is a soaring site—just pick a spot and assemble the glider, but while doing so watch for the "sand-devils," 'cause your craft may decide to soar before you, the pilot, are ready). The Grand Prairie Site was first and the contests staged here raised the national figures for records a sizable bit. Wichita Falls was next, and again records really "soared," as close to forty glider pilots joined the "100" club, the prerequisite being flights between 100 and 200 miles. And then there is a place in Texas called Odessa. So a bunch of the boys and girls decided to have a get-together—no contest—just to soar if and when the notion arose. One day Richard Johnson decided to break "500"—he did by soaring from Odessa to Salina, Kansas; 535 miles from his launching site. (We acknowledge that his well-executed flight was not quite as casual as we make it sound here).

Washington (State) with many unproven sites has long provided launching sites from which many soaring flights were made. Oroville, Washington, the home of Cloyd Artman, was a busy site in the early days of gliding and soaring in this country. Now the glider pilots have Arlington Airport and Fancher Field with much activity. Another group is located at Wenatchee, Washington.

Elmira Industries, Inc. shares your enthusiasm for the advancement
of soaring.