

THE THERMAL. SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA SOARING ASSOCIATION. Perhaps the most important news from El Mirage is the successful start of operations by the long awaited S.C.S.A. flight group. One of the Sierra-Wave research P-R's has been used by this group from the second week-end in May. In first three weeks of operation, over 35 hours have been logged by this group. It has directly encouraged over 10 new members to join S.C.S.A. We feel that it will encourage a great many more. After a trial of 3 months operation at El Mirage, this same ship will then be based at Elsinore. During the 21st Nationals there, it will be used for good-will operations, passenger hopping, etc. Afterwards, a second flight group will operate this ship from Elsinore until October. The Directors of S.C.S.A. will then determine a future plan of operation for this ship and the second P-R, which currently is being held in reserve for other possible research projects. One of these may be conducted by Paul MacCready in August. A complete list of flight group rules and waiver agreement have been completed and is now available for those who wish to join the flight group of S.C.S.A. in their P-R sailplane. Copies of this can be secured from Bill Rodenberg, Secretary, 701 University Place, Burbank, California.

"THE THERMAL," Southern California Soaring Association, Azusa, California. "Chicago Record, Monday, June 29, 1896. —Two eagles, whose nest crowns the dismantled walls on Tower Hill, one of the highest promontories on the southern shore of Lake Michigan, were out skirmishing for breakfast at an early hour yesterday morning. As they wheeled and whirled in the still air they were the object of considerable interest to a little knot of men standing on a sand hill which divides the Calumet river from the lake. As the male eagle spread his strong, dark pinions he wheeled suddenly, and, without a quiver of his wings, sailed straight into the teeth of the wind.

"There!" exclaimed the oldest of the group, a soldierly looking man with a gray mustache and imperial, 'there, see how he aspirates.'

The word 'aspirates' had an inappropriate sound to a listener, whose knowledge of aerodynamics is not his stronghold, but Octave Chanute—for it was the noted authority on flying who spoke—explained that 'aspiration,' in the language of Lillienthal & Co., is applied to the act of flying in the face of the wind without using any other power than that furnished by the wind itself.

"It is to ascertain the best way of utilizing this faculty of the birds and to experiment with our new 'aerocurves' that we have sought this out-of-the-way place," said Mr. Chanute."

"CONVECTOR," Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association, Washington, D. C. Visitors to Westminster airport on May 16 may not have realized that anything unusual was about to happen as ace aviator Frank "Glider Guider" Lane climbed into the cockpit of his 1-20 glider, preparatory to a struggle with the dark forces of nature of such epic proportions as is seldom the lot of mortal man.

No sooner was he airborne than an evil influence became apparent. A thermal at

LOOKING BACK

IT HAS BEEN QUITE A FEW YEARS — SINCE... The June 1929 (twenty-five years ago) issue of *The National Geographic Magazine* carried an article with 40 illustrations titled "On the Wings of the Wind." This was one of the first stories on gliding and soaring to be seen on the pages of a big circulation magazine in America.

The 1929 Geographic story was written by Howard Siepen. The foreword read "In motorless planes, pilots ride in flying-fox fashion, cruising on upward air streams and lifted by the suction of moving clouds."

The story and illustrations related to the glider movement in Germany, just then in full swing.

The May 1932 (twenty-two years ago) *Gliding and Soaring Bulletin* (forerunner of *Soaring*) announced the Soaring Society of America's sanction of the third annual National Soaring Meet to be held at Elmira, New York, July 11 to 24.

Entry fee was \$2. Decision was made to admit wire-braced gliders to the contest. Living costs for contestants at Elmira were as follows: At the Y.M.C.A., double room \$3 per person per week, breakfast 10 cents up, dinner 50 cents or less. All launchings were shock-cord and detailed instructions were contained in the rules some of which read as follows: "... one man holding the tail, and not more than four (two on each side of the V) pulling launching ropes. The pilot sits in the glider as for auto-towing, being sure the safety belt is fastened.

a low altitude tempted him to cut loose below one thousand feet. But this was kid stuff to our ace who held on to a respectable height and cut loose in a good thermal. It was then that Dame Nature played her highest card — she camouflaged the airfield to such a good effect that it was quite invisible from the air. At the same time she provided good thermals, ever leading the sailplane in her grip away from the now unseen field.

But Frank was made of sterner stuff. Undaunted by these scurvy tricks he selected a suitable farmer's patch and carried out a successful landing.

Thus was completed:

- (1) A cross-country of five miles.
- (2) Frank's first away landing.
- (3) MASA's first and only cross-country of the year.

It is the opinion of some of the brains in the "upper levels" that Frank may have earned the coveted "Lead C," which may be awarded at a later date.

He sits squarely in the seat, and rests his head against the back of the seat, with shoulder blades in contact with the backrest.

Commands to the starting crew are WALK until the crew has gone about ten paces; then RUN until it has gone about ten more paces, and then RELEASE, to the man holding the tail."

The magazine "FLIGHT" was in its first year of publication in 1909 (Mr. Geo. Haddaway, please note.—Ed.) and was sent out from London, England. It said it was "First Aero Weekly in the World," and the price per copy was one penny.

Starting in the October, 1909, issue (forty-five years ago) was the first in a series of articles titled, "How to Glide," by an American, Mr. Wilbur Wright.

In one section of the first installment which Mr. Wright sub-titled, "Why I took up Flight," he had this to say: "My own active interest in aeronautical problems dates back to the death of Lilienthal in 1896. The brief notice of his death which appeared in the telegraphic news at that time aroused a passive interest which had existed from my childhood and led me to take down from the shelves of our home library a book on 'Animal Mechanism' by Prof. Marey, which I had already read several times. From this I was led to read more modern works, and as my brother soon became equally interested with myself, we soon passed from the reading to the thinking, and finally to the working stage."

(EDITOR'S NOTE: We think these retrospective reviews may find some interest for our readers. We would welcome suggestive material of this type from you.)

"HOT AIR," Northern California Soaring Association, Inc., Mt. View, Cal.

"WANTED

DOG — — — Laborador Retriever — — — Must be strong and well trained.

To be used in glider testing and towing to shore — — — Contact: Fred Jukich, Mill Valley, Calif." (Ed's. Note: He must be building a seaplane glider.)

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The failure of commercial sky trains to appear in the skies in no way detracts from the magnitude of Hawks' adventure and while the pilot left us many years ago, 'Eaglet' survives to this day, secure in the knowledge that it has earned the position that it now occupies in the halls of the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D. C.