



21st NATIONAL SOARING STORY

A FACTUAL ACCOUNT COMPILED
BY THE EDITOR FROM DAILY
BULLETINS PUBLISHED DURING THE CONTEST

A Prayer for the 21st NATIONAL SOARING CONTEST

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LMIGHTY GOD,

who art the Creator of the heavens, the firmament, the earth. We look to Thee for Thy blessing for this valley of Elsinore at this eventful season. Give to those who soar into the heavens, wisdom, gliding skill, aeronautical knowledge, and thermal conditions to make this contest a great success. Keep us all free from danger, mishap, and any other adversity. Grant to those who are actively participating the spirit of sportsmanship, competition, and success. May they have great joy as they mount up with wings as eagles, and may we all through absolute faith in Thee, climb up into the open spaces of Thy love, and may the thermal of faith so lift us above ourselves that we too will be enriched through this gliding experience. Bless every glider pilot, those who prepare and keep safe the machines, officials who have made this possible, and may our locality richly enjoy this contest of fun, fellowship and faith. This we pray in Thy great Name. Amen.

Rev. Charles Richmond, Vicar of
St. Andrews By-the-Lake

This invocation, certainly the best ever heard at a gliding contest, was pronounced by Rev. Charles Richmond, Vicar of St. Andrews' Episcopal Church, during the ceremonies marking the opening, on July 27th, of the 21st National Soaring Contest at Elsinore, California. With such a blessing how could the contest be anything other than the success it was! To the strains of "Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder" played by March Air Force Band, the contest was underway.

A weak flow of moist unstable air had come from the Southeast and there were forecasts of thunderstorms over Arizona. Weak to moderate lift to about 10,000 feet under cumulus clouds was expected locally with less to the East. In consequence of such conditions, a 100 kilometre triangular speed task East to Hemet, South to Radec and Northwest back to Elsinore was set the contestants.

Much to the surprise of everyone,

this task proved to be more difficult than was anticipated and no one completed the course. Paul Bikle in his Schweizer 1-23 and Emil Lehecka in the "Whatsit" fell about 10 miles short of completing the task, but, because the speed factor could not be applied, the scores at the end of the first day's flying did not influence the final outcome.

At the start of the second day's flying the weather looked none too promising, with a low inversion and a moist Southeast airstream aloft. Scattered cumulus were forecast for California, and thunderstorms in Arizona. However, to confound the forecasters,

the pilot cared to choose, in other words, an "open" day. Dick Johnson flying the RJ-5 took the lead, which he held thereafter, with a 321 mile flight to Mesa, Arizona. Lyle Maxey in his new ship flew 283 miles into Nevada and Paul Bikle made Wickenburg, Arizona, for 245 miles. Ray Parker in the "Tinymite" made a nice 221 mile goal flight to Las Vegas, Nevada. (This machine is really something now and you will be interested to know that Dr. Gus Raspet and Ray Parker have written the full story of the transformation of this ship to its present condition, and this story, complete with graphs and pictures, will

The winning Johnson/RJ-5 combination with crewman Eric Craik attaching towrope.



Staff Photo

this turned out to be the day which provided the longest flight of the contest. The shortcomings of the arrangements made for this contest were obvious now when it took over two hours to launch the forty sailplanes, instead of the one hour one would normally expect for such a job. This lack of launching facilities—aircraft and accessories—would appear to handicap competitors unduly as well as to introduce a luck factor into the final scores. The latter, of course, is debatable, and it can be argued that the luck element will cancel itself out over a prolonged period of flying such as this.

The task set for the second day was a distance flight to whichever point

appear in the next issue of SOARING.)

Thursday the 29th was another open day with mediocre soaring weather. Johnson again made easily the longest flight—to Boulder 215 miles. Paul Bikle replaced Lyle Maxey in No. 2 position with a 66 mile hop to Indio, and Maxey took Bikle's spot in third position with 20 miles to Hemet. Ray Parker did not fly and remained in fourth position.

Friday the 30th, maintained the upper level high over the Southwestern U. S. and conditions had deteriorated slightly from the previous day. The contest committee declared yet another open day and Johnson, arriving back midway through the launching