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on the gliders, so the contest will be between individuals and not teams. Until this comes about we must utilize radios fully like all the others.

Starting with the second event the two place planes were given preference for the rest of the meet. Frankly these nine planes spoiled the meet for the thirty-four single place pilots. Their attitude seemed to be one of delay and the situation was not improved by vacillation on the part of the committee determining tasks. Loss of position meant nothing as there were so few planes in this division. Also they could have two additional launchings if they wanted before 6 P.M. Why should they hurry? It was their privilege to wait for the most advantageous flying conditions. The only trouble was the single place planes could not be launched until all the two place planes had left the ridge. Always the single place planes were trundled out to the starting line and the pilots were anxious to go even though a flight of two hours might be all that was left to them. But no, they were not allowed to fly. At least it made a nice spectacle for all the paying visitors, but why didn't the Competition Committee see what was happening.

The Competition Committee was faced with an emergency—the worst weather England has had in fifty years. They must make the two place event official and it was one event behind the single place. The fact that this was a World's Soaring Championship is primarily a personal pilot championship. A country can't win a Championship, a team can't win it—only a pilot. Who won the 1950 World's Championship? Nilsson. Who won the 1952 World's Championship? Philip Wills. Who won the two place championship? Very few know. The two place championship is an anomaly but since it is in the F.A.I. rules it must be provided for but not at the expense of what is normally considered the World's Championship for Soaring. It did seem as if the two place planes could have been taken to an airport and been given aerotows to complete their last two flights. What would it have cost? \$200.00? What is \$200.00 when you are already \$10,000 in the hole? I am sure the single place pilots would gladly have raised that much ante to get the two place planes out of their hair and be allowed to complete the contest as it was originally planned in fairness to all. But this hadn't been planned ahead of time. Still they were

following the rules which we had accepted without question the year before.

One little incident must be reported as it happened under my vision. The two place British team made a poor flight on one of the days. We were told that it was on its way back to get another launch before 6 P.M. About 5:30 P.M. the trailer appeared on the hill going hell bent for the launching site. They lost several precious minutes getting stuck in the mud. However, their plane was assembled in exactly eleven minutes, but with the aid of at least twenty-five other British helpers. That was O.K. Towing is purely incidental to flying. But in Sweden in 1950 help by others than the official crew was against the rules. Why?

Much strategy was wasted due to



The Schweizer stable at Great Hucklow during the 1954 International Contest.

Photo: John D. Graves

obsession of the Competition Committee which kept the single place planes grounded. What would have happened if there was flying on the last day and a race had been declared? Would each team have sent # 2 pilot out to find thermals for their # 1 pilot? You can be sure they would if the position at take off permitted it. What would have happened between plane and plane with the intercommunication of radio? You can figure—finding thermals for one another has occurred in these meets notably in 1950 and 1952. In any close International Contest would it be fair to make a goal of the pilots choice the last event?

It was felt that the Competition Committee did not make the best use of what few opportunities for flying were available. For example, during one of the last flying days with weak conditions, they set the task of speed for the two place planes first, and distance for the single place second.

Of course the two place pilots waiting for the best mid-afternoon speed conditions delayed until the single place flights had to be cancelled. If the single place sailplanes had been permitted to take off first both tasks could have been run that day without interference. The committee sometimes consulted team managers about whether or not to fly at all but did not consult them concerning tasks. Actually the best system is that used in Sweden, where the competition committee made all decisions itself.

This is not written in the spirit of criticism but to try and teach a few of the facts of life to Americans. The British did a good job, but just didn't seem to rise to the emergency in time. It is written to dispel some fallacious ideas on the part of many in this country. There is talk of our staging

an International Meet. Nothing could be more foolish at the present time. There are certain obstacles—the McCarran act, (the outstanding Russian pilot visited with us at Camphill and wants to fly in the United States) the rate of exchange, the difficulty of providing tow cars, etc. etc., but these aren't insurmountable. We should not consider holding a meet until we have won one and show that we know all the intricacies. Neither the British nor the United States likes regimentation, but a certain amount is necessary to complete a meet as originally planned. You can't count on luck. Every eventuality must be figured ahead and planned for—even bad weather. There has been a "blob" in the last three International meets. We don't want that but we would get it with compound interest unless we have many more men who are familiar with International meets.

This year we took the first step in

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