

THE PARADE OF CHAMPIONS (continued)



Paul MacCready
1948-51-53



Dick Johnson
1949-50-52-54



1955

This contest saw the coming of two of America's most numerous and still famous two-seater types, the Schweizer TG-2 and Jack Laister's LK-TG4. From many standpoints no other sailplane in this country has ever contributed quite so much to the soaring movement. To this good day, these trusty old two-seaters are still rendering yeoman service.

The famous Warren E. Eaton Memorial Trophy had been created by the family of this great man and was presented for the first time in 1939.



Mr. Barnard Wiggin, world famed soaring Meteorologist.

The Californians were attracting national attention in 1939 by the exploits of such soaring greats as Johnny Robinson, Woody Brown, and Stan Hall. This west coast contingent joined in the first organized contest ever to be held in Texas. The results of Baringer's great distance flight of the year before had sparked this further activity in the level country of the southwest. The Californian, Woodridge P. Brown, brought off the magnificent distance of 263 miles in a record flight from Wichita Falls, Texas, to Wichita, Kansas. The distance lid was really off in America.

1940 — 11th Annual National Soaring Contest. Harris Hill, Elmira, N. Y. Johnny Robinson of California hove into sight on America's soaring scene during the running of the 11th and exhibited great prowess as a soaring pilot when on the final day of the contest and after nipping the heels of the great Decker all the way, went a cool 290 miles to Mineral, Va. Such distances were not thought possible in the eastern part of the U. S. It was in fact a record that was to stand for many years and was to be exceeded from this site only once to this date.

Best Performances:

Altitude — 11,500 ft., duration — *not scored, distance — 290 mi.

The great 290 cross country flight by Robinson was to stand as the National record for some years — until 1947, when this same man in the very same machine was to up it by nearly 100 miles on a flight in Texas in the 14th National. Another prodigious effort in this 11th National was a 216 mile cross-country in a two seater (Schweizer TG-2) by Bob Stanley and Earnest Schweizer when they soared from Elmira to Washington, D. C. This was a two-seater record and was to stand for a good many years.

A rank newcomer to tournament soaring appeared in this 11th meet, a lad of only 17 years, one Richard "Dick" Johnson of Los Altos, California. Dick showed up with a "Bowlus Baby" which he had trailed the 3,000 mi. all the way from California. Many observers were aghast at this lad's nerve for having come so long a way with so poor equipment and to com-

*Beginning with this contest, duration no longer figured in the scoring system and soon thereafter altitude was to be eliminated as a factor in the computation of a pilot's score. This for the simple reason that tournament soaring in America with the high-performance sailplane was to base its scoring on distance accomplishments and altitude and duration are, of course, easily converted into distance.

pete with the great pilots of many years tournament experience. These same observers were struck even more with amazement when this youth came third in the scoring after only the great Robinson and Decker. Here indeed was a lad who was to be heard of later in American soaring circles.

1941 — 12th Annual National Soaring Contests. Harris Hill, Elmira, N. Y. Johnny Robinson of California was to hold the American championship for a second year by coming back to N. Y. for this 12th National and handily outscoring Decker and the youthful Johnson. Although both Decker (225 mi.) and Johnson (182 mi.) exceeded Robinson's best distance effort (170 mi.) the great Robinson was to score when it counted most and carry off the high honors.

Best Performances:

Distance — 225 mi. Altitude — 14,400 ft.



Capt. and Mrs. F. B. Compton, honeymooning at the 13th National.

This altitude was made in a cloud flight by Lyle Maxey, another young newcomer from whom more was to be heard in later National Contests. It did not, however, figure in the point scores as altitude was no longer a direct scoring factor.

This year 1941 found America awakened to the fact that militarily she was woefully weak in the air. The cannons of World War II were booming mightily over much of Europe and even then it was apparently inevitable that the U. S. would in the near future be drawn into this holocaust. High