

EDITORIAL

With the launching of championship sailplane flights at Harris Hill during the first week in July, motorless flight will observe the twenty-fifth anniversary of national soaring competition in the United States.

All of you who are associated with this occasion—whether as contestants, crew, officials, or sponsors—have a right to take pride in your Silver Anniversary event. You have a right to take pride in the fact that soaring, as a sport, today has a more solid base of national participation than at any previous time in its history.

Some of you will remember back to the early 1930's, when the Soaring Society was being launched by such men as Ralph Barnaby, Richard du Pont, Warren Eaton, and Lew Barringer, both as outstanding contestants and as devoted workers for the cause. Frank Hawks and Winthrop Rockefeller, among others, also gave indirect but valuable assistance through their encouragement of all types of air youth activities.

These pioneers, and others who have followed them, recognized the broad possibilities of motorless flight in the over-all development of aviation. They realized that soaring possesses the unique advantages of being both an important sporting event as well as an invaluable training school for participation in our fast developing air age. Back in those early days of soaring, the writer had the privilege of working with your president, Floyd Sweet, and others in setting up the organizational pattern which has made the Soaring Society, through its affiliation with National Aeronautic Association, an official representative of the Federation Aeronautique Internationale, and the governing body for motorless flight in this country. Through its FAI franchise, your Society is empowered to confer international recognition for new records in motorless flight as they are established at your championship meets.

Recent months have seen most gratifying developments in the strengthening of all phases of our national program of air youth activities—including that of motorless flight. Through a three-way cooperative effort on the part of leaders in the aviation industry, of educators and of leaders of recognized aviation activities such as soaring, a National Aviation Education Council has been established with an active forward looking pro-



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gram of youth training and indoctrination in aviation. By this means, there has been set up a vehicle for giving support to such important activities as your national soaring championship meets.

The NAEC is still in its formative period, but I believe that it holds great potential for augmenting all types of youth aviation activities. The unique importance of your Society in this over-all program, is, of course, the fact that you are equipped to provide the most valuable form of educational opportunity—the excitement and stimulation of direct participation in flight training.

Although soaring today has not yet achieved the position as an universally popular sport which some of us had hoped for a quarter of a century ago, its progress nevertheless has been sound, and its future prospects have never been brighter. What now is needed is the tangible interest and support—both from industry and individuals—that will make possible broader direct participation in competitions such as you are holding at Harris Hill. More adequate funds must be provided for launching sites, for equipment, and perhaps most urgently of all for a full time staff to accelerate the development of the Soaring Society's national program.

On behalf of that large group who are concerned with the future of aviation as an industry, as a science and an instrument of national policy, I extend congratulations to all those participating in the Silver Anniversary Championships, and I wish the Society the support which it richly deserves for another quarter century of successful activity.

Soaring

VOL. 19

ROBERT C. FORBES, *Editor*

NO. 4

Publication of The Soaring Society of America, Inc., and The Soaring Association of Canada. Editorial Offices, 3106 Fairmount St., Dallas, Texas. Address of the Society: P. O. Box 71, Elmira, New York. *Membership of the Soaring Society of America is open to anyone interested in the art, the science, the sport of motorless flight.*

The Soaring Society of America, Inc., by agreement with the National Aeronautic Association, is the governing authority for motorless flight in the United States.

SOARING is published bi-monthly; entered as second class matter at Dallas, Texas. Subscription, \$4 per year. Printed by E. J. Storm Printing Co., 2230 San Jacinto St., Dallas, Texas, U.S.A. This issue, July-August, 1955, is Volume 19, No. 4.