

SOUTHWESTERN ANNUAL MEET

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Texas Soaring Association has logged another first for during TSA's Labor Day weekend "Soaring Rodeo" the newly-established 200-kilometer triangular speed course was run for the first time in the U. S. The 200 and 300 kilometer triangular courses were established by the FAI earlier in the year.

Dick Johnson, flying the RJ-5, averaged 44.4 mph around the triangle, breaking the existing record of 35 mph set by a French pilot. However, Johnson will not claim a record since he failed to find the second turning point on an obscure farmer's strip.

Conditions on the first day of the Soaring Rodeo were marginal, for Texas at least, with an inversion at 5000 feet. Marshall Claybourn, contest director, left it up to the contestants as to what sort of event they wanted to run. The contest committee had tentatively outlined a short out-and-back, the 100 km triangle and the 200-km triangle as tasks for the contest. It was planned to keep retrieves to a minimum since not all ships had trailers.

Saturday's task evolved from the pilots' meeting as an out-and-back from Grand Prairie Airport to Russell Field near Fort Worth for as many laps as possible. The frequency of small strips and airports in the 20 miles between the two fields made aero-retrieving the most practical.

At the end of the day, Dick Johnson had made the circuit three times; Pat Mulloy of Laurel, Miss., in his fire-engine-red 1-23, made two laps; Pat Serman, Fort Worth, flying an L-K Flatop, made one lap; Wally Wiberg, Cedar Hill, flying "Li'l Dogie," one lap. The two-place entrant, George Coder and Jon Carsey flying a Pratt-Read made one lap. Also rans: Terry White, Dallas, flying TSA's "Weihe" made three quarters of the circuit, landing on the return leg of the first lap at a small auxiliary field five miles west of Grand Prairie.

A high cirrus cover clobbered soaring conditions for Sunday, the second day of the Rodeo. However the cirrus

burned off by late afternoon allowing local flying but no contest event.

Cumulus popping early Monday morning, Labor Day, set the pilots in a mood to tackle the 200-kilometer triangle. The triangle had been laid out from Grand Prairie west 47 miles to Weatherford Airport, southeast 58 miles to Itasca Airport, and north on the 38 mile home stretch to Grand Prairie Airport. Total distance was approximately 143 miles, well over the equivalent of 200 kilometers.

Five machines started the triangle, but only two completed the course. Dick Johnson, RJ-5, and Pat Mulloy, 1-23, made it around the triangle and back to home base. Othmar Schwarzenberger, flying the TSA Weihe, passed the second turning point at Itasca but had to land in a pasture about 15 miles north on the last leg. Pat Sherman, with Laurene Murphey as passenger in the LK flattop, fell short of the second turning point by a scant nine miles, and landed near Grandview. George Coder, flying two-place with Del Reed in the Pratt-Read, realized the soaring conditions were dying out and short-circuited the triangle at Cleburne. They made it back as far as Arlington from where they were aero-towed back to Grand Prairie Airport. Coder and Reed had the lack of a Pratt-Read trailer staring them in the face.

In a later session of hangar flying, Dick Johnson said that he made 360's over every butane tank and washline near Itasca, hoping that there would be marker signals on the elusive airport. The "airport" at Itasca, shown on the air maps as being four miles northeast of town, turned out to be a short, narrow, weed-grown strip with one barn for a hangar and a ragged windsock atop a windmill derrick. Pat Mulloy passed directly over the turning point, Johnson and Schwarzenberger passed within sight of the observers, but failed to come far enough east to spot the signal markers.

Aside from the poor conditions, the only thing that marred the Soaring

Rodeo was an accident on Labor Day in which June Wiberg was injured. Wally Wiberg overran the tow line with "Li'l Dogie" as the tow pilot took up slack. June attempted to pull the line from under the ship, and the tow pilot, thinking all was clear, started the tow. The leading edge of the "Dogie" struck June in the hip, knocking her to the asphalt. She received a mild concussion and had to remain in the hospital for three weeks.

Non-competing glider-guiders attending the Soaring Rodeo included Mr. and Mrs. Mark Noble, Jim Turnbow, and Mr. and Mrs. Ned Snead, all of the Austin Division of TSA, who brought with them the club TG-3 which they had newly covered and modified. The group recently completed a winch which they plan to put into action soon.

Total scores for the Soaring Rodeo were as follows:

Sailplane	Pilots	Points
RJ-5	Johnson	301.2
1-23	Mulloy	258
L-K Flatop	*Sherman-Murphey	138.2
DFS Weihe	Schwarzenberger-White	134
Pratt-Read	*Coder-Carsey-Reed	127.2
Li'l Dogie	Wiberg	43.2

*Denotes pilot in command.



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