

# THE WEATHER OF IT

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The hottest contest ever held at Elmira found the weather in phase. The meet opened July 5th with an easterly drift of scorching convectively unstable air over the entire northeast. Far to the north a low pressure system moving across Hudson Bay was dragging in a mass of drier but only

Mason-Dixon Line hence the task—Dupont Airport, Wilmington, Del. The sluggish subsiding air heated some 30°F during the day and the pilots were real hot too.

July 8—A return drift of warmer and more humid air started this day as our little "button" high slipped past to the east coast.

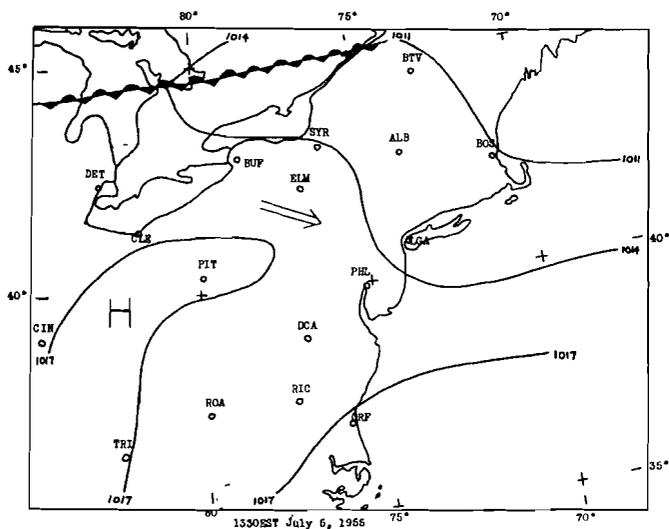
It was an open day and the open door lay to the northeast. An unstable layer some 5,000 feet thick accompanied those who got to the Hudson Valley. In central New York good convection thinned out to less than 2,000 feet during the day.

July 9—Meteorological debris from the deep south be-

ped in sudden rain storms. This Marilyn cloud bulged down in true mamato style—just lovely to look at, as tendrils of wispy ice cloud sped past high overhead. A dark column of heavy rain swept closer, then no closer, then farther away, and zip! The whole parade pivoted on the Chemung County Airport and went columns right on to Pennsylvania.

Immediately to the east another cumimb erupted into being. With a deep roll of heavy thunder and much zigging and zagging of assorted lightning it carried on, where my Marilyn had quit, skipping of course about all the lawn on which the Schweizer lawn party was spread. About three drops of rain hit here and there. They laughed when I took my foot out of the door to rejoin the party.

July 10—An open day. A new and diffuse type of cold front slipped in during the early morning hours setting off a few light thundershowers just enough to stabilize the air in all the valleys. This day the early bird got the wormy apple. Good convection occurred briefly during the late afternoon after intense solar input had bridged the two air masses. Early efforts found the lid very low even though a sweltering 95° was reached shortly after noon. The rear of the frontal zone and much clearer air



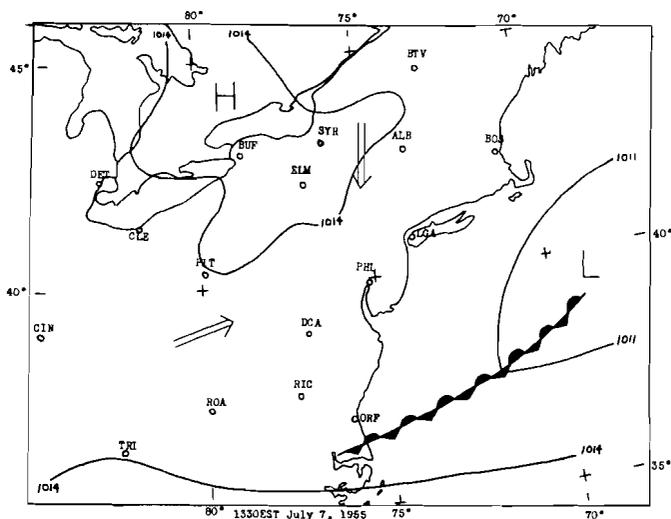
slightly cooler Pacific air. Its cold front was expected to drop southward into the Adirondacks during the day creating a pre-frontal wave that would trigger off heavy thundershowers. The task—Barre, Mass. While the stay-at-homes sweltered for the second day in 100° discomfort the contestants set the performance records for the entire meet: Distance 208 miles, altitude over 19,000 feet.

July 6—Open day. The cold front is now a broad zone about 100 miles wide with Harris Hill on the southern edge. Refrigerated air brought down by yesterday's thunderstorms filled the valleys and stabilized the lower layers. Many contestants tired by their first efforts conspired against one O'Brien, and sailed 18 miles to free steak dinners. Proof enough of their excellent weather judgment (concurrent foreign weather report for our visitors—Paris 54°, clear; London 69°, clear; Berlin 64°, rain; Seville 78°, clear).

July 7—The drier air had now pushed southward to be below the

gan to arrive. A short task seemed humane after the nearly 1,600 miles flown the previous day. A speed task downwind to Norwich was aided by swelling cumulus in the afternoon as the temperature jumped past 95°. A meteorological miracle followed. The Schweizer lawn party scheduled for 1900 EDT

started to the deep roll of thunder. A Marilyn Monroe of the cumimb family, her icy coiffure flung to the winds of the tropopause, loomed to the west a perfect artist's model. I thoughtfully chose to stand near the door of the Schweizer plant rather than sit in one of the comfortable seats at one of the tables on the lawn. People have stam-



came through after 3:00 p.m.

July 11—Pressure built up overnight north of the Great Lakes. Sunday's cold front was now past Washington and so the task—a series of downwind goals, the farthest one to Winchester, Va. Only a 5,000 to 6,000 foot stratum of active convection was expected with the wind drift