

over, gets 'Alibi' assembled, charts us a course, secures a take-off time, and one-half hour before dead-line, awakens us.

There is nothing left but to follow Gene's instructions, start for Duanesburg, New York, a nice goal flight if we could make it, but the winds did not cooperate. Holding said course seemed to be impossible, as we would drift 2 or 3 miles north in every lift; and finally near Norwich, decided to give up the goal and go for distance. Giving 'Alibi' a loose set of reins, we started covering ground at about 43 miles per hour on a true course of 45°. With nice dry thermals to lift us to 6,500, the flight then started to become fun. Especially so because more and more, the little things one learns, and has used in the past, start coming through, and with each one comes a gain in 'Alibi's' perform-

view. Boy, this is living—a good flight, a good retrieve and a good night's sleep with no flight plan to worry about tomorrow, because the wise old Contest Board will sort out all the bits and pieces and we just do as instructed.

The 5th day of Competition will be a speed race to Norwich, New York. It's only 76 miles, so we have loads of time. No rush. We even have time to unscramble the different colored cards that permit one to be towed aloft and politely to ask the pretty young maids who run things with a mailed fist, for an open take-off time. Soon we are sailing along at 5,000 M.S.L. and getting just a bit more daring. 'Alibi' seems to tighten up a bit at 80, but then we do not have a calibrated air-speed indicator, and who knows, we could be up to 90. But, as the hill faded out of sight, so did other

We never sighted Steve after that and soon had other worries. Norwich was still about 22 miles away and that last cloud was the last bit of lift. Some real high stuff was flattening out like an umbrella cutting off everything. What little zero sink there was about, was peppered with enough down to make us realize that to get out of there was the thing to do. Dead ahead on course, but a long glide from our position, was a bit of sunshine. With a careful eye on our fuel supply, we finally slide into the edge of it, which by this time, was expanding larger. There were no Hawks, Buzzards or other sailplanes to guide us this time—just 'Alibi's' single working rate of climb and two sensitive spots in the region of some chute buckles. Well, we did stir up a possible thermal from about 275 feet to 4,000—just enough to make Norwich with a good pattern altitude left. The airport showed just over the ridge and looked like Harris Hill, just before the first take-off—there were so many gliders already there.

We rolled up to the line and tried to put the wing tip in E. J.'s hand, but he was standing on the wrong side!

This was a satisfying flight. We made our goal, and in fair time, and immensely enjoyed that brief encounter with Steve 20 miles back. Imagine my surprise to see Bennis approaching me with a glass of iced-tea in one hand, and the biggest grin ever to enhance a mustache. The ole' Fox wasn't out-foxed a bit for he had gone into that thar cloud and made one glide into Norwich to beat us in by 10 minutes.

Sunday—an open day—gotta knuckle down now—we're commencing to climb the ladder. On the third day of the Contest, we were up one from the bottom. Today we were eighth from the top. Hope Barney has some good weather today, but he didn't, and we fell flat on the airport at Owego just 32 miles down the road. However, so did everyone else. Gliders were in every field between us and Elmira, and here comes a break.

John and Gene came barreling into view less than 2 minutes after calling in. We flagged 'em down, and in 15 minutes, were on our way back to the Hill. This quick retrieve suggested another try, so by 3:30, we were being towed aloft on a goal and return flight to Towanda, 33 miles down river.

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'Alibi' at the starting line.

Staff Photo

ance. I am thinking now of my conversation with Larry Gehrlein just before take-off. We gave each other advice and some of the stuff we passed on to Larry did sound good, we brought it into play, and so it went. If it had not been for Larry, we probably never would have used that technique which worked so well later on.

The only other event of the day was our landing in the same field Dick Johnson picked several years back, near Dodgeville, New York. This was good for 130 points and we could have made more if there had been any place to go; but when one reaches Dodgeville, one stops, because from there on, it is just trees and I mean solid.

Today, 'Alibi's' Crew, Gene M. and John B., were really on the ball. After landing and phoning in, it took the pilot about 10 minutes to walk over to main highway, and he nearly made it before the car and trailer came into

gliders and, as is so often the case, 'Alibi' and I were alone. With lift all around us big enough to make large turns in, the going was too easy and with time on our hands, we were hoping for some company, when up in front 5 or 6 miles away, we saw a red job circling under a nice muscular little cumulus. As we closed up the gap, it was easy to recognize Steve Bennis, with a smile and a mustache, all over his face. We waved 'En Passant' and then each of us got down to the business at hand, namely, who gets to the cloud base first. Steve was 100 feet or so higher and doing a splendid job of centering the lift, so it was only necessary for us to set on it as slow and tight as we could. It was close, but we got there firstest by about one turn, just enough to slip out on heading in that twilight zone and let Steve think we were inside. Oh well, I'll buy him a coke when we get there!