

CROSS COUNTRY

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downwind and hardly believed that this could be Quincy so soon, since it was 120 miles airline distance from my point of takeoff. I called Quincy radio and definitely established that the airport was the Quincy-Baldwin Airport, so I made a position report and then a survey down into Missouri. The terrain was very uninviting and there was only one small airport between Quincy and my goal, another 90 miles away.

Considering that the girls were trailering alone, as Dave had left to return to work, and my unhappy feelings with the several hours of flying over the open pit coal mines of Illinois, I returned to Quincy and had a great deal of fun flying around the airport. As it so often happens, conditions picked up and were quite good when I got back to the airport. I landed at Quincy at 4:10 Daylight Time after four hours and 55 minutes in the air and 120 miles from my point of takeoff.

Crosscountry driving in this area was nearly as bad as flying. It was several hours before Margaret and Tiddum arrived. By that time the photographer from the Quincy Television Station KHQA-TV had arrived and seemed very happy to take pictures of disassembling the ship and putting it on the trailer. After putting the ship on the trailer we headed for home where hurricane Connie was waiting for us.

All of us were pleasantly surprised at how relatively easy and interesting the trip was, insofar as crewing was concerned. Most of our flying had been confined to weekends around the airport, and near the growing family. Our few previous crosscountry flights were made during soaring meets, with late night retrieves and early morning reassembling. We found this trip not nearly so tiring on crew or pilot, as contest flying.

We never ceased to be surprised with the kindly, cooperative, and friendly attitude shown by everyone along the route. The trip offered an unusual opportunity to make acquaintance with the local people, and learn about places where we stopped. This experience certainly was the non-soaring highlight of the trip.

We had a truly wonderful time, and heartily recommend this type of trip to anyone who has the opportunity.



Spiraling

with E. J.

"THE SOARING MOVEMENT IN AMERICA IS, BY ITS VERY NATURE, A SLOW GROWING SHRUB."

Someone once said this about our sport. I would reckon, by and large, this was a rather apt statement. But the encouraging thing to me is the visible evidence of the fact that it is growing — albeit slow.

I would not be so bold as to infer that we devotees have in every instance, given the 'shrub' all the nurturing it would have stood. We might very well have forced the growth just a bit. You know—a handful of fertilizer now and again and perhaps a wee bit more water during the dry seasons.

Our rather poor husbandry at times has been due I imagine, to the inclination on the part of many of us to 'let SSA do it.' Forgetting for the moment at least, that we are SSA. But, human frailties being what they are, we have all in all done not too badly. In the long run we may be better for our slow, natural, native growth. And, anyway, this is not my day to gripe.

Quite to the contrary, I feel rather on the optimistic side of things for soaring's future in America. I see in my own area, and I read of it elsewhere — considerable growth of the interest in soaring. More actual flying hours, and what's better, those flying hours being put to better purpose. By that I mean increased attention to real soaring attainments, such as tries for records and accomplishments for the various badges.

Our movement must have benefited tremendously from the accomplishments of some groups in connection with their participation in the scientific phases of motorless flight. Particularly noteworthy have been such activities as the Southern California Soaring Association's assistance in the Sierra Wave Project and Dr. August Raspert with his Research Station at Mississippi State College. Other individuals and groups have made valuable contributions although perhaps on a smaller scale and with less attendant publicity.

This year, the second such instance in our entire history, SSA was tendered firm bids from three great soaring centers for the privilege of sponsoring our 1956 National Contest. This is indeed indicative of expanded interest in our sport. In the very recent past it was only the tenacity of one soaring group in this country that kept our Nationals in business. Now to see three great centers of influence in soaring come forward and bid eagerly for the contest, is encouraging.

Now that our larger groups have found that they are fully capable of sponsoring a National Contest, we shall soon see this tourney held in all parts of this country. And nothing will aid and abet the cause of soaring so much as this demonstration that good soaring can be had in not just a few selected spots, but in many throughout the land.

A certain leading manufacturer of the world's finest and least expensive performance sailplanes in this country (notice I mention no names — we charge for that) has just announced the completion of their first run of fifty of their better machines and the start of the second run which may exceed the first. It is this kind of thing that will really put soaring's show on the road. No matter the amount of enthusiasm that may be stirred up for the sport of soaring, you just can't hardly do it without a proper machine.

And so it is, my multitude of eager readers, that 1956 dawns fair and bright for me — and for soaring in America. Fact is, I'm knocking this off to git down to Old Joe's and start the celebration. I'll hist one in the direction of all of y'all. Here's to the laborers in the vineyard. Hic' hic' for 56.