

driving right straight through to Yuma. It may seem strange not to ask you to stop and check to see if I am down somewhere, but today's flight involves several gambles and this is one. Remember, straight through to Yuma. If I go down anywhere, I'll telephone C.A.A. at Yuma and give them my location. OK?"

"OK! Mon Capitain," answered Betty as she gave him a mock salute. He smiled and she continued, "Good luck, Bill. I'll talk with you at one o'clock."

The bright red station wagon with its trailer rolled smoothly down the driveway and away from the hotel. Just before turning out of sight, Betty waved. Bill's arm raised itself in answer. At that moment he was offering a prayer for his wife's protection. The time was 10:10.

At the gliderport the activity was increasing. Last minute preparations were being accomplished, some hurriedly, some almost frantically, and some normally. Frank Elder set about his work methodically. He checked a pre-flight list which he had typed for himself. It contained many items which most glider pilots would not consider important. June was busy washing down the wings. The time was 11:09. Frank had filed for a take off time of 13:00.

Straightening up from having examined the underfittings of the horizontal stabilizer, Frank's eyes fell upon June. Her brown arm was moving regularly back and forth over the metal wing. Her white shorts accentuated the deep tan on her legs. "How lucky I am, thought Frank. "She certainly has beautiful legs." A quick flush suffused him and he smiled. The erotic thoughts which were starting to surge into his consciousness were dissipated by the sharp, staccato roar far down the field of a towplane as it moved forward from the starting line on the first take off for the day. Clouds of sand and dust flew out behind and hid the glider being towed. As the plane's tail rose and its momentum increased, a bobbing glider rose above the dust cloud, quickly settled lower, and then skimmed along a few feet above the ground. Soon the towplane and glider rose skyward. June had stopped working and had turned to watch. Frank walked slowly around to stand beside June, his eyes still on the plane and glider. Suddenly he said, "That's Bill Coverley. Wonder why he's taking off so early?"

In the cockpit of the glider Bill

Coverley glanced at his left wrist, moved it to the stick, and reached with his right hand for his pencil. After taking a moment to check his position behind the towplane, he wrote on the pad strapped to his right leg, "Take off 11:10." Returning the pencil, Bill concentrated on flying. As the valley floor fell further and further away, and grew larger and larger, he scanned its surface for evidence of dust devils. Look as he might, none were visible. "Had he misjudged?" Peter Allerton, the weather man, had forecast that thermals would begin rising when the temperature reached 89° and the predicted temperature for 11:30 was 90°.

"Maybe I should have waited another eight or ten minutes." Glancing at the altimeter Bill noted that he was 900 ft. above the field. According to contest rules, all tows must end before or at 2,000 ft. Bill had asked the tow pilot to climb slowly and to circle the area near Rome Hill. Hardly more than an oversized hummock, Rome Hill rose about 100 ft. above the valley floor. It acted regularly as a thermal factory. First the towplane and then the glider passed over it at 1000 ft. There was no sign of a thermal. Continuing in a large circle around the gliderport the towplane headed for the Sedco Hills. Bill's thoughts and emotions boiled in anxiety. Suddenly, at 1200' the glider struck a burble of turbulence. Bill's heart leaped. There was some activity. Maybe he would be lucky. Just one minute later as the towplane started to turn near the Sedco Hills it began to rise rapidly. From long experience Bill knew that only a fairly strong thermal could lift the towplane like that. Now, between the plane and glider was in invisible column of air swirling upward with untold energy. The glider wings sang with joy as the sudden lift of the thermal sent stress sounds ringing into the cockpit. The tow rope release knob banged against the instrument panel as Bill let it go. Man and glider were on their own.

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*(We will leave Bill as he enters his thermal and will continue his story in the next issue of Soaring. The editor feels that any reference to living people or places and events in this fiction story is purely intentional.)*

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## SOARING PILOT'S MARINE ADVENTURE

A long distance telephone call to Mr. and Mrs. John Bardwick, Jr., 639 Perth, Flossmoor, from their son, John, brought news of his having had to bail out of his Sabre jet over the China Sea early in February.

John, former member of Purdue University Gliding Club, and now a Lieutenant in the Air Force, was one of the pilots in a formation of four Sabre jets returning to Kadena Air Force Base in Okinawa. A diversion due to a heavy storm caused the jets to run out of fuel over the China



Lieutenant John Bardwick

Sea. Bardwick and two others bailed out over the water at about 6000 feet and were picked up almost at once by an amphibian plane. John's only injury was a black eye which he cannot even remember receiving. The fourth pilot landed by 'chute on one of the small islands in the Okinawa chain and was also uninjured.

John, who graduated with a BS degree in engineering from Purdue University in 1953, told his parents "I just collected all your tax money for the last few years and dunked it into the sea. The fracas wasn't due to any lapse on my part so I'm flying again as usual with more confidence in the machine than ever. Aside from not running too red hot on no gas the gear (ejection seat, etc.) all works just like the book says. I was about 30,000 feet when I flamed out so I had plenty of time to get all set

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