



Photo: F. H. Matteson
One of the four Slingsby Skylarks. This one was flown by Koch of the Netherlands.

tained during the competitions. Mother Nature shared the prevailing mood. A severe thunderstorm took over half way through the ceremonies. No one got wet because it was spotted by radar and an hour's warning was given of its approach.

The grande finale was moved to the briefing hangar. Here were six barrels of water substitute, the finest produced in this producing area. Six barbecued lambs were brought in out of the rain, and six cords of bread. For the first time LIBERTE, EGALITE and FRATERNITE were well joined. The U. S. Team was surrounded by well wishers from all the other competing teams. We responded by mounting the stage to give out with the loudest singing of any group in the place. Your President furnished the words and a unique key which the rest of us approximated. Our French hosts smiled benignly as the success of this last meeting mounted.

There was a refined echo of the closing ceremonies at Vichy the following day, Bastille Day, the French 14th of July. We were guests of the city. After a memorial service at their *Monument aux Morts* we were received by city officials at the plush Sporting Club. City trophies were awarded at the Plaza. Here we were nearly disgraced by the Team Captain who tried to parlay a ceremonial buss on the cheek to a good, red-blooded American smackeroo. But you should have seen the other party! Then came dinner at the Carlton where the contrast was so great after the hangar soiree of the night before that bold airmen became suddenly timid. An awed hush filled the room lasting until the Mayor broke it up by handing out souvenirs of Vichy. There were fireworks in the park then the ball "La Nuit des Ailes" in the Grand Casin. Vive Vichy!

On a more serious note there is this inescapable observation—I think our small group did more to create good will between our country and the other 24 nations than have much larger international enterprises. When one considers that the majority of people concerned with World Glider competitions are prominent in the aviation and scientific fields the importance of these friendly gatherings is apparent. They are the last and only peaceful international competitions in aviation.

A most frequent question asked, and always with an obvious attachment of hope—"Will the United States hold the 1958 competitions?" That, dear reader, is entirely up to you and your organization. This much is certain. If we should get the kind of capable and sympathetic support from all government agencies concerned with such an undertaking as we received this year from the United States Air Force and if our great aviation industry helped, then



The only American sailplane in the contest. The Schweizer two-place all-metal 2-25 flown by Kempe Trager and Gene Miller.

Photo: F. H. Matteson

for sure the next World Gliding Contests would be held in the United States in 1958.

The greatest thrill of the contest after seeing our team gain all the lead positions came with Paul's flight of July 3rd. Only he can give you the details of it. We who waited under the windows of the telephone room grew more and more concerned as reports came in of pilots gone "aux vaches"—landed with the cows that is.

Cheers went up and excitement mounted as Caradio, Wills, and Ivans reported in from the Toulon-Cuer airport, the last landing field on the fixed course. No report on MacCready. Finally MacCready was the only pilot not reported!

The sun had set. It grew dark. Some of little faith shivered in the evening chill as they thought of the mountain crags and ravines along

the course, one of them possibly holding MacCready.

Suddenly excitement boiled in the telephone room. Ever see a group of excited Frenchmen? More pleased it seemed than had it been a report on one of their own they rushed to the window. M. Boissinado ordinarily a poker-faced gentleman and normally not speaking one word of English was radiant as he shouted—"MacCready at Mediterranean!" For one glorious moment MacCready was on everybody's team. A great shout went up from us, from the Yugoslavs, the Dutch, the Danes, the Germans, the Poles—from everybody assembled there and the stragglers that came a-running. Paul had really come into his own.

Every MacCready flight was outstanding. On July 5th for example under very marginal conditions he completed the 116km triangular circuit like an engine. Converting his little altitude to speed at precisely the right distance out, Paul flashed across

the finish line one yard above the ground.

On only one occasion that I know about could he have gained more points. The very first task, free distance, merited a "major effort." We were in a transition from a cold continental airmass to the usual maritime air with its cloud and softer thermals.

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Germany's sleek HKS-1 two-seater flown by Haase and Heinzel.

Photo: F. H. Matteson

