

of an area of divergence in the general direction of New York City and we made a mental note to head either south or a little north of east.

The usual session of calculating, guessing, map scanning, and crystal ball gazing brought me to a conclusion that a spot about 225 miles to the east-northeast would be my best bet for a goal for the day. But with a worthwhile cash prize going begging at Hiller Airport near Barre, Massachusetts, it was not difficult to expand my target distance to 244 miles. We were airborne around noon and within 20 minutes were back down ridge soaring in the midst of the take-off traffic. This didn't last long though and shortly we had a weak thermal, then a strong one and were on our way. There was no serious trouble until we were almost half way to the goal; although early in the flight we were conscious of a high overcast pushing us from the west. This called for a little more speed; so we concentrated on getting out in front of it. A few miles southeast of Oneonta we spotted a familiar 1-23. It was either Bovenkerk, Bikle or Hoverman; I didn't know which. We both got pretty low in a rugged valley somewhat north of the highest part of the Catskills and were too busy to concern ourselves much with each other. After finally getting back to safe altitude again, sight of the 1-23 also doing alright somewhat irritated me; so I switched on the turn-and-bank and horizon and made use of some of the extra energy made available by the natural condensation of water vapor in free atmosphere.

With the additional altitude thus obtained I pushed on toward the broad valley of the Hudson. As I approached it was evident that the area dead ahead was somewhat questionable with its relative lack of Cumulus activity. Consequently a detour to the southeast was made to a more promising looking area and I soon crossed the Hudson at about 8000 feet asl; time about 4:00 P.M. A rather slow period followed with only two moderate thermals and I arrived in the wide valley north of Great Barrington with my altitude showing. The clouds were now fast disappearing and a landing seemed imminent. The mountain before me looked formidable and was almost

as high as I was. Searching diligently for a thermal, I finally snagged a moderate but consistent one and slowly climbed up the face of the steep bluff just east of Great Barrington. After sober consideration I decided that if I could get 5000 feet above my take-off point at Harris Hill I would head out across the wooded mountains toward the Connecticut River valley in the distance. Altitude gained and off we went quite cautiously as we took a north-easterly course to correct for the detour made at the Hudson. Amherst came into view as we caught another thermal after reaching the Connecticut River and it began to look like we would make it.

The sky was now nearly cloudless. Attaining the west side of the Quabbin Reservoir I began calculating glide paths. I was still not near enough to be safe but I pushed on out over the water as I caught a glimpse of that 1-23 I had supposedly ditched back in New York. He was a little behind me and somewhat below. Again his presence irritated me. But I suppressed an impulse to plunge forward and went back to my arithmetic. I now had my position accurately pegged from the outline of the Reservoir. Another calculation produced the answer that, at 4 miles per 1000 feet, the goal was within reach. So I set sail in the proper direction at a conservative 55 mph and began looking in earnest for the Hiller Airport. I spotted the main road winding northeast from Ware and Gilbertville but couldn't find the field. There seemed to be nothing but forest as far as I could see ahead and nothing but water underneath me. Reaching the edge of the Reservoir my altitude situation was getting critical. The air was dead smooth. I began to regret my stupidity in not giving myself more margin of error when I caught the glint of the late afternoon sun on the surface of a pool of water. A latent thought stirred in the back of my mind. Two years before I had gotten within 40 miles of this same goal for the same prize and there was something about identification by means of a swimming pool. As this thought was developing I saw a light-plane on the ground near the pool. I heaved a great sigh of relief as the stick went forward and spoilers came open. My

relief and pleasure then gave way to mild shock as I made out the unmistakable form of a sailplane on the ground by the edge of the trees. And not just one but three of them! As I considered soaricide I saw that one was a 2-22 and another was partially covered by a tarp. But what matter—I may as well be 4th as 2nd. Landing hot after a fast downwind leg intended to express my feelings, I was met by a grinning Earl Brooks, who calmed me down by informing me that I was the only one to arrive so far and that the whole airport was tickled to see me. I said I was pretty tickled to be there. I mentioned the green and white 1-23 seen on the other side of the reservoir. Figured he ought to be along any minute. Joe Anthony appeared and wanted to know if I had seen Lyle Maxey who was also steering for Hiller. I hadn't.

There were photographs with the gracious Mrs. Hiller, Earl, Joe, and others and much talk about the flight and conjecture about the others who were still not heard from. Then a message came that I was wanted on the 'phone. It was Maxey. He and Bovenkerk and Coverdale were all over on the other side of the Reservoir at Northampton, only 24 miles away. Earl made arrangements to have them picked up and flown over to Hiller so that we could have a ball while we all waited for our crews. Lyle and Hal came over but Bill Coverdale decided to stay with the gliders. Shortly the news got to us that another glider was down at Ware, ten miles to the south. Earl went down to investigate and came back with Paul Bikle in tow. So I still don't know whether it was Bikle or Bovenkerk who was pushing me so hard back in New York and again only 30 miles back along the course.

As a final stroke in the tremendous hospitality put forth at Hiller, Earl Brooks played host to us at dinner and I was confronted by a lobster so large that I was somewhat afraid it might turn on me. About the time I concluded that I would win the bout with the beast, my tired crew arrived and were treated to the same fare. We were fed, loaded up, and on the way back home before midnight.

Resume: the barogram of the flight shows only 16 thermals none of them indicating twin peaks like those of the first day. It was clearly a much better day and perhaps I was getting into better shape. Total flight time; about 6 hours. Distance 244 miles,

E. M. G. A. M.