

EVERY TWENTY-FOUR YEARS

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me by arriving at midnight before I had been able to get to sleep on my bench and we were soon on the way back to Elmira, leaving a good-bye note for the sleeping Englishman.

Before leaving Atlantic City we heard that Bikle had landed at Cape May, 35 miles southwest of us and 14 miles farther from Elmira for the longest flight of the day. There was no land left in any direction for him, except back along the course. But based on my 230 miles he needed 730 to pick up his deficit points. I felt that I had compensated a little for his beating me so soundly last summer in Texas.

And so the 24th National passes on to join the others in the record books, including my previous win some 24 years ago in 1933. But before closing the record book it is interesting to look at this year's results in light of the variety of contest rules which have been used in the past few years; there was much comment this year about whether the modern rules fitted Elmira and Eastern weather.

The 1956 rules were substantially the same as those used this year, so the contest results would be the same. Going back to 1955, when the trend toward putting a premium on speed had been well established and applying these rules to the 1957 performances, we find that the first position

remains unchanged, but that Schreder moves up to 2nd position, Compton retains 3rd, Bikle drops to 4th and Thomson holds 5th. The reason for Bikle and Schreder swapping positions by these rules is apparently the result of Dick netting more than fifty per cent of his total points for his spectacular goal flight to Boston. This is, of course, impossible under the 1000 points per day system.

After struggling through the calculations necessary to determine the relative positions of the top five pilots in 1957 according to 1954 rules, I'm glad I was in England at the World Championships that year instead of at Elsinore. They were most unwieldy and complicated. However, I finally worked out some answers. Again I held first place. (Of course you two readers realize that if the answers had come out wrong, this part of the story would have been left out.) Again Bikle dropped to 4th. This time Compton jumped to 2nd, Thomson to 3rd and Schreder dropped to 5th. The only explanation I can offer in this case is that Fritz did well on the 2nd and 3rd day's speed dashes while Bikle and Schreder both had bad days. Dropping one open and one task day from the scoring seems to have the effect of accentuating inconsistent performance, rather than the opposite. The 1954 rules gave an exaggerated bonus for speed. Thomson got more than half of his total points for his speed flight to Sidney. I was unable to locate the 1953 and 1952 rules

but did calculate results based on the 1951 rules. Again I led the pack, and again Schreder jumped to 2nd as a result of his big Boston flight and Bikle went to 3rd, Compton to 4th and Thompson held 5th.

There is some possibility that other contestants might move up to one of the top five places by the rules of the other years but I have not taken the time to investigate this possibility. It is difficult to draw any very clear-cut conclusions from this review but I did satisfy my curiosity about my own status as a function of rules variation. Also, it appears to me that the 1000 points per day system does result in the fairest way to pay off for good speed performance. I think it is indicated, too, that the old system, used several years, of discarding one or more of the poorest days performances results in undue accent on best performances at the expense of consistency.

The statistics calculated in this little study were tabulated and are presented here in several variations to help in determining whether they are significant. The first tabulation gives the actual calculated points for the top five contestants, computed by the rules in effect in 1957, 1955, 1954 and 1951. The second recomputes the points based on application of the 1000 points per day system. The third gives the results as computed in the second table, in percentage of a perfect score. (A perfect score in 1957 and 1951 would have been 7000 points and in 1955 and 1954, 5000 points). Finally, the relative positions are shown for all of the years that were investigated; in both actual and 1000 point systems. If you two guys are not confused by now, you are welcome to take up where I now leave off.

There is one more point of discussion which will be of interest to some. The wisdom of the Contest Board was questioned by some when the goal flight to Syracuse was announced on July 8th, and by a few more when the results were in that night. A quick check shows that if this day had been declared "no contest, Fritz Compton would have been the deserving winner with 4420 points, Paul Bikle would have held his second position with 4380, and I would have dropped to third with 4366. This is brought out because it may help future Contest Boards to appreciate the weight of their responsibility in the just and proper selection of the National Soaring Champion.

STANDINGS — RULES STUDY, 1957 TOP FIVE

| RULES YEAR | SMITH | BIKLE | COMPTON | SCHREDER | THOMSON |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------|---------|----------|---------|
| Actual Calculated Points | | | | | |
| 1957 | 5366 | 4736 | 4570 | 4375 | 4315 |
| 1955 | 677 | 568 | 661 | 662 | 500 |
| 1954 | 822 | 611 | 721 | 601 | 816 |
| 1951 | 915 | 788 | 726 | 855 | 723 |
| 1000 points per day basis | | | | | |
| 1957 | 5366 | 4736 | 4570 | 4375 | 4315 |
| 1955 | 4478 | 4338 | 4446 | 3926 | 3856 |
| 1954 | 4027 | 3479 | 3613 | 2996 | 3511 |
| 1951 | 6166 | 5165 | 4944 | 4958 | 4236 |
| Percentage of Perfect Score | | | | | |
| 1957 | 76.7 | 67.1 | 65.2 | 62.5 | 61.5 |
| 1955 | 64.7 | 62.7 | 64.6 | 56.8 | 55.8 |
| 1954 | 89.0 | 74.7 | 71.4 | 71.9 | 61.1 |
| 1951 | 80.5 | 69.6 | 72.3 | 59.9 | 70.2 |
| Summary of Positions | | | | | |
| | A—B | A—B | A—B | A—B | A—B |
| 1957 | 1—1 | 2—2 | 3—3 | 4—4 | 5—5 |
| 1955 | 1—1 | 4—3 | 3—2 | 2—4 | 5—5 |
| 1954 | 1—1 | 4—4 | 3—2 | 5—5 | 2—3 |
| 1951 | 1—1 | 3—2 | 4—4 | 2—3 | 5—5 |

A — based on actual score.

B — based on 1000 point system.