

NORTHWEST MEMORIAL DAY SOARING MEET

by ROBERT LEE MOORE

The Northwest Memorial Day Soaring Meet was held at Vista Field, Kennewick, Washington, under the sponsorship of the newly organized Columbia Basin Soaring Association. E. D. (Ed) McClanahan, Jr., was contest director, and Clifford Rasch (Kennewick airport manager) was responsible for the airplane towing operation. Appropriately enough, Vista Field was the site of the only previous Memorial Day meet ever held in this area, in 1950, exactly eight years ago. The earlier Memorial Day contest was made memorable by the accomplishment of the first Northwest Gold C distance flight—by Bob Fisher to Sand Point, Idaho. Bob Fisher was on hand for this contest too, but as a spectator rather than a contestant this time. Others who were on hand for both included Bill Fisher, Johnny Owens, Joe Robertson, and Bob Moore.

Six sailplanes participated this year. These included the Allemann-Warren 1-26, the McClanahan-Pallmer 1-26, Bob Moore's 1-21, Walt Parker's TG-3, Joe Robertson's Olympia, and Pete Bowers's 1-26. Contest rules were identical to those of the 1957 Wenatchee contest. A cold front went through a day or two before the contest, providing excellent soaring conditions on Friday with strong thermals, well formed cumulus, and a SW wind blowing directly toward Sand Point. Friday was accordingly declared an "open" day, and Allemann and McClanahan declared Sand Point (189 miles) as their goal. Rudi (Allemann) completed his for Gold C distance and Diamond Goal, while Ed needed one more thermal and landed slightly short at Couer d'Alene, Idaho (165 miles). Bob Moore declared and completed a 140 mile triangle (Vista-Lind-Washtucna-Vista). Joe Robertson made a successful goal flight from the famous Northwest soaring site at Wenatchee, Wash., to Vista Field (100 miles), the latter part of the flight being made against a strong head wind. Meanwhile, Joe's crew, Frank and Marlene Woodward, brought Joe's car and trailer down from Wenatchee. Pete Bowers trailered in about mid-afternoon, too late to compete

on Friday. There were mixed emotions when Rudi phoned in from Sand Point!

Saturday, May 31. Another small front went through Friday night, and the contestants were greeted by rain Saturday morning. The clouds didn't clear till afternoon, so altitude was declared the task of the day. This was won by Paul Pallmer with 6600 feet, followed by Bob Moore (6500) and Rudi Allemann (6200). An informal banquet was held that evening at an Italian restaurant, followed by a showing of soaring and mountaineering slides at Rudi Allemann's.

Sunday, June 1. This, the last day of the contest, was another "super" day with Gold C possibilities, thanks to the now departed cold front. The pilot's meeting was held early and a 192 mile Gold C triangle (Vista-Ritzville - Touchet Valley - Vista) was selected as the task. Cumulus began to form by 9 A.M. and there was a scramble to get airborne. Robertson, Bowers, and Moore elected to try to go around clockwise (Ritzville first) while Pallmer and Allemann went the other way (Touchet Valley first). Joe and Pete made the best speed to Ritzville but

had the misfortune to get caught in a temporarily clouded over area at Ritzville and had to land. Moore was able to note this condition (from ground shadows) from near Lind, stayed high, and was able to get into the turning point and back out again. He arrived back at Vista at 4 P.M. with an elapsed time of 5½ hours, while Pallmer made it back in 8 hours, an extremely fine performance for a 1-26. Allemann also made it around in eight hours but had to land several miles short at Pasco. One more thermal would have done it! While the above pilots were sailing (or struggling) around the triangle, Bob Fisher and Walt Parker made a several hour's local flight in Walt's TG-3, thus giving the crowd something to watch. Then Walt went up solo to win his "C."

Summing up, we were extremely lucky on the weather and consider that we had a very successful contest. Four Gold C distance flights were made, equal to the total number made in the Northwest up to this time! We only wish that more people had had their ships ready to participate.



Bob Moore's 1-21 on final approach behind the Allemann-Warren 1-26 at Vista Field.

Team	May 30 Open	May 31 Altitude	June 1 Gold C Tri	Total
Bob Moore	803	985	1000	2788
Allemann-Warren	1000	940	653	2593
McClanahan-Pallmer	698	1000	678	2376
Joe Robertson	530	303	268	1101
Pete Bowers	—	224	268	492