

# NATIONALS BRIEFING

by HUGH H. WHITNEY, *Contest Manager*

By the time that you read this short article, you should have received at least one information and invitation bulletin from the Elmira Area Soaring Corporation, inviting you to attend the 26th Annual U.S. National Soaring Competition. Just to clear away any doubts, this event will be held July 1-10, 1959, at scenic Harris Hill near Elmira, New York. It is sponsored by the Elmira Area Soaring Corporation (EASC to those familiar with our sport), and sanctioned by the Soaring Society of America.

Several innovations are planned for this 26th National Contest. Most important is the decision of the Directors of the Soaring Society of America to accept the suggestion of EASC, whereby the national soaring organization plays a major part in the contest. Thus, for certain considerations, the SSA will be directly involved with the competition portion of the 26th Nationals, while the EASC will provide the other necessary functions and general overall co-ordination of the contest.

Now to specifics. Under the leadership of Bill Frutchy, EASC President, and Paul Schweizer, Chairman of the EASC Nationals Committee (and other numerous soaring offices and responsibilities), the wheels of organization have been turning. Under the SSA appointed Competition Director, John D. Graves, come the functions of scoring and statistics, timers and course officials, and barograph and instrument verification. Probably the largest responsibility of the Competition Director will be his job as Chairman of the Contest Committee. An effort is being made to select the members of this Contest Committee well before the start of the contest so as to allow them time to review their functions. At the time of this writing, 4 May, Don Ryon of the Rochester Soaring Club has been named to handle the important post of Chief Scorer and Statistician. Also, Professor True McLean of Cornell University has been placed in charge of the barograph servicing.

The EASC has the prime responsibility for the selection of Business Manager, Director of Operations and General Publicity Director. A special

effort is being made to provide more publicity for the contest and therefore soaring in general. The EASC is trying a new approach to this part of the contest and it looks very promising. Of course, they also named a Contest Manager who is the Assistant Chairman of the Contest Committee, oversees the general organization of the contest, writes letters (with typing errors), and wordy articles for SOARING, and other things. The author is really enjoying his opportunity to serve soaring this way after three years of isolation in the USAF.



Photo: Peter M. Bowers

Peter Riedel smiles his pleasure from a flight in Pete Bowers' 1-26. Peter expects to compete in the 1959 Nationals as a U.S. citizen with H. W. Jensen's LO-150. His return to competitive soaring will be watched with considerable interest, based on his outstanding performances in pre-war contests.

But there are two other vital jobs that haven't been mentioned. They are the representatives of the FAA and the Weather Bureau. We are very fortunate in having Bill Placek assigned as the FAA representative. Having an experienced sailplane pilot in FAA and assigned to the 26th Nationals helps us all. And what would a contest at Elmira be without Barney Wiggin, Chief of the U.S. Weather Bureau Station at Buffalo, N.Y. This is the 20th anniversary of

Barney's first attendance at soaring contests in an official capacity. The things that we've learned from him are many, but how about the things that we haven't learned because we didn't pay quite close enough attention to everything said by this grand meteorological philosopher?

So much for the dry formality of organizational detail. Most readers don't have to be reminded of the general excitement that surrounds a good competitive contest. We will do our best to whet the competitive appetite and also foster the good fellowship that is so much a part of soaring.

And you say you are looking for competition? Very early rumblings indicate that such solid performers as Dick Johnson, Fritz Compton, and Peter Riedel are planning to enter and win. Peter will be eligible to win the Championship this time. Accounts of contests before WW II reveal that he knows how to soar!

Those pilots who like to win "things" as well as titles are not forgotten. The awards list is growing with trophy awards and some of those cash types for the Free Distance days.

The EASC is awaiting replies from other aviation organizations affiliated with the NAA as to their participation in special events during the contest period. It looks like it will be a fine affair. Why don't you write to the Elmira Area Soaring Corporation, Federation Building, Elmira, New York, and say you are coming as contestant, crew, volunteer worker for SSA or EASC, a short-handed contestant, or just a visitor. Come one, come all. Attend the 26th Annual U.S. National Soaring Competition, July 1-10, 1959, at Harris Hill, Elmira, New York.

## RULES CHANGES

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4.10 Provides for standardized tow patterns and point of release. This gives everyone the same type of start, removes questions of point of release and permits timing from release.

Many of the discussions concerning what form a particular rule should take were resolved by using the 1958 World Championships rules as a guide. We hope that in subsequent years we can arrive at one set of rules that can be used at all contests with only minor revisions.

SSA Rules Subcommittee.