

# RACING FOR RECORDS AT ODESSA, TEXAS

by DICK SCHREDER

The wonderful combination of TSA personnel, Al Parker and his excellent facilities, the good City of Odessa and Texas weather made the 1959 Odessa Soaring Camp meet most enjoyable.

In going to Odessa, my thoughts and plans were with the goal, goal and return and straight distance records. Unfortunately, the weather didn't cooperate for this type of flying and it was necessary to concentrate on the speed triangles.

Fortunately, Harland Ross, who had past experience in breaking all 3 two-place speed records in 1958, was on hand with the R-6 and gave valuable advice on how to go about this sort of flying.

After a couple of days of practice to get acclimated to the Texas go go type of soaring, we aimed at the 200 km. triangle. This record fell on August 6th. The 300 km. record fell on the 7th and the 100 km. on the 11th. Weather on the 8th, 9th and 10th was not favorable enough for record runs.

Following are the high points of the three flights. Barograph traces are included to show the ups and downs of each flight.

## August 6th and the 200 Kilometer run.

Cumulus conditions began to look good about 1300 so with both Peravias and both cameras sealed, the task board photographed, water in the thermos and the HP-8 groomed for take-off, we were towed aloft at 1326.

After release, thermal strength did not seem as strong as it should be, so I delayed crossing the starting plane until a fat cloud formed down wind on the first leg dragging a tornado-like dust devil along below it. A thousand foot loss of altitude brought my indicated air speed up to

140 mph and we crossed the starting line at 1347.

A small cloud on course gave me some straight away climb at 70 mph until the big one was reached. Under this, I circled at 50 mph with 10° down flaps and maintained a steady 870 ft. per min. climb to 10,000 ft., about 500 ft. below cloud base. At this point the clouds were forming into long streets roughly parallel to

the course and it was possible to fly all the way to the turn point without circling. When the lift was good, the flaps were dropped and at best climb speed of 50 mph, long periods of straight climb were possible as evidenced by the barograph trace. When proceeding between cloud streets, the flaps were raised to —5° and speed was increased to 75 mph. This method of flying eventually got me back to 10,000 ft. at the first turning point where I made a 360° turn to get a picture with each camera at 1427 and 9750 feet.

On the second leg the clouds were not lined up so conveniently; nor were they as plentiful. Different tactics were required for this situation, so I flew slow under clouds and ran

The author prepares for one of his speed runs at Odessa, Texas. The Vee-tailed HP-8 has curled up wing tips and the wing-fuselage fillets developed for it during the flight testing program it underwent at Mississippi State.



Photo: E. J. Reeves

