

THE DANISH NATIONAL SOARING CONTEST

by PER WEISHAUP

The Danish Nationals took place at Vandel AFB by kind permission of the Royal Danish Air Force which also provided three KZ VII tow-planes. Otherwise the civil Danish gliding clubs are not subsidized, but the new Commander-in-Chief, Lieutenant-General Kurt Ramberg who opened the championships by a flight in a K-7 together with Kaj V. Pedersen, chairman of the Danish soaring committee, expressed his wish to help the soaring movement as much as possible.

A new record of 17 sailplanes took part, 7 two-seaters and 10 single-seaters. There were 4 official entries from the Air Force, in which soaring is performed as a sport mainly by ground personnel, and two unofficial in civil sailplanes as well as 11 entries from civil clubs.

In the first week weather was generally anticyclonic with weak thermals and much flying at extremely low altitudes, but the contest committee used every possibility and after four days the minimum of flying days was reached.

On July 6th nobody reached the goal, 51 miles away. Winner was the old champion, Jorgen Friis who this time flew a K-7 together with Arne Jorgensen. They got 44 miles along the set course.

On July 7th two competitors reached the goal, Sonderborg, 57 miles. Niels Sejstrup and Ole Didriksen in an Air Force K-7 were first with 23.4 mph, Svend Ravn (L-Spatz) was second with 21.3 mph.

A 70 mile triangle on July 8th was not successful. Sejstrup and Didriksen went 63 miles and Ravn went 59 miles.

An out-and-return of 68 miles on July 9th was carried out by 5 sailplanes. Aage Dyhr Thomsen (Jaskolka) was first with 29.3 mph, Ravn was once more second with 26.9 mph.

Until now the weak thermals had not been good for Harald W. Jensen, flying Wolf Hirth's brand-new LO-150. As he had feared, the high wing-loading made it difficult, and the first days it also seemed nose-heavy. Jensen would land near some local inn and phone back from there. When at one time he was only eighth in the cumulative standings we felt sure the Americans would be very impressed when they learned how many better pilots than Harald we had!

July 9th was somewhat better which Dyhr Thomsen proved, and Jensen too nearly completed, landing just outside the boundary!

After a much needed rest day a small triangle was tried on July 11th, but had to be cancelled. On Sunday the 12th we just managed to get another competition day between a thunderstorm and the next front. A race over 51 miles was won by Jensen with 59.4 mph.

Weather the next two days made flying impossible, but then a high pressure ridge made things better. A down-wind race being too easy the contest committee proposed an out-and-return across the wind of



Photo: Per Weishaupt

The victors: Ole Didriksen, with the Ellehammer Cup, and Niels Sejstrup.

127 miles. The pilots laughed just as some did last year at Bishop at the 388 mile race, but actually two two-seaters completed: Erick Toft and G. Schütze who thereby put up a new Danish two-seater out-and-return record. Their speed was 23.6 mph, while Friis and Jorgensen made 22.8 mph. An old Mu-13D was third, piloted by Svend Michaelsen who flew for 6½ hours and went 107 miles.

Sejstrup and Didriksen had been in the lead since the second day and now seemed impossible to beat, but there was much doubt with regard to second place.

Weather being a little better on July 16th, the contest committee once more made the pilots moan when a 207 km. (128 miles) triangle was announced. To understand this you must consider that Denmark is so small a country that such a triangle is difficult to arrange without coming near the coast with the risk of sea-breeze effect. Only once before had a 200 km triangle been flown in Denmark.

Actually weather was even better than expected, and no less that 10 sailplanes succeeded with two more just outside the boundary. Jensen was first with 30.4 mph; Sejstrup and Didriksen had 29.8 and put up the first Danish two-seater record in this category; and Ravn was third.

Seven competition days over this was the end. Once more we got a new champion, nobody having won more than once (1951: Aksel Feddersen; 1953: H. W. Jensen; 1955: Dyhr Thomsen; 1957: Jorgen Friis). Sejstrup's victory was convincing, well deserved and popular. He had 5435 points, Friis and Jorgensen 4642, Ravn 4548, Hans Borreby (Eon Olympia) 4212 and H. W. Jensen 4199. Of the other former winners Dyhr Thomsen was ninth and Feddersen tenth.

The Schleicher K-8 which was demonstrated during the Danish Nationals and flown by many pilots. As a simple single-seater with better performance and handling qualities than the Olympia and a price in Denmark half that of a Schweizer 1-26, it will probably be popular with the clubs in the future.

Photo: Per Weishaupt

