

1960 TORREY PINES MEET

Sanctioned by The Soaring Society of America, Inc.

by TED SANFORD

The 14th Annual Pacific Coast Midwinter Soaring Championships were held at the Torrey Pines Gliderport, which is located just north of La Jolla, California, on February 27th and 28th, 1960. It was jointly sponsored by the Associated Glider Clubs of Southern California, Ltd., and the San Diego Junior Chamber of Commerce, sanctioned by SSA and operated under a waiver issued by FAA.

The weather on Saturday began with a light rain to clear the atmosphere, later improving to provide unlimited visibility and sustaining cliff soaring from noon until the meet closed for the day at 5:00 P.M. Sunday's weather started with light rain and continued wet all day with the best ridge soaring occurring from 1:00 PM until the Meet officially closed at 4:00 PM along with the heaviest rain, lowest ceilings and visibility just above the three mile limit required by the FAA in the Meet waiver. Five scoring events were held this year; Duration, Spot Landing, Bomb Drop, Distance and Dual Distance. The Altitude and

Acrobatics events, although scheduled, were cancelled due to inadequate weather and insufficient qualified entries, respectively, to support these events.

Early on Saturday, Dave McNay of Pomona, California, flying his flat-top Schweizer 1-26, established a definite lead over all other contestants by becoming keenly competitive in four events. While challenged on Sunday, first by Larry Bell in his flat-top L-K and then by Jim Meckoll in the SCSA 1-26, Dave improved his bomb drop score and retained his lead to continue on and win the Meet championship award, The John J. Montgomery trophy.

This contest, set as it is on the Torrey Pines Mesa atop the three hundred foot high cliffs which form the Southern California coast line at this point, provides competing pilots, crew members and spectators alike an awe-inspiring, beautiful, yet ruggedly picturesque, view which is unexcelled by that offered at any other soaring contest held anywhere in the world. The Torrey Pines Gliderport features a fine long secondary run-

way of hard sand Pacific Ocean beach located at the base of the cliffs to provide ridge soaring pilots peace of mind concerning safe landing spots. This year the mesa was green from much rain and thus gave a newly scuffed appearance, all of which added to the picture provided by nature for this contest.

Saturday morning, February 27th, thirty-one pilots registered and entered the Meet with a total of twenty-four sailplanes; five Schweizer 1-26's, three 1-23's, three TG-2's, one Schweizer 1-7, one 1-24, one 2-22C, three L-K's, two Cherokee II's, one Pratt-Read, one Fauvel Flying Wing AV-36, one Super Bowlus, one Nimbus IIB and one home-built Steinruck SCS-1.

The light rain which was falling at the start of the pilots' briefing at 9:00 AM stopped by 9:30. During the pilots' drawing for tow positions, held at 10:15, the sun came out and the skies cleared. The Meet was opened at 11:41 AM when Wade Steinruck lifted his trim SCS-1 into the air on winch tow. With Larry Bell's winch tow at 1:00 PM sustaining flight on the cliffs was possible and Larry continued to soar for four hours and one minute which proved to be the winning time in the duration event. During the afternoon as many as twelve sailplanes at one time were floating gracefully back and forth along the Torrey Pines cliffs. By midafternoon visibility appeared to be the best ever experienced at Torrey Pines. San Clemente Island sixty miles off the Southern California coast was clearly visible to everyone on the Gliderport.

By 4:00 PM Stan Winsor in the Soarcerers' Pratt Read had made the spot landing competition terrific with a stop one and five-eighths inches from the mark. De Vaughn North was leading in the bomb drop event with a miss of thirteen feet seven inches and John Williams in his flat-top 1-23 reported in from the San Pasqual school house 22.2 miles to the north for best effort in the distance event. The meet closed for the day at 5:00 PM with Ted Grabowsky in his flat-top L-K 26.3 miles east in a parking lot at El Capitan reservoir and John Ryan in his 1-23G 25.8 miles southeast near Jamul.

The day at Torrey Pines had been terrific for spectators. At one time some three thousand people were being alternately held spellbound by our able masters of ceremony, Bud Wemple and Jim Spurgeon, and thrilled by the flying of the contest.

Larry Bell piles up duration points in his sleek flat-top L-K on the Saturday afternoon of the Meet.

Photo: Rose Marie Licher

