



Photo: Peter M. Bowers

Fancher Field, Wenatchee, Washington, site of the forthcoming 1960 West Coast Soaring Championships and Soaring Camp.

### WENATCHEE READY FOR WEST COAST CHAMPIONSHIP CONTESTANTS

Fancher Field, site of the 1960 West Coast Championship Soaring Contest, is being readied for the combined Soaring Camp (July 2-9) and the contest (July 4-8). The field itself approaches a glider pilot's dream for overall convenience of operation. No matter which way the wind blows, there is no need to haul the ship to the opposite end of the runway. Takeoffs are made from mid-field, near the intersection of the main runway and the paved taxiway shown in the photo. Takeoff to north or south from this central point is optional, and landings are completed right at the takeoff point from an approach in the opposite direction. If there happens to be a strong enough cross-wind, takeoffs are made straight across the field. Under such conditions, those pilots who are not off on contest flights can initiate "Operation Cheapskate" and use the diagonal runway to tow gliders into the slope wind by automobile and a short rope.

Camp-minded contestants and their

families can pitch their tents and sleep on the field. Restaurant facilities are available, and the town of Wenatchee is only a ten-minute drive away. There are plenty of auto courts nearby, so contestants desiring advance accommodations should make their wants known to the contest director:

Robert E. Kruse,  
19012 46th Avenue So.  
Seattle, 88, Wash.

For families who wish to be elsewhere while father is flying, mountain and lake vacation areas are within an hour's drive, and Seattle is less than a four-hour drive across the Cascade mountains. Nationally-famous scenic wonders nearby are Grand Coulee Dam (there are a number of new ones now, too), Ginko petrified forest, Lake Chelan, the Columbia Basin irrigation developments, and the spectacular Cascade Mountains, to name a few.

The photo shows Fancher Field, with the camera looking approximately northwest. Field elevation is 1440 feet, and the Columbia river, elevation 900 feet, is just visible in the upper left corner. A 3500-foot high soaring ridge is within easy gliding distance from the right of the picture.

The soaring camp and contest dates have been set up especially for the advantage of pilots from distant points on the West Coast who would like to try this now-famous soaring site without having to use more than one week of vacation time to make the trip. Non-Washington pilots who plan to attend should notify the contest director of their intentions as soon as possible.

## THE WAVES OF EL MIRAGE

by LEONARD CANFIELD

After 18 months of no soaring due to repairs being made on my P-R, my fellow workers and I finally arrived at the big moment when we once again were able to try our wings. Don Gaede, Elemer Katinsky, Ray Parker, Robert Canfield, Ronnie Shugar, Bud Robertson and myself were on hand.

Sunday, February 21st, was warm with a wind of about 25 to 30 mph. We were making auto tows to 2000 feet from Mirage Dry Lake. About 4 P.M., Don and I took off and released at 1500 feet. Lift was found almost everywhere. We managed to work thermals to 9000 feet asl, using only a single pointer altimeter and our airspeed, since we had no rate of climb or variometer. I wasn't prepared for the high altitude temperature as I only had my tee shirt on. We finally entered a wave condition at about 5 P.M. at 7000 feet. Flying was perfectly smooth but we had a steady rate of climb on the altimeter. We were almost directly over El Mirage at 12,000 feet where the temperature was about 35°. The sun had gone down so we decided to try and come down before it got much darker. Contact with our ground crew on the radio indicated they were beginning to get worried. We opened the dive brakes and flew at 65 miles per hour but still couldn't lose much altitude. We kept flying with dive brakes fully extended for approximately 30 minutes before we were able to make our approach for a landing. Several people had their car lights on for us and we landed during some pretty rough gusts of up to 35 miles per hour. It was great to get down where it was warmer but I had sure enjoyed being able to fly my first Wave. I am looking forward to more of them in the future.

The next day, Monday, conditions were also good with thermals popping everywhere. We made another two hour flight but elected to come down and give some others a chance to fly. El Mirage is for me.

We plan to put my P-R to good use during the coming year and I might also say that it seems to fly even better than before I hit the Joshua Tree.

**Philadelphia Glider Council**  
**Open House Week**  
**Saturday, July 9th, through**  
**Sunday, July 17th.**  
**PGC Glider Port**  
**Rte. 1, Box 315, Perkasie, Pa.**  
**Bring your sailplane**  
**or just your interest.**