

SOARING AT SEBRING

by DAVID V. ROBISON

A group of Florida sailplane pilots met at Sebring to soar and hangar fly over the weekend of April 30th. The weather man smiled on us providing some of the best soaring conditions we have seen. Friday afternoon, Lou Rehr, with his 1-23G, arrived to see that all the arrangements he had made for food and lodging had been carried out and that all was in readiness. Dave Robison came in soon after with the Stearman towplane from Vero Beach. Later in the evening, Fritz and Kay Sebek arrived with Dave Whyte and family from Miami. Dave has been working on the HP-9 wing. Sebek couldn't bring his Ka-6 because of refinishing his trailer. We understood he is doing his usual perfectionist's job.

Bright and early Saturday morning we assembled sailplanes and started flying. John and Nelda Randall and son, Will, brought John's Ka-6; Fritz Compton and son Burt trailered his L-K, accompanied by Peter Riedel; and Johnny Dezzutti trailered the Suncoast Soaring Assn. 2-22 from Vero Beach. By 10:30 A.M. everything was in the air. It was good to see a thermal full of sailplanes instead of buzzards and flights of two and three hours were usual. The 2-22 was busy giving rides and doing some soaring. Randall found some difference in the L/D

of the 2-22 when compared to his Ka-6.

Clint Moore and Sonny Stokes checked out in the 1-23G early Sunday morning. Both did well, had big grins and qualified for their C badges the following weekend. As is usual, the generosity of real people showed and everyone had an opportunity to fly something other than his own ship. Airport Manager Graybill was given a 2-22 ride to wind up operations Sunday.

To those of us who are novices, one of the big things of the weekend was the opportunity to learn from the real pro's. They were, without

exception, generous with tips and theories available only after years of experience. More weekends like this one will do more towards furthering the sport of soaring than any other singular thing.

All of us felt the weekend was a spectacular success. Some fifty people participated from all over South and Central Florida, so that additional interest was created. This event was created from an idea sparked from the Vero Beach group, seconded by the Miami group and put in action by the Lantana enthusiasts. With this kind of cooperation, the soaring movement has gotta grow. We are looking forward to participating in at least three of these events yearly at Sebring. Maybe, we will outdo the sports car races and show the people a sane sport.

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Two new all-metal, home-built and designed sailplanes on the southern California soaring scene are George Tweed's GT-1, right, and Gene Whigham's GW-1, below. The lower half of the nose on the GT-1 is a drop tank. The top half of the nose on the GT-1 and both top and bottom halves of the nose on the GW-1 are fiberglass which was laid up in the drop tank. Specs for the GT-1 are: span, 48'; length, 21' 6"; wing area, 144 sq. ft.; AR, 16; airfoil, NACA 43012 A; empty wt., 490 lb.; and max. gross wt., 750 lb. It has conventional spoilers, retractable gear and has already earned for its builder a Gold C.

Photo: George Tweed



The GW-1 has a span of 40'; length, 20'; wing area 100 sq. ft.; AR, 16; airfoil, NACA 23018; empty wt., 340 lb.; and max. gross wt., 580 lb. It has 25% chord flaps which extend over 55% of the span, permitting very steep approaches. No performance measurements have been attempted for either the GW-1 or GT-1 so the builders won't even guess at the L/D's at this time.

Photo: Eugene Whigham