

SAFETY FIRST

THE GRAY HAIR DEPARTMENT

by JOSEPH M. ROBERTSON, *Chairman*
SSA Safety and Flight Operations Committee

It is probably wondered why the 1959 accident summary has not yet appeared in this column and the reason is, basically, that not all the reports have been received. Since the SSA depends to a large extent on volunteer help and information in many areas there is no way to insure the prompt reporting of all accidents and/or incidents.

There are three channels through which information on accidents reaches the Safety Committee.

First are the FAA reports which are summarized, condensed and issued to interested groups on a semi-monthly basis. Apparently because of a huge backlog of reports not analyzed prior to the start of the present system, the latest summary of accidents for the period May 1 through May 15, 1960 contains more 1959 accidents than 1960 accidents. It should be noted that the listings are of general aviation accidents to aircraft under 12,500 lbs. gross. When an accident summary is noted as having occurred in a sailplane the procedure is to write the FAA requesting the complete file on that

particular accident. The FAA sends the file to a commercial reproduction firm, photostats are made and the bill sent to the SSA. It is a relatively time consuming process. Of course, the accident has first to be reported to the FAA. It is surprising how many sailplane accidents are not reported, as they should be, to the FAA. But it does seem that the majority of the major accidents are recorded.

Second source of information is the sailplane census form sent to all registered sailplane owners by the Executive Secretary of the SSA. The form contains a sentence asking if the sailplane has suffered any damage during the previous year. If the answer is affirmative, an accident report form is sent to the owner with a request that the form be filled out and returned. The conditions for use of the information are stated in the letter. Submission of the accident report form is purely voluntary. There is nothing speedy about this channel however because of the double delay inherent in the system. However, it is considered that this method gives the most accurate and complete overall picture.

Third source of information is the voluntary submission of accident reports by the pilots involved, by persons present at the scene or by those familiar with the details. Many times this is the quickest and only means available. Pilots who voluntarily submit reports on accidents in which they are involved are to be highly commended.

The above is outlined in order to indicate that the SSA makes every effort to record and analyze accidents in which pilots are injured or sailplanes damaged. Most accidents are preventable and unless we know the whys and wherefores, it is impossible to determine trouble areas. As the soaring movement continues to grow, the subject of safety becomes more important. Statistics on accidents are necessary in order to record trends and to record performance when compared with total hours flown or some other measure of activity.

Every safety program is based on statistics. When ours are complete the data will be published.

CALENDAR

Items listed in bold face type are to be sanctioned by SSA.

July 9-17. Annual P.G.C. Open House, Philadelphia Glider Port, Rte. 1, Box 315, Perkasie, Pa.

July 19-28. Canadian National Soaring Competitions, Brantford, Ontario.

Dates to be Announced. 3rd Annual Jim Swearengen Soaring Contest, Twinkletown Airport, 10 mi. S. of Memphis, Tenn., on Hwy. 61.

July 25-31. 1960 National Model Airplane Championships, U.S. Naval Air Station, Dallas, Texas.

Aug. 2 - 11. 27th Annual U. S. National Soaring Championships, Ector County Airport, Odessa, Texas.

Aug. 4-7. Soaring "Meeting" (Camp), Frankfort, Mich.

Aug. 5-7. 3rd Annual Mid-Atlantic States Soaring Meet, Municipal Airport, Cumberland, W. Va.

Aug. 7. Annual Meeting of The Soaring Society of America, Inc., 3 P.M. at the Nationals Briefing Hangar, Ector County Airport, Odessa, Texas.

Aug. 12. SSA Board of Directors' Meeting, 215 W. 4th St., Odessa, Texas.

Sept. 2-5. 3rd Illini Soaring Meet, Urbana, Ill.

Sept. 2-5. Labor Day Soaring Camp, Fancher Field, Wenatchee, Wash.

Sept. 3-5. Second half of 1960 Southwestern and Texas State Soaring Championship, Grand Prairie, Texas, Airport.

Sept. 3-5. Schweizer 1-26 One-Design Soaring Regatta, Harris Hill, Elmira, N.Y.

Sept. 3-5. 3rd Annual Rocky Mountain Soaring Contest, East Colfax Airpark, 10 mi. E. of Denver, Colo. Write Mervin Hicks, 1345 Elmira St., Aurora, Colo.

Sept. 3-5. SCSA's Invitational Gypsy Soaring Contest to, at and from McCarran Field, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Sept. 3-5. National Air Rally, Orange, Mass., Airport.

Oct. 1-2. Fall Soaring Roundup, Sky-park Airport, Chillicothe, Ohio.

Nov. 14-16. National Aeronautic Assn. Annual Meeting, Indio, Cal.

Nov. 25-27. Snowbird Meet, Harris Hill, Elmira, N.Y.

Lloyd P. Hunter - Dur.; 1-26
Norman K. Jacobshagen - Dur.; L-K
Tom H. Johnson - Alt.; TG-3A
Erwin F. Jones - Alt.; 1-26
Charles L. Kirschner - Alt.; P-R
Sherburne W. Klein - Alt.; 1-26
Frank A. Krentz - Alt.; 1-26
John F. Krey - Alt., Dist.; 1-26
Paul J. LaFrenier - Dist.; 1-26
Allen L. Leffler - Alt., Dist.; L-K
J. Lowenstein - Alt., Dur., Dist.; 1-26
Frederick H. Matteson - Dist.; M-1
Clarence B. Miller, Jr. - Dur.; 1-26
Alf C. Modahl - Alt., Dur.; P-R
James S. Moeller - Alt.; 1-26
William R. Padgett - Dist.; Ka-6CR
James C. Reilly - Dist.; 1-23
Joe W. Richardson - Dist.; 1-26
Terence Roach - Dist.; 1-26
M. Boris Rotman - Alt., Dist.; 1-26
Roberto S. Salinas - Alt., Dur.; 1-26
N. K. Sanders - Alt., Dist., Dur.; 1-26
G. H. Shea - Alt., Dist., Dur.; 1-26
Bernald S. Smith - Dist.; P-R
Robert I. Stokely - Alt.; TG-2
Steven R. Strong - Alt.; 1-26
Donald E. Taupier - Alt.; BG-7
William Carl Walters - Dist.; TG-2
W. E. Wyatt - Dist.; 1-26, TG-3A