

# 4th ANNUAL JIM SWEARENGEN MEMORIAL SOARING MEET

*Sanctioned by The Soaring Society of America, Inc.*

by LEROY P. TURNER

The Fourth Annual Jim Swearingen Memorial Meet was held at Twinkletown Airport near Memphis May 27th to 30th. The 27th dawned with broken clouds almost obscuring the sky and a low of 41 degrees, the coldest by 10 degrees ever recorded on this date in Memphis. The clouds disappeared before noon; however, the mass of cold Canadian air kept an uncomfortable chill with us all day long. The task for this first day was decided to be Bishop Airport near Holly Springs, Miss., and return, a distance of 72 miles round trip. The first sailplane was off exactly at noon, with the other contestants leaving the ground at approximately 15 minute intervals. The first off, Eugart Yerian in the Memphis Soaring Society's 1-26, had failed to find lift and returned shortly. However, Maj. Linford Bachtell of Robins AFB, flying a 1-23, was able to stay up and he completed the task in 3:45 hr., thereby earning 1000 points. The "Bald Eagle" (Pat Mulloy) from Laurel, Miss., who has a beautiful head of white hair, failed to make it back to the field, but he did earn 814 points for almost completing the task. Walter Fuller in his beautiful Ka-6 and making his first contest cross-country was extra careful and set down in a nice field without making the required distance. Eugart Yerian made another start at 1:05. While he did stay up some two hours on this try he was never out of sight of the field.

On Sunday, a program at the airport had been arranged which included Radio Control model airplane flying and Sky Diving. Partly in the interest of safety we decided to call it an open day and the boys were towed aloft beginning at 11:45. It was our hope the cold Canadian air mass had been heated up enough for good thermals. The result was that Bachtell went into Kentucky, while Pat Mulloy in his 1-23 lost his lift and landed near Ripley, Tenn., for 500 points. The Major had picked up 1000. Eugart Yerian did manage to get out of sight of the field. Walter Fuller after a tow at 12:15 had found no lift, returned

to the field and was towed aloft again at 12:43. He wished to return to Hayesville, N. C., late Sunday and headed out in that direction with his ground crew trailing him. We have not yet heard the exact distance he made.

A rather large turnout was experienced at Twinkletown on Sunday afternoon. With the contesting sailplanes out of town, the public had to content themselves with observing our training plane, a Schweizer 2-22. It made numerous hops for a spot landing contest which was eventually won by John D. Wilson, Jr., with a 37" distance.



Photo by John M. Karlovich

Maj. Linford B. Bachtell, USAF.

Monday morning in the face of a 10 to 15 knot wind with 25 to 30 knots above 5000 feet, a task of Clarksdale, Miss., and return was selected. This was a distance of 98 miles round trip with the turn point directly up wind. It was difficult enough as none of the contestants completed the task. Pat Mulloy almost made it back and wound up with 1000 points. Lin Bachtell was close behind him with 928 points. Eugart Yerian carded 417 for this day.

A dinner was given Monday evening at Doug Partee's Germantown estate for the members, contestants and crews, and it developed our leading competitor, Major Bachtell, wanted to leave for home early Tuesday, however, his crew eventually persuaded him to stay over and Tuesday, which was the first day of real soaring weather, had been list-

ed as a short task so contestants could get an early start for home. Accordingly, a triangular course from Twinkletown to Wilson Field to Hernando and return was selected. On this speed task of 50 miles, Mulloy completed it in 1:41 hr., Bachtell in 2:01 and Eugart completed it in 3:02.

One interesting sidelight to this final task is almost another story. A balky brake on the Stearman had delayed getting the sailplanes aloft for almost an hour. "Q" had begun to pop and it looked like a day of real soaring weather. As soon as the contestants were aloft, John Wilson in a Cub set out for Wilson Field to set out markers. Evidently Mulloy was circling the field there waiting for the marker. John flew on to Hernando and found the same would-be buzzard over the airport waiting for the marker again. His markers completed — John returned to Twinkletown and on entering the pattern found that same buzzard ahead of him landing. Not knowing whether to believe his own eyes, John taxied up to the 1-23, asked for and received an accurate description of the markers. Who needs an old engine anyway when "Q's" are popping?

The Major was not far behind and Pat had not been able to overcome his earlier lead, so Lin Bachtell was declared the winner and new Mid-South Soaring Champion. He was presented with a check for \$100 and the large trophy which is to carry his name as winner in 1961. We look forward to his clean, keen, mean competition again next year. Pat Mulloy was winner of the second place and likewise presented with a trophy and a check for \$75. Eugart Yerian won the third prize and also the duration prize for flight over the field.

Due to conflict with school graduation this meet did not have as many contestants as had been anticipated. Also, the weather was disappointing. Even so, we would class it as successful and next year we are in hopes of providing more intensive competition.

## BIKLE'S HIGH REPUTATION

The following quote is from "Desert Wings" of Edwards, Calif.:

"Crack of the month: When Joe Walker set his altitude mark of 31 miles in the X-15, the Edwards AFB Test Controller, Jack McKay, cautioned over the radio, 'Careful Joe, Paul Bikle is 10,000 feet above you in a glider.'"