



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

by TONY DOHERTY

We think of a Regatta as a group of enthusiasts getting together for the purpose of competition, companionship and fun — the social activities being an important part of the program. This is particularly true of the Annual 1-26 Regattas held each year at Harris Hill. While the competition has been keen, and interest in individual standings high, the overall atmosphere has been one of good fellowship and fun.

The Seventh Annual 1-26 Regatta was held at Harris Hill over the Labor Day Weekend. Sailplanes and crews from the Atlantic states and the providences of Ontario and Quebec braved the hazards of the highways to meet in friendly competition.

While the weather tended to favor the spectators more than the contestants, the tasks that were set up provided a real challenge.

The Regatta Program began Friday evening with a movie session and smoker. Schweizer Aircraft's new movie "Sky Sailing" was shown. This was followed by an informal session of hangar flying.

Saturday's task was a goal and return flight to Ithaca. Gordon Hicks of the Montreal Soaring Council turned in the best performance of the day.

Following a picnic supper Saturday evening, Bob Fisher of Moses Lake, Washington, gave a very interesting account of his epic coast-to-coast soaring trip in a 1-23H.

Sunday morning the Lemans type assembly race, which has become a

feature of the regatta, was held following the pilots meeting. For the third consecutive year the record was broken. Francis Bundy of the Mohawk Soaring Club and his crew clipped nearly 40 seconds off Jim Norton's '60 record with the excellent time of 6 minutes 50 seconds. Bob Curtis' crew of EASC'ers in second place also bettered last year's record. (Any Challengers?)

Soaring conditions Sunday were generally weak but a task was set to Blue Swan Airport and return. While none of the pilots were able to complete the task, many local flights were made over the Harris Hill area. Photographers from a national magazine were on hand to take some pictures featuring soaring. Three 1-26's flying in formation for several shots provided a great deal of spectator interest.

The annual banquet held Sunday evening was attended by nearly 150 persons. Cliff Robertson, well known TV and movie actor who has been currently attending the soaring school, was guest speaker. Don Ryon, president of the 1-26 Association, presented each pilot with plaques commemorating their participation in the Regatta. These plaques have been a feature of the regatta for several years and many owners attach them to the instrument panel of their ship. One is reproduced as the title of this article, full size. They are aluminum with red lines.

Monday's task was a goal and return flight to Savona. Stuart Schwei-

zer turned in the best flight of the day closely followed by Bud Briggs and Francis Bundy.

When contest flying ended at 4:00 P.M. the judges found that Stuart Schweizer was the 1961 Regatta Champion with Bud Briggs a close second. Frank Hurtt and Tony Doherty of EASC won the team championship followed by the Hicks and Henderson team from the Montreal Soaring Club.

While the meet is primarily for 1-26's, a field of 10 sailplanes competed in the open class. Tom Smith of the Iroquois Club won the open class with Walter Cannon the runner up. Hard luck befell two entrants in this class. Brad Straus caught a wing while landing the RJ-5 and seriously damaged his ship. Joe Perrucci also damaged his 1-23 while landing. Neither pilot was injured.

As national interest in soaring grows it is interesting to note the number of pilots being attracted to the one-design regatta type meets. Several new regattas were held this year in different sections of the country and more are scheduled for '62. The idea of one-design competition is not a new one. It was the most important factor that led to the tremendous growth of sailing competition throughout the world. Only when pilots are flying identical sailplanes does soaring become a true test of pilot's ability and skill. These informal regattas are an excellent means to introduce the new soaring enthusiast to the excitement of competition and cross-country soaring. From these area meets will come the future national and international contestants.

EASC President William E. Frutchy (left) presenting trophies to (from L to R) Stuart Schweizer, 1-26 individual champion, and Franklin Hurtt and W. E. "Tony" Doherty, Jr., winners of the team championship.



Most of the 16 participating 1-26's as they appeared for the Regatta portrait.

