

C SOLO FLIGHT

by VERNE JOBST

There is hardly an airplane pilot that has flown through Elmira, N.Y., whose curiosity hasn't been aroused by the sleek, graceful "birds" (sailplanes) that soar in and around the Elmira area. This curiosity in some is suppressed indefinitely. For others it gnaws at them in varying degrees. And in a few, that curiosity finally becomes a reality. Thank goodness, I am in that last group.

My introduction to sailplanes came to me a little over three years ago while flying DC-3's through Elmira for Capital Airlines. I would find myself really looking forward to being in the Elmira area to see those beautiful silent wings rise among the thermals that prevail so frequently.

Ground delays were a pleasure just to see a sailplane in tow, lift so magnificently into the air or to wait till one set down so gently.

After several weeks of flying through there almost daily, we had a minor mechanical on our ever-faithful DC-3. We were to be delayed about three hours. Our agent arranged for my crew and me to get a real close-up of sailplanes with a tour through the Schweizer Soaring School and factory with Tony Doherty as our guide. If I wasn't convinced before, that tour really set the sparks a-flying. However, for various reasons, I wasn't able to fulfill the craving to get airborne in a sailplane for quite a while.

This past summer I mentioned to one of our pilots, Frank Fox, that I would like to try my hand at soaring. He was real pleased with my interest and invited me to join him, Jim Phillips and Vince Petraitis on getting to Elmira to fulfill this desire to soar. I jumped at the offer.

Frank kindled the fire even more by giving me a year's issues of *Soaring* magazine. It seemed that I'd pick up an issue and read it cover to cover; by that time I was really captured. The four of us finally made it there the first of September.

After enrolling in Schweizer's power transition course, Erwin Jones introduced me personally to a 2-22C. After four dual rides, Jonesy turned me loose on what was to become just about one of the greatest

flights of my flying career. This was the type of day I had read about—many thermals just waiting for me.

Just before I soloed, I noticed my three partners were already high above. I was itching to get up there with them. I gave the signal that I was ready and very shortly thereafter we accelerated forward, faster and faster, and in what seemed like a twinkle of an eye I was airborne. Tony Doherty towed me to 3000. As we approached 3000, my hand slipped over the red ball release. I pulled hard. Bang! The moment of release and I was on my own. The exhilarating feeling cannot be accurately described with words. Only others experiencing

Frank Fox
congratulating
Verne Jobst upon
completion of his
C Badge flight.



the same feeling know the thrill that creeps throughout your body.

I kept watching the variometer hoping to get a green indication. What was wrong? A steady red. I looked around and saw my friends high above and in all directions. Now down to 1700. I thought to myself, "Looks like you're heading for a downhill ride. You'd better think of heading back toward the airport. Boy, are they going to razz you about not being able to stay up."

Now I was at 1600 feet. Still no lift. Then all of a sudden the red drops to zero. I'm holding my own. I check the variometer again. Finally I'm in the green. Wouldn't it be great if I could get back to 3000. First thing I knew, the altimeter was reading 3000. By this time I was looking for more lift and hoping to get to 4000. I was fortunate enough to soar to 4650. As far as I

was concerned, I was sitting on top of the world experiencing the fantasy of silent flight that Viscounts and DC-7's cannot match.

Forty-five minutes after releasing, I entered the pattern and eased to a stop near where my friends were waiting. They told me I had qualified for my C Badge. Erwin Jones and Bernie Carris presented me with my C pin right there on the spot. Later on through the mail came my card certificate #2892.

This was a day that I'll never forget. We had left Pittsburgh after breakfast via Piper Apache. I earned my C on my solo flight and then back we went to Pittsburgh for a late dinner. What a perfect day!

I hope in the future to soar to higher awards but I seriously doubt that anything will have quite the thrill for me as did my C solo flight.

2nd of New Federal Aviation Regulations

The Federal Aviation Agency has issued a new Part 61, "Certification: Pilots and Flight Instructors," to become effective Nov. 1, 1962, which supersedes Civil Aeronautics Manual 20, "Pilot and Instructor Certificates," and *partially* supersedes C.A.M. 43, "General Operations Rules." This is in line with FAA's current program to recodify its Civil Air Regulations, Civil Aeronautics Manuals, and Regulations of the Administrator into a new single regulatory system of Federal Aviation Regulations. This recodification program is explained in Part 1, "Definitions and Abbreviations," copies of which are available for 25 cents each from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C. Cost of the new Part 61 is 30 cents per copy.