

MOHAWK VALLEY SOARING CONTEST

Ballston Airport, Saratoga, N.Y., 2-3 June 1962

Sanctioned by The Soaring Society of America, Inc.

by J. F. NORTON AND F. P. BUNDY

By about 11:00 A.M. Saturday, June 2nd, six competing pilots, their crews and ships were on hand for the contest at Ballston Airport. They were George Arents, Jr., of Miami, Fla., with his 1-23H; Hal Bovenkerk, Royal Oak, Mich., 1-23D; Bob Court, Horseheads, N.Y., 1-26; Steve duPont, Southbury, Conn., HP-10; Connie Moeller, Orange, Conn., 1-23G; and Jim Norton, Alpaus, N.Y., 1-26. In addition to the competing pilots there were Bud Briggs and Hugh Root with their 1-26 from Utica, N.Y.; Steve Bogan from the Nutmeg Group, Bethany, Conn., with their 1-26; and a group from the New England Soaring Assn., Barre, Mass., with their 2-22C. Aero tows were provided by Bernie Betts in a Stinson L-5 from Utica, N.Y. and by Mr. Ladd in a Super Cub from Hiller Airport, Barre, Mass. Hal Bovenkerk served very ably as meteorologist, Hazel Bundy as keeper of records, Wally Holbrook as chief inspector, Lloyd Nesbitt as field operations manager and Doc Bundy as director. Connie Moeller was elected from the pilots to join with the director and meteorologist to form the Task Committee.

On Saturday a brisk unstable new batch of air was flowing in from the WNW at a good clip. The task assigned was a speed dash to Pittsfield, Mass., Airport, 52 miles downwind. As take-off time approached the sky

became completely covered with cloud at 2700 feet, and nearly all ground heating was cut off. Nearly all the contestants tried but none could get up and away. Results: No Contest Day.

Sunday dawned bright and clear with much drier air and a light breeze from the north, a day of promise! The meteorologist forecast a good day of dry thermals to about 5000 feet ASL. The Task Committee assigned a 110-mile triangular course with turning points at Bennington, Vt., Airport and Granville, N.Y. All contestants got off to good starts in thermals near the airport, which lifted them to nearly 5000 feet ASL. George Arents headed off a little to the south of the first leg because he had decided to try for a declared goal flight to Hyannis, Cape Cod, for his Diamond Goal and Gold Distance.

After the contestants were off, local soaring was enjoyed by the two 2-22's and the two 1-26's which remained. By mid-afternoon landing reports began coming in. It developed that all but one had failed to find a second thermal. Then, finally, at about 6:00 P.M., Moeller reported his landing just north of Saratoga, only six miles short, after nearly five hours in the air. He modestly stated that, being a member of the Task Committee, he had to prove that the

task assigned was a reasonable one!

The final scores were:

Moeller (1-23G),	104 mi.,	1000 pts.
Bovenkerk (1-23D),	21 mi.,	202 pts.
duPont (HP-10),	16 mi.,	153 pts.
Norton (1-26),	16 mi.,	153 pts.
Court (1-26),	12 mi.,	115 pts.
Arents (1-23H),	landed at Loudon	
Airport,	18 miles out.	

Moeller was awarded the first prize, a desk set consisting of a barometer, thermometer and hydrometer. Bovenkerk won a portable wind gage for second prize. Norton and duPont each received copies of Philip Wills' latest book, "Where No Birds Fly," for third prizes.

An unusual feature of the meet was the excellent radio communication system provided and manned by the local radio hams. They had four stations on the airfield, an encampment with station on top of Mt. Greylock (Mass.), one in Pittsfield, Mass., and one in Scotia, N.Y. This communications service made it possible to check and coordinate all activities on the airport, and for landed pilots to call in directly to the records clerk at the take-off line. The radio system was very ably organized and coordinated by Howard Lester of Alpaus, N.Y. The radio hams thought this *real* exercise was much more fun than a simulated disaster or flood-type of exercise!

The Contest Committee wishes to thank all members of the Mohawk Soaring Club for the effective work they did in preparing for and carrying out the meet. Special mention should be made of the excellent VW Microbus service between the parking lot and the flight line which was provided by Bill Wilson and his son Lee.

Next meet we hope we can arrange for two super soaring days.

Scene during first day's pilots' meeting. Doc Bundy is displaying the prizes. At right are Hazel Bundy and Hal Bovenkerk. Note cloud cover which clomped thermals.



Steve duPont getting final preparations for contest take-off in his HP-10 as the New England Soaring Association's 2-22C comes in for a landing.



Photo by J. P. Parrott