

# DIAMOND HOLIDAY AT PINCHER CREEK

by EDWIN D. McCLANAHAN

An invitation from Julien Audette to members of our local soaring club at Richland, Wash., (CBSA) to participate in a wave expedition to Pincher Creek, Alberta, was a temptation too great to be denied. The Regina Soaring Club and the Calgary Cu Nim Club were sponsoring the camp from October 7th-9th. Just one more fling before the winter doldrums set in.

In spite of the 470-mile journey, the odds of three wave days out of five for October quoted by Julien seemed ample. Rudy and Mary Ann Allemann decided to take their Ka-6CR and Molly, Kathy, Tina and myself our 1-23H. Jim "Ace" Hard offered his service as crew which was immediately accepted.

Our journey northeastward began amidst a dust storm which turned to rain as we neared Spokane, Washington. We crossed the border and cleared customs with relative ease; however, the Canadian officer's gloomy report of a blizzard raging on Crowsnest Pass left us a bit uneasy but this also meant the wind was blowing, hurrah! We crossed the pass shortly after midnight and found it snowing quite heavily with six inches on the ground and yes, a wind was blowing about 15 miles per hour from the northeast!?

We located our motel about 2:00 A.M. and found our Canadian cohorts waiting for us with a quite ade-

quate supply of the pride of Canada. Their first words were something to the effect that you might as well join us and succumb to hypoxia the easy way for there will be no wave flying until Monday. So we did.

Saturday morning a haggard Rudy and Mary Ann greeted us. They, in contrast, spent the wee hours of the morning extricating their car and trailer from a buffalo wallow encountered on a "short-cut" to the airport. Later, Joe Robertson and Frank Woodward from Seattle made their muddy appearance with a similar tale. The rest of the day was spent shopping and harrassing the local weather office. Low clouds with occasional snow flurries persisted throughout the afternoon. The weather man predicted it would clear late Sunday afternoon with a 50—50 chance for wave conditions Monday.

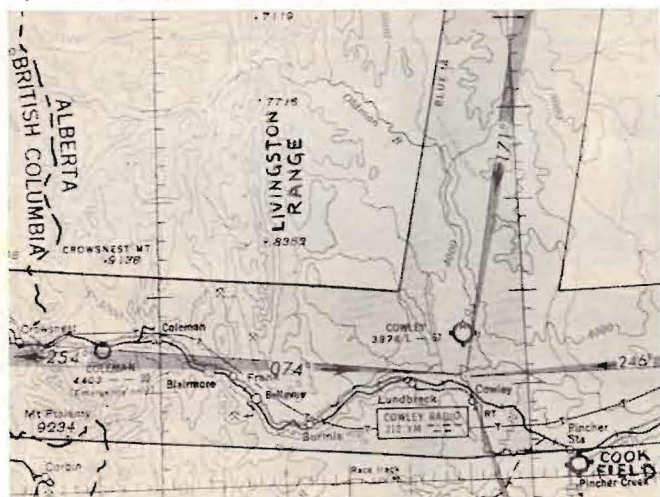
Sunday we awoke early to find the air crystal clear and very still. After breakfast an almost imperceptible wind from the west was noticed and a small dot of cumulus cloud appeared on the eastern slope of the Livingston Range 18 miles west of us. Such a tiny cloud might easily be overlooked as a spurious event but its true significance was betrayed by long banners of snow being swept from the summits of the more prominent peaks. An hour later a cloud fall developed over the range and the now enlarged rotor cloud was

crowned with a well formed lenticular.

Cook field suddenly was alive with pilots and crews assembling gliders, filling oxygen bottles and fueling tow planes. The Canadians are indeed fortunate in having a patron such as Mr. Cook who opens his spacious home and convenient air strip to glider pilots on these occasions. By noon all ships were assembled but the warm wind created by our wave had melted the snow on the runway and turned the latter into a sea of mud. A close inspection revealed that it was drying fast. A muddy patch between the assembly area and the end of the runway was bridged with planks to forestall wheel clogging on the sailplanes which was inevitable on take-off. Harold Townsend slithered off first in a 1-26. The 2400 ft. runway didn't appear any too long. The tow plane was back in 40 minutes. The wave was working fine but the air was quite turbulent.

I was next with Molly and "Ace" Hard tugging on the wing tips and Rudy keeping the tail low. Once airborne I missed the familiar sound of the spinning main wheel. Doug Currie, the tow pilot, had taken "Doc" Laidlaw along as copilot to increase the latter's wave towing experience and our rate of climb suffered accordingly; but it did give us the opportunity to admire the golden quaking aspen against their snowy background. To reach the lift zone we towed through a small gap in the foothills after failing to climb over them. Now we were just below the base of the rotor cloud which rose vertically for over a mile and in front of us the foehn wall was spilling down the Livingston Range. The

Map showing places mentioned in article. Pincher Creek is in lower right corner, Crowsnest at lower left, Livingston Range in center.



Lenticular and roll cloud of primary wave caused by the Livingston Range. Photo taken from Pincher Creek at 3:00 P.M., Oct. 9, 1961.

