

The 1962 SSA Photographic Contest Results

by DR. HARNER SELVIDGE, Chairman, SSA Publications Committee

Not too long ago, U.S. soaring enthusiasts could go a year or more and not see more than one or two good black and white photos of sailplanes, particularly in-flight shots. There were plenty of good colored slides, although not many of them were of airborne subjects. Since these slides don't make very good black and white prints, those responsible for *Soaring* magazine and the SSA calendars were usually in desperate straits for good photos. Last year's SSA photographic contest brought out many photos which were much superior to any that had been seen in soaring circles for a long time, and the tide really began to turn. The chance at that \$100 first prize was very stimulating.

The results last year were so good that the anonymous donor of the prize money contributed a similar amount for the 1962 contest which has just been concluded. The judges thought that some comments on the 1962 entries would be welcomed by the contestants and those who might wish to enter future contests. There were 150 prints entered this year, up from 117 in 1961. Most notable was the high average quality of the 1962 entries. There were perhaps 50 which were equal to the top 10 last year. In 1961 probably 75% of the entries were eliminated in the first round of judging. This year, the judges were able to eliminate only about one-third the first time around because of the high average quality.

Here are some of the judges' comments, first on reasons for rejections:

Poor Negative Quality—A common difficulty was a lack of sharpness in the principal object in the photo. This can be caused either by vibration, poor focus or excessive enlargement. A fuzzy or grainy subject has to have tremendous interest to survive comparison with a crisp, technically perfect negative.

Poor Print Quality—There were a number of prints submitted which would have ranged higher if they had been printed properly. Some needed more contrasty paper, some

Photo Contest Winners

1. Robert Lee Moore — \$100
2. George D. Hess — \$50
3. Sandor A. Aldott — \$25
4. Robert Lee Moore — \$5
5. Howard Gottschalk — \$5
6. Charles E. Brown — \$5
(used on cover of August, 1962, *Soaring*)
7. Eugene Bartos — \$5
8. Sandor A. Aldott — \$5
(used as frontispiece in October, 1962, *Soaring*)

Honorable Mentions

Edward M. Ford
Robert Lee Moore (two photos)
Dita Aldott (three photos)
Sandor A. Aldott (two photos)

Most of the winning photos will be used as frontispieces in forthcoming issues of *Soaring* magazine.

needed sections dodged, and some just needed more time in the hypo! Take the time to get all there is out of your negatives.

Poor Composition—A very frequent trouble was that of a "busy" or distracting background. It is almost impossible to take a shot from above looking down on a sailplane over a city, for example, without the eye being led astray by houses, streets, etc. It is better to shoot over more open country, but even here you may find upon viewing the print that a road or some other ob-

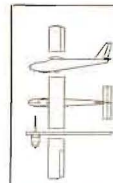
ject on the ground creates a confusing pattern with respect to the lines of the sailplane. One solution to this problem is to take lots of shots and pick the best. Some prints submitted had poor arrangement of the subject, and some could have been greatly improved by judicious cropping.

On the positive side, the judges are usually looking for shots with a high pictorial quality and interest—ones which catch the grace and beauty of soaring—and they must *move*. It is surprising how often a good, clean, close-up, in-flight shot of a sailplane can have a static quality which reduces the photo to a mere technical record. Camera angles are most important here.

Surprisingly few photos submitted had any good clouds. They are not only an integral part of most soaring, but have an excellent pictorial quality in themselves. They almost always add interest to a picture.

It takes a lot of work to make good in-flight pictures of aircraft. The articles by Pete Bowers, an outstanding aircraft photographer, in *Soaring* for May and June, 1961, should be carefully studied by all seriously interested in aerial photography of sailplanes.

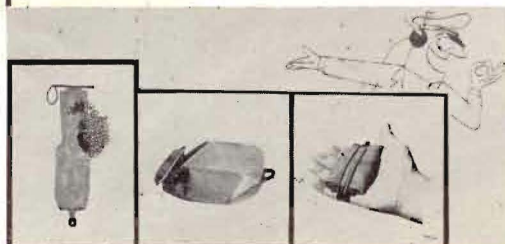
Finally, the judges thought special recognition should be given to Alex and Dita Aldott of Chicago, Illinois, who together had seven photos in the top sixteen in this year's contest.



BUILD the little, all-metal D-8 sailplane. 32-ft. span. Easy to build — rugged. Engineered by designer of world-famous aircraft. License experimental (amateur-built), CAR Part 1. Plans, including full-scale rib and bulkhead layouts — only \$29.95. Specs. 3-view, description — \$1.00. Pacific Aircraft Company, 5942 Avenida Chamnez, La Jolla, California.

new!

**MAKES ALL RIGID
"RELIEF TUBES" OBSOLETE.**



"Pocket John" the Flier's Friend!

Smooth, strong, bellows-type latex bag with elongated neck and simple, positive, roll-down closure.

Spill-proof, leak-proof, flexible, adaptable.
Reversible for easy Cleansing.

Supplied and guaranteed by

SIMPLEX SUPPLY CO.

Box 1702, Santa Rosa, Calif.

\$7.95 at your Airport Store
(or order direct)

INQUIRIES INVITED