

THE INTERNATIONALS— A CANADIAN VIEW

by MARGUERITE CHESBROUGH, *Press Delegate, Canadian Team*

David Webb established two Canadian national soaring records during the World Soaring Championships held February 11th to 23rd at Laguna de Gomez airport, near Junín, Argentina. On the 19th, the fifth contest day, he completed a 322.7-kilometre (200-mi.) triangle with an average speed of 75.64 kph (47 mph) in his new Skylark 4, which Slingsby's had delivered to him in Argentina. Charles Yeates of Brantford and Wolf Mix of Toronto, both flying Schleicher Ka-6's in the Standard class, also completed the triangle, coming 11th and 19th, respectively, for the day. Dave was 9th for the day in the Open Class. Actually, Charlie exceeded Julien Audette's existing record, also, but Dave was even faster.

This illustrates how records were constantly being broken during this exciting contest. Belgium, Italy, France, Australia, Israel and Chile also set new national records.

Dave's second record flight of 637 km. (395 miles) was made the next day. The day's task, free distance, was the feature event of the contest. The drift was to the northwest and pilots were warned of large swampy

areas in that direction. The beginning was very tough with weak conditions, and proved the downfall of the French pilot Henry who had been holding the lead. He was forced down only 50 km. from Laguna de Gomez.

Webb's landing place became known in the late afternoon and for several proud hours a small flag with his number—15—appeared as the farthest point on the map displayed for the occasion. But not all the pilots had been heard from, and finally it was learned that Dick Johnson of the U. S. A. and Edward Makula of Poland had gone well over 700 km., leaving Dave third for the day. Our Standard Class pilots did well too, both going about 430 km. (270 mi.) and coming 18th and 19th for the day.

In the final totals, Webb was 9th in the Open Class, and in the Standard Class Yeates took 9th and Mix 21st. It was a proud moment for Canada when two of our pilots took their places among the honored "top ten" of each class during the closing ceremonies. Our highest previous position had been 15th, for Jeffery and Woodward in the two-place

class in Spain in 1952; in single-place competition the highest had been 18th, Yeates in Poland in 1958. Though steady improvement had been noted, our success this year surprised ourselves and others as well—Ann Welch commented, "I did not know that you Canadians could fly so well!"

The Laguna de Gomez Gliding Club is situated in a perfectly flat part of the country, with not a hill in sight. Conditions are comparable with those at Ontario, with which I am familiar, but with higher cloud base at times. The weather was good throughout the contest except for the occasional thunderstorms that would be preceded by turbulent conditions and followed by a heavy blanket of cloud that prevented soaring on two days, and also spoiled some planned social functions.

The people of the nearby town of Junín showered the visitors with invitations to their homes and clubs. Everyone had to try at least once an *asado*, a typical *gaucho* meal of freshly-killed beef roasted slowly over an open fire, a feast accompanied by some of the truly delicious Argentine wines, bread and fresh fruit, and eaten right in front of the fire with only knife and fork as utensils.

The foreign teams and the workers at the base were offered free meals served in a new hangar converted into a mess-hall for the meet. Some 1100 had their meals there every day, getting acquainted with their chance neighbors at table, trying to carry on a conversation through the tremendous noise created by the dishes handled by 25 running and sweating waiters, the blaring record player and unintelligible announcements over the loud-speaker, all reverberating under the metal roof. The servings were generous and very good.

Certainly the Argentine organizers of this year's contest have set a very high standard in friendliness, courtesy, cordiality and helpfulness toward the foreign teams. The generosity of the Argentine Republic in helping with travel costs, providing Ka-6 sailplanes, and in many other respects, will leave a permanent impression in the annals of international soaring competition.

We departed with a sad feeling of leaving a charming country and charming people whom we might not soon see again.

The principals of the Canadian team in Argentina during opening day ceremonies: from L to R, Ross Grady of Edmonton, Team Captain; David Webb of Montreal, open class pilot who placed 9th; Charles Yeates of Brantford and Wolf Mix of Don Mills, standard class pilots who placed 9th and 21st, respectively. Crew members were Albie Pow, James Carpenter, Ben Price, Cliff Sunderland, Mrs. C. Yeates, Roy Gray, James Reid, Roy Olson and Peter Timm. Mrs. J. Chesbrough was press delegate, John Chesbrough and Ralph Goodfellow were OSTIV delegates and Mrs. J. Carpenter was an observer.

