

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by WILLIAM S. IVANS
SSA President

This month promises to be one of the most active in the soaring year.

Highlight will be the National Championships at Elmira, New York, immediately followed by the SSA Annual Meeting and a Meeting of the SSA Board of Directors.

The Nationals are expected to produce the largest pilot entry in recent years. For the first time, a method for limiting entry has been employed, with 55 set by the organizers as maximum. This will almost surely become customary in succeeding years; there is a limit to the number which can be safely and equitably handled by any of the sites and organizations likely to host a Nationals. From the present relatively simple Badge requirements for entry we may expect to progress to Regional eliminations as a more accurate yardstick of competitive ability. This transition will be paced as much by the successful development of truly competitive Regional meets as by any other factor.

Among the agenda items at the SSA Board meeting will be discussion of your Society's operations and financial status, including a rehearsing of arguments for and against an increase in membership dues.

Our status as a Division of the National Aeronautics is to be examined. The NAA is the official Aero Club of the U.S., and is the sole channel through which sanctions, Badges, and records are approved by the Federation Aeronautique Internationale. Your directors will discuss proposals for a closer relationship with NAA.

A report on recent discussions with FAA will be of interest to everyone. Considerable progress appears to have been made with several regulatory branches of FAA headquarters in Washington, in the vital areas of pilot and glider certification and air traffic control. SSA representatives, coordinated by Vice-President John Ryan, have called upon the appropriate FAA offices at frequent intervals to provide information on the special requirements of glider

operations. We have requested a number of special category regulations designed to increase our present freedom of action in flight, and we are requesting special exemption from the equipment and flight path requirements which are scheduled to apply to all flight above 18,000 feet in a year's time. In many areas of regulation, our cause is the same as that of general aviation, which has been stifled into extinction by over-regulation in many European countries and in the United Kingdom. Many of us feel that representation of our cause to FAA is the most important service which the SSA can

perform for its members; without freedom to fly, all other problems become academic.

Final item of business will be election of officers to serve in 1964.



(Photo by George Uveges)

SOARING

To those of you who have stopped to gaze,
At the gull as he silently sails along
The ridge of an ocean's shore.
And to those of you who,
On a warm summer day,
Have watched the hawk
With long, black, tapered wings outstretched,
Lazily circling and wheeling,
Turning and seeking the way
To become just a speck to the human eye
In the vastness of the sky.
Or to you who have watched the dust from the desert's floor
Borne aloft in devilish delight and followed
Our hawk in flight to an even greater height.

If this you have seen and say it is so —
Then you have paused just long enough to ask,
The eternal question of how and why?
There can be flight without power in their sky.
The gull was gliding —
Riding downhill on an ocean of upslope wind,
The hawk was soaring —
Within an invisible bubble of warm rising air,
Maintaining and gaining altitude where
He is wise on how to search
And find the center of strongest lift,
And be carried aloft by the thermal gift.

The gull and hawk are of but two
Of nature's sailplanes in the sky,
That you have stopped to watch and wonder why?
They have found the secret of nature's energy in space
And turned their eyes on a higher plane,
As man looks to an even higher place.

EARL J. SEAGARS

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