

# REPORT ON THE 9th WORLD SOARING CHAMPIONSHIPS

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The March issue of *Soaring* contained a complete statistical report on the International Contest, which was recently completed in Argentina. This article will attempt to fill in some of the details, as well as to make some observations concerning the meet, which may be of interest to the readers of *Soaring*. In the near future, we hope to have articles by Dick Johnson, Dick Schreder and John Ryan, giving first-hand accounts of their experiences during the competition.

Although we naturally would have liked to have "won," we think the SSA can feel proud of its team, for competition is extremely keen when there are over sixty of the world's best pilots from twenty-three countries competing, and each one is out to make the best possible showing he can. Makula and Popiel in the open and Huth in the standard class did an outstanding job of competitive flying. Schreder's and Johnson's finishing right behind the Poles was an outstanding achievement.

There were many unique things about the 9th World Soaring Championships; the complete use of aero-

tow for retrieving, the 50% subsidized travel and transportation cost of the teams to Argentina, the Argentines' picking up the bill for all team costs while in Argentina, and, last but not least, the wonderful friendliness of the Argentine people.

The possibility of holding the Internationals in Argentina developed soon after Hossinger had won the World Championship in Cologne, Germany, in 1960. Frondesi, who was then the president of Argentina, was in Europe at that time and apparently was impressed with the favorable publicity this could give Argentina. He gave the nod to bid on the Internationals for 1963. Few gave them much chance of obtaining the meet, due to Argentina's being so far from most of the F.A.I. member countries.

However, the Argentine proposal at the F.A.I. Gliding Committee's Meeting (where the decisions on the location of the International Meet is made) was so impressive and generous that it was impossible to refuse. It was rumored that the total cost of the meet, apparently including the Ka-6's and towplanes and improvements at Junin Air-

port, approached the three-quarter million dollar mark. Since the Argentine Government was in a difficult financial condition, there was some apprehension as to whether they could proceed with the meet. Fortunately, they did go through with it and produced one of the most interesting Internationals yet held.

Preparations for the SSA International Team effort began in the spring of 1962. At the summer meeting of the Board of Directors, policy was set concerning the team; the captain was chosen and procedure set up for seeding the pilots. This was the same system as used in the past, where the pilots on the previous International Team and the top ten pilots from the two previous Nationals seeded each other. The seeding was carried out in August and Dick Johnson, Dick Schreder and John Ryan were chosen as the pilots. Applications from persons interested in other positions on the team were received and the crewmen, meteorologist and team manager were chosen by the pilots and the captain.

One of the major problems facing the team was that of obtaining transportation for the sailplanes and pilots. Through Jacqueline Cochran and the NAA, the U.S. Team was very fortunate in receiving assurance of military transportation. At the same time, a fund drive with a goal of \$7,500 to cover the team costs was started. So far, 75% of the goal has been reached and additional donations are still expected. Even if the full goal is achieved, the team members will still have to absorb some of the costs themselves, including the uniforms.

One of our big concerns was that of getting our sailplanes and equipment through Argentine customs. FAVAV recommended that we allow the month of January for this, which, of course, would be impractical since the sailplanes and team would be going down together by air. We finally were able to obtain their promise that they would try to accomplish this in two days. Actually, when we arrived at B.A., we found that FAVAV and Mr. Danilo Frey of Aviquipo, who was assisting the team, had made arrangements through the American Embassy so that we were cleared in five minutes and entered the country on a diplomatic basis. Our pass-

The airfield at Junin where the 1963 World Soaring Championships were conducted, as seen from one of the towplanes.

