

# 443.5 MILES BY 1-26 N8606R

by WALLACE A. SCOTT

My ambition in the last year and a half has been to beat the 1-26 record of 373 miles, set by Helmut Roemer, a German soaring pilot, flying out of Albuquerque, New Mexico. Last August, a year ago, I had a very enjoyable flight for my distance diamond in 06R, following a dog-leg course from Odessa to Plains, Texas, thence to Roswell, N.M., and on to Tucumcari, N.M., for 330 miles.

This year has been a terrible year locally for distance flying, but regardless of this fact, an encampment was planned for the first two weeks in August. A gathering of the clan was scheduled for the flying to be attempted from either here (Odessa) or the Marfa-Alpine airport, halfway between Marfa and Alpine, Texas. Some of our good friends arrived a week or so early, including Ben Greene from North Carolina and the John Randalls from Florida. The time was spent flying locally, and bemoaning the poor weather for this time of year. John tried bravely in his new Sisu 1A for some distance flights, but they all were aborted. Ben couldn't be talked into any exploratory flights, in his new Standard Austria. Al Parker ended up with John's Sisu, and low and behold, August 1st loomed as a good x-country day. Some of the boys

were already at Marfa, but the ones here decided to go x-country this day, out of Odessa. I took the first aero tow at about 10:10 A.M., and left the airport confines about 15 minutes later with 2,000' in hand, after working up from a low of 900' after tow.

The first half hour was a struggle, but about 7 hours 20 minutes later I had completed one of my most enjoyable flights yet, 380 miles in total distance. This was a three-legged, dog-leg course, with turn points at Hobbs, N.M., and Tucumcari, N.M. This beat the record, as far as I knew, but I was disappointed when I had landed and erroneously measured by distance as 350 miles. The next day, back in Odessa, you can imagine my elation upon an accurate measurement of 380 miles. All the gang left for Marfa the next day, and in the next few days, some exceptional flights were made from there, as you will no doubt read about in other write ups. Of necessity, I remained in Odessa.

I checked on the weather up the line, and Aug. 3rd was good. Aug. 4th was very good all the way north as far as I could hope to fly. Aug. 5th, I aborted from an eleven o'clock car tow, as I figured it was too late. This turned out to be a very good day, and I was in con-

tact with Ben Greene and Red Wright by radio about 12:30 as they came zooming up from Marfa, crossing this area a few miles to the west of Odessa. How I envied them. Ben's ground speed up to that point was a fantastic 80 to 85 miles per hour, and he made his world goal attempt to Boise City, Okahiloma. (He was beat out of this record because of a high tow, but courageously made the flight over again two days later for a new world goal record, pending homologation by SSA, NAA and FAI.) That night my weather man advised that Aug. 6th would be a repeat of Aug. 5th, and I was ready for another flight.

The next morning found me at the airport with my son at 9:00 A.M. We got the 1-26 out and on the line, and as I was laying out the car tow line my wife drove up to act as tow pilot in our Buick. At 9:30 I made the first attempt, found zero, but soon lost it and landed. My next attempt was steady sink. Cu's were not predicted until eleven. I made the third attempt immediately and found 50- to 100-fpm lift that soon fizzled. I delayed my fourth car tow until 10:05, and cut loose at 900' in lift. I worked it for 20 minutes to 2,300' above ground and said goodbye once again to Odessa. I had declared turn points at Lovington, N.M., and Clayton, N.M., with the hopes of landing in Scott City, Kansas. (Optimistic, but Doc Williams had talked me into the decision. The reader will hear from this man once he takes delivery of his Standard Austria, so remember his name, Dr. Glen R. Williams. Thanks.) The slight wind, about 5 to 10 mph, had drifted me too far north of my course line, so I had to set in a slight crab, clicking along at 55 mph. My next thermal saved my flight, 900' above ground, but I was able to work it up to about 3,000'. Down again to 1,000' at five miles south of Frankel City. Saved again by Cu forming near by. Now the left was getting better and I set off for Hobbs and Lovington, increasing the indicated air speed. Near Hobbs I was up to 9,000' MSL in 500-fpm lift under large Cu's. Now the day was really beginning to boom. Over Hobbs at 12 noon and 75 miles stowed away. I wouldn't work lift for the next hour unless it was better than 500 fpm. I expected the lift to weaken over

The author soaring his Schweizer 1-26 over Odessa, Texas.

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