

1-26 CLASS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

by DR. DONALD W. AITKEN, JR.

I. INTRODUCTION

The many letters of response to my article in the October, 1963, issue of *Soaring* (pp. 12-14) revealed a nationwide enthusiasm for 1-26 one-design activities and for the concept of a national 1-26 class point championship. The latter will run for the entire year, and will determine category champions and a national champion solely on the basis of points accumulated throughout the year. Particular interest appears to be in evidence among rental pilots and club members who suddenly find that they can compete locally on an equal basis with owners and nationally on an almost equal basis with owners.

This interest was reflected by the officers and participants in the 1-26 Class Association organizational meeting at Elmira on September 1, 1963, and the national point championship was adopted by the 1-26 Class Association as its first officially sanctioned function. The three regional champions (Eastern, Central and Western) will be determined in sanctioned regattas (the time and place has not yet been established), but the national champion will be determined on the basis of his cumulative performance for the year. It is quite conceivable that a rental pilot will

emerge as the 1964 national 1-26 champion.

The tentative rules for the national championship were circulated among all of the officers of the 1-26 Class Association. They were discussed, modified and finally adopted in the form presented here.

II. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A valid current membership in the Soaring Society of America is required. Nonmembers may join by sending annual dues, name and address to The Soaring Society of America, Inc., Box 66071, Los Angeles, California, 90066, (\$3.00 for academic students, \$5.00 for associate status, or \$10.00 for full member grade).

Membership in the National 1-26 Class Association is also required. The membership fee of \$1.00 should either be sent directly to Nathan Frank, Box 338, Lexington Park, Maryland, or submitted to local clubs and dealers where provisions for membership collection are available (we hope soon to have this include *all* active soaring schools in the United States).

Finally, 25 cents per individual flight submission will be required. This should be submitted to the scorer along with the flight description as outlined in the rules. The 25-cent fees will go toward purchasing and mailing trophies at the

end of the year (see section IV of this article).

It should be clear that the 1-26 Class Association is a purely one-design association. Flights made in other sailplanes of comparable performance (Cherokees, etc.) will not be considered.

III. CATEGORIES AND RULES

Our fundamental goals were to foster one-design activities in soaring, to enable the rental pilot and club member to compete with the owner with a minimum of disadvantage, and to keep the rules and events simple, in order to encourage participation by as many pilots as possible. In general the pilot's word will serve for most of the proof. Barogram, turn-point photographs and official timings are never required. Nevertheless, it was deemed advantageous to stay fairly close to the general FAI requirements in order to familiarize novice pilots with the procedure for recording flights for FAI recognition. The pilot's own calculation of distance, speed and altitude will usually be accepted but as the reader will note, sufficient information is required to enable the scorer to recalculate the performance whenever it is considered necessary (in the event of near ties in standings, for instance). The six competition categories are listed below, followed by a discussion of the rules for each category.

1. Free distance
2. Distance to a predeclared goal
3. Distance over a closed course
4. Altitude gained
5. Speed over a closed course
6. Total cross-country miles accumulated

1. Free distance: the applicant should submit his own best estimate of the distance covered. Nevertheless, a description of the take-off and landing points must be provided to the scorer, along with the estimated release altitude above the terrain (or ASL) and an estimate of the ASL altitudes of the terrain at release and landing. Only flights exceeding 50 kilometers (31.1 miles) are eligible and the altitude difference between release and landing must not exceed 1% of the distance covered. The standard FAI distance penalty will be imposed when this altitude difference exceeds 1000 meters (3281 ft.). One landing witness signature is re-

The Schweizer 1-26 sailplane built from a kit by pilot Tom Page of the Illini Glider Club at the University of Illinois, Urbana, Ill. Tom has earned his Gold badge with one diamond, so far, in his 1-26.

Photo by David Mobley

