

SIERRA REGIONAL SOARING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Sanctioned by the Soaring Society of America, Inc.

by VICTOR SAUDEK, Competition Director

The contest, sponsored by the Nevada Soaring Association and the National Air Races and held at the Carson City, Nev. airport, was marked by good airmanship and sportsmanship, though it did not draw the number of contestants expected. The weather was fair to mediocre, nevertheless, the participants flew a total of 1,850 miles during the four contest days.

Responsible for the smooth operation of the meet were Charles Glattly, Catherine Nielsen and Edward Blalock of the Nevada Soaring Association, while Tom Hay, manager of the Carson City Airport, deserves high praise for his invaluable cooperation. Weather was handled by John Marsh of the USWB, Reno Airport.

September 13—First Day

Weather was fair for a small closed course race: light winds, light thermals topping at 12,000 plus feet. Takeoffs were interspersed between TBM Borate Bombers putting out a local forest fire. Course was Carson City to Yerington to Smith Valley and return, 86 miles. Those completing the course were, in order, Dick Delafield, Bob Klemmedson and Al Leffler. The points were in reverse order: Al winning with 38.2 mph, Bob got 989 points with 36.9 mph and Dick pushed his 1-23 (June Bug) over with 29.6 mph. Klaus Nielsen made 53 miles in the Nevada Soaring Association's 1-26. Carl Herold made 49.5 in his (and Bruce Beebe's) Ka-6CR. Don Edwards flogged away for 26.5 miles in a 1-26 trying to get his Silver C distance to qualify. Walt Lockhart (1-26), Don Mythen (Cherokee II), and Steve Keachie in the Pratt-Read returned to base.

September 14—Second Day

As thermals showed more spirit and dash, a triangular course with free distance was set: Carson City to Yerington to Silver Springs, return and then out again. Leffler took the LM-1 (an L-K modification) around and then off to Hawthorne for 167.5 miles. Bob Klemmedson made 131.5 miles in his Skylark 3F and Carl Herold also landed in the same place. Delafield

struck out to make 126.5 miles in his "Bug" and Klaus Nielsen just completed the course for 93 miles. Keachie lumbered off 42 in the PR and Lockhart fell just short of that at 39 miles. Don Mythen and Dan Schat made it to Yerington for 33.5 miles.

The third day, September 15th, was "no contest" as an east wind picked up during the morning throwing odd puffs and jolts into the sky but getting no one anywhere. The Skylark struggled for two hours to climb out of a box canyon. His position was called in from time to time by forest fire lookouts. It was to have been free distance, but no one made as much as 30 miles.

September 16—Fourth Day

An attempt to make free distance. This time, points were earned during a few hours of productive thermals as a wave situation developed by mid-afternoon.

Herold: 93 miles to Lovelock putting him in 3rd place; Klemmedson: 92 miles to Lovelock putting

him in 1st place; Lockhart: 40 miles, raising him to 6th place; Leffler: 29 miles, held 2nd place.

Delafield and Keachie, 20 miles, 4th and 8th places respectively. Nielsen and Mythen returned, no score.

The fifth day, September 17th, was declared a "waste of time" to try for points as the trough that caused the wave was upon us. It was overcast and high winds were predicted. The National Championship Air Races were cancelled for the same reason. However, things weren't as bad as that, since Herold and Klemmedson and others made local flights of several hours duration. The strong winds did not show nor was the spectacular wave display worth much altitude. It might have been good enough for contest minimum, but not much more.

September 18—Sixth Day

Late developing and exasperating thermals made the triangle race from Carson City to Silver Springs to Douglas County Airport (Minden) and return a real test and challenge to decide the Sierra Soaring Champion. The east wind did blow and all contestants were launched between 12:50 and 1:30. The last one crossed the starting

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Participants in the Sierra Regional Soaring Championship. Left to Right. Standing: Dick Delafield, Washington; Steve Keachie, Calif.; Bob Klemmedson, Calif.; Allen Leffler, Calif.; Dan Schat, Calif.; Sitting: Walt Lockhart, Calif.; Carl Herold, Calif.; Klaus Nielsen, Nevada. Not in the photo: Don Mythen and Don Edwards.