



Studying the map of the first leg of the transcontinental delivery flight are, left to right, Richard Miller and Les Arnold with Russ Palmer in cockpit. First stop was Thermal-G-Ranch.

## WESTWARD-HO WITH THE 2-32

On September 9th, 1964, at 9:45 AM, a brand new Schweizer 2-32 sailplane took off behind a Piper PA-18-150 towplane from the Chemung County Airport, Elmira, N.Y. bound for Sky Sailing Airport, Fremont, Calif., 2,458 miles away.

At the controls of the 2-32, N5840V, Serial No. 5, were Russell Palmer of Menlo Park, Calif. and Richard Miller, *Soaring's* editor of the 1-26 Association News feature, of Oakland, Calif. The towplane pilot was Les Arnold, owner and operator of the Sky Sailing airport. Arnold who purchased the sailplane for his Fremont, Calif. operation, chose to tow it by air to its new home rather than by the more tedious and tiring method of trailering by car.

Five days later, the "sky train" reached its destination after an uneventful flight which consumed a total of 31 hours and 35 minutes, one hour of which was spent in demonstration soaring over some of the stopover airports. The average ground speed during the entire trip was 80.6 mph and the pilots RON'd at 13 cities.

This was the first east-to-west transcontinental towed flight and the second crossing of the United States by a "sky train". The first

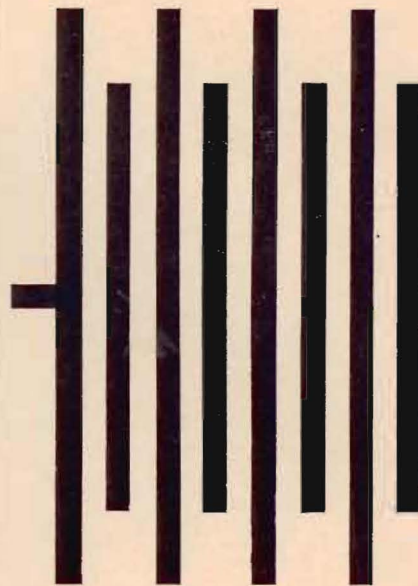
took place 34 years ago, on March 30, 1930, when the famous speed and distance record pilot, Frank M. Hawks, took off from San Diego, Calif. with New York City as his destination. Hawks was flying the "Texaco Eaglet", designed by Prof. R. E. Franklin, father of the famous Franklin gliders of the early 30s. His brother, Wallace rode in the front cockpit of the towplane, a Waco biplane powered by a 220 hp Wright Whirlwind engine which was piloted by J. D. "Duke" Jernigen.

Hawks' flight took a total of six and a half days (36 hours flying time) and covered 2,860 miles with landings at 21 airports. It is interesting to note that the average ground speed was a high 79.19 mph.

Shortly before 4:00 PM, on April 5th, the Eaglet appeared at 4,000 feet over New York's Van Cortland Park where it landed 16 minutes after release from the tug. On touchdown, Hawks was welcomed by Grover Whalen, then New York City's official greeter, and a crowd of 15,000 spectators.

Later the same year, the Eaglet was presented to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D. C.

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