

## ON RECORDS, AND THE NEXT 1,000



There have been many notable achievements by American soaring pilots during the last decade. Paul MacCready's winning the World Championship in 1956 and Paul Bikle's flight to 46,267 feet in 1961 come immediately to mind. But no flight seems to have captured the imagination of American soaring pilots as has Al Parker's flight of 644 miles on July 31, 1964. What soaring pilot's heart did not beat faster when he heard the news? The struggle for world's records is a continuing international competition, and the distance record appears firmly back in our hands with a stunning margin.

Because of the importance of this flight, we are devoting a major part of this issue of *Soaring* to its various aspects. However, this was not the only world's record flight claimed by an American soaring pilot in the last few weeks. George Moffat added almost ten miles an hour to his 300 km triangle speed record, as he blistered around the course in 2 hours and 40 minutes for a ground speed of 75 mph (121 kmph). A few days before, Wally Scott set a new world's goal record with a flight of 505 miles (815 km). Their

stories are also in this issue.

We talked to Al Parker a few weeks ago on the last day of the Nationals at McCook. He had just come in with a rank of 38th in the final standings and frankly wasn't very happy about it. He said he guessed he was going to have to go back home and learn how to fly. It now looks as though Al is the world's fastest learner. It was only 22 days later that he made his record flight.

World's record flights are no accident, and most are well planned. Al's flight was no exception, but for sheer audacity we believe it knows no equal. With the world's goal record standing at 505 miles and the distance record at 544, he named a goal at 630 and *overflew it!* Never mind the national ratings, Al, everyone is convinced by now that you know how to fly!

This record flight, like the other two, was achieved by a gratifying combination of a good pilot, a good sailplane, and good weather. The rest of us in American soaring owe a great debt to that handful of pilots like Al Parker, George Moffat, and Wally Scott who expend endless amounts of time, hard work and

money in the quest of records for the United States. We are also appreciative of the fine sailplane designers all over the world who have contributed so much to our ability to fly better. And finally, we are grateful for our vast country with so many different meteorological regimes which give us so many types of soaring opportunities.

So much for the past and present; what of the future? Hold your hats fellows, for this is only the beginning. Al's record is going to be very tough to beat, but beaten it will be. Probably 750 miles is about all you can expect from ordinary thermal soaring like Al used, but don't forget those fast moving cold fronts! Our counterparts abroad have always been looking forward to the 1,000 km flight. Well, we have knocked that one off; now let's go for the next 1,000—we mean of course, *1,000 miles!* Neither Al, George or Wally had flown a sailplane when Dick Johnson's record of 535 was set in 1951 and maybe the pilot who will break the next 1,000 has yet to have his first motorless flight. But don't count on it—some of these old timers seem to be able to learn pretty fast. H.S.