



The Historic 33rd

(The Story of the 1966 National Soaring Championships)

In Bryan, Ohio, Richard Schreder stood in his airport shop regarding the brand new HP-14 with its metal skins glistening under the fluorescent lights. He had poured his store of ten years' experience building and designing sailplanes into the HP-14 and with the first flight tests that day he knew he had something special. The strain of putting his drafting supplies business and his Piper dealership in order should have made him bone weary. Instead, he felt a sense of elation. He snapped out of his reverie. It was Friday. On Tuesday the Championships would open in Stead and he and Angie still had to trailer the ship 1500 miles west. There was work to be done. . . .

In Elizabeth, N. J., George Moffat closed his well-worn volume of John Donne. The English instructor permitted himself a glance out of the classroom windows and noted with distaste the yellow industrial haze that hung in the city's sky. In his mind's eye he pictured another sky, a mile-high sky, clear, sharp, blue—a soaring sky. Well, it wouldn't be long. The semester was ending and soon he and Suzanne would be at Stead with the Austria. . . .

In southern California, Graham Thomson sat in the Preliminary Design/Space Vehicles office of Hughes Aircraft Co. and knocked on the wood of a drawing board. Had he been lucky? Competing against 23 pilots he had just won the first part of the Southern California Regionals. Among the contestants were eight pilots he knew he would have to face again at the Championships and the victory had not been easy. What would he do against the cream of the U. S. pilots at Stead? At least in crewing he suffered no qualms. Helen was tops, and now their ten-year-old son, Brian, was even becoming a help. . . .