

disgust, in order to identify the positions of the marker panels before they could start north on the distance leg.

Nine, however, were not able to contact the wave and had to content themselves with field landings at Stead. One point-wise contestant landed at the far western extremity of the field on a drag-strip to glean a point or two. Another missed the field by a mile, but missed connections with his crew by minutes and was stranded, so far and yet so near, until the middle of the night.

With the sun dropping toward the horizon it seemed doubtful that anyone would get as far as Alturas, 130 miles away in California. But without headwinds, and with assists from random waves, the high-performance machines moved northward with unexpected speed. Schreder, still holding the Pioneer rate-of-climb indicator in his hand, managed another 86 miles beyond Stead. With darkness coming on A. J. Smith in his Sisu, Edward Makula in a Foka Four, and Sterling Starr in his modified 1-23, landed in Alturas with flights of 401 miles, while Bill Ivans and Sisu made an additional four miles and Carroll Klein, a newcomer, flew a surprising twenty miles beyond the airport in his Libelle.

The final moments of the day belong to Moffatt and Thomson. Far to the west the snow-covered tip of Mount Shasta's cone turned pink in the fading light. The shadows crept up the slopes of a range to their east and they peered ahead toward Goose Lake which lay astride the Oregon-California border. They watched each other warily, like two dogs with one bone.

"I watched Graham and tried to keep myself to the rear, in his blind spot," Moffat recalled. "We were flying in evening lift and Graham was farther out in the valley. After awhile I noticed him rise gently in a thermal. To my surprise, he went straight through it. I felt sure he had missed the boat and when I reached the spot I began to circle. I climbed for a few turns, feeling that I was gaining the advantage that would make the final difference.

"I had made a mistake, because instead of his being below he was a speck far ahead at the same altitude. The lift was a mile square and it wasn't necessary to turn."

Below, in the deepening gloom, lights marked the presence of an occasional car on Highway 395.

"As I flew along the slopes on the east side of Goose Lake," Thomson said, "I radioed Helen to un-hitch the trailer. This would give her greater mobility in scouting for landing fields. I was over bad terrain and Helen would make tactful remarks like, 'It's getting dark down here.'"

"During the last forty miles of the flight I had used 4000 feet of altitude which I stretched with the help of the recently illumined slopes. I decided to leave them at 1500 feet and try for the airport north of the lake at Lakeview, Oregon. I was fortunate to have Ray Proeneke crewing for me and he acted as a sort of mobile computer who supplied me with constantly up-dated information on my glide slope. At such times attempting to make calculations in the cockpit is out of the question and full concentration must be given to the flying itself.

"We knew the airport was lighted and that it lay at the limit of my glide slope at that time. My main worry were swamps which were shown on the air charts to cover the last six miles south of the airport.

"At last I spotted the tower and then the lights of the runway low on my canopy and angling 45 degrees to my flight path. During the final moments Ray literally talked me down. I was flying at minimum sink and when I banked over the end of the field to line up the runway I had 50 feet left. There was no need for air brakes."

It was 9:15 P.M. Thomson had flown 443 miles and won the day.

Five miles behind, the aggressive Moffat had also been talked down by a crewman who marked a field by blinking the trailer lights at its end. Though he had bowed to Thomson, his effort kept him in first place in the cumulative scoring of the contest.



A view of the Huetter Libelle that more and more competitors seemed destined to see, the bottom.