

rumor that a group of puzzlemakers from Formosa had come over to see exactly how Dave and Mark juggled the equipment, as it is mathematically impossible to put that many sailplanes in that little space.

Sunday, November 14, I got into some lift over the Garden of the Gods at around 16,000 feet and then into some violent sink that had the rate of climb indicator pegged at 3,000 fpm. The decision to land was an easy one and after thawing out I tried the secondary wave almost over the Gliderport. Here I was able to work up to about 27,000 feet where I ended up on top of the cloud and got a close-up view of a lenticular being generated just ahead and beneath me. The barograph showed I was about 200 feet shy of a Diamond on this one.

The weather forecast for Monday was not too encouraging but I decided to stay over in the bunk room to see how things looked. During the night the winds began to pick up and by three o'clock in the morning I could see the tell tale haze of a lenticular almost directly overhead. By eight o'clock Mark's anemometer was showing winds of 40 mph on the ground. The weather bureau was reporting around 75 mph winds at 20,000 feet. All systems appeared to be go. The rotor clouds were boiling directly west of the gliderport and we could see thin lenticulars to the north and south for at least 100 miles. I pulled out the long-handles, another pair of pants, the quilted flight pants from Wave Flights' well-stocked flight-gear locker, two sweaters and a jacket and a pair of fur-lined boots.

John Brittingham, Joe Conn and I towed the 1-26 to the east side of the field behind Mark Wild's Oldsmobile. The winds had diminished to about 30 mph when I turned and finally turned on the barograph—only to be met with dead silence. Our barograph sometimes misbehaves when it is overwound and this, of course, was one of the days when it decided to misbehave. After a five-minute hold Mark brought out another barograph and Dave and I headed west. The rotor action was not severe but *any* rotor action is apt to be an eye-opener for those who have not experienced mountain flying. On the previous day, when the winds were a good deal lower, John Brittingham found himself upside down in the Super Cub when coming back through the rotor after a tow to the Peak area.

After five minutes of tow, heading in the general direction of the Air Force Academy, we were suddenly in the smooth air of the secondary wave and the rate-of-climb indicator, which had been banging

between 1,000 fpm up to 1200 fpm down as though it had the hiccoughs, suddenly steadied on 1,500 fpm up and Dave's voice on the radio said, "This looks like the part you want, Bill. Why don't you give it a try?" I released, pulled on the spoilers, pointed the nose down and finally got the rate of climb down to zero sink. After a rather harrowing dive with full spoilers for another minute I managed to lose 500 feet of altitude to make a low point of 10,300 feet. Then I dropped the spoilers, pulled the nose up and watched the rate of climb steady on 1,300 up. Climbing through 20,000 I found that lift tended occasionally to get weak. I then began to probe forward and back and left and right in an attempt to keep the machine going up. I climbed more slowly to 28,000 feet and wandered a good deal north and south at that altitude trying to find better lift.

I was finally about to give up and come down when I heard Joe Conn, who had taken off just after me, report that he was climbing through 26,500 feet at 600 fpm, so I decided to look around a bit more.

About two miles north I again found good lift and banged up through 29,000 where my canopy began to ice over. The hose that Dave Johnson had thoughtfully stuck in the ventilator to direct cold air to the canopy became a most welcome optional extra. Around 30,000 feet the air began to get turbulent, apparently because of shear action, and lift went from an occasional 1,000 fpm up to 500 down. Wind velocities increased considerably and with an indicated 70 mph I was unable to maintain my position and began drifting east and out of lift. Although there appeared to be good lift to the west the drag on the 1-26 was such that at these higher speeds I was unable to work it. Outside air temperature was -30 degrees F. and true airspeed was approximately 100 mph. The wind velocities were something over 100 mph at that altitude.

I took a long last look at the Sangre de Cristos 200 miles to the south, at the lenticulars all up and down the Continental Divide, the snow storms in the Aspen area about 100 miles to the west and the plains north to Denver and beyond, then pulled on the spoilers and started the 20 minute descent to the gliderport. After hot coffee there was the telephone call to Helen in Oklahoma City to tell her that we had finally made it, and the very pleasant knowledge that, barring a balky barograph, I had finally cornered the three elusive Diamonds in Schweizer's great little 1-26.

Archives Plea

The formation of an SSA Archives is long overdue. The importance of such an Archives cannot be overstressed. We're asking for donations (fully tax deductible — you establish the value) of books, magazines, papers or anything else of historical significance pertaining to soaring.

Please contact the SSA Public Information Committee Chairman, Dale S. May, 608 South Can Dota, Mt. Prospect, Illinois 60057, with your offers. Better still, just pack up your entire attic and ship it to him for which you will promptly get an SSA receipt. Dale has offered to store all items until an Archives building can be established. Don't just sit there. Send something!

Quotable Quotes

One conversation of that weekend stays in mind. It was between Captain Schmid and his little daughter, Cheryl. After listening for hours to soaring talk, she decided it was pretentious.

"You can't fly as good as the birds, Daddy," she said.

"Oh yes, I can fly better than the birds."

"You can't fly as high as the birds."

"Yes. I can fly ever higher than the birds."

"You can't fly as fast as the birds."

"Oh, I can fly much faster than any bird."

The child gave him a long, hard and furious look.

"Well, you can't build a nest."

SOARING FOR DIAMONDS