

June 25th — Arrived at Adrian early. This a new adventure for me. Never flown in any kind of contest before. As a matter of fact have never flown *anywhere* except West Texas. Boy! Did I have a lot to learn. The only thing I had going for me was a lot of practice flying for the last three years with some pretty salty pilots such as Ben Greene, Wally Scott, Al Parker, George Moffatt and John Ryan. The only reason I didn't place first in this National Contest was (1) I didn't know anything about contest flying (2) I was abysmally ignorant of Eastern flying conditions, and (3) there were 41 other entrants in the contest that were better pilots than I was! I certainly couldn't blame it on my crew or equipment — they were superb. I think the high point in the entire time for me was when I accidentally managed to get around a speed triangle (on a practice day) ahead of Paul Bikle, Ben Greene, Werner Grosse and John Randall. I should have quit right then while I was ahead because *I never did it again.*



Red Dog Wright come to roost in Adrian, Michigan. Shortly after this picture was taken Red tore up a large portion of the Duck Lake Golf Course green, narrowly missed fisticuffs with the green keeper.

I guess the low point was on the last contest day on a triangle — Lansing, Marshall, Adrian and free distance. Things seemed to go very well until, when I was about 2/3rd of the way down the second leg of the course, I ventured out into the middle of a big blue hole and the inevitable began to unfold — lower, lower and still lower . . . hit a very weak thermal at about 500 feet. Casting a fearful eye about for a landing spot I spied a beautiful golf course directly below. Reassured myself — *have no fear*, best place in the world to land — will work this stinker of a thermal for all it's worth. Recollections of John Randall's description of tall, cool drinks at the bar, inch-thick steaks and admiring crowds on the fairway when one lands on a golf course lulled me into a false sense of complacency.

After about eight orbits and a loss of another 200 feet of altitude I not too reluctantly turned base leg for the east-west fairway with visions of a noggin of bourbon and branch water in the offing. Bending the old Sisu around on final with all garbage down I had a rude shock. The fairway I picked for a cushy landing was a horrifying series of Appalachian ridges with 12-foot undulations terminating with a green perched atop a veritable Mt. Everest 35 feet high. Committed now, I frantically began a series of roller-

coaster yo-yo's to try to get in phase with the ridges on the fairway. Over the first — ricocheted off the second, down the valley in the third with the mountainous wall up to the green staring me in the face. Sheer terror with disaster imminent. Hauled back on the stick to keep from burying the nose of the Sisu in terra firma. Mushed and slammed into the incline. Impact on landing (wheel, tail wheel and right wingtip simultaneously) felt like 20 G's. Knocked me nutty as a squirrel — ricocheted up slope 30 feet and came to rest three feet from the pin on the third green.

After I could get my breath again, and cleared the whirling stars from my vision, I fearfully climbed out of the cockpit, felt for broken bones and surveyed the damage. Wrinkled right wing-tip and a long, jagged gash in the Duck Lake Golf Course green. Had mixed emotions. The sight of the wrinkled wingtip made me want to cry. The rest of the ship being intact and my carcass still being in one piece made me thankful. Gave thanks to Allah and Len Niemi for looking after me in my ignorance and ineptitude.

Things began to take a new turn. The green keeper arrived on the scene, took one look at his torn up turf, let out an agonized screech that reverberated around the countryside. Frothing at the mouth he began to make derogatory remarks about oddball glider pilots who had the poor judgment to use his greens for an airport. This struck me as being singularly unsympathetic toward someone who had just miraculously escaped being scragged and we forthwith exchanged heated remarks about each other's ancestry. Fortunately, a couple of dolls in short shorts played through about this time and we cooled off. This probably saved me from abrasions and contusions that up to this point I had escaped. Anyway, my crew arrived about then and with reinforcements I felt a little less like Custer at the Little Big Horn.

In summary, regarding the National Contest at Adrian, it was a beautifully run contest. The host personnel were superb. The officials were real professionals and my pleasure in associating with the pilots and crews from all over the United States was a thing I will treasure for many a day. Quite a memorable experience.

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July 18th — On to Marfa for their annual soaring camp. My Sisu still in Greenville, South Carolina, having the wrinkled wingtip ironed out by Len. I still marvel at the tremendous structural strength of the Sisu. Niemi's workmanship is unsurpassed. Len and Jack Baugh have accomplished something in the building of the Sibus that I doubt will ever be matched again.

Many 500-km triangles being attempted and *completed*. Ben Greene, George Moffat, Dean Svec and Harry Wvenstel burning up the course. Hans Linke too. The four guys from the Lilienthal Soaring Club from out California way are real doers. They whip the old Zugvogel around the 300-km and 500-km triangles with no sweat (but considerable radio conversation). Total of 18 500-km triangles attempted with 15 *successfully completed*. How about that! U. S. records broken but nobody would claim them. Wanted world-record time only. George Moffatt only missed the present 500-km world-record time (now held by "Boet" Dommise, Republic of South Africa) by two minutes! Suzanne Moffat knocking off goal, distance and speed