

peaks and the upper limit of the lift, a layer perhaps 3000 to 3500 ft. deep. This was generally sufficient to allow you to reach distant lift, but not always. And then your situation was not enviable.

The practice task which took place the next day, a goal and return to Susanville, a distance of 124 miles, fully convinced me of the Get High, Stay High rule. I flew off very courageously from an altitude of 13,000 ft. the Polish way—not looking at the peaks! It ended very sadly, 650 ft. above a small ranch, and after covering only 30 miles. I found 1.5 f.p.s. lift and spent an hour regaining height—a clear loss, as this was a speed task. I was already getting a lot of experience.

On June 28th at nine o'clock the first task was announced. There were no speeches, simply a short presentation of the management and the conditions of the task. Retrieving of gliders and handling of the ships on the airfield was up to the pilot and crew. This gives somewhat the impression one gets at the World Championships because of the multitude of types of auxiliary equipment, all the way from luxurious cars and trailers with hired professional crews to battered cars with a crew that consisted chiefly of family members—mostly wives!

As I mentioned before, the equipment situation was unusual. Prior to this I had never flown in a comparable competition without maintenance facilities. Nor was there a repair shop on the airfield nor any aircraft specialists familiar with the construction of the Foka . . . and no tools whatsoever. Thus even the slightest damage to the Foka would have eliminated me from further flying. In light of these conditions I decided to fly very carefully and, if at all possible, land on airfields. While keeping to this policy I lost some points, but nevertheless avoided off-field landings.

* * *

The American pilots, as I had been able to ascertain during the practice task, were very well adjusted to these conditions. All the top competitors flew for at least a week before the meet (*not at all the case—Ed.*) and Moffat prepared himself with two weeks of training. Who were the favorites in the race? Most of all the pilots of the Sisus and Libelles, among them the defending champion Svec, old Thomson, Ryan, Moffat and, last but not least, old hand Schreder. In spite of the universal radio equipment, and quite contrary to our practice, there was no flying on the next fellow's tail nor information on the lift conditions. In fact, transmitting lift strengths was prohibited. In a word, the contest had a thoroughly individualistic character.

The conditions during the competition did not disappoint us. It will perhaps be adequate to mention that utilizing lift of less than 13 f.p.s. was done only in critical situations. In each task except one I contended with all the types of lift known to glider pilots, and often at altitudes of more than 23,000 ft. I am certain that, had it not been for the presence of a warm front on the free-distance day, Parker would have had quite a few colleagues in the 1000-km. club. Perhaps the only mistake the contest management made was announcing the open-distance task with the knowledge that this condition would force all the pilots to early landings.

The contest ended on the 7th of July with a "short" task—a triangle of 186 miles—and with an official ban-

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quet the next evening. The winner was Schreder, several times U.S. champion. There were many unofficial records and the results were really impressive. The physical efforts of the pilots exceeded that of any other competition in which I have ever taken part. All the high-placing pilots flew for over 60 hours, which means flying from morning till dusk. There were several nights spent in the car, the snacks at roadside taverns, the heat on the ground and below-freezing temperatures in the air, frequent assembly and disassembly of the gliders and neverous tension caused by being low, without lift, and over inhospitable terrain.

So, it is not difficult to understand how pleased I am to have taken part in this competition, and to have left a whole and undamaged Foka behind me. I wish that all my colleagues, at least once in their sporting careers, could have the opportunity to experience the same sort of unforgettable impressions that I enjoyed at the 33rd U.S. National Soaring Championships. This opportunity might come soon, for Reno is where the Americans would like to organize the 1968 World Championships.