

Canada's National

Ron Claudi is Dominion's Champ

By BETTY FLEMING,
Co-editor, *Free Flight*

THIRTEEN GLIDERS from various points in Canada and the United States arrived at the airport on the Saturday before the official opening. One was a new type of sail-plane on the Canadian scene — the Mu 13 of the Montreal Soaring Council. After 4 years of work rebuilding it from the "pieces" brought out of Germany, the Montreal boys are at last flying it.

The Louden, designed and built at Toronto University, was also in the line-up, as was the new 1-23 of the Montreal Club, and the Olympia of the Gatineau Club. Two-place gliders had come from Sherbrooke and Buckingham, Quebec; Hamilton and Kingston, Ontario, and Elmira, N.Y. Three hard-working Tiger Moths did the towing.

On the first day of the Meet, 68 flights were recorded, for a total of 34 hours and 46 minutes. John Agnew of the Montreal Club put 5 hours in the 1-23 to complete a second leg on his Silver 'C'. Jack Ames' similar attempt in the Louden fell a little short of the mark.

The following day was the only day of the Meet which was not a soaring day — even so, a few hardy souls did some flying in the drizzle. Altitude gains during the week were restricted by the low cloud base. The only flights of interest here were made in a smoke column rising from a burning lumber yard. Like vultures circling over a dying animal, six gliders soared in this column of smoke, the 2-22 and the Grunau striving for top place at 5,000 feet.

The most notable flight of the Meet was a 75-mile goal flight to Farnham by two pilots, Jack Ames in the Louden and Ron Claudi in the Mu 13, both on the same day. These two now jointly hold the Canadian record for goal flight. Jack had the distinction at the Meet of being aero towed back from all three of the cross-countries he made.

Stan Rys took the Mu 13 a distance of 30 miles to Pt. Claire, and later made a flight of 37 miles to Cartville airport, to complete his requirements for a Silver 'C' and in addition lay claim to the nylon tow rope which has been waiting at Cartville for the first sailplane pilot to land there from greater than Silver 'C' distance. His was another quick retrieve, with the tow plane picking him up less than an hour after he landed.

Ron Claudi made an excellent attempt at an out and return flight to Pendleton (30 mi.) in the Grunau but was forced to land at Hawksbury, about 12 miles short of St. Eugene. Albie Pow, 1951 Meet Champion, chalked up a 60 mile flight to Ottawa in the Olympia.

The Four Soaring Club from Hamilton with their TG-3, nicknamed "the Battleship", put in several cross countries; Ray Byrne and Charlie Yeates going as far as St. Paul L'Ermite, a distance of 55 miles.

The Meet came to an end on Saturday Aug. 9, with Ron Claudi of the Montreal Soaring Council being declared the National Champion. He amassed a total of 277 points. Runner-up was Jack Ames of Toronto with 158 points. A survey of the flying



RON CLAUDI, Montreal



'CHEM' CHEMINANT, President of Gatineau Club of Ottawa, Canada, and Doy Ryon, Rochester, N.Y.

during the Meet showed that during the seven recorded flying days 271 flights had been made giving a total flying time of 139 hours. Approximately 550 miles were flown on cross-countries.

The Championship Trophy was a silver rose bowl given by Shell Aviation Sales. Accompanying the trophy was a portable spot-light — especially designed for use while retrieving glides. The runner-up received a sensitive altimeter. The Meet ended amid discussion of the plans for a 1953 Meet.

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At 2,000 feet over the airport, the sailplanes released from their tow, and quickly disappeared from view, as upsurging thermals gave them lift and getaway power. West and north was the direction, the prevailing winds being from the south.

Anti-climax and suspense attended the takeoff of the meet's most spectacular entry, The Flying Wing, piloted by German-born aerophysicist

Rudy Opitz, now in Air Force research at Wright Field.

The Wing took off in the grass along the runway, owing to the skid arrangement on the almost fuselageless craft. At 1,500 ft., the Wing released, and landed back on the airport. Its releasable forward wheel gear had failed to release. A small, hasty adjustment was made, and the Wing was off again, in earnest. Its takeoff was among the impressive sights of the week, or any week.

Came the late afternoon, and contest headquarters was agog with anticipation. As the hours passed, and pilots still remained aloft, many with boldly distant goals, it was clear that a big day was in the making. Press and radio stood by for results.

Then the ringing phones began to bring in the exciting news. Pilot after pilot was reported down, and they had covered Texas' wide open spaces in astonishing fashion.

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