



An increasingly familiar shape: the Skylark II (left), five of which were entered. No. 18 belongs to the Cambridge University club. Right, preparing the Olympia IV for an aero-tow launch, with the E.T.P.S. Olympia II in the foreground.

NATIONAL GLIDING . . .

approach to the rope-dropping area now passed over the public entrance-road.

Flying Tiger Moth G-ANFC, I was given a particularly interesting quartet in succession among my sailplane towees this afternoon. They comprised No. 28, the modified grey Olympia with the faired canopy, flown by Gough; the orange-and-cream Skylark III, No. 9, flown by Deane-Drummond; that superb example of french-polishing, the laminar-winged Olympia IV flown by Ince; and the big T.42 Eagle two-seater (Welch and Irving) belying its size in a smooth, relatively fast climb.

There was always a natural, if irrational, personal interest in the fortunes of the sailplanes one had lifted to 2,000ft and sent on their way, and the sight of the Olympia IV stretching a long glide in to land downwind at 3.30 p.m. (only 2½ hr after release) raised an immediate hope for Ince's success. Lift along the route was weak, however; he had managed to fly only half-way along the first leg, and had scraped precariously back at no more than 500ft. Twenty minutes later, No. 1 took off for a second attempt.

One of my other rope-end passengers, however, later managed to beat the marginal conditions and complete the course, when the Skylark III reappeared to land at Lasham after 4 hr 1 min. Best time over the triangle was achieved by David Kerridge of the Surrey Gliding Club (Olympia), flying in his first National contest: his time was 3 hr 13 min. Only other pilot to complete the course was Peter Rivers, in Olympia No. 21, after 4 hr 36 min. None of these notable achievements, however, was to be reflected in the championship scores for, as fewer than the required 20 per cent had completed the task, "no contest" was again the verdict. And this was true for the Sedberghs, also.

At the briefing on Sunday morning, July 31st, a 34-mile out-and-return race to the American base at Greenham Common, near Newbury, was specified for the Open section, with pilot-declared goals for the two-seaters. C. E. Wallington, met. forecaster, began, "No cloud should develop till after noon—"; was interrupted by a voice, "Look outside—there's some there now!" and calmly continued, "I meant the later cloud . . ."

Through a fine, hazy morning the cumulus—both early and later—swelled up to provide good soaring conditions for the fairly

short distance involved in the race. The wind was light and north-easterly again, and before the busy first period of launching had ended the early birds were beginning to swoop in across the finishing line at the west end of the main runway—and to book launching times for their second attempts. The best first attempts recorded on the board were those of Deane-Drummond (49 min), Wills (53 min) and Foster (54 min).

Climbing steadily up and around our clockwork-mouse towing circle in Fox Charlie, with the close-following Sky of Philip Wills reflectively floating in my mirror, I noticed below a light-blue Olympia circling over a large country house at what seemed an unusually low height. On my next trip, 15 min later, with Scallon in the Imperial College Skylark, the Olympia had been forced to land in a field; it was apparently the Cambridge entry, No. 19, having failed to gain sufficient height for the two-mile glide-in. Next time round in the Tiger (with Dan Smith in the Dunstable Sky), I saw the grey cigar of the retrieving trailer nosing slowly out of the field. Obviously no time had been wasted.

Although several pilots improved their times on second attempts, the fastest speeds remained those made earlier by Deane-Drummond (40.7 m.p.h.) and Wills (37.7 m.p.h.). On his second trip David Ince equalled Foster's 54 min, representing 37 m.p.h. David Kerridge (Olympia) flew the race three times (a maximum of three launches per competitor was allowed each day). One other incident which seemed to arouse interest on the aerodrome was the dead-stick landing made by the writer when, due to a faulty fuel gauge, he ran out of fuel at the moment of dropping the rope on the approach to land. Tributes to his precise judgment were modestly rejected by the pilot concerned—who is, however, sticking to his fuel-gauge story.

In a field two miles north-west of Basingstoke, John Holder was attempting at about this time to defend his person and the Southdown club's Olympia from the attentions of a black-and-white Friesian bull named Sabbath. It was not long before the Press tent at Lasham had details. Over a telephone line to Fleet Street, the story was concisely given . . . "Quote: I crooned to him but he would not go away, unquote, said Mr. Holder, brewer son of a baronet, of Brewery House, Bourne Road, Bexley, Kent . . ."

CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS (LEADING COMPETITORS): WORST DAY'S POINTS DEDUCTED IN FINAL TOTALS

Place	Aircraft	No.	Entrant	Pilot	Daily points						Total points
					1	2	3	4	5	6	
Individual Class (Open Section)											
1	Sky	13	P. A. Wills	P. A. Wills	100	100	100	100	92	14	492
2	Skylark III	9	F. N. Slingsby	A. J. Deane-Drummond	58	84	74	89	100	93	440
3	Olympia IV	1	H. C. G. Buckingham	D. Ince	75	81	74	86	90	98	430
4	Skylark II	5	F. Foster	F. Foster	74	84	70	54	90	86	404
5	Sky	8	London G.C.	D. A. Smith	—	79	76	91	69	79	394
6	Skylark II	2	O. J. C. Cotton	J. L. Cotton	48	79	64	52	86	76	357
Team Class (Open Section)											
1	Sky	30	Empire Test Pilots' School	P. L. Bisgood, E. D. Blake	83	55	86	89	84	96	438
2	Gull IV	29	R.A.F.G.S.A./Moonrakers G.C.	K. C. Fitzroy, S. Wells	73	50	67	50	80	64	334
3	Sky	32	E. J. Furlong	E. J. Furlong, G. H. Stephenson	12	45	82	44	57	100	328
4	Olympia	34	A. H. Warminger	A. H. Warminger, B. Gould	—	68	59	61	73	60	321
5	Olympia	33	G. C. Varley and R. C. Stafford-Allen	G. C. Varley, R. C. Stafford-Allen	41	60	73	30	66	63	303
6	Olympia	21	Derby and Lincs G.C.	P. Rivers, R. Dickson	47	60	69	54	72	10	302
T-21B Section											
1	T-21B	36	R.A.F./A.T.C. Home Command Gliding Instructors' School	R. C. Jones, R. Williams	—	100	100	77	49	84	361
2	T-21B	38	R.A.F./A.T.C. No. 142 G.S.	W. Verling, D. E. Varney	—	46	92	100	40	100	338
3	T-21B	37	R.A.F./A.T.C. No. 89 G.S.	F. R. E. Hayter, J. C. Allan	—	86	21	47	100	39	272
4	T-21B	41	Midland G.C.	J. H. Hickling, A. Pickup	—	97	37	50	44	56	247

In the T-21B section, Allan in No. 89 Gliding School's Sedbergh was the only pilot to reach his goal, 74 miles away at Halesland, near Cheddar.

By the morning of Monday, August 1st, final day of the championships, there was no doubt as to who would become National champion in the Individual class. Philip Wills' lead was unassailable. For second and third places, however, and for the Team class placings, competition was still very much alive.

A 100-km triangular race, with turning points at Romsey and the Roman camp at Haydown Hill, near Andover, was chosen for the Open section, and the T-21Bs were to race out-and-return to the second of these points. At Lasham the morning began bright and hot under a blue sky, and it was not long before useful-looking cumulus began to form. Much low-level haze was present while, to the north, long high streaks seemed to indicate waves. On the aero-tows, which began in earnest at about 11.30 a.m., some particularly potent thermals were encountered while climbing.

After the continuous stream of launches most of the sailplanes seemed to get away, and there was a gap until 2.45 p.m. when

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