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LARGEST U. S. SOARING CONTEST AT CHESTER



Pilots and ground crews try to relax while waiting for the signal to start launches at a soaring contest.

Karl Striedieck, young Pennsylvania Air National Guard fighter pilot whose soaring exploits were featured in the April, 1978, National Geographic, topped 48 other 15-Meter Class competitors at the Region 5 Soaring Championships at Chester, S.C. The spring (April 18-22) contest attracted the largest entry list in its ten-year history this year: 76 aircraft, three of them piloted by foreign nationals. Standard Class competition was won by David Cole, a youngster from Roanoke, Virginia, flying in his first major

contest; he outflew 26 other pilots in his class.

This year's contest was successful despite uncooperative weather. Soaring is a sunshine sport, but there was little or no sunshine during the first two scheduled days of competition. However, by the final Sunday, both competition groups had flown the requisite three contest days--with one that featured rain, sleet and snow showers, some lightning, and wind gusts above 50 knots. Thanks to the expertise of the competing pilots, there was no serious damage