

Part V Cleveland 1947

by Al Hansen

(Photos courtesy of Gery Liang)



Emil at the Merced, California, Antique Fly-In, June 1989. (Photo by Al Hansen)

In 1947, a new class of racing aircraft was established at the Cleveland, Ohio National Air Races. The aircraft in the new class were limited to 190 cu. in. engines, fixed pitch propellers and fixed landing gear and an empty weight limit of 500 lbs. These small racers flew low over a 4-pylon, 15 lap, 2.2 mile course within easy sight of all.

Emil Strasser attended both the 1947 and 1948 National Air Races and took many photos of the new class racer that was sponsored by the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company.

Tony Le Vier called himself “Fox of the Skyways” in those days just after WWII. He bought a surplus Lockheed P-38L, put a fire truck red paint job on it, removed the superchargers and stabilizer tips and took second place in the 1946 Thompson Trophy Race at Cleveland. Tony was practicing flying the P- 38 at Vail Field in Montebello in October 1946 where Emil took these fine photos.



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1. Tony Le Vier, “Fox of the Skyways” at Vail Field, Montebello, California in Oct. 1946. This photo was **not developed until 1998**.



2. Tony's Lockheed P-38L-5-LO, NX21764, 44-53087 taking off at Vail Field. This photo was not developed until 1998 also.



3. A nice ground shot of Tony's P-38L at Vail Field, which is approx. 15 miles east of downtown Los Angeles.



4. Cal Dawson and the HDJ Special Pistol Ball, N58915, No.33 at the 1948 National Air Races, Cleveland, Ohio, September 1948.



5. Cal Dawson runs up the HDJ Special Pistol Ball at the 1948 National Air Races.



6. Charles Bing's Flightways Special, NX 18219, No. 70 at the 1947 National Air Races.



7. Pitts Special, Pellet, NX52120 of T.B. Heisel at the 1948 National Air Races.



8. R.J. Chinoski and the Francis-Angell Special Whistler, NX84Y, No. 81 at Cleveland in 1948.



9. Bill Falck modified Art Chester's pre-war Jeep racer for the 1947 National Air Races. Falck won the Goodyear Consolation Race at 141.615 mph and gained some valuable experience for his future success in the famous Rivets.



10. The Dixon Special, racing no. 41, NX1N on the ramp at Cleveland in 1948.



11. E.R. Smith's Hurlburt Hurricane, NX 1223, no. 85 at the 1947 National Air Races.



12. Another view of the Dixon Special on the ramp at Cleveland in 1948.

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