

April / May 2009

TOWLINE



THE ADVANTAGES OF EPHRATA
Big Runways Everywhere

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www.nwinternet.com/~blankam/css

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Fred Hermanspann 206-288-3951

www.evergreensoaring.com

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Puget Sound Soaring Assoc.

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www.pugetsoundsoar.org

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www.vsa.ca

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Portland, OR

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www.wvsc.org

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Wenatchee, WA

Vitek Siroky 509-884-8305

Cascade Soaring McMinnville, OR

Joe Deem 503-472-8805

Towplane Lewiston, ID

Dave Dorion 509-243-9919

SGC one-year membership renewal (January-December) US \$35.
(SGC Membership is required for all tows behind an SGC towplane.)
SGC Family Membership (for 14 and older) US\$10 each.

Tows (at Ephrata): \$TBD for first 1500' (minimum fee) + \$TBD per 100' above 1500'

Tows (airport other than Ephrata): \$TBD for first 1500' + \$TBD per 100' above 1500'

Aero Retrieve or Glider Ferry: \$TBD / tach hour

Ephrata Pilot Use Fee: \$TBD for the season or \$TBD per week (Sat-Fri)

(Note: maximum limit if pilot fee paid by the week is \$TBD)

Trailer Parking: \$TBD per season, or \$TBD per week (Sat-Fri)

RV Parking: \$TBD per season (+ \$25.70 tax), or \$TBD per week (+ \$3.95 tax) (Sat-Fri)

Weather Information:

NWS Spokane 509-353-2367

NWS Seattle 206-526-6087

FAA Weather 800-992-7433

Highway Report 206-368-4499

Soaring in the ASH-25 Mi

By Stan Kasprzyk



While planning a visit to the Big Island of Hawaii after a 30 year hiatus, I was able to connect up with a great friend from my Air Force pilot training days at

Williams AFB - Greg Trebon. Greg retired a few years ago from the Air Force, and is now living in Kailua-Kona, on the Kona west coast of the Big Island. Besides flying for Big Island Air, Greg has established himself as a general aviation coordinator on the Big Island, and has built up a great network among Hawaiian aviators.

Greg and I had flown general aviation aircraft in the past, and Greg knew of my enthusiasm for soaring. He mentioned that a friend flying out of Waimea, on the north part of the island, had a 'high-performance two-place sailplane' that he offered to fly me in. My anticipation grew when I found out Greg's friend was Woody Woods, a well-known soaring competition pilot, and the fact that his sailplane was an ASH-25 Mi, a super self-launching sailplane with a 26-meter (85 foot) wingspan, and a best glide ratio of 60:1!

We arrived on the Big Island on Friday afternoon, and I was surprised by the foggy/hazy conditions as we descended into the Kona airport. Greg called the condition '[Vog](#)', which stands for 'Volcanic Smog', which is formed when sulfur dioxide and other gases emitted by an erupting volcano mix with oxygen and moisture in the presence of sunlight. The term is most often applied to the island of Hawaii, where the Kilauea volcano has been erupting continuously since 1983, and Friday evening had a heavy Vog level.

On Saturday morning we headed up the west coast of Hawaii, where the south winds changed dramatically to the prevailing northeast trade winds, providing stunning clear skies and great visibility in the beautiful late November Hawaiian sun. Arriving at the Waimea-Kohala airport, Greg, Mary and I met Woody Woods and gingerly began extricating the 85 foot wings of the ASH-25 from its purpose-built

hangar. With the trade winds blowing steadily at around 20 knots down runway 04, Woody had me jump right into the backseat and get settled in, while Greg, Woody, and local sailplane pilots Dave Bigelow and Clyde Arakawa helped maneuver the ASH-25 for launch. Woody, Dave and Clyde are members of Mauna Kea Soaring, a small group of soaring enthusiasts flying out of Waimea. Woody had towed Dave Bigelow from here in his DG-400 in 4 April 2008 when Dave set the new Hawaiian state altitude record of 33,531 feet in the Mauna Kea wave, taking over that record from Woody.



Woody Woods' ASH-25 Mi over Big Island.

Photo by Dave Bigelow.

Woody got settled in the front cockpit, which contained the controls for the fuel-injected rotary engine, and we donned our Bose ANR headsets and completed pre-flight checks. We were then pushed onto the runway, where Woody started the engine and began the warm-up, which allowed us to reach required temperatures for takeoff in about 3 minutes. Revving the engine, we left Greg, our wing runner behind and quickly reached takeoff speed in the 20 knot headwind. Woody picked up about 60 knots, then began a climbing right turn toward the southeast and Mauna Kea, then continued to climb at 5-600 FPM as we continued our turn west to the southern foothills of the Kohala mountains. Taking over the flight controls, I got a feel for the handling of the ASH-25, and was surprised how comfortable and stable it felt, especially in pitch. Roll forces were surprisingly light, due to nearly the full span flap/aileron combination. As expected, you need a good boot of rudder to initiate and roll out of turns,

but not much more than other long winged two-seaters, such as the DG-1000.

The strong trade winds were developing rotor clouds as they spilled over the Kohala mountains, and Woody pointed me toward an area that looked good for some potential wave lift. From the Waimea airport elevation of 2671', we continued to motor up to 5500', then Woody throttled back to cool the engine as we started engaging bits of lift. Once established in some steady but choppy lift at 6300', Woody shut down the engine, which centered its propeller and quickly retracted, turning us now into a true 60:1 sailplane. Woody pointed out local landmarks while we centered the lift in figure eights, still more rotor-like in its bumpiness than true laminar wave lift. Alternating with Woody, and using his location pointers, I was able to climb to 9500', but no further.

Woody headed us to some potential lift in an area where we expected a secondary wave, but little lift was available. The visibility remained fantastic to the ocean shore to the west, and also back southeast toward Mauna Kea. I headed back to the primary lift area to regain a bit of altitude, and then Woody suggested we head back east to the Waimea airfield to some building cumulus toward Mauna Kea. I got a nice demonstration of the cruise capability of this 60:1 beauty as we lost very little altitude in the cruise back, smiling in the jet-like performance with cruise flaps set.



Post-flight with Woody Woods and his ASH-25

I cranked into a fairly tight thermalling turn under some ragged cumulus, which were getting chopped apart in the strong trade winds. It was a good exercise in rudder coordination, which came

surprising easy, but I noticed a tendency to pick up a bit too much speed. Woody, I guess I need to come back to figure out the trim system better!

After an hour and half of soaring in this stunning sailplane, Woody took over nearing the Waimea airport as we entered downwind, then flew a nice steep approach using the powerful spoilers into the strong headwinds, which provided lots of options, but made for a beautiful touchdown and very short rollout, right into Greg Trebon's waiting hand on our wingtip! Thanks, Woody for allowing me to soar in your fantastic bird!

Doris Grove Award

Doris Grove, a world record breaking glider pilot, flight instructor, and a member of the U.S. Soaring Hall of Fame has been honored with the Pelagia Majewska Gliding Medal. This Medal was created by the FAI in 1989, following a proposal by the Aero Club of Poland, in memory of Madame Pelagia Majewska, an eminent Polish glider pilot. Pelagia Majewska was awarded the Lilienthal Medal in 1960, and is the holder of 17 world gliding records. She lost her life in an air accident in 1988. The Medal is offered to the FAI by the Aero Club of Poland. It may be awarded annually, on recommendation by the FAI Gliding Commission, to a female glider pilot to reward a particularly remarkable performance in gliding during the past year, or eminent services to gliding over a long period of time. The announcement came during the Seniors contest in Florida.

Doris and Husband Tom Knauff operate Ridge Soaring Gliderport in Julian, PA.

Baron Hilton Cup

A new Barron Hilton Cup competition cycle has begun on 15 March 2009 and will run through 14 March 2010. Unfortunately the visits to the Hilton Ranch for the Barron Hilton Cup winners are over after this year's visits from last year's winners. The winners of the 2008/09 cycle of the BHC will come to the Flying-M-Ranch this June and this is the end of a 30 year affair.

SGC Chairman's Note

Here we are again at the start of a new soaring season and I wanted to let you know about a few things.

At Ephrata, we still have the signs marking the edges of the Object Free Area for the ramp runway where the center taxiway crosses it. So pilots taking off from and landing on the ramp runway will need to be aware of the locations of these signs and avoid them. It would be helpful if before the next time you fly there you took a couple moments and asked someone to point them out to you so you know exactly where they are. Consistent with last year, we stage just outside the quadruple yellow lines and takeoff diagonally onto the new runway, similar to how we operated for many years at Wenatchee. Make sure you get the briefing next time you launch there.

At Wenatchee, there are some new rules if you want to gain access to Pangborn Field. A chain link fence now surrounds the airport, complete with locked gates. In order to get onto the field, you will have to be escorted, unless you get the briefing and apply for an airport badge. If you land there, you need to stay close to your aircraft and not go outside the fence. We can send a towplane to retrieve you, but if your crew goes there to get you with a trailer, you will need to talk to the FBO to get escorted inside the fence to get the glider. Staging rules have changed also, so most glider operations there will be from 25-7.

We have a Contest Camp coming up on Memorial Day Weekend. The idea is for pilots who haven't flown many contests to participate and get an idea of what it is like at a contest. More information is available on the SGC website. Volunteers who can help are welcome, contact Bruce Bulloch if you can help out.

We also have the 18 Meter National Championships at Ephrata this year, from June 30th through July 9th. Practice days are June 28th and 29th. It will be busy out there that time, so plan

accordingly. Let me know if you are willing to help out during the contest.

The parachute operation is still operating out of a small field just east of Ritzville. So be alert when flying in that area. There should be information posted at the clubhouse in Ephrata. The jump planes broadcast their intentions on the radio.

The OLC is going again and some members of the SGC are already posting flights. Again this year the Arlington flyers have an entry, along with the Cascade club in Wenatchee.

In mid July the Air Force will be holding their C-17 Rodeo in the Basin areas. This year, international crews will be participating. They will be using routes all around the Basin, including some high altitude fast descents into Moses Lake from the North and East. Typically, they practice at night, but the National Guard crews may be training on weekends, so you need to be aware of the potential for that activity. More information is in this issue, and on the web page.

On a final note, I want to remind everyone to make a conscious effort to be continuously aware of safety issues. Don't be afraid to ask if a pilot has done a positive control check and offer to help perform it. Checklists are developed for a reason, use them. And finally, always have a plan for any situation that might present itself. A prepared pilot is a safe pilot.

See you at the airport,

Stephen Northcraft

A Thought to Ponder

Both optimists and pessimists contribute to the society.

The optimist invents the aeroplane,
the pessimist the parachute.

Early Season Safety Ideas

by Heinz Gehlhaar

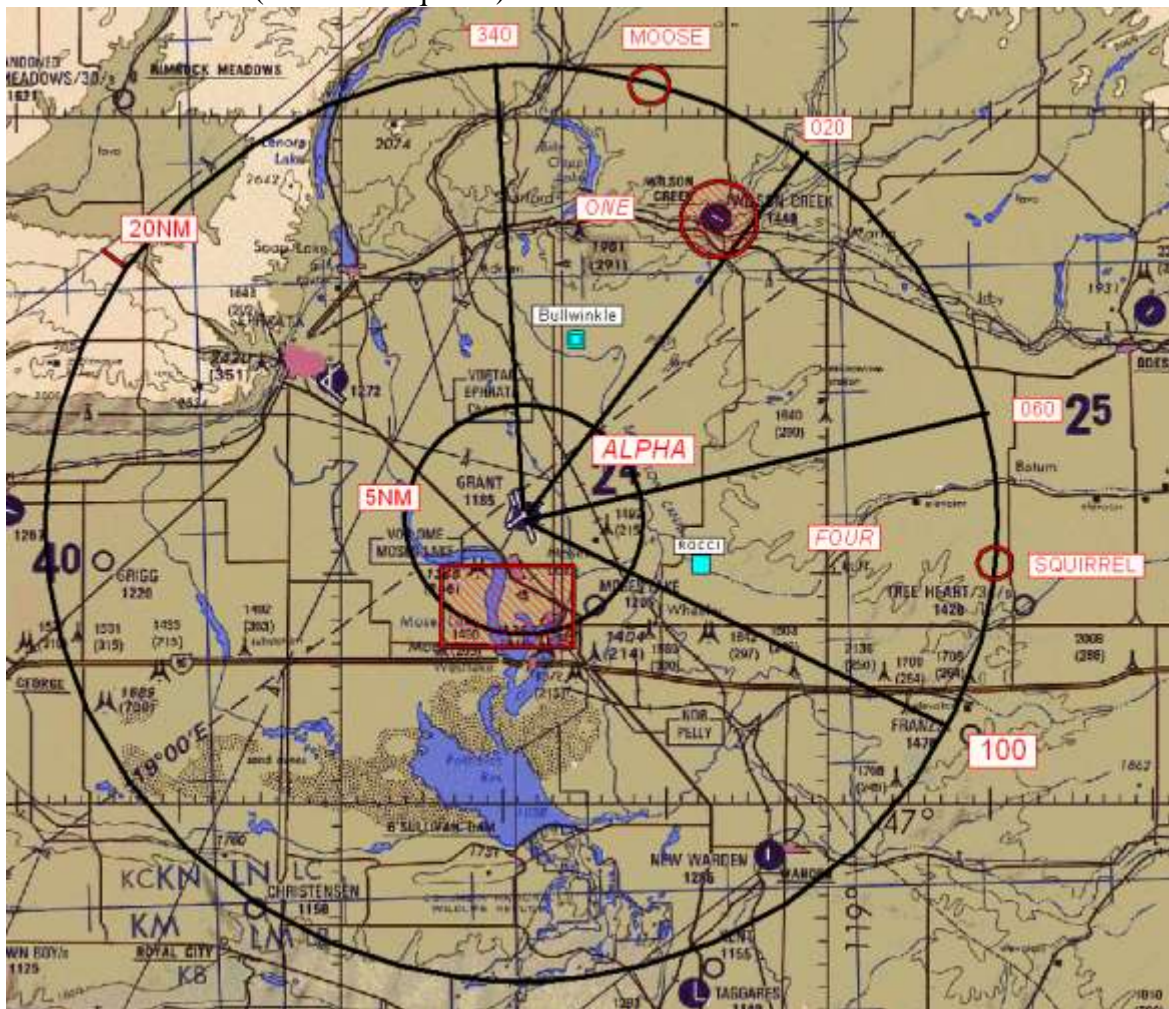
I am always looking for items relating to safety. Any inputs are welcome! Here is a sampling of what I found.

C17's new mission simulation approach and landings at Grant County AP

Dale Hacker Reports:

The military will be doing some interesting and unusual practices around Moses Lake. Here is the skinny:

- Active days: C17's can be flying 24 hr a day 365 a yr.
- Notice to airmen: None
- Grant County has 2 pie sectors that need attention. See the figure below
- Pie #1 is called Moose. This is a flight from less than 2000' to a low-level high-speed point "Bullwinkle" (300 AGL), then a 90-deg landing approach and a pop up and land.
- Pie #4 called Squirrel is a high-altitude (11,000 to 24,000) descent to point "Rocci" for landing (descent rate of 20,000 ft / min!) Yes, like a brick at over 200 mph vertical and 180+ forward speed.
- Yes there is a possibility of reversing the sectors but not likely.
- Best thing to do is notify Grant County control tower (118.1) and identify yourself by altitude and location or corridor (Moose or Squirrel).



BTW: The red-hatched areas are simulated SAM sites that the C17's should avoid. That gives us some "safety" near Ephrata.

Increased Military activity around Ephrata

Increased C17, C141 and C140 will be on all IR and VR low level flight routes around EPH July 20-24. This is the Air Mobility Command Rodeo. (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Air_Mobility_Rodeo)

Spring 2009: SILLY SEASON IS HERE,

Tom Knauff wrote an interesting lead-in to his special towing offer. In the email with the above title, he brought these ideas:

The "silly season" is the result of pilots who have not flown for several months attempting controlled flight early in the spring. You will have an opportunity to witness all kinds of silly errors that most of the time are not serious, just embarrassing. We had a silly incident occur the other day. A pilot made several radio calls with no response from anyone during his flight. After he landed, he discovered the volume was not turned up.

Of course, more serious errors can occur and someone may get hurt. Bottom line – take your time, be thorough and careful with assembly, preflight and pre-takeoff checks and do not fly in marginal conditions until you get some practice flying again. I might add, that you should also consider a knock-the-rust-off flight with an instructor.

April 1 2009,Technology is just great

Developed from an email article in a local newsgroup.

Technology is really improving my safety while I am flying. For instance, I like to fly with a PDA now. I no longer get lost. And it has really helped my thermalling abilities, like to the point of being like totally awesome. I don't have to look out of the cockpit because the PDA shows me exactly where to circle, and if I drift off to far there is an awesome little thingy that shows up on the screen and tells me where to go to get back into the lift. Totally awesome.

Another great help is this bang-up terrain feature this PDA has. heck, with that ON, I can even fly in the clouds, I don't need to see outside..

Anyways, you ought to try it, It's totally cool having a bunch of blinking, beeping screens telling you what to do, cuz seat-of-the-pants flying is soooooo like yesterday!

Complacency: What Me Worry?

I will close this out with a mention of Martin Hellman. If you have not been at his site: www-ee.stanford.edu/~hellman/ you should go there. What a wealth of interesting stuff. In particular here is the speech he gave at a PASCO Soaring Safety Seminar:

www-ee.stanford.edu/~hellman/soaring/PASCO_2007_talk.html

There he examines this list of maneuver categories

- High-speed low passes
- Crossing ridges at low altitude
- Close-in ridge flight
- Becoming enveloped in clouds
- Landing out – especially in difficult circumstances

The soaring community has experienced fatalities among experienced pilots in all five categories, so they warrant some examination.

He looks at these from a point of view of "it's a 99.9% safe maneuver". This is a maneuver that you can execute safely 999 times out of a thousand. You have done it many times. ... It's safe!

But one time in a thousand, there will be an accident, possibly fatal. If you execute such a maneuver only once, the risk is small. But, if you execute it a hundred times, there's a good chance that it will bite you.

And there is a bad by-product of doing it successfully several times: The attention-getting fear-level that you have the first few times you do it, evaporates as you become comfortable with the maneuver. But that's just complacency masquerading as confidence in our skill level.

How often have you had this feeling when you do something out of the ordinary? It's safe, ... I have done it hundreds of times! Go for it!

Please do yourself a favor and read his article.

JUMPIN' AT "THE RITZ"

Eric Greenwell writes: I talked to the pilot for West Plains Skydiving, the operation out of the airport about 4 miles NE of Ritzville near the Interstate. See their website at <http://www.westplainskydiving.com/location.htm>

They are now operating Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, and occasionally other days. A Notam is supposed to be issued for each period, but I didn't find one for this weekend.

West Plains Skydiving will be operating weekends for the 08 season at our new location. Exit #226 (Schoessler Rd) 4 miles East of Ritzville 1/4 mile east on Schoessler to airport on right. Here is a map:



Rules & Laws

There are Rules and there are Laws. The Rules are made by men who think that they know how to fly your airplane better than you. Laws (of Physics) are made by the Great One. You can, and sometimes should, suspend the Rules but you can never suspend the Laws.

Rules are a good place to hide behind if you don't have a better idea and the talent to execute it.

However, when you deviate from a rule, it must be a flawless performance

e.g., If you fly under a bridge, don't hit the bridge.

Washington Wave Window

Sailplane use of High Altitude Airspace within Washington State

| | | | | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------|-------|----------------------|----------------|
| SEA ARTCC | 126.1 | 126.6 | 132.6 | MOS | (253) 351-3523 |
| SEA FSS (EAT) | 122.6 | | | SEATTLE FLIGHT WATCH | 122.0 |
| 6WA8 ALTITUDE | 2650 ft MSL | | | 6WA8 CTAF | 122.9 |
| EPH ALTITUDE | 1272 ft MSL | | | EPH CTAF | 122.8 |
| EAT ALTITUDE | 1245 ft MSL | | | EAT CTAF | 123.0 |
| RLD ALTITUDE | 391 ft MSL | | | RLD CTAF | 122.7 |
| ELN ALTITUDE | 1760 ft MSL | | | ELN CTAF | 123.0 |

As a result of a Letter of Agreement between the Seattle ARTCC, the Seattle Glider Council and the Columbia Basin Association the four wave windows were established. Per FAR Part 91, all pilots are responsible to be familiar with, and in compliance with, the terms of that agreement, prior to operating above FL180 in Washington.

CENTER NOTIFICATION – ALL WAVE WINDOWS

The agreement "requires" that the Military Operations Specialist (MOS) at the Seattle Center be "notified" at least one hour prior to any "request" for usage of the Wave Window to allow the area to be cleared of normal aircraft use. The ATC Sector Controller may entertain this initial request on frequency at his discretion, but we should plan to make the initial call by telephone whenever possible. Phone # is (253) 351-3523. (Note: The individual who opens the airspace is responsible for its closure by telephone.) This advance warning to ATC should be done if the day looks good or, if the day is changeable, when requested by an airborne pilot. Notification should only be made when there is a strong likelihood that wave exists and the window can be reached. Do not make the starting time any earlier than we expect to use it. The Sector Controller may advise that only a partial opening will be permitted or that they will not issue a clearance. Practically speaking: Only one area may be opened at a time to allow ATC to vector jets around the sailplanes.

REQUEST FOR CLEARANCE.

A request for clearance by the first pilot at approx. 17,500-ft will effectively open the window for the rest of us. That call is made to the Seattle Center on the frequency for each area, see below. However, every pilot/sailplane wishing to fly above FL180 must obtain clearance from the Controller.

CLEARANCE & PROTOCOL

The Controller will most likely issue a clearance in response to your request. You and all other sailplanes subsequently operating in the "Window" are then subject to the terms of The Letter of Agreement, as amended, and the flight clearance. This may include altitude and time limits. After passing through 18000 ft (note your altimeter setting) then change to 29.92 inches. Advise Center when transferring back & forth from 123.3 MHz. All pilots must advise Center as they enter and leave the window. Note: Center keeps track of each aircraft so use your N-numbers. The last sailplane remaining in the airspace is to advise Center when exiting the window and that there are no more sailplanes in the window, so the airspace can be returned to normal usage. This radio call must be confirmed to Center by telephone as soon as possible when all pilots are out of the window. (Remember: change altimeter back to original setting after dropping below 17500 ft.)

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|------------------|--------------|
| AREA # 1 – “MT RAINIER” | FL1800 to FL450 | | | | SEA ARTCC | 126.6 |
| LAT | 47 00 | 47 00 | 46 43 | 46 39 | 46 39 | 46 43 |
| LON | 121 55 | 121 34 | 120 57 | 120 59 | 121 36 | 121 51 |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|------------------|--------------|
| AREA # 2 – “WENATCHEE” | FL1800 to FL230 | | | | SEA ARTCC | 126.1 |
| LAT | 47 39 | 47 39 | 47 12 | 47 12 | | |
| LON | 120 30 | 119 20 | 119 20 | 120 30 | | |

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|------------------|--------------|
| AREA # 3A – “RATTLESNAKE HILLS” | FL1800 to FL450 | | | | SEA ARTCC | 132.6 |
| LAT | 46 40 | 46 40 | 46 26 | 46 21 | 46 21 | 46 24 |
| LON | 119 50 | 119 43 | 119 26 | 119 26 | 119 55 | 120 00 |

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|------------------|--------------|
| AREA # 3B – “RATTLESNAKE HILLS” | FL1800 to FL450 | | | | SEA ARTCC | 132.6 |
| LAT | 46 40 | 46 40 | 46 30 | 46 30 | 46 33 | |
| LON | 119 53 | 119 50 | 119 50 | 120 00 | 119 58 | |

Wave area #3B is restricted when the Yakima range is active.

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|---------|---------|--------|------------------|--------------|
| AREA # 4 – “ELLENSBURG” | FL1800 to FL450+ | | | | SEA ARTCC | 126.1 |
| LAT | 47 17 | 47 18.5 | 47 13.6 | 47 01 | 47 06 | 47 12 |
| LON | 120 53 | 120 26 | 119 58 | 119 58 | 120 27 | 120 53 |

Wave area #4 is sandwiched between Sea-Tac arrival and departure routes and as such has no tolerance for gliders to wonder even a mile outside the defined area. Visual references are not expectable for navigation and only the use of GPS is accurate enough, there for a GPS unit is required equipment with the areas boundaries defined to enter the area.

Caution! This is the best I found! If you have any update to this data, please let me know! --Editor
 If you find yourself at 17999 ft and this does not work, don't blame the messenger

50 YEARS AGO IN...

Towline

Submitted by Linda Chism

1958 had been the banner year in the history of the Seattle Glider Council in terms of pilots checked out, number of flights, and accumulated flight hours. Accordingly, 12 members showed up in the sleet of New Year's Day 1959 for a combined club session at Arlington on New Year's Day. Along with the private ship owners, two clubs made up the bulk of the Seattle Glider Council: the Boeing Glider Club and the Cascade Soaring Society. As an aspiring club member in 1959, you would have had the choice of training in these club ships: a TG-3, a two-seat and a single seat L-K, and a new 2-22. Pete Bowers had generously made his 1-26 available to the Clubs on a lease basis, and it was the ship that everyone wanted to get checked out in. The standard operation was every Saturday at Arlington with a tow Cub and a tow Car. In early 1959, the clubs started to lobby the SGC to have both a Saturday and a Sunday operation.

As technology advanced and VHF radios became lighter, pilots experimented with their use in gliders. Bob Moore of Richland became the first SGC pilot to outfit his 1-21 and his crew car. He evaluated its use during the 1958 season, and in the Feb 1959 Towline, Bob wrote a detailed article recommending the use of radios in the sport of soaring. His 1-Watt Skycrafter Multiphone was strapped to the passenger floorboard of his Crew car, with a hardmounted antenna on the car roof. In the 1-21, Bob mounted a Aerotron transmitter/Gonset receiver in the panel, with a battery located behind the seat. Due to heavy battery drain, the

radio was generally used only on tow and at half-hour intervals with his Crew. Bob's article outlined the safety plusses of having a radio, and also the fact that his "ever loyal crew" Elisabeth assured him that "two way radio contributes greatly to the crews' enjoyment, peace of mind, and contentment."

A key member of any soaring operation is the CAA/FAA designee who is authorized to give flight exams for glider licenses. In 1959, the designee was Pete Bowers. He, however, was not "feeling the love" from his pilot community. Applicants were often unprepared with paperwork and the required physical. Even though the standard checkride fee was \$10, he typically waived it in honor of a promise from the applicant to be his retrieve crew in the future. However, when needed, those who promised were never available. Adding to it the fact that designee duties were cutting into his own cross-country and contest flying when the weather was good, Pete was considering not renewing his rating. After doing up to 12 exams a year, he was ready to hang up his designee spurs and go back to instructing. A plea was made to the SGC membership to treat Pete's job as an examiner with more respect in an attempt to retain his services.

The March 1959 Tow Line contained some sobering news: the Arlington airport operator and the City of Arlington re-wrote the airport operating rules and prohibited the use of gliders on the field after May. SGC Chairman Dean Reynolds strongly recommended that the SGC should purchase and develop its own site so that eviction would not be an issue again. Two largely unused airports were mentioned as possible purchases: the abandoned Mount Vernon Navy Field [now, the very active Skagit Co. Airport] and the likewise vacant Shelton Field. "Losing Arlington will be a blow, but it need not be a fatal one. Maybe it will be the spur to new and greater things.....who knows?"

GRINNING AT THE GROB

by Pat McGrath, Jr.

Editors Note: This article was written by Pat in the early 1980's. He recently found it. (Us retired folks call that Re-search!)

John Chalmer's pleasant courtesy has made a lengthy San Diego assignment more than just interesting.

John, who was at the Heber Safari this past summer lives in San Diego and invited me to meet, at the regular Friday luncheon, the group of men who represent a local "Who's Who" of aviation. (One of these was T. Claude Ryan whom we lost in September, and it was a loss. You can see his work in the Aerospace Museum when the 1985 SSA Convention meets in San Diego.)

Chalmers kindly invited me on a flight with him in the Grob, a two-place ship. It is a "sailplane" not only beautiful to look at but most enjoyable to fly. More on that later.

The flight was going to originate at Montgomery Field, just north of San Diego, where John keeps it tied down. John pulled up right on time and began to pre-flight the Grob. This ship, with its' low wing (about 10 inches thick all the way out) and T-tail appears eager to jump off the ground while just sitting there. The impression is that the tie-downs are taut because the ship is pulling at them!

The half acre of Plexiglas covering you hinges at the front. Getting in is a gymnast's delight but the stretch-out-and-be-comfortable cockpit more than makes up for it.

The fuel truck stops by and puts in 12 or 13 gallons and we're ready.

Press the starter button and after two or three kicks the cockpit is only a little less quiet. Gazing out along the 60 foot Eppler airfoil shows an expanse of white composite that seems to go on forever.

We taxi out as John gets his clearance from the busy tower at Montgomery. Taking off in the bright morning sun on 26 right, we're airborne at about 45 knots and climbing at 500 feet per minute. As we reach cruise altitude, John shows me the old "prop pitch change trick", i.e., throttle back to 2200 RPM, reach for the center pull T-handle and give it a tug. There's a brief flutter of the Hoffman fiberglass prop, a little like a frightened bird's takeoff and the engine settles down to cruise speed. (You're in the green up to 3000 RPM.)

Tickling along at about 85 knots (there's more available with that handy throttle) the clouds and soaring areas sit out there like your choice of pie in a huge bakery window! Go for it! (So this is why Bob Moore smiles so much of late.)

As we arrive at Brown Field, a Vari-eze is just whistling out. We do the prop pitch change again and get in the downwind leg. John cracks the spoilers slightly with a pull on the blue anodized knob at his left. (I have the same control on my right.) Those spoilers are, as John says, "effective". About 20% of the 6 to 8 inches vertical extension is enough to do the job. We settle down to a three point on the streamlined gear (tail wheel, too) and taxi to the ramp. The admirers are already walking up before we're out of the ship.

"What kind of a slide ratio?" -- about 30/1. A few other questions and then we walk away as the ship basks in a warm sun and envious eyes.

After the air show (pylon race the main event followed by a bevy of ultra-lights droning up and around) we head back.

Over the Otay Reservoir, John hands over the ship and switches from "pilot" to "vario". Cloud base is only about 3000 and we're in marine air but there are a few thermals. Cranking in at about 55 gets us a bit of lift and a chance to feel the ship's responses. Fun! Even for a jaded old H301 driver it's impressive. The merit is there.

We land again and taxi in. I walk away - grinning at the Grob.

Thanks, John -- very much.

Ephrata news

2009 Calendar

As you can see from the SGC Schedule (last page), lots of pilots are getting ready for the next season. The clubhouse opened on Saturday, 4 April. The bathhouse will open when the risk of frost passes. If you have any great or small plan, now is the time to put it on the calendar and reserve your space in the sun. For an up-to-date schedule, please look at <http://www.seattleglidercouncil.org/>, and click on **2009 Calendar**. Also, if you have an update to the Calendar, or if you have some neat picture, please send that to our webmaster Jim McNeil at jwm033@netscape.net.

National 18 Meter Soaring Contest

Of course our big event this year is our hosting of the National 18 Meter Soaring Contest running from June 30 to July 9, with practice days on June 28 & 29. The SGC is looking for volunteers to staff that effort. If you would like to help, please contact Steve Northcraft. For all the details of becoming a contestant, log on to our website and click on 2009 National 18M Contest.

Region 8 Contest

Region 8 extends a special invitation to all soaring pilots in the Northwest to the Region 8 Soaring Contest named *ephrata dustup '09*. While the Contest is open to all pilots, it will have a special focus on first time competitors.

The contest starts on the evening of Friday, May 22 with an evening orientation. The actual contest will include three days of soaring tasks over the Memorial Day weekend, Saturday through Monday, May 23-25. While the contest will be unsanctioned to increase ease of registration for first time competitors, the tasks and scoring will be the same as a sanctioned contest.

On Saturday and Sunday evenings we will hold educational sessions to review the day's flight with expert competition pilots offering instruction on competition soaring strategies and tactics.

In addition, we'll have some fun. Saturday and Sunday nights will feature dinners along with the educational sessions.

The Contest Officers are:

- Contest Manager Bruce Bulloch
- Contest Director Ron Bellamy
- Scorer Nelson Funston
- Weather Noel Wade
- Flight Line Crew Paul Sjoberg
- Tow Pilots Jim Simmons

More details and updates are found at our website <http://www.seattleglidercouncil.org/> under **Region 8 Contest**.

To register, contact Bruce Bulloch at (206) 935 5927 or at bbulloch@drizzle.com

Idaho Mackay Safari

By Tom Dixon

The Idaho folks are going soaring to Mackay, ID on July 27 to Aug. 10, 2009

Towing spaces are limited, and so are the accommodations in Mackay. Please sign up right away. Contact Tom Dixon at tfdixon@msn.com

Contest Preparation

Michael Newgard

{Michael Newgard gave great presentation to the SCG on how to get ready for a contest for pilots new to Contest-Flying. I have taken his slides and condensed them for Towline. --Editor}

Before you get there

The things that you got to get ready *before* the contest are the Glider, Trailer, the Tow Vehicle and (often forgotten) Yourself

The Glider needs to be prepared before getting to site. Items to consider are Instruments, Logger, Radio, and any other items you have in your glider. Make sure you have check lists in the glider.

The Trailer. Here you need to consider the state of the Tires, the Wheels/Axle, the Lights, the License, and the Jack/Lug Wrench. Think about that most likely someone other than you will have to tow your empty trailer to come and get you.

The Tow Vehicle Similar ideas for your tow-car. Is it fuelled? Where are the keys? Do you have a spare set? Condition of the tires and light system. Does it have Maps (Road / Aeronautical / Topographic), Radio / Phone and Tools? Is the hitch installed? And where is the legal paperwork? A list of where all that stuff is located, may help. Yourself. For yourself comes a Self Check. You have read and understood the Rules and the Contest Operations. Turnpoints are installed in the computer and you have a map/chart with them on it. You know where you keep your Phone/Radio. You and your crew have a Retrieve Plan. Once all of that is done, you are ready to drive to the contest. Avoid arriving on the first contest day – show up earlier to give yourself plenty of time to Check In, and Register. Then assemble the glider and park trailer. Find out when/where the Pilot Meeting/Safety Briefing will be held.

Contest Days

During each Contest Day here are the key issues: Prepare yourself. Make sure you are well rested, hydrated and have eaten. Attend the Pilots Meeting. This is a mandatory meeting and consists of a Safety Briefing, an Operations Briefing, a Weather Briefing, and a Statement of the Tasking Options. Be sure you know the schedule (grid time, launch time, official sunset), the Retrieve Procedures, and the Scoring procedures. Prepare your Glider. Now use your checklist to verify your Assembly. Do a control check. Make sure that Battery, Maps, GPS, Task Sheet, Food/Water, Personal relief system, Oxygen, Land out kit/clothes are installed. Load GPS/Flight Computer with today's tasks. Prepare Retrieve Vehicle. Verify that the trailer is hooked up and the lights work. Close up the trailer with all assembly aids in their safe place. Brief retrieve person.

Now you are ready to relax until Grid -time. Because you were prepared, there is a lot of extra time. Remember: You are here to have fun!

Think SAFETY. Be especially aware of what's going on around you during Launch, Tow, Pre-start, On course, Finishing, Landing. Don't start

thinking about the party until you are on the ground and out of the way!

Additional Information

Introduction To Cross Country Soaring by Kai Gertsen, ([Kai Gertsen Link](#))

Cross Country Soaring by the Soaring Safety Foundation

Beginning Cross Country by Tom Knauff ([Knauff Link](#))

Turnpoints: John Leibacher maintains an unofficial (and very useful) database of turnpoints at ([T-P Link](#))

SSA Contest Rules Page:

<http://www.ssa.org/myhome.asp?mbr=6310235857>

The SRA Guide to Soaring Competition:

<http://www.ssa.org/files/member/SRAGuide.PDF>

Have a great series of contest days.

SGC Calendar

- May 4, 7:00PM, SGC General Membership Meeting - Museum of Flight
- May 22-25 Region 8 "Dustup" Contest)
- May 23-31 Evergreen Soaring Ephrata encampment
- May 23-31 Willamette Valley Soaring encampment Club
- June 14 - 25, Open and Standard Class Nationals Contest, Montague, CA
- June 22 - 26, Vancouver Soaring Association Ephrata Encampment
- June 27 - July 4, Region 9 Soaring Contest, Parowan, Utah
- June 30 - July 9, National 18 Meter Soaring Contest, Ephrata (Practice days June 28-29)
- July 11 - July 19, Willamette Valley Soaring Club Alvord Desert Encampment
- July 27 to Aug. 10 annual safari to Mackay, ID.
- July 11 - July 25, International Military Airlift Competition "Rodeo", Moses Lake (Grant County Airport)

Classifieds

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For more information please contact
Chris@PacificAeroSport.com or Phone:
360-474-9394
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