

TOWLINE



Photo by: Jonathan Hart

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TOWLINE is the Newsletter of the Seattle Glider Council

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 30 Airport Street NE
 Ephrata, WA 98823
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SGC BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2023)

Chairman:	Noel Wade	noelw@seattleglidercouncil.org
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	Christian Klix	chrisk@seattleglidercouncil.org
	Henry Rebbeck	henryr@seattleglidercouncil.org

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Secretary	Jim McNeil
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Towplane Manager	Chris Klix
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TOWLINE Committee	Dave Lindberg, Dave Reusch, Eric Greenwell, Tom Dixon, Chris Klix
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Contest Manager (Region 8)	Mike Bamberg
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Webmaster(s)	Jim McNeil & Noel Wade
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Elections Chair	>OPEN<
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Dust-Up Event Coordinator	Mike Bamberg
Methow Event Coordinator	Brad Pattison
WA State Governor	>OPEN<
Toward Data Entry Focal	Randy Scott

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Director:	Henry Rebbeck	(exp. 1/1/25)
Director:	Mike Bamberg	(exp. 1/1/26)

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Region 8 Director	Craig Funston
Idaho Governor	Tom Dixon
Montana Governor	Greg Mecklenburg
Oregon Governor	Mike Bamberg
Washington State Governor	>OPEN<

DUES & FEES

Membership:

Regular - (includes 1 week of facility use)	\$75
Family - (Spouse/Partner w/facility & voting privileges)	\$35
Youth - (25 years & under, incl. 1 week of facility use)	\$50
Lifetime - (incl. 1 week of facility use per year)	\$1500

Tows (Ephrata)

Hook up and first 1500 feet	\$50
Per 100 feet above 1500 feet	\$1.70
Mid-week surcharge if fewer than 3 tows in a day	\$15 per tow

Aero-retrieve or glider ferry

\$190 / tach hr.

Ephrata Facility Use Fee

Seasonal (April - October, full use of all facilities)	\$100
Weekly (first week included in membership fee)	\$30

Glider Tiedown & Trailer Storage at Ephrata

Seasonal (April - October, reserved trailer spot)	\$220 per glider
Weekly	\$40

Ephrata RV Parking

Seasonal reserved spot (April - October)	\$550
Weekly (8 nights or less)	\$120
Short Term (3 nights or less)	\$60
EV Charging	\$10

Notes:

- All fees are in USD
- SGC and SSA membership required for all tows behind SGC towplanes
- Tow fees are invoiced. All other fees should be paid prior to arrival at Ephrata.

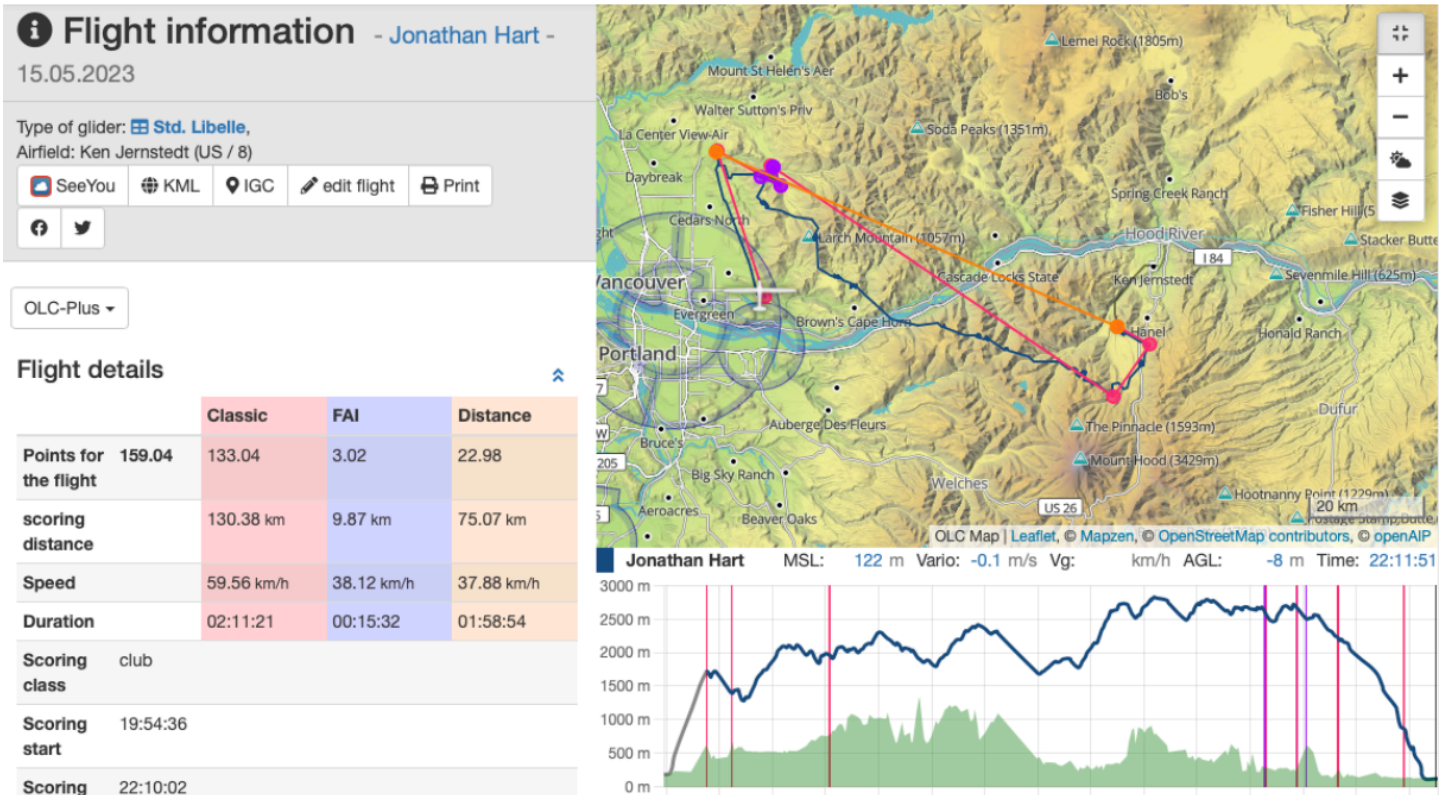
CLUBS & OPERATIONS

Cascade Soaring Society	-	https://www.cascadesoaringociety.com
Evergreen Soaring	-	http://www.evergreensoaring.com
Glider-Rides.com	-	http://www.glider-rides.com
Hood River Soaring	-	https://www.hoodriversoaring.org
High Desert Soaring Club	-	http://www.hdsoaring.org
King Mountain Glider Park	-	https://www.kingmountaingliderpark.com
Puget Sound Soaring Association	-	http://www.pugetsoundsoaring.org
Spokane Soaring Society	-	https://spokanesoaring.org
Vancouver Soaring Association	-	https://vancouversoaring.com
Willamette Valley Soaring Club	-	https://www.facebook.com/flyWVSC



Crossing the Cascades Westbound *Submitted by Jonathan Hart*

May 15th 2023



First of all I should mention that I had been planning this flight out of Hood River, Oregon, for about two years before I got a day with the right weather conditions to make it possible. I needed a day with cloudbase over 7k ft and little to no west wind. These conditions are rare to find in Hood River.

At about 11am, I took off out of Hood River for a tow to 4k ft to hook into the thermals south of the airport. On tow I noticed that I was not getting any airspeed indication. I landed and got the problem fixed, no big deal. I took off on my second tow about 11:45 and took a 5,000 ft tow 10 miles South of Hood River where I hooked into my first climb and took it up to 6,500 ft. Staying within gliding distance of Hood River, I continued SW towards Mt Hood (*Editor's Note: See cover photo*) where I could see cloudbase was higher than the clouds where I was. I stayed around 7k ft and got far enough west to transition to



Cascade Locks and use that airport as my next landout option. I crossed the Columbia River West of Bonneville Dam at about 7,500. After crossing over to the WA side of the river the thermals got quite a bit stronger and cloud bases were more than 2,000 ft HIGHER! I continued North of the river for about 15 miles and flew around over Battleground, WA, for the next hour or so. Getting on into the later afternoon I was starting to see some over development and the start of some thunderclouds. I called Portland Approach and got a clearance to descend through the PDX Class C to get down and land at Camas Grove Field underneath a shelf of the C.

Letters and Articles

Jonathan's Story

Submitted by Brian Hart, Sr.

I want folks to get a sense of what can happen with young aspiring pilots when we as adults help remove obstacles and allow them to focus in pursuing their calling. It is my impression that it is often the us as adults—not the youth—that allow our fears and misconceptions impose many of the perceived limitations. After all, Jonathan is now one of 20 actively soaring youth members at Hood River Soaring, and I expect many of them to take somewhat accelerated paths similar to Jonathan's as they continue their aviation pursuits. Still, it has always been something of a quandary for me: how do I get that across without sounding pretentious when the most entertaining tale and best living proof I have is in Jonathan's story? So, I am not sure what else to do than to tell that story as it has unfolded, in the hopes that it will inspire other young pilots to press forward as well. It is not so much that he is a lone star in this story; it is that the stars around him have illuminated the path he has walked. And the SGC is an integral part of that story.

The full story is below, but if nothing else, note a couple of key points buried there: Jonathan passed his power checkride on his 17th birthday in July, and already having his tailwheel & high-power endorsements while a student pilot plus ~500 glider & power hours combined, got checked out to begin towing the Pawnee the next day. So, we have a towplane-and-glider picture in which the cumulative age of the pilots is 31: 14-year-old Isabel Ulland being towed by 17-year-old Jonathan.

And he passed his instrument checkride 11 days later.

Busy kid...broke (but still happy) dad that has now been towed twice by Jonathan and finally flew our Libelle.

This is a story about the advantage of starting aviation training in a glider—and about the glider community that makes it happen.

Jonathan Hart, after competing for the first time at age 16—and safely landing out twice, once alongside Charlie Longley at Beezley Hills and the second time alone at Electric City—at this year's Region 8 contest, jumped right back into preparation for his instrument checkride. Instrument checkride? But he was only 16, you say. Well, this is what glider time can for young people when they are encouraged to focus, and perhaps some background will help.

Jonathan had his first glider lesson at age 14 plus three weeks, soloed a few months later, and was well into his second glider logbook with well over 100 solo hours, much of it in his Libelle, by the time he passed his glider checkride on his 16th birthday in July last year. He immediately gave me my first glider ride, and then I still had to be in the car with him—since he had yet only a learner's permit—while we drove from Hood River, Oregon, to Grove Field in Camas, Washington, where he soloed the Cub for the first time. Upon completion of his first solos, his instructor Neil Cahoon said, “What do I do with you for the next year? You're ready for your power checkride”.

And he was referring not to some natural proclivity for aviation; after all, he had given Jonathan his first ride in a Pacer when Jonathan was four years old, but he did not begin Jonathan's power instruction until 11 years later when Jonathan had already been soloing a glider for over a year. No, he was referring



mostly to the superior stick, rudder, and aeronautical decision making that came with the glider experience accompanied by a substantial amount of diligent hard work. There were, of course, a few additional formalities before the power checkride: the required three hours [power] cross-country training, three hours of night flight training, three hours of simulated IFR training, and some cross-country time. But that would not fill an entire year, so the big question was indeed what to do for the next year. And it was not hard to answer: prepare for instrument checkride concurrently with private pilot checkride. And while the instrument training had to wait until our soggy NorthWest winter ended, the time last summer was not lost. Jonathan with his new tailwheel endorsement kept flying that Cub solo, building 50 tailwheel hours and numerous cross-country flights before it went out of service for repairs in the fall.

With the Cub down, we decided we might want to buy this supposedly-instrument-ready 1976 Cessna 150M in Bloomington, Illinois, for Jonathan's continuing aviation education, but we did not think it worth the big trip for Jonathan and Neil. That was until we found that Neil was to ferry a Comanche from Grove Field to Boston. So we decided buying the 150 would work after all, and Jonathan got his major dual cross-country hours done concurrently with his complex endorsement as he flew the Comanche from Washington to Illinois. Neil went on to Boston alone to deliver the Comanche, and Jonathan stayed at Bloomington to assist with the annual on the 150. When Neil rejoined him for the trip home in the 150 a couple of days later, more cross-country hours and great experiences followed.

Not the least of these was a mystery alternator outage that led to the inevitable dead battery and this macabre-sounding finale to their day on FlightAware when the electronics went dark "Last seen over Bear Lake". Not to worry, though; they made it to Burleigh, Idaho, before dark, and the local A & P solved the alternator breaker problem the next morning—only to discover stripped Heli coils in one of the cylinder-to-exhaust connections.



So, the intrepid travelers made the 14-hour-ride back to Hood River—on the bus!



It was a couple of months later before Jonathan could get another ride with his friend Colson Zack back out



there to pick up the 150 with its newly-installed cylinder. That was December last year.

Night flying & endorsement ensued, as did towered airport flying & endorsement, and weekly endorsements from Neil for long cross-country flights in the 150. In April, it was time instrument training began in earnest, but the dual G5's GNC 355 we had purchased to make the 150 his official instrument trainer were still in the box waiting for the long-overdue installation that was supposed to start in February. So instead, the instrument training came in the FlyIt Academy's RV12. High-power endorsement (does it sound yet like there might be a Pawnee at the end of this tale?) and four hours' simulated IFR Foggie time came in Neil's 300 HP Cessna 180 on a trip to Livermore, CA, a couple of months ago to pick up the Ximango. I got to ride along in the back seat on that flight along with 14-year-old HRS glider student Kylan Mullis. And while Jonathan, still at 16, flew me back Hood River in the Ximango that day and the next, Kylan got his first four hours' power instruction time with Neil in the 180.

One day in June, Jonathan did 11 Young Eagles flights as the youngest EAA volunteer pilot.



Then came the first glider contest in Ephrata and back to the final phases of instrument training, which

all began to take shape building up to his 17th birthday. He had almost 500 hours combined glider & power hours by this time.



This would not have been happening this way were it not for the glider experience. Starting with Jeff Pinnock at Willamette Valley to Mark Stanfield at Hood River to landing out in an anonymous field northeast of Odessa at age 14, then a battery outage leading to a landout at Mansfield and an aero retrieve



by Mike Newgard, and doing his Gold Badge distance under the guidance of Mike Bamberg the following year, the glider experience has been and continues to be an inextricable part of this story. So finally there he was passing his power checkride on his 17th birthday this July.



Finally? No, not actually. He and Geoff Curtis jumped into the 150 the next day, where he got checked out as a tow pilot and then did his first solo flights in the Pawnee.



And then into his first tow with Geoff and a student in the ASK-21 behind.



And he passed his instrument checkride 11 days after that.

One of our locals noted that the cumulative age of the pilots in this picture is 31: 14-year-old Isabel Ulland being towed by 17-year-old Jonathan Hart.

Busy times at the airports, for sure.

And while it all began with a flight in a Pacer at age 4 with Neil, it was the early glider training and involvement of you as a glider community, including many more not named here, that provided the fertile soil in which this love of aviation took root, grew, and flourished. After all, his first thought only three years ago upon hearing that I was going to start him in a glider, not in a power plane, had been, “That would be boring—flying around without an engine!” Go figure.



Setting Goals, Submitted by Chris Klix

At Dust-up 2022, I attended a seminar given by Kelvyn Flavall on “Badges and Setting Records” in gliders. I first got serious about badge flying on May 27th, 1983 when I flew solo from Ephrata to Mansfield in an L13 Blanik, achieving my silver distance and my Silver Badge, having previously done my 5-hour duration in 1975 on a ridge above Gelnhausen Germany, in a Schleicher Ka-6 and my 1,000m altitude gain in 1976 in a Schleicher K-8. In 1985 I purchased my first glider, a Standard Cirrus, which helped me in achieving both my gold badge and two of my diamonds, Diamond Goal and Diamond Altitude, during which I also set the Washington State, Standard Class, Absolute Altitude record on March 20, 1988 of 22,498 ft. over Mission Ridge ski area, near Wenatchee, WA. I have always looked back on those badge and record setting flights as very rewarding flying. Mind-you, this was all done with a smoked foil barograph for documenting altitude and cameras for turnpoint photos. I attempted to do my Diamond Distance flight three times in my Standard Cirrus, each time coming up short, primarily because my average cross-country speed was not fast enough. That was when I started flying contests, hoping to improve my speed. With the onset of the digital age and online contest (OLC) flying, there was a period of time where I lost interest in badge and record flying, but because of the challenge of flying specific declared tasks, I still found much joy by competing in contests. There is just something about achieving predetermined goals that I find very rewarding.

Therefore, the thought of getting back to badge and record flying was something that intrigued me, even more than just trying to get the most OLC points. I recall during one of the past Dust-up events I was doing a lead and follow with Tory Tolton. We looked at the weather and decided to set a goal of flying to #31 Mansfield, #50 Tree Hart Ranch and back. It was a nice day and we both achieved our goal, landing safely back in Ephrata. What stuck with me was Tory’s comment on how much he enjoyed the day by flying a predetermined goal. He

had always just gone out and flown what looked to be the best way to go, but had never actually set a goal prior to take-off and then flew it, regardless of the conditions. It really does add extra dopamine to your system.

Last year I decided to re-learn how to declare and fly records in my LS7-WL glider. So, I thought, I would start with something small that would also help me figure out how to program my computer and learn all the rules again, which I found to be the same in some of the basics, but also very different when it comes to recording it in the new digital world.

I declared a 100km triangle which I could simply go around as many times as I wanted to until I had my fastest speed. This actually turned out to be a very eye-opening experiment. My first time around, I had my McCready setting on 4 knots. Although I had some good climbs, the average was perhaps not that good, and I ended up getting lower in my lift band. I actually went around 3 and a half times, abandoning one try, just because I knew it was not as good as a previous try. I eventually set my McCready to 2.5 during my last attempt. This resulted in flying a circuit that better utilized flying through the areas of lift closer to cloud base, requiring less circling.

Low and behold, that was actually my fastest circuit. Perhaps stronger conditions later in the day also helped, but I think flying slower actually help me to fly faster overall. I was also pleasantly surprised to have set a new Standard Class, 100km triangle speed record of 71.95 mph.

This season I decided to again set a goal and try to finish my Diamond Badge. The Sports Class, Triangle Speed record for 500km was also still wide open, so I thought why not try to do both in the same flight. Being Sports Class, I would need to fly without water, and also make sure I declared a triangle that was big enough when applying my handicap of 0.94. I looked at the conditions on SkySight and laid out a 542km FAI triangle with three turnpoints, Twisp, Deer Park, New Warden, and back to a straight 1km long start and finish line at the



Ephrata Start East waypoint. I had previously set a remote start finish line closer to Soap Lake to avoid the Aerobatic box, which was active and in use, but could not get my early version LX8000 to recognize it. I am still baffled as to why it would just default to the Ephrata Start East waypoint. Time was passing and I needed to stop fiddling with it, and get going to get an early start. I decided I just need to get on my way.

Being in a rush is never a good thing. We towed the glider to the south end of runway 04 with our van. I climbed into my glider and my wife Nan, asked me if I had done a positive. I had not, so we did one while the tow plane was lining up in front of me.

Everything was much too rushed, and after 48 years of flying gliders, I got complacent about doing my normal pre-take-off checks! We hooked up and off I went. But upon leaving the ground, the glider suddenly slammed back down onto the runway before lifting off again. The glider felt odd and there was some buffeting in the tail. My immediate thought was that I had damaged the tail when the glider slammed down. I felt the controls and, though there was buffeting, I had aileron and elevator control, but for how long? I decided to make sure I had enough height to do a 180 degree turn back to runway 21, the main power runway parallel to our glider runway. I released and prepared for landing by putting my left hand on the spoiler handle. That was when I realized what was wrong. I had failed to lock my spoilers prior to take-off, which resulted in them extending as I first broke ground. This explains why I slammed back down to the runway before we gained enough speed to break ground a second time. Thankfully, I was able to make an uneventful landing on runway 21, rolling off on the diagonal taxiway. Brian Case, the towpilot in our C-182, immediately landed behind me. The winds were light, so after checking the glider, some good advice from Kelvyn to always say out loud prior to take-off "Spoilers Locked and Gear locked down", I finally got my act together and we launched again, this time from runway 22. Now, it was already a ½ hour later than my first try, but I figured I would go for it anyway.

I released and found lift which I took to 6,000 ft. I needed to fly back over the airport high enough to be clear of the aerobatic box, which went to 5,000 ft, and then hook the start line going North, but low enough that I would be able to easily finish with just enough height to enter the pattern for landing. The rules require I finish within 1000 meters of my start height. If I start too high, I might not be able to cross the finish line with enough height, even though it might be plenty for getting back to a safe landing at Ephrata.

The lift started out a bit low, but I was able to carefully stair step my way North eventually getting to about 7,800 ft NE of Mansfield, and about 8,000 ft after crossing the Columbia river with lift averaging about 3.5 knots. Although the lift did not go as high as I had hoped, the first leg was consistent, with excellent clouds to mark the way. I turned Twisp about 1.5 hours into my flight with a speed of 51 mph. An added fun factor was I could hear all the activity of other gliders in the area because of the Methow encampment, which was in full swing that week. The second leg took me over the Okanagan valley, just south of Omak. This area was a wide valley of blue sky, which had me somewhat worried. But upon extending my legs into the blue, there were just enough small cloud wisps that would pop up to carry me across. The east side of the valley was however, another story. It was quickly overdeveloping and I could see virga extending down from the clouds to Northeast of Grand Coulee Dam. This forced me to veer way south of my course line. At one point I found myself down to only 5,500 feet MSL over Rice Ranch, which sits on a 2500 ft. plateau. Well, you get the picture. I finally ended up crossing the North end of Banks lake. This detour seemed to be just too big to still be able to complete the task. Given the chain of events on how the day started, I then decided to only fly to Davenport and just make the best of it, however, I did return home via a point that was about 10 miles short of my third turn point, New Warden. Even though I was defeated on my fourth attempt at Diamond Distance, it makes it even more worth it when you actually do achieve your goal. I ended up flying just over 500km that



day with an OLC score of 627 points, which I was actually very happy with.

Brian Case and I were swapping Towpilot duties, so I had anticipated I would be flying the towplane the following day. However, when I checked with him, he said he would be working online for much of the day and therefore elected to continue flying the towplane. This gave me another opportunity to try it again, so I went for it. This time I was able to get an earlier start without being so rushed, and everything went much better. Even the conditions were better. I was able to immediately get up to over 10,000 feet, however my first leg was still about the same as before, 1.5 hours to Twisp. From there, I again had to take a leap of faith, and cross the Okanagan valley in the blue. Like the day before, I was able to work small wisps of cloud that would occasionally pop up along my route. This time the territory, we call "Tiger Country" because of the lack of landable fields, was free of overdevelopment. However, with most of my flight on that leg at between 7,500 and 10,500 ft, I was able to easily stay within safe gliding distance of an airport.

Crossing Lake Roosevelt, was however a challenge because of the wide blue hole, and the first clouds on the other side were not working as I had hoped. But after back tracking slightly to a gravel pit facing the sun, I was able to connect with some good lift on the east side of the mountains running north and south along the east side of the lake. This was enough to make my second turnpoint, Deer Park, north of the Spokane Class "C" airspace. From there I had to be careful to not enter the airspace as I skirted around its northern boundary. The conditions looked good ahead towards my third turn point, until it didn't.

At about 30 miles out of New Warden, and about 60 miles from my finish line the air went completely dead, with no signs of lift anywhere enroute. All I could do was tank up with as much altitude as I could and hope for the best. As you can see in my flight trace, it was one, very smooth long glide, that took me from 11,550 ft. all the way down to 3,860 ft. (about 2600 ft. AGL) near the Moses Lake Municipal

airport, where I worked some very weak lift. That final thermal eventually averaged 1.9 knots over a feed lot, which got me back up to 6,300 ft, just high enough, to pass over the Grant County airspace and make my minimum finish line altitude. And to answer your question, yes, I did contact the tower and get clearance to enter their airspace, just in case.

This flight gave me my long overdue Diamond Distance, completing my Diamond badge. In addition, I was able to set a Washington State, Sports Class, 500km Triangle handicapped speed record of 53.81 mph, with a raw speed of 57.24 mph. In addition, and to my unexpected surprise, I also set 12 more General category Washington State Distance records.

- Two in Open Class Singleplace: Distance up to three turnpoints at 338.2 miles, and Free Triangle Distance at 338.26 miles;
- Three in 15m class: Distance up to three turnpoints at 338.2 miles, Free Triangle Distance at 338.26 miles, and Free Distance up to Three Turnpoints at 341.53 miles.
- Four in Standard Class: Triangle Distance at 336.59 miles, Distance up to three turnpoints at 338.2 miles, Free Triangle Distance at 338.26 miles, and Free Distance up to Three Turnpoints at 341.53 miles.
- Three handicapped distances in Sports Class: Triangle Distance at 316.39 miles, Free Triangle Distance at 317.96 miles, and Free Distance up to Three Turnpoints at 321.04 miles

In all it was a very enjoyable, very productive, and very rewarding flight, I will always remember. So, go out and set some goals, you might just surprise yourself on what you can accomplish.

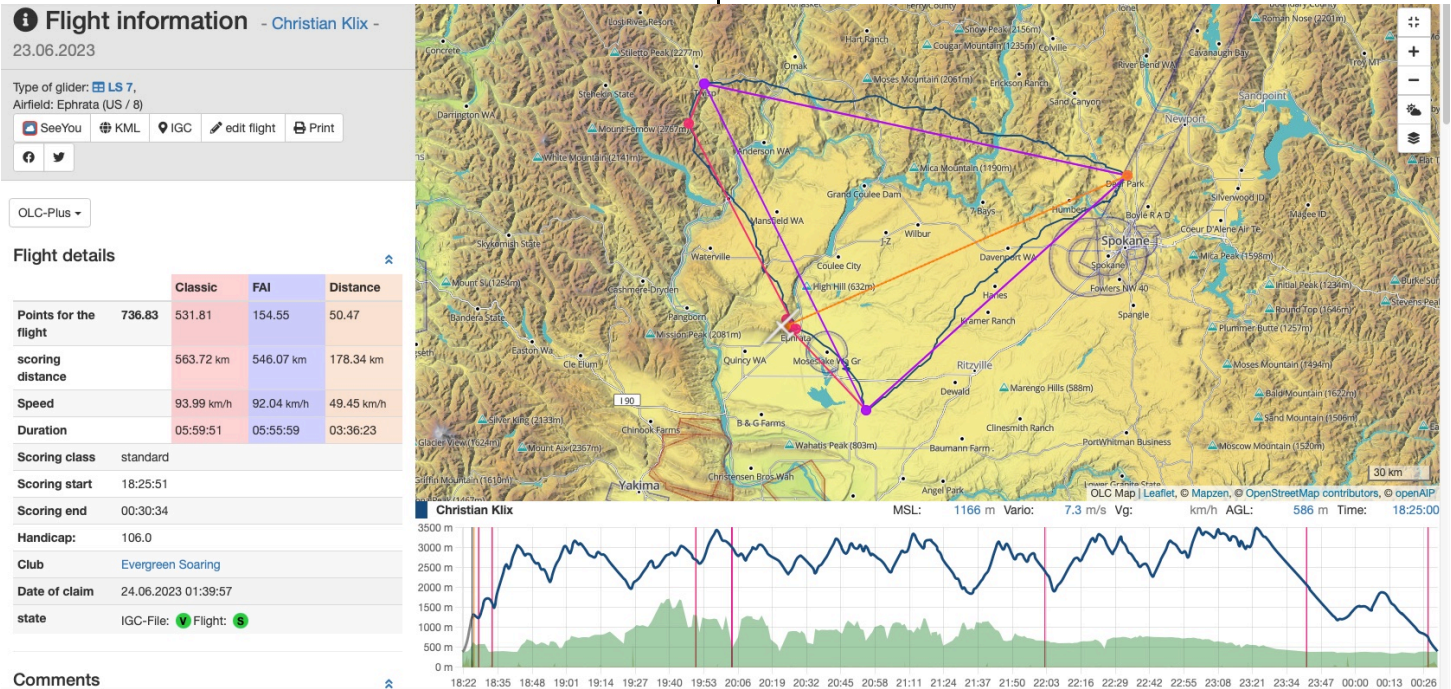
I want to thank Kelvyn for inspiring me to get back to setting goals again, Brian Case for towing me and giving me the opportunity to fly on two of the best



September 2023 *Towline*

days I have experienced this season, and last but not least, Mike Bamberg for being my official observer and helping me out in the application work.

Link to my Diamond Distance OLC flight trace:
<https://www.onlinecontest.org/olc-3.0/gliding/flightinfo.html?dsId=9510799#map=46.0732%2C-121.6846%2C49.2176%2C-114.4885>



Mackay, ID Regatta, July 09 Through July 23, 2023, Submitted by Tom Dixon

No. of Days Flown: 12
 No. of Flights: 76
 No. of K Logged: 25,352.86 (three flights were not logged on OLC)
 Flight over 600 K: 1 (Stuart Larimore 618.56 K)
 Flights over 500 K less than above: 7
 Flights over 400 K less than above: 17
 Flights qualifying for the Louis Stur Memorial Trophy of 362 K: 14
 Newest Sailplane: Twin Shark
 Oldest Sailplane: Ka6e
 States/Countries Represented: Canada, CA, OR, WA, ID, MT, NH
 Landouts: 2 (No issues and quick retrieves)
 No. of Milkshakes and Root Beer Floats at the new Ice Cream Parlor: TOO MANY
 No. of Golf Games: More than one less than 20

No. of Fish Caught: A bunch
 Longest Hike: Kelvyn Flavall, Lower Cedar Creek water fall AND mountain vintage air navigation panel.
 No. of Dinners at the Moose Crossing RV Park Pavilion: Every night

No. of Smoky Days: NONE!!! (One fire near the May turnpoint with TFR)
 Average Time to Tow 6 gliders: 1hr 12
 Idaho State Records Approved: Three (Sean Franke/Don Profota, Twin Shark)
 Tour of world's first nuclear power plant
 For 2024 dates contact Tom Dixon, lodging reservations need to be done ASAP





Retrieve of Brian Case at Twin Bridges Airport



Typical mountain flying day at Mackay



This is the lower Cedar Creek Falls fed by internal mountain reservoirs filled by previous year's snow fall. L to R Brian Case, Hal Woodward, Tom Dixon, Don Profota



No flying day, major rain and wind



Wild Fire near May Airport



No flying day, tour of the museum at Arco ID with the World's first nuclear plant



Previous Photos were taken by Hal Woodward, Don Profota, and Stuart Larimore



Photo to the left was taken by Sean Franke of me landing for one of the two shortest flights of the event. Hal Woodward with his FES Ventis stayed up about 29 min. I was up for about 21 minutes. Delayed the launch for about 30 minutes and flights were 400k plus.

Solos and Endorsements

Three firsts at Hood River in the last few weeks.

#1: **Isabel Ulland** was ready to solo on her 14th birthday in June under the guidance of CFGIF Geoff Curtis. But the ASK-21 was down for a mechanical repair that day, so here she is after her first solo at age 14 plus 3 days. Isabel is not only an avid glider pilot and key member of the Hood River Soaring ground operations team, but she is also often at the gliderport, wrench in hand, assisting the A&P's with glider maintenance, repairs, and annuals. One of her goals is to compete in a glider contest one day.



#2: Congratulations to 14-year-old **Anou Slingeland** shown here after his first solo August 1 with his father Alex Slingeland as tow pilot and CFGIF Geoff Curtis at Hood River, Oregon. Anou and his family live near Bangkok, Thailand, and come to Hood River each summer. He took his first glider lessons here last summer, while his father got checked out to be a tow pilot, and they returned this summer for more towing and instruction at Hood River Soaring. Alex owns and flies a Cessna 180 in Thailand as well as a Kit Fox that he and Anou fly at Hood River.



#3: **Henry Mason** shown here with CFIG Geoff Curtis after Henry's first solo in the ASK-21. Henry is one of Hood River Soaring's many active youth members and made such great progress at this year's glider camp that he soloed shortly thereafter. In Henry's own words, "Airplane felt really different, but it was easier to fly. I can't wait to solo again, in the L33 as well. I'm super excited to have finally done this. Now I'm looking forward to getting my ABC and Bronze Badges. Also thank you to the SSA for the scholarship that helped me accomplish solo flight."



Hood River Soaring currently has 22 active youth members, including two that became licensed on their 16th birthdays and one that began towing the day after his Private Pilot (power) checkride on his 17th birthday, as well as five that are soloing at 14 or 15 years of age. This is in addition to many adult members, including four active adult students. Many of our youth members, including Henry, are working toward their Bronze Badges in the hopes of attending an SSA junior XC camp if we can bring it to the Northwest in the near future!



From North Plains, Oregon –

Congratulations to **Sparrow Reed** on achieving his auto tow endorsement while at the annual Alvord desert encampment this past July, 2023. This was accomplished over 4 days and 6 flights with flight instructor Ron Poe. At 16 years old, Sparrow is one of the youngest pilots to achieve the auto tow endorsement in the Alvord desert. Sparrow is the recipient of the 2023 SSA Flight Training Scholarship. Below is his write up of the experience.

There was much anticipation leading up to my initial flights with Ron Poe. However, I quickly realized that I was in the presence of a very experienced pilot and was in good hands should something go wrong. The first day, Ron flew the takeoff and landing. I took controls shortly after and thermaled right up to 9500 msl over the playa. The weather was a balmy 104 degrees, so I decided to take the rest of the day off. Lightning and high winds blew in overnight and the next day we were presented with a steady 10-15kt crosswind. In the afternoon Ron and I went up again and I attempted some thermaling.



The scale of the desert is easily lost, and I did not realize how far I had gotten from camp until I turned back and was fighting a quartering headwind. This was my first attempt at a playa landing, and I realized there was much more to a smooth landing than I originally thought. The altitudes and visual landmarks in the landing pattern that I was used to from North Plains had no place here, and it turned out that I needed a couple more demonstrations from Ron before I was going to be ready. The next day there was light ridge lift over the foothills of the Steens, where I received my first lessons on ridge soaring. I found flying the ridge to be incredibly captivating. The intimacy you feel with the geography is unparalleled in normal thermaling. Ron had me fly the launches and landings, and I became very comfortable with the auto-tow procedures. At first, I found the launches disorienting. After the first 200 feet, there is no reference to the horizon. Once you become more attuned to feeling the glider's movement without the aid of that reference, I found that the moment of the tow keeps you centered a surprising amount. On landing, it was a matter of energy management and planning ahead as always. Unlike a conventional airstrip, there are so many options as to where to land that it can be overwhelming. While doing rope break practice, I was faced with the problem of too many options when at 200 ft I had plenty of room to land straight ahead or turn back. I lost substantial altitude while deciding which to do (I ended up turning back). All this is to say that the levels of planning, communication, and precision required at the Alvord are high. This is a lesson that can easily be translated into every day flying, one that I realize is invaluable experience.

Obituaries

Wayne Douglas Ginther, 82, of Lacey, WA, a beloved husband, father, and adventurer, passed away to be with his Heavenly Father on August 3, 2023. He was surrounded by his family. He was born on October 8, 1940, in Sioux Falls, South Dakota to Robert and Pearl Ginther. When he was a toddler his parents moved to Puyallup, WA. Wayne lost his father in a plane accident at a young age and grew up in the Puyallup Valley with his mother and seven siblings. Even though his father died in a plane accident Wayne developed a lifelong love of aviation. He piloted small engine planes, was an avid glider pilot becoming president of the Puget Sound Soaring Association for several years, and chose a career where he designed and drafted the big jets of Lockheed and Boeing. See more about Wayne's life at: <https://www.powersfuneralhome.com/obituary/Wayne-Ginther>

Robert Secombe passed away on August 24th. Robert took his final soaring flight 'west'. As we all know, soaring had become Robert's passion following a long career as a pilot for American Airlines. Robert was always generous in offering seats in his amazing ASH30-Mi glider and helping our club out with winter storage space for the Super Cub and club gliders in his heated hangar at Tacoma Narrows. His last glider encampment was in Methow where he gave awesome flights to several PSSA members and attended each morning briefing quietly in the background. Robert's last flight was over 3 and a half hours on July 19th from Ephrata and covered the plateau around and beyond Ephrata. Robert had a long struggle with side effects from radiation therapy years ago which made it difficult for him to communicate and at risk for recurrent pneumonia. He passed away yesterday in Gig Harbor with his son Evan present. I had visited Robert several times in the last two weeks just before the pneumonia overwhelmed him. Peace, strong thermals and tailwinds good friend.
Submitted by Brad Pattison



Upcoming Meetings and Events for 2023

- Labor Day Weekend in Ephrata September 2nd – 4th
- SGC Board Meeting Sept. 12th @ 7:00 PM
- SGC General Meeting October 2nd @ 7:00 PM
- Ephrata Winterization Work Party October 7th – 8th
- Ephrata Glider Aerobatic Camp (Tentative) April or May 2024

SGC General Meetings are held online the first Monday of the month at 7:00 PM, Jan through May & Oct through Dec.

- All pilots can join by clicking going to the [SGC website homepage](#) and clicking the link under “UPCOMING EVENTS”

SGC Board Meetings are held online every second Tuesday (recently changed from Wednesday) of the month at 7:00 PM

- SGC Members are welcome to attend. [Email the SGC Board](#) to request a meeting link.
- A representative from each Club in the Region is invited to attend for maximum coordination & mutual benefit!

--Chris Klix, 2023 SGC Board

REMINDER NOTICE TO ALL SGC MEMBERS

Anyone curious about our recent Bylaw changes is encouraged to [read the SGC Bylaws online](#) (available through our website under the “Information” page).

If you have any questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to contact the SGC Board of Directors at: sgcboard@seattleglidercouncil.org

Labor Day Weekend in Ephrata

GROUP EFFORT, GROUP FUN

Throughout 2023 we’ve had some great operations, great events, and great fun! Although the season is drawing to a close, it’s not quite done yet. Now is the time to stock up on “altitude therapy” to tide you over until next year! We’re holding a full operation over the 3 days of Labor Day Weekend (Sept 2nd – 4th) and you are cordially invited. To sweeten the deal we’re organizing a potluck, a pancake breakfast, and an evening presentation or two if there’s interest. Come for the flying, stay for the camaraderie! Bunks & RV spots are available. To indicate your interest, please use the SGC SignUp Genius page.

Additionally, please mark your calendar for October 7th & 8th. That will be your chance to show support and appreciation for the SGC, as we’ll winterize the facility that weekend. We don’t have paid staff; your help is



necessary to ensure the site is usable next year. Watch your inbox for further details, and thanks for remembering that this is your organization!

Noel Wade, 2023 SGC Chairperson

We are still scheduling tow operations for the remaining 2023 Season. In order to commit towpilots we need glider pilots to express their intent to soar. Please Indicate that you would like tows using our [SignUp Genius](#) system.

That also goes for towpilots as well. If you would like to tow for us in Ephrata, please sign up, even if there are no glider pilots signed up yet. Sometimes that is all it takes to get the glider pilots to commit.

To sign up for tows:

1. Use the link above or go to the SGC website and over **EVENTS**, then click “**2023 Ephrata Operations Signup**”.
2. Click the “SIGN UP!” image to go to the SignUp Genius calendar.
3. Use the “Sign Up” button next to each of your desired dates, then click “Save & Continue” at the bottom of the page to confirm your signups.
4. If you would like to edit what you have committed to you will need to create an account and log in.

On behalf of the SGC Board of Directors
Thank you to the Towline Publishing Committee and all the volunteers that contributed to this newsletter! This publication is such an important communication tool in helping keep SGC the heart of the PNW soaring scene.

Please send any articles/pictures for submission in future publications to:
Towline@SeattleGliderCouncil.org

