

The Flight Line

News about Sugarbush Soaring

SUGARBUSH SOARING ASSOCIATION, INC.
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From the President's Cockpit

Odd winter we've had in the Mad River Valley. Though downhill skiers had a good season with help from snow guns, Ole's X-C Ski at the airport had a tough season. They have been shut down since the beginning of March due to lack of snow.

Lack of snow is good news for Sugarbush Soaring. It suggests that the field will be in good shape for our put-together weekend, May 6-7.

Your Board of Directors has been very busy over the winter. Faced with tough decisions following our washed-out autumn weather, the Board has decided to hold the line on club dues but to begin charging members a nominal fee for use of club gliders. This follows a well-established practice in other clubs; it is intended to defray some of the maintenance costs that we face with our mature glider fleet.

Something new is in the air at Sugarbush Soaring. The Board of Directors has voted to lease a new Flight Design CTSW Special Light Sport Aircraft ([see www.flightdesignusa.com](http://www.flightdesignusa.com)) from a newly formed group called Sugarbush Sport Flyers. The lease is written so Sugarbush Soaring bears no financial risk from this venture. Our capable Sugarbush Soaring staff has the exclusive contract for providing instruction in this aircraft. Members of Sugarbush Sport Flyers rent the aircraft at cost and pay Sugarbush Soaring member rates for instruction.

The CTSW will be on the field at the end of June. On days when the air is flat, consider trying out this new way to experience the joy of flight.

I'm looking forward to seeing each of you on May 6, and to a great 2006 soaring season.

Dave Ellis



Opening Weekend

Saturday 6 May

Breakfast from 8:00 AM

Assemble gliders

Safety Seminar

Social hour

Dinner at the Tower

Sunday 7 May

Safety Seminar.

See you there!

Operational Wanderings

By Rick Hanson

Remember back, if you can, to what made you get interested

enough in flying to expend precious time and wads of money to climb into a small man-made contrivance and leave the planet earth. I'm guessing you can remember the person whose enthusiasm, flying skill, and obvious dedication has brought you, years later, to where you are now. For me, it was a dour, infrequently responsible Maine bush pilot and instructor who, despite his endless grouching about all the stupid things I could accomplish on a single, short instructional flight, took the time to place the aircraft between the sun and a cumulus cloud on a rare sunny fall day, and reverently show me what he called "the pilot's halo."

We all hope to see a whole lot of new faces around the airport this summer - and we do - every summer. Among these new faces are the new students, club members, glider owners, board members, instructors, and future of this operation and airport that we all love and want to succeed. The thing is, some of these "new faces" never get a chance to find out what we're all about, never get fired up to take that first ride or intro lesson, never get a hint of the unique character of the place or the unique place of the characters. We are all a little guilty of forgetting that each of us has an obligation to make strangers feel welcome, to discuss, maybe for the tenth time in two days, how a glider stays up without an engine. We all need to take the time to talk to new people on the field, make them feel at home, and encourage them to become part of the collection of aviation fanatics and lunatics that makes Warren Sugarbush Airport unique.

In addition to the usual opportunities to talk to mystified but enthralled visitors to the airport, this year, we will have an Open House in May and a Fly-In on June 24th. Please help, on these occasions, to encourage visitors to stay, talk, listen, and participate in the great adventure of aviation. There are some practical matters to go along with this adventure - we will have safety briefings on Saturday and Sunday morning of opening weekend - attendance at one of these is mandatory to fly club ships. Remember to check your log book for the date of your last flight review. Students need to remember that the student certificate is good for two years only.

This year we will be offering an eight-session ground school every Saturday morning in June and July (except June 24) from 8 - 10:30 am on the third floor for those who want to prepare for the knowledge ("written") test for Sport Pilot, Private Pilot - both power and glider as most of the information applies to both) or just review. Sign up in advance - cost of the full course is \$165 or pay \$25 per class for those who want to pick and choose - the syllabus will be in the office. Completion of the course will result in sign off to take the test. And - if you haven't seen "the pilot's halo," some sunny day this summer I'd be happy to show you.

Rick

From the other end of the rope

Both towplanes will be up and running by opening day, with our usual stable of tow pilots. Bob Messner will be back on the tow register this season. 14L will be sporting a new Tost tow line release (the same release that all the European gliders - K-21, Blaniks, etc. use). It was a **MONUMENTAL** effort on the part of our mechanic, Steve Skinner at Vermont Flying Service in Montpelier, to get the friendly FAA in the Portland, ME, FSDO to approve the installation. We spent a few hours with him at Morrisville putting large loads on the hook from several directions to satisfy the FAA that the tail won't fall off the towplane if the glider driver is jerky on the stick. Never mind that the FAA has always tacitly accepted the same loads on all towplanes with the Schweizer hook. Anyway, it will now be much easier for any other Pawnee in our district to get this installation.

Bob & Rick

New Sport Plane

By Rick Hanson

There seems to be some misunderstanding with regard to the proposal for the new Sport Plane which will be on the field this coming summer. A group of investors has put up the money for the purchase of a new, high-tech composite aircraft that qualifies in the new Sport Pilot category, allowing pilots to train in less time than for the Private Pilot Single Engine Land rating. One need only possess a valid U.S. driver's license in lieu of an FAA medical certificate, and a pilot already certificated with a U.S. glider rating does not need to take an additional knowledge test and may take a flight test with an instructor for an endorsement in his logbook to be a fully certified Sport Pilot.



Five of the members of the group which has purchased this aircraft are Sugarbush glider pilots with interest in flying the aircraft, but with a greater interest in benefitting the club. Five of the members of this group will be students whose goal is to get their Sport Pilot ratings by training in this aircraft. The group, Sugarbush Sport Flyers, LLC, would lease the aircraft to Sugarbush Soaring, perform all scheduled maintenance, pay for the insurance, inspections, and hangaring of the aircraft. Sugarbush Soaring will provide the instructors (Rick Hanson, Pierre Swick, Jen Stamp, and Dave Neilson), provide scheduling and bookkeeping, and charge out use of the aircraft to anyone who walks on the field or other SSA club members for instruction, checkouts, and rental, making roughly \$25 per hour for aircraft rental, and \$35 per hour for instructor time (SSA pays instructors less than half that per hour).



This arrangement is a win-win proposition for the membership of Sugarbush Soaring. Sugarbush Soaring will be "Named Insured" on the insurance policy, and, though the LLC is the owning entity of the aircraft, AIG, also the insuring company for Sugarbush Soaring, is more willing to write a policy for a new aircraft in a new category, if that aircraft is to be flown by a known entity with a known history, as we have with our fleet insurance..

This new element in our operation adds a new \$100,000 training aircraft to our fleet for NO COST to members or SSA in total, brings new people to the field and allows for cross-training from power to glider and glider to power/ and adds roughly \$6,000 to \$7,000 in revenue to Sugarbush at nearest guess usage. It will also keep underutilized staff employed and reduce the burden

on Sugarbush Soaring for payroll. This enables Sugarbush Soaring to diversify and meet a changing market place by training in the newest, most talked about field of aviation in decades.

We all fear the unknown. It is much easier to stay where you are than move, but stasis is often the worst choice. We have had to raise rates in the past as expenses continue to rise. We have lost membership over the last ten years as have many other soaring operations as soaring pilots get older and younger people don't seem to fill in the spaces. The Sport Pilot Aircraft will help broaden our appeal to a new group of future pilots that will also be the future of Sugarbush Soaring.

Rick

SUGARBUSH SOARING YOUTH CAMPS 2005



Above - Ground school time at 0800 Hrs.

The July group - we actually caught them when they were all on the ground!

Left to right: Yan Booth, Fritz Langford, Max Beitel, Abaabi Sharif (Marty Johnson's grandson), Matt Dews (Mary Webster's grandson), and John Rushing.



Ben Dawson loses his shirt tail to Andy Macalaster (and his head to the photographer) after his first solo.



Photos by Rick Hanson

Sugarbush Soaring 2006 Activities Calendar

- Saturday, May 6 Put-together day
Breakfast from 8:30 AM
Annual Safety Seminar 9:00 AM
Social hour 5:30
Dinner at the tower 6:30 PM
- Sunday, May 7 Annual Safety Seminar 9:00 AM
- Saturday, May 20 Sugarbush Soaring Open House
(Burlington, Montpelier & Rutland markets)
\$15 early evening Barbeque hosted by SSA
- Sunday, May 21 Open House Rain date
- Saturday, June 24 Power aircraft Fly-in with aviation lectures (See announcement below).
Early evening Barbeque
- Sunday, June 25 Rain date for Fly-in
- Saturday, July 1 4th of July Weekend Dinner
Sunday, July 2 Rain date for Dinner
- July 9 – July 15 Junior camp
- July 30 – August 5 Junior camp
- Saturday, Sept. 2 Labor Day Dinner
- Sept. 8 – 24 Greater Boston Soaring Club Encampment (tentative)
- October 28 Put-away day, Banquet and Annual General meeting

Sugarbush Soaring Hosts FAA Meeting Open House for Power Pilots - Call for volunteers

Sugarbush Soaring will be hosting an OPEN HOUSE for fly-in and drive-in pilots to see what we are all about on Saturday, June 24 (Sunday, June 25 is the "rain day").

We will be hosting an FAA presentation on "Mountain Flying" for Wings Program credit that should be of interest to all, Dave Gould is doing a Chicken Barbeque, and we will be offering discounted, 15 minute glider rides for those visitors who want to see what soaring is all about. We need club volunteers to help out by talking to visitors, parking aircraft, helping to serve lunch, helping to set up the FAA presentation in Parker's hangar, and a few to offer their ships and expertise for "show-and-tell" static display. There will be a sign-up sheet in the office - come in or call in and help us make this a success! Thanks!



Opening Saturday, May 20th

*Come see why so many call us the
"Best Breakfast & Lunch in the Valley"*

Thursday-Monday 8:00-2:00

Check us out on line!

www.dinersoar.com

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