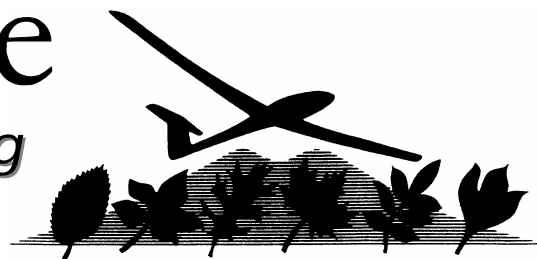


The Flight Line

News about Sugarbush Soaring



SUGARBUSH SOARING ASSOCIATION, INC.
P.O. Box 123 • Warren, Vermont 05674 • (802) 496-2290
<http://www.sugarbush.org/> • soar@sugarbush.org

Volume 21 Number 5

September 2002

Soaring Gossip

Since I spent the summer goofing off at the airfield, I got to see a lot! Here's the scoop: Three members have (or almost have) new gliders. Bob Messner bought a new Ventus, and after much wrangling with the bureaucracy, he finally got to fly it in late June. Tim Larson has a GZ304 on order, and Buddy Duncan is looking forward to the arrival of his new Discus 2.

You might also have noticed two new trailers parked in WT alley at the north end of the field. One is inhabited by John Chaplin, and the other by our new Aussie instructor, Nigel Davies. Nigel began flying hang gliders in 1971, power in 1976, and gliders in 1995. His home club is Narrogin Gliding Club in Western Australia, and he has instructed there, as well as at Seminole Lake in Florida over the last two winters. His students always seem to buy him beer, so he always has some to spare; stop by his trailer and see! Our other new instructor is Terry Mason. Also a foreigner, Terry has flown at Lasham and Sutton Bank in England. He now lives near Montpelier with his Cessna 150 (and his family). In fact, Terry's stepson Kyle has been helping on the line all summer, and regularly flies the 1-26.

Speaking of current (and former) line crew exploits, Dave Kramer recently got his glider rating; he made doing so part of a school project at Cape Elizabeth High School in Maine. Kenda Blair (remember her?) recently graduated from the Air Force Academy, and she will soon go to navigator school. Kenda was a soaring instructor at the Academy, and she was the pilot who landed a glider on the academy football field at graduation! Walter Brink (how could you forget?) just finished basic training in the Army, and is now train-

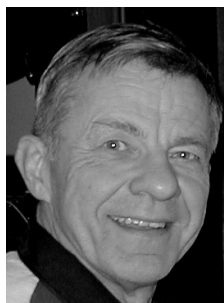
(Continued on page 2)



From the President's Cockpit...

Labor Day has come and gone which marks the beginning of the fall season. The last two or three weeks soaring weather has been good for rides and training but not the best for cross country soaring, but that's to be expected for August. It was, however, an outstanding month for the number of tows we did, over 500! That's the highest in a long time in fact we had to go back to 1998 to find a bigger month. There was also a group that came to the valley for a reunion and decided that soaring would be a good activity. They took probably 15 or so rides. We also had little rain to hamper our flying. It is hard to say what factors caused all of this business to come our way, but I will take it as a good omen.

As I write this I have not yet had a solid appraisal of the financial status of the



club but I can make a few comments. It appears that the tow plane operation is going well. There have been a few maintenance issues which were taken care of promptly. The budget Bob Messner put together seems to be spot on. We did not sell the SGS 2-32 as planned to allow us to pay off the club members that loaned us some of the money to purchase the ASW-21. Since the loan is due this year our only alternative was to go back to those club members holding the loan and ask for a one year extension. To the best of my knowledge everyone agreed. I am not sure why but the 2-32 has flown

more this year than last by a lot. Somehow double rides are in this year. The pricing is favorable and perhaps the front office is pitching them. We thought we could sell it for around 40 or 42 thousand dollars. As soon as we put it up for sale

(Continued on page 2)

From the President's Cockpit

(Continued from page 1)

there were five other 2-32s for sale in the low to mid 30s. With the market price so low and the double ride business so good I think we will probably reconsider selling it at the up coming board meeting. How we will pay off the loan from the members without selling it I do not know. We have not had our accountant reconcile the books at this point in time so I am unable to say just how we are doing compared to last year. Treasurer Dave Nagley feels we are doing about the same as we did last year which if true is not what we expected. I am hopeful that we will find out that we did better.

We have been blessed with a very capable addition to our staff this season. Nigel Davies does it all; he instructs, gives rides, runs the line, tells good jokes, sells visitors and passerbys on soaring. He has worked hard for us which has allowed Rick Hanson to get a few days off this season. Nigel has added a lot to the operation with his sense of humor and his flying and instructing skills. He will be back next year! Thanks Nigel for all the help. Next season I promise we will keep those guys with hydraulic overload from behind your

trailer. If you get lonesome for Nigel he will be at Seminole Soaring Center in central Florida this winter instructing and playing the digery do.

Terry Mason has also been on board



again this year helping out instructing and

giving rides. Great to have you Terry!

This just in!!! Heidi, our very own Dinersoar Deli creative and lovable proprietor, wins 1st place in the Taste of the Valley contest for her hors d'oeuvres!!!!!! And 2nd place for her main course!!!! That just goes to show ya we have a top notch place to eat located right here! Congratulations Heidi!!!!

From the Soap Box:

I have heard from visiting pilots that we could do a better job at helping out with assembly, getting them to the line and retrieving them. Let's do it in spades! We want these guys back and want them to speak highly of Sugarbush Soaring. Enough said?

NOTICE THIS

From now until the end of the season we need your help on the line with any time you can spare. The normal line crew workers have gone back to school. Help with the hook ups, retrieves and maintaining the flight log would be greatly appreciated.

Fly carefully!

Ron Webster

Soaring Gossip

(Continued from page 1)

ing to be a medic. Dan Payn and Cal Hanson recently passed the written exams for their commercial ratings, and by the end of the summer, will probably have passed their flight tests as well. Cal's plan is to move to Mammoth Lakes, California in late August, where he can fly at Minden in the summer, and ski at Mammoth in the winter. Sounds good to me (better than Nebraska!).

Up at the clubhouse, Heather Strong has been working two days a week at the Dinersoar, and another two days for Bill in the office. Heather's mom used to run the deli when it was called Amelia's (before my time). Heather also worked on the line twenty years ago, and on several occasions had to go and retrieve Rob Buck when he landed out. Heidi – in case you haven't heard! – will soon be marrying

John Benjamin. On August 5th, she won first place in the best appetizer category at the Taste of the Valley festival at the Sugarbush Inn. Congratulations Heidi!

Finally, I heard that Bob Buck has been campaigning for years to get a light installed above the latrine in the men's bathroom. Could this be the year that it happens?!? You never know.

Happy Soaring!!

Graham Ramsden

SUGARBUSH SOARING NEEDS NEW MEMBERS!

YOU CAN HELP!

Bring a friend or acquaintance to
the club.
Help us grow!

"Roger"

During the safety briefing this year, which included a review of the radio procedures, the question was asked "where does the term "Roger" come from?". The use is immortalized in the Battle of Britain movies and followed the pre war practice of transmitting the letter "R" by Morse Code to indicate that a message or instruction had been received.

The Royal Air Force phonetic alphabet at that time was:

Apple Beer Charlie Dog Edward
Freddy George Harry In Johnny King
Love Mother Nuts Orange Peter Queen
Roger Suga Tommy Uncle Vic William
X-ray Yorker Zebra

We should be grateful that this is the only heritage of that era: the use of the term "Nuts" to indicate a negative response to an FAA controller might have dire consequences!

John Chaplin

BearLieve It or Not!

I had been soaring from Blairstown, NJ for many years and had heard all kinds of soaring tales from the seasoned pilots. Some I have believed and some I have my doubts about. The following story is true! It was on a south easterly ridge that I experienced the truth of all tales.

Blairstown, NJ is located by the Delaware Water Gap and is indeed a beautiful place to fly. Three miles to the Northwest of the airport the Kittineny ridge stands 1200 feet above the valley floor and runs east to west for hundreds of miles. Having such a ridge makes for tremendous flying. When the wind blows from the northwest it usually generates tremendous thermals and of course turbulent ridge lift. When the south east wind blows we can fly that side, but it usually means stable air and rain is coming. With the right conditions the Southeast ridge can be fabulously smooth and a fast ride.

On _____ I assembled my ASW20 with the hopes of flying the SE ridge. The winds were from the SE and light with a pale blue sky. None of the other soaring pilots had the same enthusiasm I did that day. So after I launched I was alone on the SE except for an occasional glider ride. Well the Delaware Water gap is quite a tourist and hiking attrac-

tion and many hikers conjugate at the pinnacle of the Gap, which faces SW. Over the years, many hikers have been buzzed by glider pilots flying the south-east ridge. I myself try to adhere to the FAR's.

This particular day the ridge was not strong and I approached the Water Gap with caution and after a few trips up and down the ridge I noticed a black dot on a lower shelf of the rock face. I descended lower to get a better look. About the time I began the descent I saw a man and women jump up from behind a boulder and they began to run frantically. I moved in closer, the black dot sprinted toward the couple at a faster rate. It was a Black Bear! Soon the couple and bear were in a foot race. All of a sudden everything came to a halt. The bear had backed the couple up against a sheer rock face and the couple stood motionless facing the bear. It was a stand off, the couple and bear stood 15 feet apart, no one was moving. Thoughts of mauling came to my mind and I was trying to figure out who I could call on the aircraft radio to get medical help there afterwards. The situation looked tense. With slight hesitation, I turned into the ridge and pointed the glider at the bear and descended as close

as I dared. I swooped over the bear with the right wing tip and pulled up, the couple's heads turned and followed the path of my glider, but their bodies remained motionless. I looked back. The stand off continued. I made a 180 with the glider and swooped back down even closer to the bear. I must have been 8 feet above it on the second pass and extremely close to the rock face. As I pulled up the bear jumped, turned 180 degrees and ran down the hill. The couple began jumping up and down and waved with exuberation. Then without looking at each other they stopped their celebration, sprinted around the rock face and back up to the trail east bound. The whole episode took less than 1 minute. I followed the couple along the SE trail until I lost them in the trees. I flew for another 20 minutes and returned to the airport.

After I freed myself from the glider, I walked over to the deck where all the other glider pilots were beer bonding. Guys you won't believe what just happened!

I never saw the couple again, but I bet they have a great story to tell!

- Gregg Leslie

From the Front of the Rope

As most of you know, this year we have taken over the towing operation. We purchased Pawnee "One Four Lima" from John Mahony at the start of the season and have staffed it with our own tow pilots. Towing during the week are Gregg Leslie, Mark Smith, Terry Mason (who also instructs in our gliders), and Mike Carpentiero, all extremely capable taildragger pilots. On weekends, familiar faces have towed - Tom Berthe, Dave Agneta, Richard Critz, and Bob McComiskie, all not newcomers to the business. Yours truly has also gotten his share of tows as fill in pilot.

The operation has gone quite smoothly with minimal down time. We lost two days with a voltage regulator failure, and two more with a muffler failure. Two 100-hour inspections also cost us one operating day each, for a total of six lost days. John Mahony has filled in on those days and with a second towplane on busy weekend

days, so members and visitors have not been inconvenienced.

Through August, we are ahead of projection on the number of tows our ship has made, but also above budget on spare parts and maintenance costs. Cost-wise, the two about balance out. A decision the Club will have to address this winter is whether we should purchase a second towplane for backup and busy times. While John Mahony has kindly provided this service, his nice L-19 is for sale, and that could happen at any time.

While I have your attention, there are a couple of things we tow pilots want to mention to the glider pilots. First, when the towplane pulls in front of you, please try to be ready to go. This is not the time for idle chitchat. Safety comes first - if you need some minutes more to get ready, indicate so to the tow pilot by radio or by holding up your arms crossed, and we will shut

down. If the towplane is already shut down, indicate to the tow pilot to fire up only when you are ready, by describing a circle in the air with your hand out the open canopy. This is not just to save fuel, but more importantly to keep the engine from fouling through excessive idling. Remember, it's your towplane. When the towrope is taut, indicate you are ready with full (but gentle!) wags of the rudder. Also, don't give thumbs up to the line person until you are ready.

Next, after you lift off behind the accelerating tug, be ready to rise with the towplane as it rotates and starts climbing. All too often in these first few seconds of climb, I can look in the rearview mirror, and see the glider way down below me. Climb with us, not after us, nor certainly not before us.

Lastly, when you release from tow, make

(Continued on page 4)

To all Sugarbush Soaring members:

A number of decisions were made at the Granite Board meeting that directly affect some of us. Please adhere to these policies.

1. Starting immediately, it is acceptable to start our staging and take offs from the south end of the field on the new grass area. This will improve the safety of our operation when taking off in that direction (There is a plan to fertilize this area sometime in September so we might want to keep off the fertilized part for a few days until rain soaks it into the ground).
2. Vehicles other than those of hanger owners are not to be parked on the hanger access road except in the designated parking area near the gazebo.
3. All glider trailers are to be placed and lined up at one of the two trailer areas – north end or center field. No trailers are to be parked near the hangers.
4. The runway lights will be removed to eliminate night landings. It is felt that night landings at Sugarbush are undesirable for numerous reasons.

Thank you,

Ron Webster
President

From the Front of the Rope

(Continued from page 3)

a positive climbing turn to the right. Especially with a soft release, we don't know for certain that you are off tow until we see the belly of the glider as it turns away. A quick "Thanks, Bob" on the radio helps also, but the main indicator is the view of the turning glider. These recommendations are meant to improve the tow operation and especially to contribute to its safety.

Bob Messner

DG-300

1984, excellent condition & gel coat, approximately 650 TT, Cambridge M-NAV, solid state barograph & printer, Dittel radio w/boom mic, bkup Winter vario w/speed ring, trailer, hangered in VT. Asking \$31,000 w/fresh annual. Call 203-229-0730 x102 anytime or
email: mark@teachersource.com

Limited winter hanger storage space also available. Call number above.

The Flight Line

P.O. Box 123 • Warren, Vermont 05674

