

SSB Updraft

Soaring Society of Boulder Newsletter



May 2011



Good cu, good climb - from the pilots perspective. Photo by Colin Barry

Spring in Colorado Time to fly!

As May comes to Colorado, spring is becoming more apparent. The grass is greener and the sky a little bluer. We have had several shirtsleeve days, and wayward 'cu' have been spotted.

The flight line and tie down area are starting to buzz with activity as the promise of a new soaring season begins to emerge. Yes it's been windy and not many OLC miles have been logged, but this too will pass.

This is the year for finishing a sought after rating, transitioning to new club glider, achieving a personal best flight or expanding your range on a long cross country from Boulder or at one of this summer's competitions.

No matter your thoughts for the coming season a little preparation will go a long way towards providing the most enjoyable flying and Club experiences possible.

To help you get ready for the new season this issue of the Updraft focuses on preparing for the new soaring season.

Let's get out there and fly!

Preflight

Greetings SSB,

As we start a new soaring season I am pleased to announce our Club had a very successful 2010, despite some set backs.

Although the DG-505 (KK) was totaled recently, we replaced the glider with a like-new DG-505, (PB), having only 35 flight hours. And at the recent Annual Meeting, the SSB Membership approved a motion to move ahead selling the Club's Grob 102 (SS), replacing it with a Discus.

On behalf of the entire Board, I want to thank Phil Ecklund and Doug Weibel for their service over the recent years, and welcome Jack Knopinski, our newest Director!

Joe Brack remains Treasurer for 2011, Gary Reuter is serving as Vice President, and I remain your humble President.

The field is starting to become more active as we look forward to more great soaring in 2011.

Fly far, Fly safe!

Dan Bourgeois
SSB President

In this issue of the *Updraft*...

- ✓ Club management changes
- ✓ SSB News Briefs
- ✓ Colorado Soaring Seminar Recap
- ✓ Colorado Soaring Awards
- ✓ New DG 505 arrives
- ✓ Wing running, the rest of the story
- ✓ Soaring in Serbia
- ✓ Whelan's Soaring Barn

2011 Performance Soaring Seminar and Colorado Soaring Awards – Best ever!

Founder Bob Caldwell recounts this year's great event

On March 12, the SSB hosted Colorado soaring pilots for the third year at the 2011 Performance Soaring Seminar and Colorado Soaring Awards gathering. (We need a shorter title!)

We had a huge turn out and good weather. NCAR is a fabulous site for soaring activities. The flatland visitors who attended were in awe of the beautiful setting which has become the SSB Clubhouse. Attendance was 119 pilots which; given that there are only 116 seats is pretty amazing. The attendees were from the usual clubs in Colorado as well as the Minnesota Soaring Association and the Chicago Glider Club. The seminar was webcast and we had attendance from around the country.

The speakers were excellent, as usual, and it was a full day of soaring discussion. For those who didn't get enough during the day, we headed to Carelli's for drinks, dinner and lies. We saw old friends, were entertained and got a serious case of spring fever.

The speakers were:

Al Ossorio	Getting the cobwebs out
Colin Barry	Internet Sources for Flight Planning
Paul Remde	Soaring Tech
Lee Kuhlke	Power Flarm Update
Quay Snyder, MD	Aviation Physiology
Walt Rogers	Soaring Weather Forecasting
Dave Leonard	Performance Soaring
Richard Hall	Managing Stress in the Cockpit
Wolf Herold	Return from Outer Space
Woody Woodward	Bitterwasser Update

Frank Whiteley, our State Governor and Region 9 Director, presented the Colorado Soaring Awards. The SSB cleaned up afterwards!!

We were very fortunate to be able to bring in some out of state speakers with special knowledge; Paul Remde from Minnesota and Walt Rogers from Lancaster, California.

One presenter, Wolf Herold, had volunteered to present at the seminar but had to make the trip from Buenos Aires, Argentina. Wolf blew away the audience with his recounting of a 1995 flight from Salida to Monticello, Utah and return in his ASW 22.

So the 2011 PSSCSA was a great success (OK, I am biased), and we will have more, providing the memory of this one fades with time. The Colorado Soaring Community seems to embrace this spring time ritual.

I want to thank the speakers for their knowledge and willingness to share it. Further, I want to thank Charlie Martin, Frank Whiteley, Graham Beasley, Dan Bourgeois and Cathy Barry for their assistance in making this happen. Next year...



Meeting Schedule

Second Monday of every month,
NCAR meeting room. 7:00pm

Club Management

President	Dan Bourgeois
Vice President	Gary Reuter
Treasurer	Joe Brack
Secretary	Your name here!

SSB Board of Directors

Dan Bourgeois	2012
Gary Reuter	2013
Joe Brack	2013
Jack Knopinski	2013
Al Ossorio	2012
Colin Barry	2012
Scott Westfall	2012
Bob Caldwell	2012
Al Mainero	2012

Ship Management

DG-505 (PB)	Al Ossorio
GROB 103 (13K)	Norm Anderson
GROB 102 (SS)	Fred Donaghy
SGS 1-34 (4BC)	Phil Grandmason
SGS 2-32 (29J)	Doug Weibel
Pawnee (08L)	Jeff Kline
Super Cub (85F)	Jeff Kline

Website

Web Manager Colin Barry
<http://www.soarboulder.org>

Newsletter Team

Editor	<i>Your name here!</i>
Design/Format	John Seaborn
Copy Editor	Bob Whelan



News Submission

Send along articles and club news to John Seaborn...or you will just have to keep reading ours...jseaborn@comcast.net

2010 Colorado and SSB Awards

Frank Whiteley, SSA Region 9 Director, presented the 2010 Colorado Soaring Awards at the recent Performance Soaring Seminar.

Outstanding Contribution to Soaring

Bob Caldwell

2010 Colorado OLC Awards

OLC-Classic Champion

Best six OLC flights by Colorado based pilot
David Leonard

OLC-FAI Champion

Best six OLC flights by Colorado based defining an FAI Triangle
David Leonard

OLC Champion

Best overall OLC achievement for the year for Colorado flights
Bob Faris

OLC Club Award

Best overall OLC achievement by a club's pilots in Colorado
Soaring Society of Boulder

Colorado Fourteeners Challenge

Al Ossorio

Outstanding Sailplane Flight of the Year in Colorado

John Seaborn

SSB Club Awards

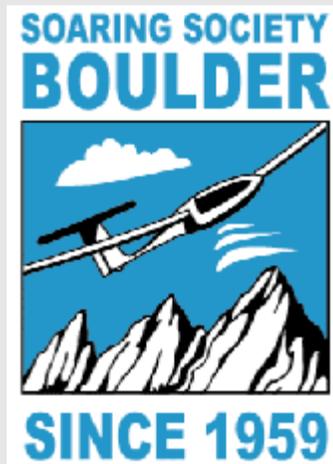
At the recent SSB banquet the Club awards were presented, not to mention a great time being had by all. Dan Bourgeois continues...

"Thanks to Bob Faris for bringing the summer soaring series back, as well as Mark Gibson for his work as our new Awards Manager. The awards this year were great, and we have new bases on a few of our more cramped awards!

And most of all, Thank you to Cathy Barry - Our fearless Banquet Manager has done it again!"

The 2010 awards are:

Longest Flight:	John Seaborn (927 km)
Chi Pickett-Heaps:	Bob Caldwell
Summer Soaring Series Bronze:	Will Matthews (1531 pts)
Summer Soaring Series Silver:	Scott Westfall (1735 pts)
Summer Soaring Series Gold:	Bob Faris (3254 pts)
Instructor of the Year:	Alfonso Ossorio & Bob Faris
Tow Pilot of the Year:	Rod Smythe
Airmanship Award:	Joe Brack
Most Improved Pilot:	Mark Gibson



Club Managers

Keep the SSB Flying

Chief Instructor
Al Ossorio

Chief Tow Pilot
Simon Roberts

New member Coordinator
Mark Boys

Assistant Webmaster
Robert Kirmse

Battery Manager
Bob Faris

Dinner Manager
Cathy Barry

Document Manager
Gary Campbell

Equipment/Shack Manger
Tom Zoellner

Fridge Manager
Andrew Westfall

Insurance Manager
Bill Daniels

Internet/Network Manager
Sharif Abdallah

Meeting Entertainment Manager
We need you here!

Newsletter Manager
John Seaborn

New Member Coordinator
Mark Boys

Oxygen Cart Manager
Dylan Bulli

Parachute Manager
Albert Turtscher

New DG 505 Arrives

2000 DG 505 Orion (N505PB)



Gary Baughman and Al Ossorio rigged the new 505, test flew it and put it on the line. It's a very nice glider.

17.2m, 18m, and 20m span with winglets (wingtips for all three spans). Clear canopies (no scratches, canopy cover included). This extremely low-time sailplane has always been stored in a factory trailer in a hangar. Like new. This ship is equipped with all of the desirable factory options for the aircraft, trailer and rigging. Full instrumentation in both cockpits.

Instrumentation:

- Winter 160 knot airspeed (front and rear)
- IFR Altimeter (front and rear)
- Airpath 2400 compass (front and rear)
- Winter +/- 10 knot variometer w. MacCready ring (front and rear)
- Cambridge L-Nav variometer system w/ repeater
- Cambridge L-Nav Flight Computer w/repeater
- Cambridge GPS
- Becker 4201 radio (microphones front and rear)
- Total energy probe
- Landing gear warning buzzer
- Fin ballast tank indicator

Airframe:

- Tail-wheel with ball bearings
- Two trim weight boxes with trim weights
- Large wing-tip wheels
- Tie down eyes for wings
- Tail fin water ballast
- Battery in tail fin



SSB Committee Seeks Discuss to Sell GROB 102

The SSB membership authorized the formation of a committee to sell the Grob 102 and replace it with a Discus. The committee is comprised of Colin Barry, Robert Kirmse, and Al Ossorio.

The membership approved the undertaking with a clear majority in favor (5 no votes, lots in favor). The committee will sell the 102 and look for a Discus B or CS plus trailer for up to \$50,000. Then recommend flight charges along with operational rules.



Congratulations to Jason Boehm for his first solo today! - Bob Faris

Trailer Tie down Complete

The SSB now has an official trailer tie down area with serious chains and anchors.



Colin Barry and others did the deed.



Gary Baughman and Al Ossorio rigging SSB Papa Bravo

Rigging Accessories

- Tail dolly
- Wing dolly
- Tow bar
- One man rigging equipment
- Jaxida covers (full set)

Cobra Trailer

- All aluminum: aluminum top and aluminum-sandwich floor
- Shocks
- Heavy duty wheels and tires
- Hydraulic lift rear ramp
- 18m wingtip holders
- 20m winglet holders
- Solar vent
- Lockable drawer underneath floor
- Stabilizer jacks
- Spare tire

Total Time: 35 Hours 28 Minutes



Congratulations to Shawn Eggleston on his solo - Bob Faris

Boulder Airport Day!

The 6th Annual Airport Day is Saturday, June 18, 2011. Tentative Airport Day Schedule

- 6:30 am:** Hot air balloon launch
- 9:00 am:** Aircraft exhibits open
- 12:00:** Flyover and parachute demonstration
- 3:00pm:** Aircraft exhibits close

Parking and admission are free.

The schedule is subject to change, so check back periodically for updates. Also, if weather causes a cancellation, this website will be updated the morning of Airport Day.

And to top it all off, there will be a World War II, USO-style ball that starts at 7 p.m.! For more information about the ball, click [here](#).

Dr. Joachim Kuettner Passes

The soaring community and atmospheric science have lost one of the last living links to the formative era. Joachim Kuettner—the eminent researcher, administrator, field project leader, and glider pilot—died on 24 February at the age of 101. Kuettner’s seven-decade career was saluted in a 2009 UCAR Magazine article and in a daylong symposium at the American Meteorological Society’s 2010 annual meeting. In addition, a website with links to many articles and videos by and about Kuettner has been created.

<https://www.archives.ucar.edu/exhibits/kuettner>



WGC Website online

The 32nd World Gliding Championship (July 28-August 19, 2012, Uvalde, Texas) Web site is now live.

The Web addresses for the site is www.wgc2012uvalde.com

FAA Requires Aircraft Re-Registration

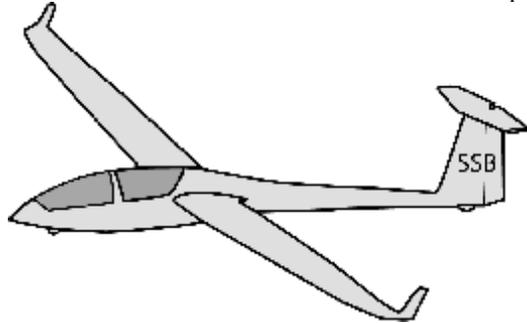
Change to aircraft registration process looks painless – sort of

AIRCRAFT MUST RE-REGISTER

If Issued registration before October 1, 2010.

The Re-registration and Renewal of Aircraft Registration Rule went into effect on October 1, 2010. Aircraft registrations issued on or after this date will expire after three years when they may be renewed.

Aircraft registered before October 1, 2010, are required to re-register during the next three years according to the schedule provided in 14 CFR Part 47.40. Reminder notices will be sent using the address of record, make sure your address is up to date.



The first group of aircraft to be re-registered are those aircraft that have a current registration issue date during the month of March, from all years. Application for re-registration of these aircraft should be made between November 1, 2010, and January 31, 2011. Making an early application will ensure the new certificate of registration can be delivered before the old certificate expires on March 31, 2011.

More information about these and other changes can be found at <http://registry.faa.gov/aircraft.asp>.

Questions may be directed toll free to 866-762-9434.

Will the FAA notify owners when it is time to re-register their aircraft?

Yes, the FAA Aircraft Registration Branch will send courtesy notices to the registered owner(s) of an aircraft at the mailing address on file. The notices will be mailed six months prior to their aircraft's registration expiration date. Owners should receive the notice before the opening of a three month window established for them to file their re-registration application. Filing an aircraft's re-registration application during the designated window allows time for processing the application and the delivery of a new certificate before the old certificate expires.

Can re-registration be completed on-line?

Yes, most aircraft owners should be able to re-register their aircraft on-line. The first notice sent will have a code that enables on-line re-registration provided the current aircraft's ownership and registration address(es) match what is shown in FAA records, the ownership still meets citizenship requirements, and the \$5 fee can be paid by credit card. *Please proceed carefully; the on-line code is good for one use only!!!*

Soaring Society of Boulder Email Lists

General Membership
ssb-members@googlegroups.com

SSB Board of Directors:
ssb-bod@googlegroups.com

SSB Tow Pilots:
ssb-towpilots@googlegroups.com

SSB Instructors:
ssb-instructors@googlegroups.com

Workfest now May 7 – Sign up!

Workfest is a great SSB tradition born out of necessity. Every year the Club comes together and does spring cleaning on the grounds, gliders, tugs trailers, shacks and all other manner of SSB resources. Afterward we feast on Mike Exner's masterful barbeque.



There is no flying during for the day on Workfest.

In years' past there was a charge applied for not attending or doing a project prior. The idea is members can choose...come down and pitch in, or pay the small fee which helps offset the cost of supplies for Workfest.

There are lots of jobs to be done, so sign up in advance.

The start time is 9:00AM sharp and the Picnic is at 4PM. You do not have to work on Workfest to enjoy the picnic. Families are encouraged to also attend. Exner is trying out a new grill, could be history in the making. The club will provide beer, wine and disposables as well as the usual grillables and condiments.

Workfest commander par exalnce – Fred Donaghy rhynchart@aol.com

Wing Runners - the Rest of the Story

Running a wing looks easy - but is it? By John Seaborn

Running a wing is easy right? Level the wings, take a few steps, let go and you're done. Here is the rest of the story...

Tom Knauff says that 20% of all fatal glider accidents occur on launch and he lists the top forty reasons why accidents occur for this phase of flight. Everything from rope breaks to bee stings. Out of these forty about half can be caught by a heads-up wing runner.

Clearly the responsibility for a safe launch rests with the Pilot In Command, but a little situational awareness on the part of the wing runner can go a long way towards an incident-free launch.

Look out above

Boulder is a busy place with lots of traffic. When helping push out, it's a great time to do a reverse look up the pattern for traffic. Start at the landing end of the runway and then look backwards up the pattern for traffic including all the way over to the Initial Point (IP). If there are gliders low milling around the IP it may pay to hold in the tie down area until their intentions become clear. This is particularly true if the tow plane is not ready to go immediately and/or there will be some sitting on the runway for any length of time.

Actively look for problems

As a wing runner practice your powers of observation. As you approach the glider take stock. What is the situation and condition of the glider and pilot(s) prior to launch?

- Tail dolly off?
- Spoilers latched?
- TE probe installed?
- Controls moving?
- Canopy(s) latched?
- Stuff sticking out of cockpit?
- Mention winds and traffic to pilot

Tow Rope

Since the wing runner usually has the privilege of hooking up the glider this is the time to give the rope a good inspection. Are there areas of fraying, knots or other damage? The SSB has a tradition of showing the pilot the knot on the tow ring. If it looks ratty how many of us refuse the rope? It may be time to tie a new knot.

The Tug

As you walk up to the tug have a look. Are there big fresh oil slicks anyplace? Tire flat? Dripping fluids?

Look out ahead and behind

We have a very active power runway to the south and Mile High Gliding operating directly east. In addition the public has access to the entire north side of the glider strip along Independence Road. So a good lookout down the runway before leveling the wings is a smart move.

Get ready to soar!

A few things to check before the season starts

- ✓ Annual aircraft inspection
- ✓ Parachute repack (now 180 days)
- ✓ Check transponder certification renewal (every two years)
- ✓ ELT battery exchange (when active for 1 cumulative hour or at the date stamped on the battery)
- ✓ Check your flight review date
- ✓ Spring SSB checkout (get one)
- ✓ Logger calibration for badges/records (24 months)
- ✓ Paperwork check in glider (AROW): Airworthiness, Registration, Operators manual, W&B, equipment list.
- ✓ Current Sectionals / Update your aviation database if it has been a while
- ✓ Air all tires (glider, trailer, ground support equipment)
- ✓ Oxygen cylinder hydro testing. 3AA steel five years, 3HT steel and composite three years. Service life varies.
- ✓ General glider inspection, maintenance and lubrication
- ✓ Change SPOT batteries/renew service/review messages
- ✓ Change vario battery backup (if independent)
- ✓ Change EDS oxygen regulator battery
- ✓ Wax it!

Trailer

- ✓ Lubricate trailer fittings
- ✓ Trailer tire pressure
- ✓ Current trailer registration/tags
- ✓ Clean out and vacuum
- ✓ Trailer lights and tiedowns

Wing runners...

Know your signals

A Club member recently launched prematurely when the wing runner mistook the wings level thumbs up for the launch signal. The launch signal starts when the wings are level *and originates with a rudder wag by the pilot*. The wing runner then begins takeoff signal which is a circular arm movement. Pilots don't be giving thumbs up unless your ready to go. If you are unsure of the signals, ask an instructor.

Timing

It is critical that the wing runner at Boulder not only clear the pattern but have a look for power aircraft ready to launch. Another good question to ask before leveling the wings: "Is that power guy who just landed going to taxi or are they going around the patch again?"

Don't rush to hook up

The hook up is towards the end of things a pilot should do prior to launch. Understand where the pilot is in preparation prior to hook up, and don't pressure the pilot just because you're standing there with the ring.

Where to stand

Never inside the wing tips (with the wing behind you) for all up slack. You sometimes you see people standing by the fuselage giving the take up slack signal with the rope connected. Bad spot to be in.

Run the wing

They call it wing running for a reason. In training gliders with a head wind it may be fine to take a few steps and let go but most gliders require a rapid few steps. Do not over do it! Holding back on the wing is a good way to send your pilot off the runway in a hurry.

Cross winds and water ballast

The glider will want to weather vane into the wind initially. Not many wing runners can outrun the tow plane, hence the most common problem is inadvertently holding back on the tip. The pilot will want the wing runner on the downwind wing tip.

If the glider has water ballast make SURE the wings are laterally balanced. DO NOT LAUNCH until the water redistributes and is evenly balanced. Expect to have to run farther than normal with a wet glider due to slower acceleration.

More to it

So there is a bit more to wing running than sauntering out from the picnic table and grabbing a wing tip – although every pilot appreciates this help. Next time you approach a glider to run a wing practice your powers of observation.

If you want to become an expert at wing running the Soaring Safety Foundation has an online course.

<http://www.soaringsafety.org/school/wingrunner/toc.htm>

For Tom Knauff's launch report see this link.

[Tom Knauff – Launch Report](#)

Contest season is hot!

At SSB's annual meeting it was approved to have a camp in Logan, UT, before the Region 9/15 meter Nationals. The start date for the camp will be Monday the 11th of July until the 17th (which is the first practice day of the contest). Club ships and private ships are welcome. If you are interested in attending this (or any part) please let Al Ossorio know so he can put a camp/contest list together.

Other Local Contests

We are very lucky to have more glider contests within driving range than any other region in the country.

The SSB contest mentor program is the only such club program in the country. If you would like to learn cross country soaring the SSB contest program is the single best experience you can have.

6/11/2011 - 6/17/2011
Moriarty Club/Modern Class Super Regional - Moriarty, NM

6/19/2011 - 6/30/2011
18 Meter Nationals, Hobbs, NM

7/3/2011 – 7/9/2011
Region 9 Sports Class, Parowan, UT

7/17/2011 – 7/23/2011
Region 9, Logan, Utah

7/17/2011 - 7/28/2011
15 Meter Nationals, Logan, UT

8/4/2011 – 8/14/2011
Uvalde Glide 18/15 M Super Regional Uvalde, TX

8/4/2011 – 8/14/2011
Open Class Nationals, Uvalde, TX

8/14/2011 – 8/20/2011
Region 10 Soaring Championship Llano, Texas

Gliding in Serbia

Competing in the 56th Serbian Open Gliding Championships

By Pedja Bogdanovich

In 2010 I had the opportunity to participate in the 56th Serbian Open Gliding Championship in Novi Sad, Serbia. Novi Sad is a picturesque city dominated by 19th century architecture, worth a visit in its own right. It is the capital of Vojvodina province, the most fertile agricultural region in a large flatland area, and the second largest city in Serbia.



Gliding in Serbia has a long tradition and has produced winning pilots and gliders on the world stage. Its golden era was between the early fifties and late seventies. In 1954, Božidar Komac from Serbia and Zvonimir Rajn from Croatia became the world champions in the two-seater class for Yugoslavia, flying a Yugoslav (Serbian) designed and built Košava glider. In 1972, Serbian city of Vršac played host to the 13th World Gliding Championships. Lately, a small group of gliding enthusiasts has started laying the foundation for a revival of gliding in Serbia. During the last WGC in Szeged Hungary, thanks to the open skies policy, once again the world's best glider pilots soared through Serbian skies.

The Novi Sad contest was held August 14 - 23, 2010, only a week after WGC in Szeged, Hungary, and not too far from it (less than 100 miles). The Szeged contest was plagued by weak weather; the Novi Sad contest similarly had weak weather, sometimes looking hopeless.

In Pictures



Gliding in Serbia, continued...

However, in the end, we did miraculously manage to get in seven contest days. And out of those seven, I had two glorious days of not landing out and actually completing the task, which was about the average for other pilots. Luckily the terrain is very flat and very landout friendly. There were a number of guest contestants from Slovenia who like coming to fly in Serbia exactly because, unlike their mountainous homeland with limited landout options, landouts here are not a big deal. While there were some corn fields, landable fields were many and easy to see from the air, mostly wheat stubble or recently tilled fields.



The contest was well organized and well run by the Novi Sad gliding club. The contest had corporate sponsors, and I was pleasantly surprised by all the national news coverage which included TV reportage of the opening ceremony. We were well taken care of. On-airport accommodations were available to all contestants and crews. Also available were delicious daily meals, and no one seemed to mind the high caloric content of those meals. Most importantly, there were plentiful supplies of good Serbian brews, appreciated most during evening recaps of the days' adventures.

The contest was run as Club Class because of the wide range of glider performance, from Standard Cirrus to Discus 2; the gliders were handicapped. In addition to individual results, pilots from the same clubs could team up in pairs and compete as a team. Radio comms were allowed, and after starting, pilots could switch to their team frequency. The heat of the race often gave way to camaraderie, and pilots would help each other when in trouble, even when they were not part of a team. The team flying brought up a whole new fun aspect to the contest.

This year there was a lot of rain in the region in the early summer, and during the contest the fields were still damp in some areas. This contributed to atypically weak weather for the whole task area. Most of the flying was in the blue, in weak thermals (1-3kts), and gaggle flying was the norm. The soaring area around the airport was fondly known as "Čenej hole", it was usually much weaker than some 15-20 miles away.



Gliding in Serbia, continued...

For this reason, many pilots were wishfully waiting for the day to get stronger locally so they could start, sometimes until it was too late. Pilots that did well took a leap of faith and slow start, then found much better conditions once



en route. For me, the biggest problem was predicting when the day was going to die since this varied greatly from day to day. Some pilots switched into gaggle following mode, never switched out of it, and that served them well. Out of seven contest days, day 3 was the only day of the contest which gave pilots a taste of what good weather around there might look like, with high cloud bases and nicely streeeted cu's.

However, all other days were quite challenging. Day 5 stands out as one particularly challenging day. Many pilots were not able to find any lift except for the start gate thermal. Some returned to the home airport and gave up for the day. Others, like myself, skillfully performed a lawn dart impression and spent the rest of the day honing their glider disassembly and assembly skills. It looked like the day was not a contest day at all. However, although there were no finishers, a few pilots did come close. In the end, experience won the day, and Živa Frenc (who has competed at many WGCs, including Vršac 1972, and as recently as Szeged) had the best distance for the highly devalued day. It was a well fought battle against gravity in less than 1kt thermals over the whopping distance of 85 miles.

As it goes with this type of weak weather, the task setter was not the most popular person around. To his credit he chivalrously took all the blame for the weather and challenging tasking (most of the time). Three contest days, no pilots completed the task. The large number of landouts made the crews work overtime.

By the end of the contest it was like a well oiled machine, a glider could be taken apart and put back together in no time. At the end of each day, assembled gliders were packed into a hangar. This was an interesting operation in itself; I've never seen so many assembled gliders and power planes packed in so little space.

In the end, Branko Stojković convincingly won the championship by winning 5 out of 7 days. This is his 4th year in the reign. Day results can be found at www.soaringspot.com/56srogc/. In spite of the large number of landouts and lots of gaggle flying, this was a very safe contest.

For me, this contest was a great learning experience. It required a different flying mindset from what I am used to in order to do well in these weak conditions. Often this equated to lots of patience coupled with bare survival skills. I had great fun though. Camaraderie and socializing well into the night, every night, was the norm. This aspect of the contest more than made up for the weak weather.

The national contest next year will be held at the Ečka airport and hosted by Zrenjanin gliding club. That is basically the same task area, only 50km away from Novi Sad. It is being planned as a combined Serbian and Slovenian championship. As customary, it will have on-airport accommodations, catered food, etc. I'll be there.

Thanks to Sava Ostojin and Miodrag Bugarčić of Novi Sad gliding club for making it all work and running a safe operation. Special thanks to Živa Frenc and A.K. Vaja for making all arrangements for me, from taking care of my paperwork to bringing the glider to the contest site. Finally, big thanks to all the people that crewed for me. Thanks to Branko Stojković for his contributions to this article. ###



Pedja resides in Boulder, Colorado where he enjoys the great XC mountain flying and occasionally goes to various contests. Pedja has earned a spot on the Serbian team to the 2102

World Gliding Championships in Uvalde Texas. When not soaring, he flies his Pitts biplane and competes in acro competition. When not flying, he works as a software guru and a project engineer at Ball Aerospace where he builds software for testing and simulation of space hardware.



Bob's Soaring Barn

Noted author and longtime glider pilot Bob Whelan shares his sometimes unconventional wisdom on soaring.

The Thought Police (aka Fuzzy Thinking Matters!)

Bob Whelan

Here's a potentially radical thought: How Joe or Josephine Gliderpilot thinks, matters.

It matters because how s/he thinks affects their piloting actions, and their piloting actions affect their destinies. An NTSB database-supported-fact is a considerable number of pilots' destinies has included dying or having avoidable accidents, when – had they acted differently – they might've otherwise had a routine flight. I suspect many would have *acted* differently had they *thought differently*.

Here's an historical illustration. Remember Lewis and Clark's out-and-return "Journey of Discovery" up the Missouri, across the Rockies and to the Pacific Ocean in the early 1800's? (That was pre-OLC days, for younger readers.) One of the many things they discovered was their thinking contained a potentially-fatal flaw.

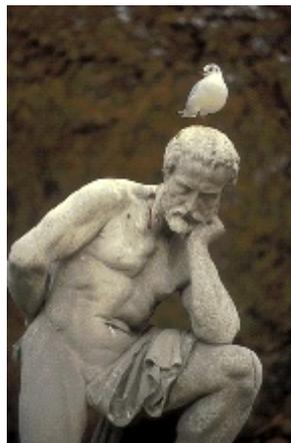
L&C's journals note they'd learned of the animal we know as the grizzly bear, a good 3 weeks or so before actually encountering one. Amerindians living on lands through which they were passing apprised them – with considerable awe, respect and fear – of a great bear (with an irritable disposition) which frequented willow breaks and riverbank thickets, and which could be inadvertently stumbled upon by even the informed and wary. In essence, the explorers were warned, "Stumbler beware!"

L&C's considered wisdom allowed as how this bear might in fact actually be larger than the relatively wimpy and retiring black bear of the eastern woods with which they were thoroughly familiar, but they figured the natives: 1) probably exaggerated, and 2) placed a sorry second to L&C technologically, insofar as weapons were concerned. (Guns rule. Bear worries? Pah!)

In my abridged version of L&C's official journal, a several week gap exists and by the time the narrative resumes, the expedition has had its first grizzly encounter. Interestingly, we learn this fact only indirectly. What jumps from the pages is a 180° reversal in the explorers' thinking about, and attitude toward, the great bear! (No direct admission the natives had been right, or, the expedition's thinking flawed, though; perhaps it's in the unabridged version?) From today's perspective, it's

funny. Prior to the encounter the journal explicitly scoffs at the natives' injunctions to give the riverbank thickets a wide berth. Noting that the man (not - by the standards of those days - majorly) injured by the great bear had encountered it in such a thicket, the journal simply notes everyone in the party agreed it was best to remain clear of them while in bear territory...no leader orders required!

So much for superior technology. (For the record, the expedition had no more surprise grizzly encounters!)



This column I'm here to suggest that if you as a sailplane pilot ever entertain a thought that 'something' will never happen to you because (insert here your favorite rationale), you're setting yourself up for a 'L&C-like' rethink...if you survive that 'something' experience, that is.

You'll never experience the inadvertent pattern stall-spin because: you have enough

safety speed/your coordination is 'always perfect'/you always fly 'high patterns' anyway? Each of these reasons is pertinent, but it's the 'never' mindset that's misguided. It's arrogant. It presumes a future that can't be known beforehand. And if it colors your piloting actions in some subtle, difficult-to-pinpoint way(s) toward complacency, and away from alert, heightened, paranoid attention to the task at hand, then an argument can be made the thought process does you a disservice, if maximizing landing pattern safety is a serious goal.

Use your imagination. What else might you be (smugly, complacently, confidently) thinking about (worse, assuming), that doesn't warrant it? Your experience on the ridge is sufficient protection? You've done enough low passes to know how the next one will turn out? Your normal preparations have always warded off a low-altitude rope break? Your oxygen system is new so you don't really need a backup for your wave flying?

You get the idea. Nothing is guaranteed when committing soaring, other than you *will* return to earth. Think – and your thinking will help you act – accordingly.

Please, *please*, **please** don't conclude I'm telling you *what* to think. I am not. If you take nothing else away, it should be this:

As a sailplane pilot, when you're thinking about possible futures – fuzzy, uncertain, grizzly-bear-inhabited futures - it's healthier to be clear and unambiguous **and correct** in your underlying assumptions.

- Soaring *can* kill you; don't assume otherwise.
- You are *not* inoculated against misfortune.
- You are *not* immune from Mother Nature's physical laws.
- You are *not* L&C's technological masters of soaring.
- Thickets are real.
- Unavoidable thickets (e.g. landing patterns) need to be handled with great and continuous awareness and care.
- Avoidable thickets should be entered only with knowledge and respect beforehand.

Understand and *believe* that you may never get a chance to fire your single shot should the bear surprise you.

Will changing your underlying assumptions guarantee you won't die as a result of a soaring accident? (Ha ha ha!!! Is the Pope an atheist? Also, review the 2nd item above.)

Life's only guarantee is: it will end.

I'm convinced though, that how one thinks about risk, *does* influence one's actions, even if 'only' subliminally. Would you be braver (on the ski slopes, riding a bike/motorcycle/horse, driving, etc.) if you felt yourself immortally protected? There are two reasons NASCAR-like 'drafting' tends to be seen only on NASCAR tracks and our highways, and *not* in other forms of auto racing. One is based on a reasonable assessment of the risks; the other isn't. How you assess risk, matters! **This** to me is the 'takeaway concept.'

Fly Fearfully

Few readers will seriously argue that to act as if very real risk – when present – is absent, is - well - *risky!* The results can be seen every day on YouTube and TV shows like *America's Funniest Home Videos*.

Is it such a stretch to not similarly conclude that the *misreading* of the *amount* or *nature* of risk actually present is similarly not risky? (This is the error Lewis and Clark made – once.)

When I say, "Fly fearfully," I'm not suggesting anyone actually *fret* about the dangers inherent to committing soaring. (What would be the point? Our wonderful sport has few enough practitioners without trying actively to scare 'em off!)

By saying, "Fly fearfully," what I'm seeking to encourage in all sailplane pilots is a fundamental awareness, a psychological belief, a way of fundamentally interacting with their soaring world. This enlightened approach to dealing with the fuzzy risks seems to me more – *prudent* – than any other approach I've so far encountered...or imagined. Why? The risks are real. Therefore it's only prudent to fundamentally interact with the soaring environment with the 'real risk' concept always and forever in our minds. If we can do so, we're much less likely to inadvertently 'discover' a great bear.

I can already hear an imaginary skeptical reader...

Q: Why do *you* - Captain Safety Nazi - think 'lots of' sailplane pilots are not thinking clearly about fundamental risks inherent to soaring?

A: Direct Feedback.

Keen listeners may have noted my airfield conversations tend to be suffused with 'thought safety.'. Not as a Soaring Nazi, but always from curiosity, and sometimes because I care about my conversational partner as a friend and they've demonstrated acceptance of a risk for reasons not obvious to me. Through the decades, it's my sense many fellow pilots have adopted a less clear view of soaring's risks than I think the sport warrants.

That said, what a person chooses to do in the face of fully comprehended risks is their business, and so long as their behavior isn't likely to result in a heavier hand from Big Brother should something go horribly wrong, I'm OK with that. I'm much less comfortable with someone accepting risks they don't fully comprehend. This is *much* more common in my experience. Viewpoint aside though, time is the ultimate, utterly impartial, judge whether others' more optimistic views of the actual risks are serving them well. Have fun. Fly safely!

Bob Whelan's fundamental soaring goal always, is to be able to fly the same glider, tomorrow. His *second* soaring goal is to remain aloft...because only by remaining aloft can any other good flight events happen.

