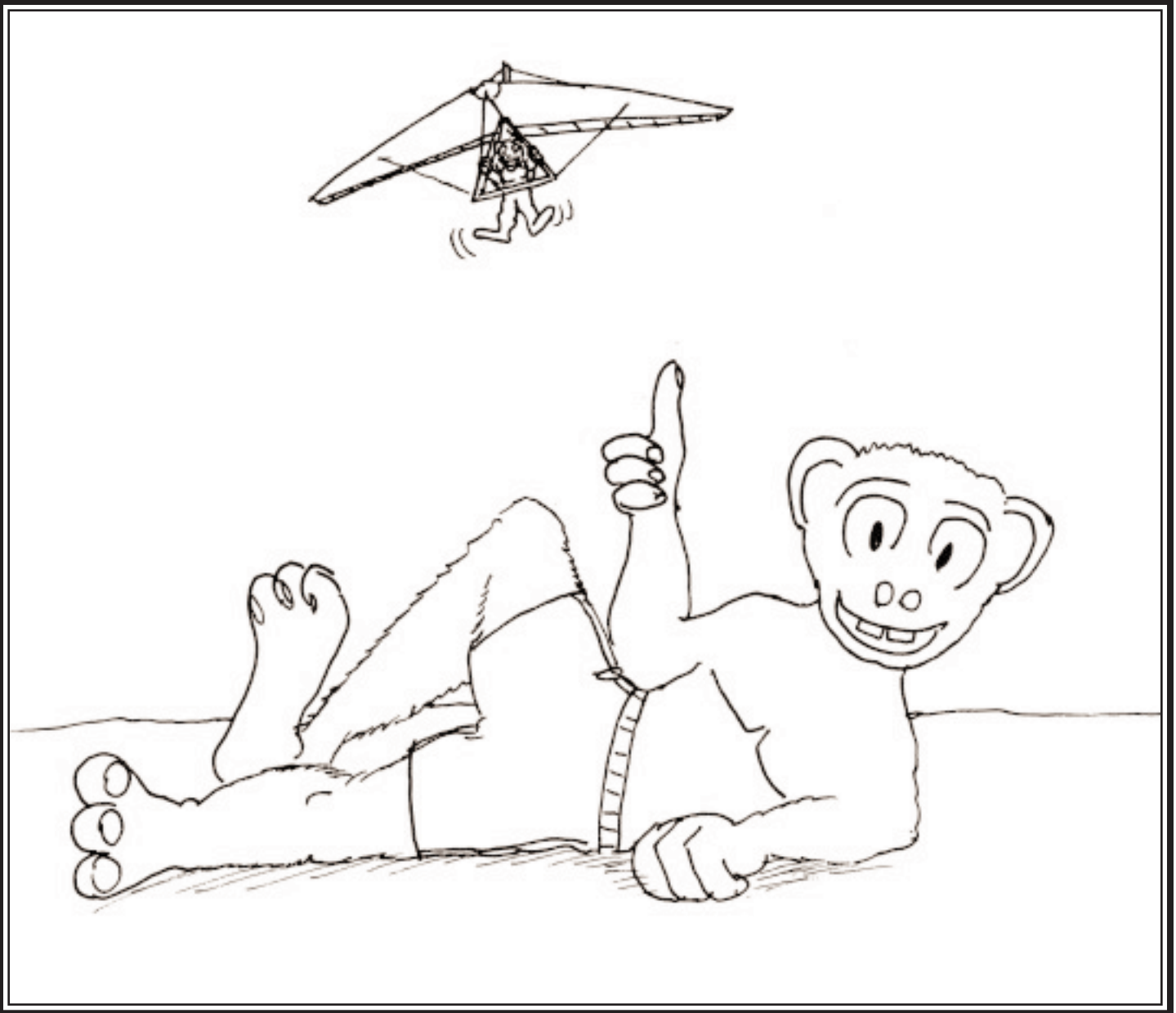


# GROUND SQUIRREL

THE PUBLICATION OF THE WINGS OF ROGALLO  
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA HANG GLIDER ASSOCIATION  
VOLUME 100, NUMBER 04, April 2000



The 2000 Swimsuit Issue! Hot Squirrels! Hot Swimsuits! Hot Fashions!

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## The Squirrel s Burrow

Here it is! The issue you've been waiting for! The fabulous Ground Squirrel Swimsuit Issue, featuring hot squirrel models in all the latest rodent swimwear!

We also have a few entries in our 2000 Ground Squirrel Hang Writing Contest. Check them out in this issue of Ground Squirrel!

Spring is here, the burrowing season's begun, and it looks like it could be a great year! Last winter was dry, the water table is low, and the ground is nice, fresh, and crumbly. It's time to get out there and start digging some serious holes!

But before you start, it might be a good idea to head on over the the training burrow for a little bit of tunneling practice. We all tend to get a bit rusty over the winter, and be honest with yourself, are your digging skills still as sharp as they were last fall? Can you still stick a nice deep hole right underneath the arkle of a hapless pilot? If not, now's the time to polish those skills before the booming days of summer.

Speaking of pilots, our clever plans to keep them away from our the burrowing zone (BZ) appear to be working. These new speed gliding

competitions get them out of the air as soon as possible. And for pilots who aren't into speed gliding, the latest generation of rigid wings guarantees long flights that will keep them up in the air, away from the BZ, and also scare off some of those boorish hawks, harriers, and eagles who persist in eating us. (Who do those raptors think they are? Don't they know that squirrels are supposed to be the top of the food chain? They must be working for Microsoft!)

Finally, in a clever attempt to get those pilots to go away and fly somewhere else, we have used our Secret Ground Squirrel Mind Control Powers to trick the Fellow Feathers into holding the Fort Funston Air Races 2000 at Fort Funston (aw, you guessed!) May 19 through May 21, 2000. It should be great. read all about it in this issue of Ground Squirrel!

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## Quit Yankin My VG

by Eric Carlson

It is 2:15 PM Friday, and I am stuck in a hot current of vehicles rolling north towards home for the weekend. Winter feels like it is finally coming to a close. The clear brilliant blue air is alive between the Pacific storms. Cumulus clouds ring the Bay Area, taunting me as I beg them to get their bases up before spring arrives. I feel like I have had my VG on tight for an eternity. Racing from customer to customer trying not to lose time or altitude. Not a lot of time spent calmly spinning around irresponsibly in a thermal somewhere. My mind starts to drift from the vehicle towards a better place...

The long drive across the San Joaquin Valley is soothing in itself. The group seems to agree. It was not hard getting them all together after a depressingly long winter. Once again 'The Magnificent 10' will rule the skies

over Dunlap.

In no time, we are filling up just east of Fresno. I overhear a tourist asking one of my fellow wingmen if that is a boat on top of the car. "Oh ya" he says, "It's a new Catalina." In a blink, there's Steve Koski and his sheepish grin. Somebody tells him they've got a telephone pole for sale. "Free delivery!"

Sleep and a big breakfast quickly become my two main priorities. Seems like as soon as I have the bag rolled out I'm rolling into 'Clingon's Junction'. My glee turns to apathy as I notice most of the good seats are taken up by those pathetic 'Safariites' and their down-trodden instructors. One of the Mag10 decides to say good morning for all of us. Just as well. I hope nobody spits in my food today.

Sometime before noon I find myself stuffed in a truck full of motion sick, air starved suburbanites all in desperate need of a two month long flying vacation. I think HG vehicles are the adult version of the high school locker room. They are usually stuffed with unwashed harnesses and dirty sweat stained pressure bracelets that smell profusely of the past. We get to launch and spill out of the vehicles like a bag of black-eyed peas dropped from the top shelf. I am pretty sure the person-to-person banter was nothing short of 'Judge Judy Rude'. I blame myself. I will check launch conditions later ...

"Whereas my glider??" Those damn safariites are spread out like a mismanaged government compound. "No I don't have a helmet you can borrow!!" Soon I am putting on the nose cone and checking my harness. "Oooh, nice repack Mikey". I hear Mike at the shop will do a repack for a hot meal, a nicely folded towel, a shower, and a bar of soap... wrapped of course. I make a trip

out to launch. There's a couple safariites peeing in their pants with their first thermal. You can hear them squealing like little girls at an 'NSYNC' concert. I decide to grab my glider and head to launch... with my newly replaced down tube. It's been a long time.

I'm all alone on launch. I hear a bag of battens spill onto the ground behind the house. My senses seem to be working overtime. I can smell the essence of Bay Laurel and the sage billowing up the hill. The air flowing up the middle of launch seems a little warmer than the surrounding air. I peak out in front of my glider and see nothing but gliderless clear skies broken only by a swirling puff of white straight above me. Nobody running down the ramp to my left. I hook in and do a hang check. I turn my vario on. I look down both wings to happily see that my trailing edge is clear of weeds and other forgotten safariite debris. I step up to the dirt patch and step on the base tube. We need a freakin' rug up here!! I pick a target. Nothing moving down below. Somebody and their glider get in line behind me. I see the trees moving below....

"It's time!!" I pick up the glider and take out some slack in the hang strap. I pivot the nose down just below the horizon. Wings level. A couple more puffs on my face. Something clicks, "Balance... clear!" I lean forward and drive hard and happily down the face.

Soon my red converse all-star high tops are flailing needlessly in the air. Level and clear of the hill I step into the harness and bank right. Some safariite is now making steep half circles in a thermal. My attitude, now being influenced by adrenaline, urges me to go fly up through him like a rude inadvertent gas bubble in a Hot Tub. I zip up my harness.

I load the wing to the right. I pray this summer lasts forever. So for now, I'll leave the VG off for a little while.

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## March Ed Levin Site Report

by Steve Pittman

Mark Mulholland, Steve Pittman, and Pat Denevan met with Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department (SCCPRD) personnel at Ed Levin Park on Friday, March 10.

The SCCPRD people say they want to make opening the road after a rain a priority, although it will only be opened if mud does not stick to the shoes when it is walked on. If you find the road dry but not open, call the County Communications Dispatch center at 408-262-2505. Ask them to call ID #P49 (Debbie Zapien) and inform her of the problem. If Debbie is not available, you could also have them try #P65 (Mike Maximovich) or #P66 (Lisa Pappanastos). Do not make the call until you are sure the road is dry enough to open. If we cry "Wolf!" inappropriately a few times, I am sure the SCCPRD will lose interest in being responsive.

If you find the road dry but not open, please call Steve Pittman at 925-277-5080 and leave a message letting him know the date and time you encountered the problem. If you manage to get the road opened by calling County Communications Dispatch, Steve would appreciate knowing who you talked to and how long it took to open the road. It is important that Steve be informed of every occurrence from now on when the road is dry but not open.

We are changing the way injury accidents (those requiring first



aid) at Ed Levin are to be reported. Right now, the WOR is expected to provide a written report of every accident at Ed Levin within 24 hours. We have not been complying with that objective. The SCCPRD is insisting that we must call 911 (or dial 408-299-2311) for every such accident. (If you call 911 from a cell phone, you will be connected with the California Highway Patrol (CHP). Tell the CHP operator that there has been an accident at Ed Levin Park in Milpitas and that you want to be connected with the Santa Clara County Communications Dispatch Center. If you prefer, you can call the Dispatch Center directly from a cell phone - dial 408-299-2311.) Once we are connected to the Santa Clara County Communications Dispatch Center, we will tell the dispatcher that there has been an accident at Ed Levin and what assistance is required, if any. We will ask, in any case, that the Ed Levin rangers be notified by radio. If we do not think paramedics are required, we will tell the dispatcher so. If the dispatcher insists on sending paramedics, we won't argue but will tell the dispatcher that the victim may already have left in a private vehicle by the time any paramedics arrive. If a ranger is unavailable to take an accident report, the accident victim or an eyewitness must call 408-262-6980 within 24 hours and give the victim's name, telephone number, and a brief accident summary to a ranger, either directly or via the answering machine.

Right now, these procedures are tentative pending agreement by the SCCPRD. Another article will be published after the procedures are finalized.

Regards,  
Steve

## April Mission Peak Site Report

by Steve Rodriguez

All is well at Mission Ridge! There have been many scorable days, and the green hills make this the nicest time to fly the ridge. The rangers haven't had any complaints from Mill Creek residents so far. Please continue to drive slow and cautiously on Mill Creek Road. Please turn on your headlights for safety, as this helps make you visible through the turns obscured by trees. Keyholders also need to keep a close eye on the total number of vehicles on launch. Even with 12 keys in the lock box, we are still limited to 6 vehicles parked on top.

Good lift!  
Steve

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## Be Kind to Volunteers

by John Wilde

Greetings, as your new club VP I have been helping Carmela and Steve stand in for Don as treasurer, while he's off doing some "thermal research" in Florida. One thing seems unchanged since I did Membership duty in the early 90s, about 75% of the club members can follow simple instructions, and their memberships are processed without trouble, the rest, due to ignorance, or laziness, omit one or more items, which slows down the process and causes unnecessary work for the volunteers. These are the requirements for a smooth registration.

1/ Please include a stamped self addressed envelope. If you don't your application will be delayed, while someone scratches for an envelope and stamp.

2/ Include a legible copy of your USHGA membership card.

3/ Include an application form, indicating the various helmet stickers that you want. (it helps if you put your name, USHGA, and club numbers on the form, paperwork sometimes gets separated)

4/ Last and most important, include a check to pay for ALL the sites that you are going to fly. Please remember site improvements and insurance are an ongoing cost of every flying site, and it's only fair that all users pay their share.

Thanks for your cooperation I'm hoping to serve you well in the coming year.

John Wilde

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## March Meeting Minutes

by Paul Clayton

The February 2000 meeting minutes were accepted as published.

### NEW MEMBERS/GUESTS

Sandra, Amelia, Carla

### GREAT FLIGHTS

Steve Rodriguez reported that he flew to France and got married.

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Mark Mullholland

The club needs a new meeting venue due to the fire at the Omega Restaurant. It reportedly will be closed for 3-4 months. Volunteers are needed to form a committee to find a new place. Steve Pittman and Carmela Moreno volunteered. Only about half of last year's members have renewed. A speed gliding practice day is planned for 3-30, and volunteers are needed to run the

meet.

VICE-PRESIDENT'S REPORT  
- Ed Cline

Nothing to report.

TREASURER'S REPORT -  
Carmela Moreno

Don Jones is in Utah. We have 336 paid members, and 275 have not yet renewed.

ED LEVIN SITE COMMITTEE  
REPORT - Steve Pittman

There was a crash on launch during the speed gliding practice last Sunday. The pilot suffered serious injuries, but is expected to recover. The wind was switching over the back before the incident. The glider apparently stalled and spun into the hill. Steve recently met with the Ed Levin rangers. They want to institute new procedures for opening the road as soon as possible once it is dry. Reporting of accidents was also discussed. New site procedures will be in the newsletter.

MISSION PEAK SITE COMMITTEE  
REPORT - Steve Rodrigues

So far there have been no problems with our use of Mill Creek Road. Drivers are urged to keep speed down.

M T. DIABLO SITE COMMITTEE  
REPORT - None

FLIGHT DIRECTOR'S  
REPORT - Russ Locke

This is the time of year when there are strong conditions, and people's skills are rusty, so be extra cautious.

NEWSLETTER - Paul Gazis

Next month is the swimsuit issue.

COMPETITION COMMITTEE  
REPORT - John Borton

The speed gliding meet this year uses a new course, with an air start. The course is more visible to spectators, and offers more flexibility for use of different launch sites. Pilots may compete in one of several classes. More info is available on [www.hanggliding.org](http://www.hanggliding.org). The meet will be called the WOR Super G. A professional video rig will be used to record the action from the 600 ft launch. A party is tentatively planned for after the event on Saturday. The club events calendar will be updated soon with another competition.

OLD BUSINESS

George Morford moved that the club allocate \$300 to purchase a web cam for his Mission web site. The membership approved this motion.

Paul Gazis presented the first place award in the '99 hang writing contest to Carmela Moreno, for her photography. The prize was a copy of A Field Guide to Cows, and a handy tool kit.

T-shirts from the '99 X-C contest are still available for those who entered flights. The 2000 contest is underway, with several flights already entered.

NEW BUSINESS

Pat Denevan reported that Dunlap is open for flying. A hot tub has been donated and needs to be installed. There will be a work/fly weekend on 4-28 to 4-30. A WOR flyin is planned for May 5-7, and a WOR competition will be held on June 2-4. The road to launch is currently 4WD only due to winter damage. There will be an ICP May 13-15.

Jamie Sheldon reported on the USHGA Board of Directors meeting. The directors wants to mount a letter writing campaign to convince the feds that hang

gliding should be considered a "traditional use" of federal lands, and thus should not be subject to requirements for special use permits. A sample letter will be in the newsletter. USHGA may consolidate its administrative functions with the Soaring Society of America. Class 2 competition rules were also discussed.

A list of upcoming entertainment is on the WOR website. A coordinator is still needed.

Entertainment for the March meeting was a memorial for the late Kent Harker, including videos, pictures, and stories about his extraordinary life and flying career.

END OF MEETING MINUTES

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## A New Way to Fly a Hang Glider

by Bob Omiston

Maybe one of the reasons I've never become bored with hang gliding, even after over 25 years, is that I never seem to be able to get enough of it. Not too surprising, with a job, family, and other activities of modern life, but part of the problem is the nature of soaring itself. Good weather conditions can be an infrequent occurrence, especially for the weekend flyer. The winters are the most frustrating of all. It's hard to get much airtime from a hand-full of sled rides. Towing seemed like a good idea, but except for Tim Shea's brief fling with the Dragonfly, no one has built up a regular aerotowing operation in the Bay Area. I've thought of one of the light-weight trikes, and envied the paraglider paramotors but these don't fit the bill if you really want to stay with a hang glider. Closest thing so far has been the Mosquito hang glider harness with a motor and pro-

peller in the end of the boot. But with no first hand exposure I couldn't get too excited. Well, it turns out that this idea is starting to catch on big-time (500 or so Mosquitos delivered to date) and other manufacturers are jumping in and improving on the concept. So this brings us to our story.

Back in late January, Mike Vorhis contacted a number of WOR members about the possibility of a demo for the new Pegasus Booster power pack for hang gliders. The interest level was fairly high, so he went ahead and set up a demo for March 11. Pegasus is a major British hang glider and ultralight company, well known world-wide, except maybe in the US. They manufacture trikes, hang gliders (Solar Wing Scandal), paragliders, sport hovercraft, and now the Booster hang glider power plant. Bill Sherlock of Pegasus came specifically to this area to give the first U.S. demo of their unit for WOR members. About ten of us convened out at the New Jerusalem airstrip near Tracy, an excellent site for the demo. With farmland bordering the runway, the area is completely free of obstructions. The paved airstrip is uncontrolled but used by general aviation aircraft from time to time.

While Sherlock set up the Booster and attached it to the harness and glider and he explained to us the background and design of the unit. Doug Prather of Modesto, the Northern California dealer for the Mosquito was also on hand to fly, so we got a good chance to compare the two units. As can be seen from the pictures, the Booster consists of a carbon fiber composite structural frame carrying the engine, propeller, retractable wheel struts, and a removable fuel container. Total weight is 42-lb. It connects to the harness near your hips with two small pivot pins that must be attached to the harness. In the prone pilot position, the rear part

of your harness fairings neatly into the Booster for a very streamlined look. Even better, the propeller blades fold back for power off soaring so the total drag is little more than the harness alone. The Mosquito, the engine and harness are a single unit, so you need an extra harness for unpowered flying. Also, the Mosquito uses an external fuel container that attaches to the down tubes (extra drag). Both units use the same engine, the Radhe Racket, a 120-cc two-cycle, 10-Hp engine built in Sweden. Both units allow manual in-flight restarts after engine shutdown. The Booster has an extra muffler stage and it seemed somewhat quieter in flight. I was impressed with the design of the Booster; it seemed well thought out and the quality and craftsmanship were first class.

Bill explained that the demo Booster was brand new, only the third one built, and his flight would be its first checkout. He's mainly a trike pilot, with less than ten or so hang glider Booster flights. So we were watching with keen interest. He made a few run-ups to check out the engine, nearly 100-lb static thrust, and it seemed a bit noisy up close. The glider was a topless Solar Wings Scandal, only 138 sq-ft in area, so with the 42-lb Booster it had a pretty good wing loading. With about a 4-mph wind, Bill opened the hand-grip thumb throttle and started his run, slowly at first, then faster, the Booster trundling along behind. After 8-10 easy steps, Bill's feet lifted off, then the wheels, and up he went. What an amazing sight. Imagine lifting off flat ground in a hang glider!

After going prone, zipping up the pod, inserting his harness boot in the Booster stimp, and retracting the Booster wheel struts, Bill climbed out at 300-400 fpm. At altitude, the engine was much less noisy, and he flew around demonstrating partial and engine-

off operation. After the short flight, he throttled back, came out of prone, and made a normal hang glider landing. After the wheels touched down, he flared and ran out a few steps in the light wind. Even as a novice hang glider pilot, he sure made it look easy.

Then it was our turn - or at least some of the other guys. I figured it was better to watch and take pictures rather than fly, given the small, unfamiliar glider, too small harness, throttle unsuited to my launch grip, etc, etc. But I got a very good feel for the flyability by talking to the six or so pilots who did fly - and I hope to get my chance soon. Reto Schaeferli was the first to fly and he had a perfect takeoff, climbout, and landing; when he flew again later, we thought he was going to just fly away home. The others also flew with great success. General consensus was that it feels quite different at first, understandably, given the extra inertia and the lateral safety lines that maintain prop clearance. With power off roll control is not much different, but with power on, it's noticeably heavier. Banked up in a turn, the wing wants to tighten up and takes extra effort to roll back out. Pitch pressure for a given air-speed doesn't change since the thrust force acts through the harness, but bar position does, just like aerotowing with a harness bridle. Takeoffs seemed very easy - let the speed build up and tip-toe off when the glider lifts, although there is a bit of a right turn tendency due to motor torque. Landing is almost the same as an unpowered glider, maybe even easier because of the landing gear drag on the ground.

I have been moderately interested in the Mosquito for some time, and I was quite keen to observe this particular concept in operation. While the Booster flights were very impressive, everyone was understandably conservative.



It was therefore quite instructive to watch Doug Prather fly the Mosquito as he has lots of airtime and is very familiar with it. Using his Wills Wing Euro Sport 167 he put on quite a display of the robust handling of his Mosquito and glider combination. From aggressive, pushed-out launches and steep climbouts (briefly hands off), to high-banked 360s and steep wingovers, he demonstrated that the pilot-mounted engine concept

was quite tolerant of rough handling. Not that an ill-timed engine burp wouldn't have caused some anxious moments, but the glider obviously had plenty of stability and controllability during full power maneuvers. And Doug made excellent landings every time.

Needless to say, I was impressed with the concept. I want to stay with hang gliding, and this looked like an easy way to get

airborne when the wind isn't cooperating, or soaring when launch access is unavailable. Mainly it would multiply the options available for flying in diverse conditions and locations. Although the Mosquito looked very good, and has quite a track record, the Booster seemed to us to have the edge, mainly in terms of added features and detachability from the harness. Mike Vorhis tells me that Pegasus has earmarked five units of the April



Pegasus pilot demos Booster for WOR at New Jerusalem airstrip.



Pegasus Booster in flight

production run for the U.S. and at least one of these will come to Northern California. Maybe we'll be seeing more of the Booster soon.

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## Fort Funston Air Races 2000!!!

by Alan Sakayama  
<av8er@mindspring.com>

The Fort Funston Air Races are back... Again !!!

The Fort Funston Hang Glider Pilots Association, Fellow Feathers, announces the Fort Funston Air Races 2000 to be held at one of the world's best coastal flying sites. The air races proved to be a successful event last year and this year promises to be even better. This event will

be held on May 19th thru May 21st 2000.

The Air Races 2000 will consist of approximately a 5-mile out and return course. Launching at Fort Funston, pilots will fly south to the 600ft cliffs at Westlake, cross a pylon and return back to Fort Funston. The best overall times will be awarded!!

Separate classes for rigid wings and high performance flex wings will be added in this years format. A handicapped sporting class will also be included. Donn Derman has agreed to work the system and fine tune it.

Come fly and race with the fastest gliders and pilots. Saturday night BBQ. More updates to follow. For entry information contact

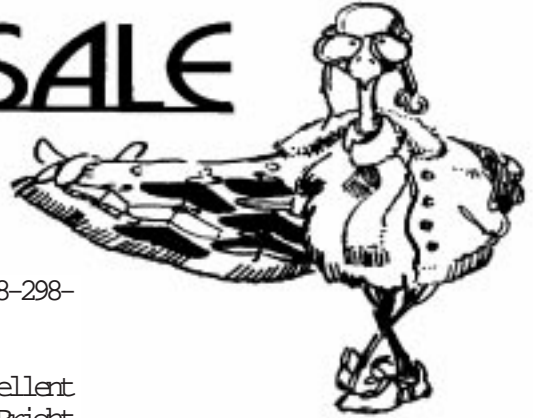
Dave Ruiz  
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Or email Alan Sakayama —  
av8er@mindspring.com

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# WINGS FOR SALE



## Wings for Sale

(Ad policy: ads run for 3 months and are free to WOR members)

### Rigid Wings

Bright Star Millennium, lots of extras and spare parts, good condition, \$7000, BRS Chute, \$800, Call Ramy Yanetz (650)625-0633 ramyyanetz@aol.com

### Flexwings

HP AT 158. Glider is in great shape, but it's time for me to go topless. New side wires, spare down-tubes, owner's manual, and rib chart. \$1000. Contact Rick at rickcav@earthlink.net or 650-961-7825 ext 345. Photo at <http://www.sirius.com/~mlbco/clas.s.htm>

Mark IV 17 Excellent condition, 1 test flight since annual inspection, \$1,500. Call Lynda Nelson, (408) 946-6353, Lynda0g@aol.com

Moyes XS 169 Good condition, good for pilot over 200#. great sink rate, good landing characteristics. Blue and yellow under surface. \$300 Call Bruno (925) 837-4261. Brunoj@worldnet.att.net

Moyes XtraLite 164. Mylar sail. Good condition, good for pilot over 200#. great sink rate and glide, exceptional landing characteristics. Built to last. Blue and yellow undersurface. \$700. Call Bruno, (925) 837-4261, Brunoj@worldnet.att.net

Pulse 11 M Red/White/Blue w/ comfort bar. \$2000 obo. (408) 527-8110 (W), (408) 929-1494 (H)

Mark IV 17. Double surface glider for beg/int pilot under 190#. Great condition, original owner, 60

hrs \$980. Call Dietmar 408-298-5821 dietmark@vicom.com

Wills Wing Falcon 195 Excellent condition, only 25 Hours. Bright Orange and Fluorescent Yellow colors. Wheels included. \$2000. Contact Mark at (408) 206-6059 or mark\_howard@onebox.com

Wills Wing Spectrum 144. Absolutely killer performer for up-and-coming pilots (strong Hang I+). Great glide, sink rate, and kawl looks to boot. White/blue/lavender, streamline downtubes, wingtip fairings, speed bar, and straight bar + wheels. Pictures & specs: <http://www.hooked.net/~hairball/spec/> \$1800. Michael: (408) 289-8418, hairball@hooked.net

HP AT 158 (Custom Sail), Attack Duck 160. All in good to excellent shape. Have purchased a Millenium, so make me an offer, I would like to clean out my garage!! Contact Mark, (408) 929-1753

### Paragliders

Edel SupersSpace 2. White & Green. \$1500 obo, (408) 527-8110 (W), (408) 929-1494 (H)

Pro Design Contest 46 in excellent condition. Always at the top of the stack. Inspection report provided. 75-95 kgs. \$800 obo. Call Bob, (650) 588-1975, fly@best.com

### Equipment

Apco Jet Stream pod harness and chute (5 years old), Full Face helmet, almost new Flying Suit, Best Offer, Ball GC99, like new, \$850, Racks for Isuzu Trooper, Best offer. Call Ramy Yanetz (650)625-0633

ramyyanetz@aol.com

Uvex full-face helmet Carbon fiber, quite light (2 lbs?). \$50. Call Kevin (408) 734-3708

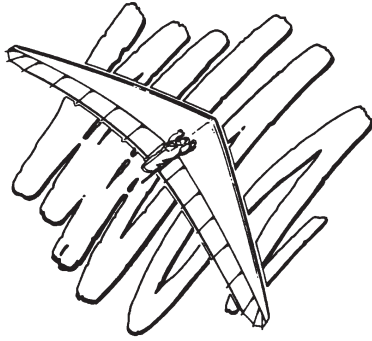
Uvex full-face helmet, Like brand new, \$150.00, Kenwood FM radio with 1 hour quick charge, cig. lighter charge, and owners manual, \$200.00, PTT headset for Kenwood and FF helmet, free with all of the above. Call Lynda Nelson, (408) 946-6353, Lynda0g@aol.com

Wanted -- Used Gamin 12XLs, will pay \$75. call Russ (408) 737-8745

### Vehicles

1993 Toyota 4Runner: \$13,000, EFI V6 3.0 Liter engine, 5 speed man transmission, many options. 150,000 miles. Contact Nathan nat@cyber-nexus.com

Wings of Rogallo  
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*Wings of  
Rogallo*

# FLIGHT LINE

VOL. 100 NO. 04 APRIL 2000

The next Wings of Rogallo Meeting will be held at the Round Table Pizza in Milpitas  
at Morrill and Landess (in the far corner of the plaza)

Tuesday, April 18 at 8:00 pm.

Social hour begins at 7:00 pm. Come early and have dinner.

Entertainment at this meeting will be finding the meeting!

Where is Morrill, anyway? Where is Landess? Are they even on this planet?

If not, what planet are they on? And is there really a plaza at the corner  
or is that just a secret landing site for alien spacecraft?