



FLIGHTLINE



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The publication of the Wings Of Rogallo Northern California Hang Gliding Association
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Cover Photo: Banked in the Owens. Photo by Paul Clayton

Index:

1. Cover photo
2. March Minutes
3. 1st Time I Flew Story1
4. 1st Time I Flew Story 2
5. 1st Time I Flew Story 3
6. Back Cover

Spring 2015 Flying Rumors and Stuff

- * WOR meeting 21 April
- * June 5 - 7 Yosemite with C. Valley and **FREE BEER**

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March 2015 Meeting Minutes

Entertainment

Paul Clayton showed video and slides shot in the Owens Valley during the WOR Memorial Day weekend trip in 2014..

New Members and Guests

Ben Rogers

Great Flights

An unknown pilot made his first trip to Dunlap and got a 50 minute flight. Eric Hinrichs flew Mission and soared with hawks and golden eagles. Mark Mullholland flew from Mission to Ed Levin in 14 minutes, along with Robert Booth, then landed due to rain. Kimlee got a 1:15 flight at Dunlap, where she made her first mountain flights.

President: Paul Gazis

Site insurance applications for WOR sites have been submitted to USHPA.

Vice President: Eric Hinrichs

Nothing to report.

Treasurer: Don Herrick

Site insurance premiums have been paid. There have also been expenses for new windsocks. Club balances are stable.

Member Services: Phyl Hamby

There are 277 paid members for 2015..

Flight Director: Ben Dunn

Ben noted that the 1200' ridge at Ed Levin is off limits for launches and landings, as it is on private land.

Page 2 1 2

Ed Levin: Phyl Hamby

Landings are permitted only in designated launch areas and in the LZ. The windtalker is working again. Road maintenance is under discussion with the Parks Dept.

Mission: Chris Valley

Chris has Mission keys for distribution. The special use permit has been renewed. Thanks for making last year painless for the site committee. An environmental impact report is being prepared for the proposed new parking lot.

Diablo: None

Site Acquisition Pat Denevan, Jim Woodward, et al

An encroachment permit is needed to secure road access. A fee of \$1100 is required for the county engineer to inspect the road. Jim Woodward noted that he has a list of other expenses that will be incurred to get the site open, including installation of a fence and parking lot. Don Herrick requested that a list of expenses to open the site be submitted to him for review.

A motion was approved to take up a collection to be used to cover the road inspection fee and other site expenses. Pat Denevan noted that a work party will be needed to put in the parking lot etc. Jim Woodward noted that a draft site procedure exists.

Old Business None

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New Business

Sergei noted that the Ed Levin road needs maintenance and questioned whether the club could use the back road. Pat Denevan noted that the back road crosses private land, but that the county had tried to buy it in the past. It was also noted that the back road is a longer turn-around than the front.

Julie Speigler mentioned that USHPA organized a film festival featuring flying films

Robert Booth proposed that competitions be organized on the west coast.

Julie Speigler suggested he contact USHPA for information about organizing sanctioned events..

END of Meeting Minutes

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The First Time I Ever Flew a Hang Glider

or (Push-out, Go Up, My First Flight in a Hang-glider)

By Larry Fleming

The very highest branches of the dry, rustling poplar trees wavered occasionally, as small gusts of a hot, mean breeze gasped. Here I was. . . at the bottom of a dry bed at the San Joaquin river on a blistering, July summer morning in 1974. . . looking up at the steep, scarred river bank . . . as an occasional motorcycle dug-in, spun-out and threw streams of dirt and dust that just hung in the air and reluctantly drifted up the 100 foot river bank. There was a slight movement of air at the top, but none at the bottom; just dust, heat, and us; a couple of teenage guys with a part-time instructor who also had a real job selling insurance or used cars or something. We had all come to live out a dream; flight.

We began by setting up the kite; an 18 foot standard. "Boys, this here is NASA's 40 million dollar development", John, the instructor/salesman, cried out, "Just look at it!" We looked and saw a big triangular, looks-like-a-kid's-kite, thing-a-ma-jig; 82 degree nose angle, 18 foot wing tubes, 18 foot keel, twisted down-tubes, that just couldn't seem to be re-straightened, and a big droopy, billowing sail, hanging down in the back. It was beautiful. It represented a dream of flight way, way more advanced than jumping off my grandmother's roof with out-stretched arms and a towel.

Our instruction began with loping through the dry, clumpy dust, learning how to keep the wings level and the nose high enough to "grab some air", but low enough to keep running forward. "Run, Run, Run!" shouted the instructor, "Keep Running!" And run we did; easily without a harness, wobbling and tripping with a harness, and haltingly down the slope at the bottom of the hill, feeling the kite and harness pull ever so slightly at our hips and shoulders.

Lunchtime, under the river trees, gave us some time to talk about this great, new sport with our own expert pilot/instructor/salesman. John told us, between sandwich bites, that we were ready to fly from the very top of the riverbank. As lunch ended, John's business partner showed up from the shop. "Want to take a flight, Jim," asked our instructor? "Don't mind if I do, John," came the reply. "Watch this," John whispered ever so quietly with awe, as the glider left the top of the hill to land right in front of us with a nose-high, tippy-toe, mushy flare. "SMOOOth," John quietly cooed, as Jim unhooked and strutted away. I asked how long Jim had been flying. "Six months," came the confident reply. I wondered and asked about our instructor's experience. John, our instructor/expert, lifted his head, straightened his back, hooked his thumbs in his belt, and proudly exclaimed "One month".

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That gave me a lot to think about as I stood on top of the river bank, hooked into the glider, looking far down that little 100 foot slope at the landing area below; at John the expert and Doug the other student; two small stick figures swallowed up by a field of dust, with several dry, rustling trees lining the riverbank behind. John's last instructions, the last words I had heard, flowed through my mind: "run hard, grab some air, and throw yourself over the control-bar to get 'er flying, push out to go up, pull in to go down." This was it; a lifetime of leaping from playground swings, jumping off roofs, and dreaming was about to come together in the next couple of minutes. I WAS GOING TO FLY!)

My run was very strong; I had had a morning of loud encouragement and lots of practice in the dust ("run, Run, RUN"). I threw myself forward, over the control-bar with gusto and a smile! "*Push-out, go up; pull-in, go down.*" Naturally, I planned to go up, so I shoved the control-bar out. . . out and up, with all my might, dreaming of floating ever so gently into the sky above. The kite, however, came to a full stop, nose high and fell uncontrollably towards the ground.)
(Continued on Page 4...)

"ARE YOU ALRIGHT," sounded a far-away voice that was in reality yelling right beside me, "HEY DUDE, ARE YOU ALRIGHT?" Although I was in one piece, I felt as bent and beat-up as the glider looked. "No worries, it happens all the time," said the instructor as he shoved his shoulder into the crumpled down-tube and returned it back to its former, slightly bowed and twisted, shape, "You are a natural pilot, my man! Let's try that again, but, this time, wait until you are closer to the ground before you flare. Hey, we have a kite just your size in the shop window. Want to buy it?"

I wondered if it was normal for a "natural pilot" to feel as sore and beat-up as I did, but I made a couple of more flights that day; one "SMOOOth" and one "rough" (ouch), but it was enough for convince me that I wanted to fly for the rest of my life, even if it was just going to be gliding down a little hill. That afternoon, I ended up buying that 17 foot Monarch Standard in the window and never looked back.



To see training video from 1973-74 go to;
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NW7TePn9Ay8>

The first Time I Ever Flew a Hang Glider By Dave Jacob

The first flight I had in a hang glider did not occur on my first lesson. It was 1983 and winter and California was being drenched by the second of two drought ending years. The hills were no longer brown but lush with thick deep green grasses and mud. On that first lesson, the day had been clear, but the wind had been so switchy that we set up the Javelins and Lancers on the knoll near the wind sock at Ed Levin. From there we could launch in any direction, but the best we could hope for was flaring really hard at the end of our runs and maybe getting our feet up in the process. Hardly flying. But things would change.

For reasons I don't recall, we had started late in the day on that second lesson on the following Saturday. But the winds were smooth and coming out of the North with a slight East component, ideal for the 40 foot hill. While I've forgotten much of the details of that day, one flight stands out clearl. I had been doing well and I had advanced about 3/4s of the way up the hill. By this time we were in the shadow of the foot hill to our west creating a near magical aura between the deeply shaded landscape and the bright sky.

As my turn came up, I was more than itching to launch. Starting the run nose high to fill the sail (some of you remember what I'm talking about), then pulling it down and accelerating, the glider lifted off my shoulders and my hands slid down the down tubes.

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With assistance from the smooth thick wind I very quickly felt the training harness pull tight and then pull my feet off the hill. The transition from terrestrial to flight for a new pilot is a drug with perfect euphoria. The wind blows warm in your face, the ground drops, and your wings become your vehicle that cuts through three dimensional space. I continued to climb until the flight reached its Zenith. I remember looking down on the instructors and for the first time noticing the queer perspective of someone flying not just skimming down the hill.

As the descent began the ground started to whiz by. Down I came until my feet were just skimming above the grass. Without much thought I pushed out on the down tubes hoping for the perfect flare. Instead, I shot back into the air and this time with a very high nose angle and rapidly diminishing air speed. I could sense what was coming next was not going to be so euphoric. So I did the most natural thing that came to mind and pulled the control bar in.

It's amazing how responsive a fully stalled glider is to a pitch command like that. The ensuing ground rush solicited a frantic push out. Unfortunately the glider response was not so rapid the second time. Right about this point a strange thing happened: time slowed. I recall the wing coming down in front of me and eclipsing everything from view except for the nearby grass and mud, rapidly darkening under its shadow. And at the extent of my earthly view, at the convergence of nylon and earth, there was the greatest cow turd I had ever seen.

(Continued on page 6)

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My white leather Nike high tops and my favorite 501 jeans would wear out and be tossed before they would stop sporting that lovely shade of green. But as I laid there in that moment in my twisted harness trying to safeguard any part of my body that was miraculously still clean, the only thing I craved more than a hot shower, a wet towel, or even a borrowed handkerchief, was to get back up the hill and do it again.

We each grabbed a neon-multicoloured backpack from Chirco's truck and pulled out a huge wad of tangled string and moldy-smelling nylon, then attempted to lay them out on the damp cow-pie infested grass as per vague & ambiguous instructions. The wings were state-of-the-art (circa 1988) Israeli-made ITVs, with perhaps as many as 10 cells per side and with a "speed seat" harness which would change the wings' angle of attack automatically for you whether you wanted it to or not.

We watched a couple of demos of how to forward inflate the wing above you and then abort the take-off. The concept of aborting launch after initiating your run is a concept foreign to HG pilots. This is just not something we do. It would take me years before I could make this adjustment in my PG flying. But today I had little choice, Mark was in front of me pulling my shoulder straps as I made my inflate and then screaming "ABORT" as he pushed my hands down towards my knees.

As of late Spring of 1988, the name for this style wing had yet to be anglicized. I had received a call from fellow HG instructor Greg Pujol to come check out the latest flying fad from France. So the next Sat morning I headed east on Calaveras Road toward ERLCP, but turned right about 1/2 way up from Piedmont ave. This was the cattle ranch of one Herman the German, we would fly from the top of his hill about 1000 ft down to land on a postage-stamp semi-clear spot next to the road. Several other old-time HG pilots like Jim Leech and George Pierson were there also, as we met our instructor de-jour Mark Chirco.

More instructor demo, a launch or two followed by a quick turn then a side-hill landing about 100 feet down. I get it, looks way too easy. What could possibly go wrong???

(Continued on page 6)

Time now to fly down. My natural style (which I adhered to today) is to pretend to not be ready but state loudly "I'd launch iffen I was set up". The other guys seemed to do all right, so trusting this unknown wing, terse instruction, and mostly my natural Irish luck I launched. Got off the ground ok, the wing seems to turn with a tad more latency than desired, and the sink rate is slightly less than that of a grand piano. Zero ground effect at landing, but there were plenty of shrubs to crash thru to help me impact almost exactly where I intended. Any landing you walk away from is a good one!

After a few more flights, we were all hooked. To me this seemed like yet another fine toy for my quiver, but more of a wing for when I might travel international or bandito locally than a daily go-to option. Other than smooth coastal air or mountain glass-offs, this remains true to date. Numerous more flights on borrowed wings followed that first day. Then I bought my first one from Pujol on extreme instructor discount whilst I was teaching PG new-bees for his shop later that same year. This is indeed a fun toy, every pilot should have at least one.

Editorial

Greetings Flightline readers.

This is my first edition as the WOR Flightline newsletter editor. I want to thank Collin Perry for the years of excellent Flightline news and entertainment he published. I will try to keep the fun traditions Collin established and add new ones.

My intention is to make the Flightline a place where pilots can publish their stories, photos, and art. I also want to add occasional rumor, gossip, news reports, and perhaps a crossword.

To encourage contributions, I will promote contests with specific themes. This month we have three great stories from Dave Jacob, Larry Fleming, and Collin Perry. The story theme is "The First Time I Ever Flew a Hang Glider/Paraglider".

The contest winners will be announced and cash prizes awarded at the April 21 WOR meeting.

Next month I hope to publish some original art. If you have art to contribute, send it to: editor@wingsofregallo.org

The art should be something of interest to the flying community and must be original to the Flightline.

Until next month, enjoy the stories, and fly safe!

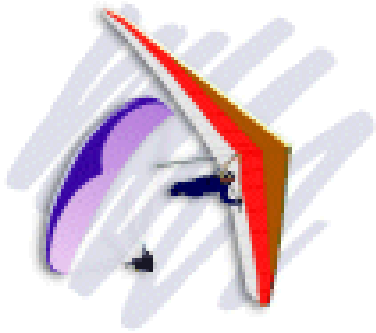
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