

FLIGHT LINE

THE PUBLICATION OF THE WINGS OF ROGALLO
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA HANG GLIDER ASSOCIATION
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Mike Conell threads his way past deadly ground squirrels to nail a landing at Mission

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For inclusion of articles or photos
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month.

The Editor's Turn

The Wings of Rogallo picnic was great! Good food, good company, and great rattlesnakes! Who could ask for anything more? I'd like to thank Lynda Nelson for the great job she did on the picnic, and the great job she's done on dozens of other club activities and events over the years. Thanks, Lynda!

Lynda has announced that she will be leaving the area, moving to Colorado, and learning to fly sailplanes. The club just won't seem the same without her. Lynda has been a member of the Wings Of Rogallo since shortly before the dawn of time, and she's done a lot for the club over the years. Good luck, Lynda, have fun, and don't get too smug about those 50:1 glide ratios!

It looks like things are slowing down here in the Bay Area. Summer's come, and folks are beginning to travel. Anyone have any good tales to tell about your trips? What was the flying like? Did you get high? Did you go far? And what about... the ground squirrels?

Things might be slow at our local sites, but we still have a lot planned out there in the big wide world. Ray Leonard will be running the Region 2 Regionals on the weekend of June 18-20, and these will also serve as the first comp in our Rally circuit. So head on up to the Reno Area, fly in the Regionals, have fun, and you'll automatically be entered in the Rally circuit. What a deal!

One sign of summer is that issues of FLIGHT LINE get out late. I don't know if this issue will get out on time, and the next issue is going to be even more problematical. 'cos I hope to head up to Chelan at the end of the month, so bear with me, and... cross your fingers.

Also, I need copy! Remember, this

is your newsletter! If I can't get enough material, I'll be forced to take... drastic measures.

So send in whatever you got — flight stories, trip reports, glider reviews — earn fare and glory, and you'll also be entered in the FLIGHT LINE 1999 Hang W riting Competition. First prize could be a brand new rigid wing glider!

Paul Gazis

The President's Report for May

by Mark Mulholland

Wow another month has just flown by. I would like to take this time to talk about two separate items. The first is the opportunity to actually buy sites. Most likely, these would be out of the Bay Area, but it would protect sites for future flying. The USHGA has had the capability to do this function for a number of years, they have a tax deductible donation account, but they have not purchased even one site! I feel that this is a shame, and would like to see it done.

The Wings of Rogallo can lead the charge, but only if you want to. Think about it. Then talk to your fellow pilots about it. It's a bigger responsibility, but one I believe that we could handle. What other club have the resources that we do? There are a number of sites that I can think of that either have a launch or LZ that is, or may become, "available". Once we set up this, we will have the capability to act on additional sites as they are put up for sale. Let's preserve the future!

To be fair, if we set up the club as a tax deductible NPO, we would have some additional administration, and also some fund raising tasks, but I believe it would really

be helpful to the future of the sport. Back when I was flying in the Midwest, the Tennessee Tree-Toppers had a similar view, and today they own all their flying sites!!!

Let's start! Are you with me? We'll try and vote on it in the August meeting, till then discuss it!

The other topic I would like to talk about is WOR competitions. These are all fun events. They are set up for all our members. In the WOR Yearly XC competition, we have classes for Experienced Pilots, and Sport Class, Hang Glider, Paraglider, and Rigid Wings. You will only "compete" against similar people on similar wings.

Right now, there are only 2 flights logged on flex wings, and none on paragliders. A simple 10 mile paragliding flight would be winning that category. Bob Trumbly is winning the flex type with 257 miles flown in 3 flights, Mark Mulholland is second with 181.5, and Tom Seeliger is 3rd with 179 miles. For flex wings, Mark Grubbs is first with one 62 miler, Dan Maguire is second with one 40.5 miler. Romy Yanetz is 3rd in the Region 2 category with 136 miles, and Nathan Wheelchel is 3rd in the Bay Area with 124.3 miles. Let's give these folks some competition. We will have some cool prizes, so please enter your flights, either at the monthly club meetings or on line at

<http://members.aol.com/worxc/index.html>

We had a first attempt at the WOR Rally, but the weather was uncooperative, so no flights were scored. I would like to thank Andrew Foss and Tim Allen for all their help leading up to the event. The Rally is to add some fun/site intro for everyone in the club. It is also handicapped, so

that the paragliders can compete with the rigid wings. It is set up to be able to run a task, but also allow you to continue your flight if you complete the task! We are trying to work out the scoring system, so bear with us this year. The next one will be at the same time as the Regionals, so come on out and join in the fun!

Keep em Flying
Keep em Safe

Mark Mulholland

The Crumpled Nosecone

Just What You'd Expect from
This Year's Flight Director
by Mike Vorhis

First let me apologize for the May column, which was penned before the rash of serious spring-time accidents that sorely deserved commentary. I did not meet the deadline for a timelier installment, so I will address those incidents now.

A Case for a Marginal Year

In March a paraglider pilot frolicked low and tight along the 300' and 600' Ed Levin hills, ultimately contacting one of them to the irrefutable ruination of his day. His flight had been something of a dance with the wind, an expression of pure elation. Then the severity of this flirtation was made clear to him, in a collapse and thud. Reports of unusual rotor and strengthening conditions were made by some, but the hard fact is that nothing Mother Nature did that day was out of the ordinary. Getting away with close terrain proximity for hours or months or years is not proof that it's been safe or controllable during ANY of that time. It's a numbers game. How many of us would lay down a bet of our

spinal cords or our craniums or our legs at a roulette table?

In April an accomplished pilot impacted the top of Mission Ridge. He'd been flying for several hours and had top-landed, chatted a bit, expressed his fatigue and desire to call it a day, and re-launched. Entering a thermal straight off launch, he turned sharply and drifted it back behind the fence on his first circle. Halfway around that circle he fell out of it, barely made it back to the safe side of the fence, and smashed into the stone wall on his stomach. Having torn a hole in his gut, he was in more pain than most people can imagine, and lay there a full half-hour before the flight he hadn't planned came to air-lift him to surgery. (Without the chest-mounted chute which was actually covering his belly on impact, it's anyone's guess where he'd be now.) He later commented that he'd flown so many hours over the years at a coastal site that his tired mind may have been thinking 'uniform lift band' instead of 'edgy thermal.' This was an insightful remark, and the differences in lift profile conceptualization bear a moment's thought; when flying different kinds of sites, it's a good idea to call those differences to the conscious mind.

We can also probably consider a few other thoughts:

a.) Besides maintaining the customary 1:1 with the front of the hill, we should also gain a certain minimum height above the top before daring to drift a thermal back over at all. If this height doesn't exceed our comfortable "fall-out-like-a-stone-and-still-regain-air-speed-and-make-it-back-out-in-front-of-the-hill" height, then we are cutting it waaaay too fine. Many of us hug the terrain and drift lift back at insanely shallow angles, and continue to get away with it through skill and a honed feel for the air.

But doing that is still a numbers game.

b.) The interruption of our focus by top-landing can play a part in our safety. We've been flying for an hour, we're sharp and we know the air, but...we did take that short break.... Where is our head at? How are our instincts NOW? We should take a few minutes to 'get the feel' again, like we do on the first launch of the day, before cranking precision moves near antennas, hills, trees, or other pilots.

In late April a top-drawer pilot tumbled over Allison Peak, roughly halfway between Mission Peak and the Ed Levin top launch. The day had been pre-frontal, and strong enough that pilots were getting really good flights. Reports say suddenly the "air changed." Perhaps a convergence line came through, on the seam between clashing air masses. Perhaps the wind shifted abruptly from SW to NW, consistent with what happens when prevailing winds combat frontal winds and...well...prevail. (Often when opposing airmasses clash there is a period of push and tug, sometimes one ruling the spot where we are, sometimes the other reclaiming it. This period can range from a few minutes to most of a day, until the stronger or more tenacious force wins out or until they both grow weary and lose interest.)

The pilot was thermalling a few hundred feet about the top, in the primary prefrontal flow but apparently somewhat in the lee for anything that might come out of the northwest. He experienced either violent convergence turbulence or mechanical rotor due to a sudden wind direction change, tumbled, got his chute out (with insufficient clearance to fully deploy), and went in. Another pilot top-landed in the uncertain conditions to come to his aid, and he was airlifted out with a broken

pelvis and a realization that it might have been far worse.

Probably there are two things to consider here:

a.) When conditions are pre-frontal, it means something is coming. Some kind of change is on the way. A gust front, or squall? Stronger winds? A fiz-zled front and abrupt change back to prevailing wind directions? It's all possible, and at any moment. Eyes on the horizon perhaps yield insufficient vigilance; this pilot was experienced enough to read the sky like few of us ever will. Maybe we need to also avoid positions that will be trouble if a sudden convergence or direction change occurs. (In particular, ANY change in the smell or temperature of the wind, or in the degree to which clouds are condensing, or in the numbers of birds flying (more or fewer), signals a change; and virtually anything can happen.

b.) Stronger days mean potential trouble. There's no getting around it.

A student pilot hit a tree on final approach at Ed Levin, and shortly thereafter another one landed on a couple of brand-new gliders. Learning to fly is fun at all stages (and we're all students). In the early phases, directional control and airspeed are really the only two big things we have to accomplish. Glitching on one of them is not uncommon—in fact it's quite human. Someone commented to me recently that the human mind cannot understand the word "don't." If we tell ourselves not to hit the tree, the brain can put us in that tree. If we vow not to do what that last guy did, we too can lose the steady course. If we visualize "don't sink out," we stand an excellent chance of missing that much-needed thermal. If we chant "I will not whack" for years and years, well...uh....

To graduate from adolescent pilotry to proficiency it's surely best to let the anal-retentive, over-cautious side of our natures rule before launch, and give the helm to the confident "this is a job for me" side when critical moments like launch and landing are at hand.

A paraglider pilot experienced a tuck at Dunlap, fell into the sail, deployed the reserve, and landed safely on a fortunate patch of soft earth in an area replete with ugly rocks. While the ending was happy in this instance, the obvious lessons include keeping a grim image of what can happen in an instant to a frameless aircraft in punchy air forefront in one's mind before deciding whether or not to launch.

Don't Do That!

(I swore to Geoff I wouldn't say this, but he only smiled and hinted that I'd come to eat my words....)

What those guys and gals in those incidents did? *Don't Do That!* Don't do any of it. I'm not implying that any of those people have anything at all to learn from me, and the facts as I know them could be in error, but it's my job among other things to try to wring some good out of bad moments, so I will try.

Avoidance strategies for all the above incidents have one important commonality: Margin. It's foolhardy to swing exuberant arcs near the hill, and to drift around between and behind them, no matter how smooth the wind is right now. It's a gamble to expect a thermal cresting a hill to keep going up, when the laminar wind can easily lop its head off as it levels out over the top (and even if a thermal does hang together after going horizontal, it no longer represents lift). It's like

rolling dice to fly on strong days, and especially to be closer to the top of a rotor-capable range than the deployment height of a chute. It's a bad recipe to be flying from 600 or 300 or 100 feet before achieving the mindset that guarantees at least basic airspeed and directional mastery of a glider. It's tempting fate to risk grailier air than is really wise.

Margin: If we build more of that stuff into our flying, we'll tell a lot fewer of these stories. Margin includes what prep we've done beforehand, what equipment we use, how we take care of it, how we fly, who we fly with, when we elect to land, and-most importantly-where, and when, we choose to fly. Stuff a big fat handful of it in your harness bag and keep it with you all the time.

I encourage us all to have a Marginal year.

- Mike

Ed Levin Site Procedure Changes

The Ed Levin Site Committee recently proposed changes to the Site Procedures. After some modification during negotiations, the changes have been approved by the Santa Clara County Parks & Recreation Department. The changes affect instruction, observing, and advancement of Student, Beginner and Novice rated pilots. This article explains who is affected by the changes and what the changes are.

The new Site Procedures are dated 6/4/99. Copies are available in the Ed Levin LZ lockbox. Please do not remove the last copy from the lock box. If there is only one copy left, see the information sheet provided for

instructions on how to get the lock box restocked

The changes apply to you only if:

- 1) you are a WOR Observer or WOR Instructor, or
- 2) you are Novice rated or lower, or
- 3) you are a WOR blue sticker pilot who sponsors Novice pilots at the 1750' launch.

The changes are:

- 1) WOR Instructor authorization has been split into WOR Basic Instructor and WOR Advanced Instructor to conform with USHGA instructor ratings. WOR Basic Instructors are permitted to sponsor student and green sticker (Beginner) pilots. WOR Basic Instructors are no longer permitted to sponsor any pilots above the 300' launch unless they are also a WOR Observer.

USHGA instructors must still attend an Ed Levin Instructor Clinic to become authorized as WOR Instructors. The new Site Procedures now require WOR Advanced Instructors to attend an Ed Levin Observer Clinic as well as an Instructor Clinic.

- 2) WOR Observers (and WOR Advanced Instructors) now have the authority (1) to accept experience outside of Ed Levin Park to advance Novice pilots to higher launches and to release them for sponsored-only flight from the 1750' launch, and (2) to release Novice pilots for sponsored-only flight from the 1750' launch after only 8 observed flights.

WOR Observers (and WOR Advanced Instructors) are not required to accept outside experience or to release a Novice pilot for sponsored-only flight after only 8 observed flights, but they now have the option to do so.

- 3) The Site Procedures no longer specify that a WOR Instructor

will automatically be suspended if a student flies over the "Green", but a more general provision has been added allowing the Site Committee to discipline a WOR Observer, WOR Basic Instructor, WOR Advanced Instructor or blue sticker pilot sponsor whenever a student or sponsored pilot violates the Site Procedures.

Note to blue sticker sponsor pilots: You may sponsor Novice pilots in the same type of glider at the 1750' launch but you MAY ONLY sponsor pilots who have been approved for sponsored flight by a WOR Observer or WOR Advanced Instructor. You are required to verify approval by checking the Novice pilot's logbook. You are and have always been responsible for insuring that the Novice pilot obeys all Site Procedures. You must accompany the Novice pilot to launch, pre-flight and provide a hang check, discuss launch and landing conditions, and observe the launch. For further clarification of these rules, please see me, any member of the Ed Levin Site Committee, or ask a WOR Observer or WOR Instructor.

Dave Wills

(Editor's Note: There's a lot more to the revised Ed Levin Site Procedures regarding WOR Instructors, so if you are an Instructor, please check the lockbox, pick up a copy, and look it over. Thanks!.)

May Meeting Minutes

by Paul Clayton

The April minutes were accepted as printed in the newsletter.

NEW MEMBERS, GUESTS

Peter Lawrence - flying HGs for

20 yrs.; likes to fly the Owens Valley
Jim Hays - From Reno; flies a Pilsner.
Howard Morse - P4
Helen Gunn - student
Eric Reid - Flying 2+ yrs.; first meeting.
Steve Phillip - para pilot; member for 8 yrs.
Jill - para pilot; first meeting.

GREAT FLIGHTS

Jamie Sheldon - made goal 3 times at the Nationals.
Mark Mullholland - 88 mile X-C at Nats; personal best.
Beth Gardner - first tandem flight.
Eric Reid - 35 miles from Potato Hill
Bob Trumbly - X-C from Diablo to Los Banos.
Paul Gazis - flew from tow in Netherlands; gained 100 ft.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Mark Mullholland

Walt's Point in the Owens Valley may not be open for flying this year due to lack of a site monitor. The club could incorporate as a non-profit for the purpose of buying sites if enough people are willing to support the effort. There is a rally this weekend at Indian Valley (part of the competition circuit). Other events are planned for each month this summer. Speed gliding events are planned for this August. There is also a year long X-C contest. A volunteer is needed to attend meetings of the FAA airspace working group, which meets on 10 AM on the third Tuesday of each month. Members are needed for the PR committee. There will be a fly-in at Hat Creek on 7-9 August. Details are available on the WOR website. Thanks to Linda Nelson for organizing the club picnic on May 15, which by all accounts was a success. There was a blue cooler left at the picnic site.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Ed Cline

Nothing to report.

TREASURER'S REPORT - None

Don Jones was not present.

FLIGHT DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Mike Vorhis

There have been no recent incidents. Mike has jackets which were left at the scene of an accident at Mission. The regional meet is coming up on 18-20 June.

ED LEVIN SITE COMMITTEE REPORT - Ed Cline

There were no accidents this month. A new site procedure has been approved. Copies of it are in the lockbox. The changes mostly affect instructors. Details will be published in the June Flight Line. On Saturday 20 May a PG snagged the windsock and damaged it and the pole it is mounted on. A new sock has been obtained. Thanks to those who helped install the new weather robot.

MISSION RIDGE SITE COMMITTEE REPORT - Steve Rodriguez

Steve met with Parks Dept. officials. Auto insurance coverage and possible future access via Mill Creek Rd. are still under discussion. The club may be permitted to add permanent windsocks to the launch and LZ. The gate part way up the front road needs to be closed only at certain times, and its status will be posted in the lockbox. The gate at launch needs to be kept closed.

DIABLO SITE COMMITTEE REPORT - Bob Trumbly

The weather robot is still not working. Site procedures are still under discussion.

OLD BUSINESS

The cones in the LZ at Ed Levin have been replaced.

Ed Cline brought plaques to the meeting to recognize the efforts of the following people on behalf of the club and the sport of foot-launched flying: Geoff Loyms - Flight Director; Paul Clayton - Secretary; Steve Rodrigues - Mission Site Chair; Don Jones - Treasurer; Dave Boatwright - President; Tom Seeliger - Diablo Site Chair; Bob Steiger - Pac Bell official who helped install the Diablo robot; Reese Carrant - Ed Levin Ranger; Nelson Rodriguez - Flight Line Editor; Mark Grubbs - Diablo Site Chair. Plaques were presented to those who were at the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Linda Nelson announced that she is giving up hang gliding and moving to Colorado, where she plans to learn to fly sailplanes.

Mike Vorhis read part of an article about foot launched flying from American Way (the American Airlines in flight magazine).

Pat Denevan announced that there is a new launch at Dunlap. There is a camp near launch which has cabins for rent. Camping will be available for the Memorial Day Weekend. Contact Pat for details. A launch and landing clinic is planned for June 13th. Pat also said that the 40 ft hill at Ed Levin is very rough and there has been one broken ankle there.

Jamie Sheldon announced that she is selling T-shirts to raise funds for the Women's World Team.

Peter Lawrence announced that Walt's Point needs a site monitor if it is to open for the flying sea-

WINGS FOR SALE



son. He also mentioned the possibility of forming a chapter to administer the site.

Funds are being raised for the World Team. See their website at www.hanggliding.org for details.

Pat Denevan announced that Dan Buchanan is looking for a helper to facilitate his airshow performances.

Mark Grubbs proposed that the club allocate \$200 to sponsor the maintenance of a raptor at the Lindsey Museum. The motion was approved.

Entertainment was a presentation on raptors by the staff of the Lindsey Museum, including two live hawks.

END OF MEETING MINUTES

Mission Ridge

Report -- June 1999

by Steve Rodrigues

Notice to Keyholders; Please note that the site regulations specifically state that all vehicles must be capable of carrying four hang gliders. To go up the hill without racks is in violation of this rule, and cause for suspension of your key!

New Gate Procedures; There is a new procedure for first livestock gate we encounter going up the road to launch. The rancher will chain it either open or closed. If you find it chained open, leave it open. If you find it chained closed, close it again after you pass through. With this procedure it will probably be open most of the year. If there is ever a question, call me at 831-476-2227 and I will contact the rancher. The gate on launch should always be kept closed.

Wings for Sale

Flexwings

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

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. Good looking colors blue and yellow under surface. \$550 Call Bruno (925) 837-4261. Bruno.j@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. Good looking colors. Blue and yellow undersurface. \$1,150. Call Bruno, (925) 837-4261, Bruno.j@worldnet.att.net

Wills Wing HP AT 145. Good shape. Less than 200 hours. Flies great! Advanced USHGA pilots only. \$950. (650) 324-9155

Wills Wing XC 142 with winglets, HP AT 158 (Custom Sail), Attack Duck 160. All in good to excellent shape. Have purchased a Millennium, so make me an offer, I would like to clean out my garage!! Contact Mark, (408) 929-1753

Paragliders

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

Equipment

Uvex full-face helmet, 17 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

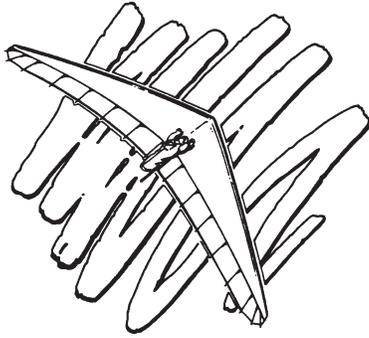
Vehicles

1987 Toyota Van 4x4 "hanglider bus" 4 captain's chairs and 3-pass. rear bench, aggressive tires, racks, 5-speed, 2-speed transfer case, 147k. \$2500. Contact John Glover, 510-272-1244 (W), 510-547-3409 (H), jglover@portokland.com

Miscellaneous

Land For Sale, 40 acres at the base of Tollhouse Flying Site 30 miles NW of Dunlap. The property is at about 2200 feet, cornering on the National Forest. Contact Mark, (408) 929-1753

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*Wings of
Rogallo*

FLIGHT LINE

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The next Wings of Rogallo meeting will be held at the Omega Restaurant in Milpitas (corner of South Park Victoria and Calaveras Boulevard) Tuesday, June 15 at 8:00 pm. Social hour begins at 7:00 pm. Come early and have dinner.

Entertainment at the meeting will be Yves Tallchief with a thermalling video (yes, that s right, thermalling!) of Yosemite Flying!

And remember, the Region 2 Regionals will be coming up in the Reno Area June 18-20. These are always a lot of fun, so come on out... and have fun!