

# FLIGHT LINE

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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA HANG GLIDING ASSOCIATION  
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Remember the upcoming USHGA vote on towing and power!

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## The Editor's Turn

To my relief, I made it back from travel last weekend just in time to finish this issue. I had also planned to fly. But I abandoned those plans when I looked at the weather map, saw that big high pressure regions stretching north to Alaska and all the east to Japan, and read the forecast temperatures. I try not to fly when the temperature is significantly above the melting point of aluminum. This seems like a wise safety precaution.

So did anyone get out? What was it like? And how did you keep your battens from melting?

We have two more entries in the *2003 Flight Line Hang Writing Competition*. The first is Al Small's tale about the beginning of the 2003 season, which I almost lost, but finally recovered and found space to run. I'm sorry I took so long, Al, but thanks for your patience, and I'm glad I was able to find it again, because it's quite good. The second is Paul Clayton's fine report on this year's *Wild West Regionals*. Thrills, chills, adventure, wild gunfights, and exotic romance... but without the wild gunfights and exotic romance, and with some great flights thrown in instead!

There hasn't been much in the way of little news, but the big news coming up is the **USHGA** vote on towing and power. I have mixed feelings about both of these issues, and even if I didn't, I do not feel it is the Editor's place to make a recommendation one way or another on something so important. But it is important, so I urge you all to think about the issue, make your decision, and vote! Mike Vorhis circulated a good discussion of the importance of the upcoming vote, along with a list of two good web sites. He may not have intended this for publication, but I think it is appropriate, so I am including it below.

## The Upcoming

### USHGA Vote

by Mike Vorhis

This topic is (a little bit) political, but still very much in the jurisdiction of a Flight Director I believe. Also a **WOR** President, for that matter. Also our Directors, for that matter.

It is the subject of the upcoming vote: whether to change the USHGA Articles of Incorporation in the two ways proposed by the Executive Director and USHGA President or whether to leave those documents alone.

I'd like to encourage members of our club to vote.

Members can get a good synopsis of both positions via the web. The USHGA "in favor" position is well documented in USHGA publications and I believe is represented on the USHGA website:

[www.USHGA.org](http://www.USHGA.org)

The "Opposed" position is nearly as articulately worded on a website dedicated to that position:

<http://www.poteau.com/vote.htm>

The issue may have far-reaching implications, and so I hope all of us in the **WOR** vote right away.

Thanks guys,  
- Mike

## A Novice Pilot G greets the New Season

by Alfred Small

For months I have been watching the local weather patterns, biding time as, one after another, the Alaskan fronts sweep across the Northern California coast bringing

a mixed bag of rain, wind, and muddy roads that preclude foot-launched flying in the area. I have a fantasy about taking a trip to Mexico to fly the Valle de Bravo or some other warm, relatively dry spot, but a series of personal events, much like storm fronts, sweeps across my life and discourages me from acting on this plan.

Finally, there is a series of balmy days that allow the roads at Ed Levin park to dry out, and the forecast for the next Saturday is propitious. In confirmation, at dawn on Saturday morning, the recorded message from the Mission Soaring instructor is "Yes, we will meet at Ed Levin at 8 am. Please be on time."

My response is to go directly to the garage, knock the dust off of my harness bag, and field kit and throw them into the back of my car. I find my new WOR sticker under miscellaneous papers in my office and stick it on my helmet. I retrieve my strategically-padded ladder, which has been standing at attention by the side of the house for the last four months, and strap it tightly to the top of my car. The remembered movements of lifting and securing the glider to the ladder come back to me as familiar dance steps, and the whole activity feels like a celebration in anticipation of finally flying again.

And then, what is this feeling? No, it can't be negative, can it? This is what I've been waiting out these months for, isn't it? But there it is — a sense not so much like butterflies in my stomach, but more like a large corkscrew in my guts. Four months... will I still remember how to launch? To land? Is it too soon in the season... will the wind be gusty and toss me around unpredictably? Maybe, instead of going to Ed Levin, I should make the 2-1/2 hour trip to Hollister, a huge effort, just to practice basic tech-

niques. I talk my heart rate down by reminding myself that I can go as far as hooking in and standing on launch, and still and drive back down the hill if I have misgivings. At least I'll be able to see if I still remember how to put my glider together.

The 90-minute drive to Ed Levin from the northern part of the East Bay is extremely pleasant. I play music loud and look at the green rain-rich hills to the east, and as I travel southward, watch the ridge rise to become Mission Peak and then the hills of Ed Levin Park. I arrive at Ed Levin at 8:15, buy my pass, and drive the short distance to the landing zone parking area. There is nobody there. An unassembled glider, still in its bag, lies in the LZ next to the fence, but otherwise there is no indication of flying activity.

Nevertheless I start up to the 300-foot launch. Even though I'm signed off for the 600' launch, I feel that there will be fewer variables by flying from the 300, and that this would be the best choice for my first flight. I'm gratified that all the parts are there the way I left them back in November. Now my wing is assembled, my thorough preflight is completed, and my harness is on. Standing at the windsock I judge that I would have about a 60-degree crosswind from the left in order to launch in the usual way — in other words, the wind is way too far around from the southwest to launch comfortably. This is the first time I've experienced this on the 300 — there have always been cycles back around to the northwest. I wait. I watch. The wind direction is unchanging.

As I break down the glider I congratulate myself for having good judgement. The day is becoming very warm, the grass smells sweet and the redwinged blackbirds are trilling out their lovesongs. I remove my sweatshirt and load the wing back onto

the car and drive up to the 600'. Now I'm suddenly all business, put the wing together again, do an acceptable re-preflight, and hooked in on the southwest-facing launch. Below me a school of new pilots is trekking up the road to the 150' hill, the instructor looking trim and strong in her well-fit jeans and loose shirt. I am alone on the launch, feeling the 5 knot breeze coming straight in, balancing the glider, picking the spot I'll keep my eyes on during the launch, reminding myself to relax, bend my knees, and use a light touch. Breathing deeply and then rethinking all of these elements over again.

At last I'm ready. Calm. A gentle babble of all my instructors' voices somewhere in my head is saying "relax, that's a nice cycle". And then I am flying.

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## WOR Pilots Getting Together

by Steve Rodrigues

Many club members have said that it is hard to find other pilots to fly or carpool with. Here is a great resource available for anyone with internet access: Go to the WOR website [www.wingsofrollo.org](http://www.wingsofrollo.org), and click on "message board". You can post anything related to flying, and get access to hundreds of fellow pilots. The more people use it, the better it will become!

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## A Need for Speed – The 2003 Wild West Regionals

by Paul Clayton

[Note to editor: The word wild is repeated in the official name of the contest, according to the inscription on the Official T-Shirt. This is only natural, given

*the hyperbolic, long winded and downright turgid nature of most hang gliding prose.]*

The days were getting longer and longer, and finally the summer solstice hovered on the horizon. That could only mean one thing: it was time to head to the desert and do some X-C flying. In particular, it was time to go compete in the Region II meet in Carson City, Nevada. As in many past years, Ray and Jackie of Adventure Sports assembled a cast of thousands (well OK, dozens) to put on a fun competition. This year's meet used the familiar format: a timed race to a goal, with up to 3 days of flying counting toward each pilot's cumulative score. Several Bay Area pilots entered the meet this year, including Ken Brown, Alan Kenny, and Mike Vorhis. The field was small but relatively talented, with a number of seasoned competition pilots present. There were 16 pilots entered in the flex wing class and 5 entered in the rigid wing class.

Meet headquarters was at the bailout LZ in the Washoe Lake campground. The task for Friday was a familiar one: McClellan to Silver Springs, a distance of about 28.5 miles. Soaring conditions looked more than strong enough, with vigorous convection and light west winds. The competitors soon headed up the hill and began setting up their gliders. The launch window was declared as 11 AM to 1 PM. The west wind made takeoff easy for most, although there was one stuffed launch. Conditions once in the air were thermally, and most of the field was soon on course. The strong conditions (and probably the performance of the current crop of topless and rigid wing gliders) made for fast times, as Phill Bloom blazed to goal in 45 minutes, averaging 38mph on his flex wing, with relatively little tailwind. Ken Brown, Sebastian Lutges, Bill

Soderquist and Rich Sauer rounded out the top 5. The 5th place time was just under an hour. Your humble narrator was 6th for the day in 1:02, on a Litespeed generously provided by Ken Brown. This was to be my best finish of the meet. The fastest rigid wing was flown by Bruce Barmakian, finishing in 43 minutes. 10 of 16 flex wing pilots, and 4 of 5 rigid wing pilots made goal.

Saturday promised to be more of the same, with only a bit less convection, and west winds on launch. The same launch window was declared, ending at 1 PM. As is often the case at McClellan, it was critical to launch at the right time. The moderate west winds felt inviting, and several pilots launched just after noon. They soon realized that the thermal conditions had not turned on yet, as they flailed mightily in front of (and below) launch. At least one was forced to land at the bailout LZ. Even though a flex wing or two had made it across the valley from Slide Mt, there was not much happening at McClellan. At about 12:45 the rest of the field began to launch. Several of the savvier pilots graciously allowed others (including me) to go around them to launch, and then watched us waffle around for 15 or 20 minutes as the clock ticked. It turned out that the smart strategy for those conditions was to launch at the end of the window, as Rich Sauer and Ken Brown, among others, did. Rich was fastest in the flex wing class, with a time of 45 minutes. The slowest of the top 5 was Harold Froehling, who finished in just under an hour. On course there was little tailwind, and even a bit of headwind near goal. This made for some entertaining finishes, as pilots tried to "dolphin fly" to stretch their glides when they realized how much headwind and sink there was in the last few miles to goal. The fastest

rigid wing was flown by Mike Tyron, finishing in 43 minutes. 12 of 15 flex wing pilots and 3 of 5 rigid wing pilots made goal.

Saturday night was banquet night, with everyone meeting at a local Mexican restaurant. After having their fill of food and drink, most of the crowd repaired to the campgrounds and hotels to rest up for the flying ahead. Quite a few pilots had turned up to free-fly that weekend, including one pilot walking around the campground with a bandage on his forehead. There was also a report of another who had vanished in the desert east of Silver Springs. Fortunately, the walking wounded had only a minor injury from a bad landing, and the missing pilot turned up uninjured, having merely suffered some radio trouble.

Sunday looked to be another excellent soaring day, and the same goal and launch window were declared. The field got a late start, with 9 competitors launching after the end of the window. The air on course was thermally, and there was a significant headwind for at least the last 5 to 10 miles to goal. Times were a bit slower, with Rich Sauer repeating his first place finish of the previous day, in 53 minutes. Sebastian Lutges was 5th, with a time of 1:03. The fastest rigid wing was again flown by Bruce Barmakian, who finished in 45 minutes. 10 of 14 flex wing pilots made goal, as did 5 of 5 rigid wing pilots. Alan Kenny not only made goal, but flew halfway back to launch before landing in a dry lake bed. Mike Vorhis also made goal for the first time in the meet. As on the two previous days, the unstable atmosphere made for exciting landing conditions at goal. There were numerous dust devils visible from the goal LZ, and winds were prone to switching every few minutes. Landing at 2 pm in the Nevada desert can be a bit dicey, but there were no casualties other than a few pieces

of aluminum.

When the dust settled, Ray, Jackie and Steve and the cast of dozens dashed back to Carson City to tally the scores. The scoring had been tight in the flex wing class, with first place tallying 5871 points and fifth place amassing 5388, out of a possible 6000. This reflected the tight grouping of the times, which were only 10 to 15 minutes different among the top 5 places each day. Phill Bloom won the flex wing class, followed by Ken Brown, Rich Sauer, Bill Soderquist and Sebastian Lutges. Bruce Barmakian won the rigid wing class, followed by Mike Tryon and Rich Burton. Oddly enough, the rigid wings were not clearly faster than the flex wings except on the last day of the meet, when there was a headwind. The top 5 flex wing pilots and top 3 rigid wing pilots were awarded the traditional silver belt buckles, suitable for a big, wide, western style belt. The rest of us will have to stick to suspenders.

So ended another Wild Wild West Regionals. We were blessed with 3 good flying days, and a good time was had by all. Thanks to Ray, Jackie, Steve, and the Cast of Dozens for another fine meet.

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## August 2003 Meeting Minutes

by Paul Clayton

### NEW MEMBERS/GUESTS

Wayne - P2  
Peter Messina - PG pilot  
Eric Richardson - PG pilot

### GREAT/SCARY FLIGHTS

Mark Mullholland - Golden Eagle flight on Swift; Flew National meet, totaling 64 hrs, 1279 miles; finished 2nd to Brian Porter.

Cathy Wilde - 1:15 flight at Mission.

Jason Boehm - Tumbled while attempting a flat spin at Dunlap; threw his chute and landed without injury.

Eric Froelich - Flew St. John with Wayne Michelson, who did a 54 mile flight, winning his division in the meet.

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT - Phyl Hamby.

The LZ at Ed Levin has been mowed and is now very smooth. We can now use water from the hydrant near the LZ to wet down the breakdown area. The helmet will be raffled at the next meeting.

### VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT - George Morford

Scotty Marion, a PG pilot, is lost in the Swiss Alps. He disappeared while flying cross-country. Funds are sought to pay for a private search for him. Search and rescue officials have called off their search.

### TREASURER'S REPORT - Don Herrick

\$187 was collected at a previous meeting to benefit Joe McInnney, a paraglider pilot who crashed near launch at Mission. The club is still solvent.

### MEMBERSHIP SERVICES - Carmela Moreno

We now have 467 members, with 15 applications outstanding.

### FLIGHT DIRECTOR'S REPORT - Juan Laos

Joe McInnney's accident at Mission occurred due to scratching low over the shelf next to the launch. This area can be turbulent in strong winds.

### ED LEVIN SITE COMMITTEE REPORT - Steve Pittman.

No incidents or suspensions this month.

### MISSION PEAK SITE COMMITTEE REPORT - Steve Rodrigues

Pilots are reminded to check behind themselves for spectators before launching. A fence has been added at the cattleguard on the road up the face.

### MT. DIABLO SITE COMMITTEE REPORT - None

### SITE ACQUISITION - Gene Pfifer, Jim Woodward

A site plan has been approved by the Parks Commission for the Coyote Lake park. The plan includes provisions for foot-launched flight. The plan will be sent to the Board of Supervisors for review. The Open Space District controls the land where an upper launch for the Coyote Lake site would most logically be sited. There is also a possibility of a flying site at Grant Ranch.

### COMPETITION COMMITTEE - Mark Mullholland

"Red Bull" Jack has expressed an interest in running a competition at Ed Levin.

### NEWSLETTER - None

### OLD BUSINESS

None

### NEW BUSINESS

Eric Hinrichs and Urs Kellenberger will be publishing a hang gliding calendar for 2004. They are seeking images of hang gliding to use in the calendar.

John Wilde requested \$250 to pay his travel expenses when he attends the USHGA Board of Directors meeting. A motion was made and approved to allocate

that amount.

Jim Woodward announced the Octoberfest fly-in to be held at Lake McClure on the first weekend in October.

Vince Endtner has agreed to present a talk on thermals as entertainment at a future meeting.

Entertainment - A short video of Jason Boehm's tumble at Dunlap was shown. A video about the Nationals in Florida was also presented.

Prizes were raffled.

END OF MEETING MINUTES\

## Mission Ridge

### Site Report

by Steve Rodrigues

I have received more reports of *Radio Controlled Gliders* flying on Mission Ridge, and interfering with hang glider flight. This is a special concern, as the high speeds of Dynamic Soaring practiced on the Ridge pose a much greater hazard than normal thermaling flight. Currently, RC gliders only have permission to fly from "RC Hill". Please report all further RC violations to me ASAP. You may also inform the RC pilots that they do not have permission to fly on the ridge,

and \*politely\* ask them to stop. I have reported the previous violations to the **EBRPD**, and they are determining how to best deal with the issue. I will let everyone know as soon as we know how to handle this situation.

There will be a vote at the September club meeting for acceptance of site procedures for the East Side, as recommended by the Mission Ridge Site Committee.

## Important Aviation Safety Tip # 6:



Don't *do* this! At least not when anyone is watching....

# WINGS FOR SALE



## Wings for Sale

(Ad policy: ads are marked by date run for 6 months, then are cancelled automatically unless they are renewed. Ads are free to WOR members)

### Rigid Wings

**2000 Ghostbuster.** Exc cond, about 50 hrs. Includes spare down tubes and custom XC bag. \$7000. Contact Steven Wertheimer at (415) 385-0423. (01/03)

### Flexwings

**Dream 220.** Black /spectrum colors, w storage tube, \$900 with stripdown or \$500 without. Contact Rudy Visaya at (510) 579-4661 or rudyvisaya@attbi.com (01/03)

**Wills Wing Falcon 225.** Blue/yellow, 150 hours, 5 yrs old, poor condition but still a good flyer, \$500.00, some spare parts available at half retail, Tom Adams, 925-933-1757 (6/03).

**Wills Wing Raven 229.** Exc cond, great beginner to intermediate or tandem glider. \$500 obo. Contact Paul Sussman (650) 994-8215 (03/03).

**Wills Wing Super Sport 153.** Blue/white, previously owned by Mike Donahue and before him Dan Boatright, hours unknown, very good condition, \$750.00, Tom Adams, 925-933-1757 (6/03).

**Wills Wing UltraSport 147.** Only 3 years old, about 150 hours, great condition, red and gray undersurface. Includes tail fin (never used), 2 spare down tubes, manual, batten chart. Base tube fitted with small Hall wheels, your choice to keep or remove. \$2000. Contact Dan Maguire, 408-779-2492. (08/03)

### Paragliders

**Advance Epsilon 3/30.** Large (DHV 1/2). Blue with gray leading edge. about 40 hours. One flight since last annual inspection which puts the wing as new. Package includes wing, backpack, speedbar + bag. \$1500 obo. Contact Alex Chattaway at 408 2307388, bapa@chatty.org (01/03)

### Equipment

**High Energy Pod Harness.** 5'5" to 5'11", great cond. \$75 obo.  
**Robertson Cocoon Harness.** great cond, \$60 obo. Other harnesses also available. Contact Paul Sussman (650) 994-8215 (03/03)

**Wanted:** New or used **Thin Air** or **Vapor Harness** by ThinRedLine. Contact Rudy Visaya at (510) 579-4661, rudyvisaya@attbi.com (01/03)

### Powered Aircraft

**Bede 5B airplane kit.** Skin and structural pieces only, unbuilt and still in shipping boxes, \$850.00, Tom Adams, 925-933-1757 (6/03).

### Lost and Found

**Lost.** Black jacket. Nylon outer, fleece lining, "West Marine" over left breast. Please call Steve Rodrigues, 415-467-2226. Thanks! (05/03)

**Found.** A blue soft lunchbox/mini-cooler container, with a note pad inside containing notes, names, phone numbers, etc. Owner can claim it by calling Mike at (510) 710-5394 or with an email to mike@vorhis.com. (12/02)

### Steel Carabiner Purchase

by Jugdeep Aggarwal

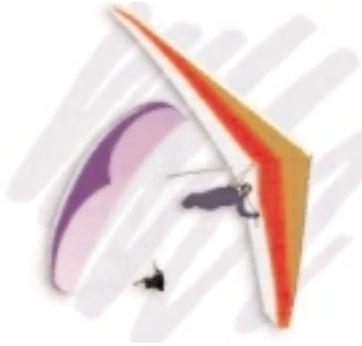
For those of you considering in replacing your aluminum carabiners with steel ones I have a cost effective plan.

I have been negotiating with Steel Carabiner manufacturers and have found that I can bulk purchase them for about \$15 each. These normally retail at \$25 each in the USA. IF you are interested in converting from your aluminum biners to steel ones please let me know. This venture is only worthwhile if I order at least 100 biners. Tandem Pilots should be aware that USHGA recommends that steel biners be used to connect the spreader to the risers. Steel mail-lons can also be purchased as part of this order and these are recommended for connecting your reserve to your suspension straps and to connect these to the harness.

For more details please contact me. (jaggarwal@es.ucsc.edu)

Jug

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*Wings of  
Rogallo*

# FLIGHT LINE

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The next Wings of Rogallo Meeting will be  
Tuesday, September 16.  
at the Summit Point Golf Club in Milpitas near Ed Levin Park  
Check the Wings of Rogallo WWW Page  
<http://www.wingsofrogallo.org/meetings.html>  
for details and directions.

Entertainment at the meeting may consist of a  
visit by Austin Powers who will give a  
Lecture on American Foreign Policy during the Polk Administration  
at the time of the Louisiana Purchase!  
Or we may all just sit around and talk about flying ..