

# Off Tow Newsletter

Puget Sound Soaring Association, Inc.

Editor: Dave Kremers

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## Upcoming Events:

**Opening Week at Bergseth** – It's time to come out of hibernation, for pilots and planes. This means much to do - cleaning, buffing, checking, organizing, reviewing – Oh so much! You know how “many hands make light work” and this is when we need those good hands. Anyway, it will be good to see your face too. Check the ops number for any calls to help out and for start times, as usual.

A **special Table Top Soaring (TTS)** session is scheduled for Thursday, March 15. The topic will be a presentation by J.C. Hauchecorne on the subject of getting to the center of those pesky thermals. Who better to pass along these secrets than a seasoned master. It will be held in the meeting room of the Round Table Pizza parlor at 5111 25<sup>th</sup> NE, just past the University Village shopping center. It's reached off of SR520 taking the Montlake Blvd. offramp and continuing on Montlake Blvd going north past the stadium and bearing left on to 25<sup>th</sup>. At the first light past the shopping center the restaurant can be seen on the left just past the light. Telephone is (206) 527-1550. We hope to see as many of you as possible in presence. After all, this is the essential skill that keeps us in the air with the chance to go places. We can all learn something. Mark the date!

## Recent Events:

### Aviation Conference and Trade Show at Puyallup



**We talked soaring and made friends.**

## **Board News:**

A new PSSA budget has been created for the coming season's operations and the board has set some important goals for our club. As always, the secret to a successful season will lie in our hands. Utilization of our fleet will be paramount. The more we use it, the better our chances of covering the costs of having it on line for your use. We hope as many members as possible will be working to move into the new single sweater and get started on some cross-country objectives. But first, let's get current!

### **Your First PSSA Flight of 2007**

**First Flight** is an initiative of the Soaring Safety Foundation (SSF) that is intended to address soaring safety by getting every American glider pilot to make his or her first flight of the season with an instructor.

PSSA's Board of Directors fully endorses the First Flight program and, accordingly, recommends every member make his/her first flight in 2007 a flight with a PSSA Instructor. Every PSSA Director and Officer has personally committed to make a First Flight. As an incentive to early participation, PSSA will waive the glider rental fee for the First Flight, if made before April 1, 2007. To claim this incentive, the daily flight log for qualifying First Flights must be annotated "FIRST FLIGHT".

So how do you accomplish this? It's very simple. Arrange to fly with a PSSA Instructor, make the flight, and (hopefully) this experience will make you safer in 2007. On completion of your flight, your instructor will endorse your logbook, and if you want, you can send a picture of you and your flight instructor to the SSF and tell them when you completed your First-Flight. The SSF will post your picture on their web site. Email your picture and info to <mailto:webmaster@soaringsafety.org>

There's no set routine for this First Flight. Consider it a learning experience. Talk over what you want to review with your flight instructor prior to the flight. Maybe you want to go over stall and spin recognition and recovery, pattern and approach flying, emergency preparedness, or whatever you want. Will any of this make a difference? It certainly won't hurt. And, we all need to believe that safety applies to every flight and act accordingly... act as if your life depended upon it. Because it does!

## **Safety:**

### **Beginning of the Soaring Season Operational & Safety Thoughts**

by Curt Chenoweth, Operations & Safety Officer

We've all been waiting for the winter weather to break so we can again take to the skies over Bergseth. Saturday, March 3, is the day. I can visualize it now... dawning clear and sunny with favorable winds. We all need to think about a few things to make this first day and the rest of our soaring days safer.

1. As we've all learned, when entering the downwind leg, the altitude should be 700-800 feet above the field elevation. At Bergseth that is 1800 ft MSL, and the turn into the base leg should be accomplished around 400-500 feet AGL, and the turn to final should be entered at 200-300 feet AGL. Conditions, and different airports, may necessitate variations from this standard pattern height due to terrain, obstructions, or other considerations, but the rectangular pattern with a 45 degree entry leg using these heights above ground works best. It provides good cues to wind conditions, provides good views for other aircraft on final or takeoff, and provides for a stable final approach. Don't compromise. We don't want to scare the neighbors or spectators on the ground, and we need to stay safe.

2. Another important item to pay attention to is the tow release in the air. The release should be made with normal tension on the towline so the towpilot will feel the release. The release handle should be pulled all the way to the stops to assure a clean release. A normal release should be obvious with an audible report, but the release should be confirmed visually in any event, before making a level right turn to clear the towline and the towplane.

3. Another item is the towline hookup. A typical hookup involves the following steps. First, the ground support member shows the towline ring end to the glider pilot for inspection, who will look for excessive abrasions, worn splices, or broken strands. When the glider pilot is ready and communicates "ready for hookup", the ground support member hooks up the towline, being careful to make sure the towhook mechanism is properly engaged, and applies tension to the line. On the first flight of the glider for the day, a release check should be done by hooking up the towline, applying tension to the line, and communicating to the glider pilot to activate the release mechanism, and then complete the second hookup and check tension a final time.

4. And, while we're at pre-launch, let's remember the other ground support member procedures before takeoff. After towline hookup, stand by the aircraft cockpit and wait for the glider pilot to communicate "check pattern" and "level wing" commands. In response to "check pattern", the ground support member must complete a 360 degree scan of the sky and area to assure safe conditions for launch (don't assume that if our gliders and towplane are all on the ground that the pattern is clear), and if so, report "pattern clear". Then, as the "level wing" and "take up slack" commands are given, proceed to end of wing, clear the area of all people, raise wing tip and give "take up slack" signal. When the slack is removed, stop signaling with arm extended over head, and when the glider pilot commands "takeoff", make a final check for conflicting traffic and a clear runway, and if clear, give takeoff signal. And, don't forget, if anything occurs to abort the takeoff, lower wing tip to the ground and signal abort.

## **Operations:**

Fellow glider pilots,

Time grows short and our 2007 season is rapidly approaching. Below is the schedule for the first rotation of field managers (alphabetically). Opening day is Saturday, March 3rd, weather permitting. As I understand the current plan, we will be assembling all gliders that morning (the week before is the Aviation Expo at Puyallup where we had the 2-33 and the PW-5 exhibited). Therefore, regardless of the weather for flying we can get the gliders assembled that day barring severe weather or winds. It's a great opportunity for all members to see and help assemble all our gliders (L-13, 2-33, & PW-5). So, all come out.

I would also ask tow pilots and instructors to provide me with their availability for the coming month. We will have a definite need for instruction the first few weekends to help all get current again, and for our ongoing support of students.

The first rotation schedule is as follows and will be posted on the website (Tow pilots and instructors will also be posted on the website as they become known). Remember our field manager policy is that you are responsible for the dates assigned. If you cannot make it, it is your responsibility to find an alternate and inform me who is replacing you.

### **Field Manager assignments:**

Sat. 3/3 Van Chaney  
Sun. 3/4 Curt Chenoweth  
Sat. 3/10 John Ennes  
Sun. 3/11 Wayne Ginther  
Sat. 3/17 Dean Gittleman  
Sun. 3/18 Tim Heneghan  
Sat. 3/24 Dave Kremers  
Sun. 3/25 Charlie Long  
Sat. 3/31 Branislav Mikulik  
Sun. 4/1 Marlene Nelson  
Sat. 4/7 Kenji Ominato  
Sun. 4/8 Stefan Perrin  
Sat. 4/14 Ron Rogers  
Sun. 4/15 Kim Sears  
Sat. 4/21 Dariush Zand.

## Our New Equipment:

Below is a run-down on all important qualities and specs for our new PW-5 (N77FZ). You will want to read this over to familiarize yourself with its characteristics before you have the chance to check out in it with an instructor. Also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politechnika\\_Warszawska\\_PW-5](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politechnika_Warszawska_PW-5)

## PW-5 Smyk



### Design and Construction

- The structure is all glass-epoxy composite.
- The wings are of trapeze contour with bow-shaped ends, shoulder-set on the fuselage, having a monospar structure with sandwich shells.
- Schempp-Hirth-type air brakes extend on the upper wing surface only.
- Fuselage shell of glass-epoxy composite monocoque structure, stiffened with frames.
- Fabric covered rudder.
- Fixed undercarriage consisting of main wheel behind the pilot, with shock absorber and drum brake, a smaller front wheel and a tail skid with a diminutive wheel to prevent scraping on the ground if over rotation takes place.

### Flying, Safety, and Operational Qualities

- Most people agree the PW-5 is very easy and fun to fly. Control harmonization is fair: extremely light ailerons, light elevator, stiff rudder. The elevator is not mass balanced and gives positive feedback in gusts to get used to. The roll rate is average in spite of the lively feel to the ailerons.
- Low speed handling is nice but not fool-proof. Spin entry may not be immediately obvious to low time pilots in high stress situations. This has been a factor in accidents.
- Crashworthy cockpit as demonstrated by accidents in which the glider was destroyed without any harm to the occupant.
- Good cockpit ergonomics, but poor visibility to the rear.
- Undercarriage arrangement, fuselage shape, high-set wings and cruciform tail reduce the risk of damage in out-landings.
- Very easy ground handling, assembly and disassembly.

<b>Competition class</b>	<a href="#">World Class</a>
<b>Wingspan</b>	13.44 m (44.1 ft)
<b>Wing area</b>	10.16 m <sup>2</sup> (109.4 sq ft)
<b>Aspect ratio</b>	17.8
<b>Wing profile</b>	NN 18-17
<b>Empty mass</b>	190 kg (419 lb)
<b>Maximum mass</b>	300 kg (661 lb)
<b>Wing loading</b>	33 kg/m <sup>2</sup> (5.6 lb/sq ft)

<b>Maximum speed</b>	220 km/h (119 knots)
<b>Speed in rough air</b>	147 km/h (79 knots)
<b>Stall speed</b>	60 km/h (32 knots)
<b>Minimum sink rate</b>	0.65 m/s at 74 km/h (130 ft/min at 40 knots)
<b>Best glide ratio</b>	32 at 80 km/h (44 knots)
<b>Roll rate</b>	5 s at 85 km/h (46 knots) -45° to +45° bank

## Newsletter contributions:

As always, your input to this newsletter is very important. Please let us know if you have new information, valuable experiences, constructive comments, even gripes which will help to make this a better club offering the safest and most cost effective soaring opportunity in the area. Send items to Dave Kremers ([dkremers@earthlink.net](mailto:dkremers@earthlink.net))



