

# Off Tow Newsletter

Puget Sound Soaring Association, Inc.

Editor: Dave Kremers

May, 2007

Seattle, WA

## Upcoming Events:

We hope some members are able to attend the cross country seminar being held there by SGC Memorial Day weekend at Ephrata on the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. Kenji is planning to get the PW-5 over there for some true adventure on Saturday (check with Curt C. about availability on Sun. or Mon).

In addition, from July 21 through 29, there will be the chance again to trek down to Montague, CA to enjoy the beauty and challenges of the Shasta Valley area.

## Recent Events:

Both weather and lack of an instructor have put something of a damper on things over the last few weekends, but that hasn't stopped some from getting some very good days in with long flights and long distances, albeit mostly under low cloud cover. Still, a first was racked up by Mr. Intrepid, Kenji Ominato, who dropped the PW-5 into Bandera airstrip on Sunday, May 13. Here are some of Kenji's pictures which might be inspiration to more of us. (There is a more extensive set of his pics on the PSSA website)



On a day when lift was good to 5,000 and above, and clouds to the north and east were very enticing, he found himself over the Hanson reservoir heading north with good prospects for lift over Chester Morse Lake and the last ridge to the I-90 corridor. Once over, there is plenty of altitude to make an uneventful approach to the Bandera airstrip. He reported that, although there are high trees on either side of the strip, the approach both east and west is very clear and easy. He does recommend landing clear of the north edge of the strip as the grass can be rather high there. **He also recommends that you have a cell phone with you.** The reception is very good in proximity to I-90 and this would obviate the need to hike to the highway to flag a motorist for a free cell call to summon the towplane!

There is talk of dedicating an operation to the Bandera strip in the near future, so stay tuned.

## **Board News:**

There are a few items to pass along from your PSSA Board of Directors:

1, Club members who choose to pursue a CFIG rating may petition the club at the end of the year “for reimbursement for club fees incurred as a result of achieving the CFIG status”. Such an application would be considered on a case-by-case basis and it is hoped that this will be an inducement to strengthen our instructor ranks.

2, **Associate members as well as 30-day temporary members, will be required to make payment on that date any charges due to PSSA are incurred.** Unfortunately past experience has forced us to make this stipulation. Regular members will continue to be billed on a monthly basis for their charges.

3. Field Managers will need to make a “**post-flight**” entry in the **log book** of club aircraft referencing any problems noticed during the day’s operation. The Maintenance Officer will also be notified of the problem as soon as possible so that the problem is remedied before the next operation. Don’t forget that field managers should also brief the manager of the next scheduled operation as to the status of equipment.

4. Those members who store their **personal glider trailers** on the portion of the field leased by PSSA are hereby notified that they are responsible for the maintenance of the grass under and around their trailer location. This may require periodic moving of the trailer to keep up with the task.

5. On the subject of **mowing** – We have an obligation to do regular mowing of the field at Bergseth and recently that task has fallen to one club volunteer (you have perhaps observed this “saint” on the big yellow mower at times). This has become a sizeable burden and needs to be shouldered by more of the membership. The board has decided to appeal to the membership for **four volunteers** who would be a dedicated “mowing team” and would be trained in the use of Walt’s big bad mowing machine and would rotate the duty so that we would always be on top to the job. The greatest need is, of course, in early spring and summer. It later tapers off to the point where it’s only a once a month problem. If you can see this as an opportunity to serve your club, please contact Brano Mikulik or Kim Sears and work out a schedule to pitch in. Remember, we are dues paying members but we each have to be volunteers, too, to make it all work.

## **Safety:**

In the interest of bringing some newer pilots up to speed on something that will perhaps soon be a normal part of flying our new PW-5, we should talk about the wearing and use of a parachute. Besides being an integral part of the comfortable seating configuration in the PW-5, the parachute is worn also as a safety device. We don’t want to contemplate the situation in which it would be necessary to use it but we do need to give some thought to its proper use or it wouldn’t make much sense to be wearing it.

As one who has never had to use one, but who has at least attended a couple of presentations given by parachute aficionado, Allen Silver, I can pass along some sage advice which I have gleaned from those sessions. So, I do this, not as any kind of expert, but one who wants to be prepared.

### **Being Ready To Use The Chute**

- Take good care of your chute. Keep it in a carrying case and protect it from moisture, dirt, sunlight and heat. Be sure it is repacked regularly by a reputable, qualified rigger familiar with your type and make of chute.

- Have the right mental attitude about using your chute. Be convinced that you can and will use the chute in an emergency. Know that, if you're prepared, it can save your life.

- Work hard to get out of your glider. Once the decision is made (as soon as possible), act decisively. In the face of obstacles, keep trying and **don't give up.**

- Review the correct order for egress often: **Canopy, Belts, Butt**, in that order. (Here, I've decided on going through the motions my hands need to remember: the motion for releasing my canopy, the motion of releasing my seat belt/shoulder harness, and the motion of placing both hands on the rails of my cockpit to push myself out.) And don't unbuckle or remove your chute before exiting the glider after routine landings, but only when outside (otherwise you could be creating a very bad habit which could become a disastrous automatic impulse).

- Know proper procedure for using the ripcord: Once the glider canopy is gone, push, climb, crawl clear of aircraft, and only then reach for the ripcord. With legs together, look for and fasten your eyes on the D-ring, grab and pull/push out with both hands in line with ripcord cable housing. Make sure both hands are gripping the ring, not one hand over the other (hook the second thumb separately through the ring).

- **Practice, practice, practice.** Before and after each flight, go through the mantra and the motions of egress plus locating and pulling the ripcord (hands off, of course).

- Preflight your chute: Ripcord pins seated properly, ripcord handle seated properly in its pocket, ripcord cable unobstructed, any sign of damage to harness, case, snaps, etc.

- Always fasten the top chest strap first when getting into your chute. (It would be disastrous if this were forgotten and you bailed out of your chute.)

- Use left and right shroud handles to steer your decent clear of any dangerous obstacles, especially power lines, once under the chute canopy. **Don't pull on both shroud handles at once** (this could cause precipitous and deadly descent). Land into wind on balls of feet, with legs tight together. On landing, tuck in chin and elbows, especially through trees and brush.

- Work hard to collapse chute in any wind: grab only one or two shroud lines and climb hand over hand up the line to collapse the chute canopy.

- Get out of the harness as quickly as possible - Release top chest belt first (if leg straps are released first, you could be strangled by a dragging chute).

- Carry a survival kit on your person which includes a means of summoning help (mirror). Allen sells one that fastens to your harness and contains a nifty cutter for severing the overhead shroud straps should you be dragged and unable to shed your rig.

Again, I present this only as my own version of a "chute ready" checklist, one I hope I will only need to use as a review,

## Word From Members and Friends:

Former member, Don Crawford, relays a couple of items to us:

"If you have any intrepid souls who are interested in flying at the Alvord this year, WVSC is applying for a BLM permit for the week of July 15-20. We had a great time last year with 20+ pilots and about 8 sailplanes. Steve Rander built a "2-holer" on wheels, complete with flush toilets, wash basins, and solar lighting. Gary Boggs brought a portable 15 foot diameter swimming pool which he set up downhill from the cold spring. "

"If anyone is interested in going, they need to get their deposit in NOW. Steve Rander has applied for the BLM permit and he paid the fee out-of-pocket. Steve

can be contacted at: stever@schoonercreek.com. The BLM fee deposit is \$50 and it is required that everyone be a member of WVSC which costs \$25 for a temporary. The deposit for the food is optional and can be paid at a later date.”

And this piece which those of us who have flown at Montague in years past will be interested in:

Dear current and former members of Mount Shasta Soaring Club,

Our main source of revenue has traditionally been the fifty dollars every competition pilot is assessed for tie downs and camping during contests. This year we have no competitions and thus no money coming in.

Dues are fifty dollars a year. We would be grateful to any of you that might contribute. Membership includes use of the tiedowns, camping and club office space. The hanger rent is paid by local members.

Please help us maintain this wonderful soaring site.

Thanks everyone,

Dale Bush MSSC pres

Mail checks to MSSC, 107 N Pacific Hwy. Talent, Or 97540

## Operations

Operations at Bergseth have been moving along steadily but with a lower number of tows completed that anticipated. The initial round of “first flights” went well with a number of pilots getting in their bearings in the new season. With the inconsistent availability of either instructor or decent weather, it’s been frustrating to many. However, things are changing for the better on both those fronts.

The availability of another instructor, Gordon Schmidt, is a welcome sign of improving conditions for our student and transition pilots. As with Grant Smith, it will be important to contact Gordon by phone in advance to confirm his availability and make a date. Better flying weather will also give our membership added incentive to get out to Bergseth, especially those who want to be stepping into the new PW-5.

If you are new to the PW-5, be looking on our website in the Members section for aircraft documents and a PowerPoint presentations on how the aircraft is rigged and de-rigged.

Also, with improving weather, look for an announcement of some activities which will be designed to encourage more members to get cross country experience in our local area.

## Field Manager duties

A reminder of upcoming Field Manager assignments follows:

Sat. May. 26 - Marlene Nelson

Sun. May. 27 - Kenji Ominato

Sat. Jun. 2 - Stefan Perrin

Sun. Jun. 3 - Ronnie Rogers

Sat. Jun. 9 - Kim Sears

Sun. Jun. 10 - Dariush Zand

Sat. Jun. 16 - Van Chaney

Sun. Jun. 17 - Curt Chenoweth

Sat. Jun. 23 - John Ennes

Sun. Jun. 24 - Wayne Ginther

Sat. Jun. 30 - Tim Heneghan

Sun. Jul. 1 - Dave Kremers

**Note:** As always, let Curt Chenoweth know right away of any problems in keeping your assignment, even if you have already made arrangements for exchanges with other members.

**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))