

Off Tow Newsletter

Puget Sound Soaring Association, Inc.

Editor: Dave Kremers

Sept.-Oct., 2007

Seattle, WA

Upcoming Events:

The annual “breakdown”. I know we’re all a bit tired at this point but there is always one last task to perform before we say goodbye to another soaring season. **We will be taking our last operation day to wash, disassemble and pack our gliders on their trailers for the winter maintenance period.** We will fly on the 27th of October, as usual, but will reserve **Sunday, the 28th** for wrapping things up - literally. There will be plenty to do for everyone, so everyone plan on being there to make it light work. It should be a time for some fun as well, so plan to join the bunch for a round at the Mint in town afterward. **Please put this on your calendar as we should be able to make this a productive event.**

Recent Events:

PSSA Annual picnic



First, the conviviality...



then, the competition.

Yes, we had a great time. The food was great, thanks to Wayne and Judith along with others who brought their eminently edible contributions. Wayne burned the meat to perfection while the rest of us overdid it at the smorgasbord waiting for the weather to improve for flying. The fact that it never did clear up for high tows didn’t keep us from making the best of the situation. Kenji organized a very spirited competition in accuracy landing which made for very good practice at a valuable skill. High scores were turned in by Travis Edwards, Kenji Ominato and “the old ace”, Mark Allen. The prize T-shirt was awarded to Travis as Best Up And Coming Talent. The rest of us had to be satisfied with the practice gained.

Off-field operation at Ranger Creek

It was hoped that we would be able to join with the Evergreen club at Ranger Creek for an operation giving us access to some new territory adjacent to Mt. Rainier. However, the weather along with some logistical problems led to a cancellation over two weekends. There was a high level of interest in this opportunity so we will definitely be keeping our eye on the next chance to conduct an operation there.

X-C activities

The aforementioned skills session at the summer picnic was an important step toward our long-term goal of getting more members flying out and around in our surrounding area. Confidence in handling an emergency short-field landing is key to meeting the challenge of that first time off- field landing.

We plan to follow this up with land-out practice sessions at our first opportunity. If you are one of those wishing to get this started, talk to Kenji or Dave.

So, as a next step in preparation, a small group made a ground tour by car of the prepared landing fields within a 20 mile radius of Bergseth Field to make notes on special features and advised procedures for local airfields. This information will be available in the future in a document that all members can have for review at the field.



Could you land here?



Or here?

Good. Then, we think you're ready for some cross-country!

Word From Members and Friends:

Unintended Consequences (from Joe Salz)

One Saturday in early September, while I was tow pilot, a single engine aircraft made a couple of passes by our local glider field. Regardless of how the bystanders felt about it, the event greatly upset a visiting FAA Flight Standards District Office (FSDO) inspector. I didn't witness much of the event, but the inspector is asking for names, requesting written statements, and desiring certificate action against the partie(s) involved. Given the severity of the possible consequences, I informed the inspector that I intend to write a brief letter to the glider club members, as well as my fellow airline pilots to remind all that what may have seemed like a safely performed maneuver might have very undesirable consequences.

Consequence #1 -- Possible conflict with aircraft taking off or landing. In this case, I believe the subject aircraft pilot asked if the pattern was clear, and received an affirmative response, but the fly-by appearance was unexpected [by me].

Consequence #2 -- Possible adverse certificate action [Is there any other kind?]. Though this is a rural private airstrip, there happened to be a visiting FAA inspector. Who would have guessed as to his presence? At any rate, the inspector makes several allegations - too fast, too low, and aerobatics (a roll) conducted below 1,500' agl. I don't know. I didn't see much, but this isn't much help because the inspector wants statements from several of those present. This leads me to consequence #3 {next}.

Consequence #3 -- When a pilot decides to publicly bend the rules a bit (or a lot), they expose those present to the possibility of dealing with the officials investigating the matter. I am certain that the inspector did not anticipate that a visit to our friendly little club would add to his office workload burden. By the same token, those of us who were just engaging in chit-chat, flying, towing, and gliding one moment, found ourselves burdened with hostile questions and requests for written statements the next. This is not a fun way to spend an afternoon or subsequent days for anyone.

THEREFORE, please remember that what might seem to be merely innocent fun with sufficient safety margins, might be viewed differently by others -- whether they are fellow pilots, local homeowners, or the unanticipated visiting local FAA inspector.

J. Salz

SSA Calendars (from Kim Sears)

The 2008 SSA Soaring Calendars are available through me. Cost is \$6.00 each plus ship-

ping. Calendars are to be delivered in November. (Normal cost through the SSA site is \$12.95 retail.)

Any interested members should contact me by e-mail. Indicate the quantity desired and I will bill you through your account.

Kim kim@soaringdog.com

Year End Maintenance: (from Brano Mikulik)

For our work party on the last day here are a couple of things we should take care of in order of priority:

- 1 – Remove any equipment from gliders that needs to be checked, repaired or stored during the winter.
- 2 - Clean and disassemble gliders, then put them on trailers.
- 3 – Assemble shelving unit in training center for storage of equipment.
- 4 – Clean up training center - get rid of old unused stuff, sort usable parts into labeled boxes, and write an inventory list.
- 5 - Find proper storage for batteries, parachute and glider documentation.

I will then need to go over documentation and write a list of winter maintenance projects or things that need to be taken care of later.

Brano

Operations & Safety: (from Curt Chenowith)

Attention field managers, wing runners, et al: (Please read as a reminder to all)

1. Field Manager Checklist: Please keep in mind the checklist on the back side of the daily log sheet. Follow the checklist and check off as tasks are completed. It's your responsibility to make sure that these tasks are completed at day's end.

2. Wing Runner Additional Task: In addition to the normal wing runner's tasks of responding to glider pilot's commands of check pattern, level wings, take up slack, and takeoff as discussed in the Operations Rules, we are adding that the wing runner shall continue to observe the takeoff process until the towplane and glider have reached the approximate altitude of 200 ft, which is about when the aircraft have completed the gradual right and left turns and are generally aligned with the runway. This observation allows the wing runner to be aware of, and to communicate, any anomalies that may occur on takeoff, including turbulence, wind shear, low climb performance, rope disconnect, and other traffic or obstacles.

3. Battery Pigtail Connections: New connector pigtails for the batteries are in place. Please leave these pigtail connections on the batteries for the 2-33 and the PW-5 and use the connector to install and charge the batteries. This eliminates removing the blade connections directly at the battery terminals to avoid any chance of misconnecting (reversing polarity) the batteries.

Field Manager duties

Upcoming Field Manager assignments follow:

Sat. Oct. 20 - Stefan Perrin

Sun. Oct. 21 - Kenji Ominato

Sat. Oct. 27 - Van Chaney

Sun. Oct. 28 - Kim Sears (Remember: This is our "wrap-up" day.)

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)

