



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF SKYLINE SOARING CLUB, LLC SEPTEMBER, 2005

President's Prerogative

George Hazelrigg

Not much to report this month. The summer is coming to an end, and we await that great fall weather. Gone with the hot, humid days, and in with the cooler, windier days of fall. If you have never flown the ridge, this might be the time to consider it. Get your favorite instructor to take you on a tour. Another coming attraction is the fall colors. I can remember flying one day in October when, under a brilliant sun, the forests all appeared to be on fire with orange leaves. This is what we live to see.

On the airport front, all I can say is that the new airport committees are hard at work redesigning everything. Hopefully, we will get a longer lease next time-still don't have one for this year. I hear that plans are in the works to provide leases up to five years in duration. That would be nice. We could still use a couple volunteers to work on these committees. Please let me know if you think you could contribute. Your contribution would be important to our future at FRR.

This is also the time of year when we begin to think about our next annual meeting. Start thinking about your involvement in the Club, and think about serving as a director or in any other position where you feel you could contribute. The work each of you puts in for the Club is what makes our Club great, and it is what makes it work. Feel free to discuss your possible contribution with me any time.

Significant Events: It's Time to Go Now...

Kit Carson

August 28, 2005

I haven't paid dues or kicked rudders since March 2003 but this is really my actual resignation from Skyline Soaring Club. Up til now, I thought some magic might occur that would put me back into the flying game. But even with a new control module and various kinds of medical Bardol, Motor Honey, STP, etc., the old heart muscle isn't up to my standards, which are much higher than that of the FAA.

Woke up this morning well before dawn thinking about 48 years of flying. In the Air Force flying in third world countries, dirt strips in WWII-patched-together birds. Later on, did a stint as an ambassador's pilot, then at Andrews AFB in pushed-up Convairs hauling Congressmen and other assorted hogs. Was out at Warrenton Air Park recently and wondered how anyone could ever make an emergency landing there. We had a regular operation there and one day, I did 39 tows out of that pea patch in a 185 Super Cub. It took for damned ever to reach 3000' but not long coming down as cracked cylinders never seemed to be a problem on the Cub. One day the tug bug got stuck right in the middle of the runway. Never fear, Super Kit with his Super Cub towed it free. Things like this just drove Chuck B crazy.

Started with Gordon B and Capitol Soaring in 1972. Hank O was my mentor and I towed the whole first day before seeing the operation from the ground. Might never have done it, had I realized just how hairy the operation was.

In the 70s, I was trying to figure out this soaring business. In the 80s, I thought I knew and was trying to learn to live with-

*Kit towing by Phil Jordan,
Warrenton Soaring Center, 1982*



out the Air Force. In the 90s, I learned what being in a club was like—Charter member, member of the Board, Chief Tow Pilot. Marty and I cobbled together the first (and most comprehensible) Tow Operations Manual. The 2000s were the beginning of the end though I never suspected it. Names from the past, the Jims, Hanks, Daves, Allan, and line boys – Fred, Charlie, Shane, Piet, and my own Bob and Tommy (later pilot, FAA Air Traffic Controller, now deceased). Then Bella, Dick, Spence, Bill J. and finally the current mob of Georges, Steves, Dick O, Bills, and so on.

I want to thank everyone for making my soaring career pos-

sible. This is certainly one endeavor you can't do on your own (despite self-launch airplanes called gliders). I won't be out at FRR as I prefer to participate rather than observe. That's probably the reason I never cared for skin flicks. It's been one hellava ride and the upside is that Marty no longer has to worry about my ending up in a black smoking hole, at least not of my making.

We still travel a lot following the NASCAR action in our cream and green dream machine, the Trek. I continue to drive the ambulance for the rescue squad, wailing through the back roads of Spotsylvania county in the middle of the night. **N90866 out!**

A Missed Opportunity

Ron Hansen

It was one of those beautiful cross country days that unfortunately required a long tow in order to get away from the field. Some 20 gliders were lined up on the taxi way, forcing me to backtrack on the active with my tow plane in order to get to line up for my next tow. As soon as I got there, I saw a burning tractor parked near a large shed located about 400 meters past our airport fence. The fire must have just started since the abundant flames had yet to produce a column of smoke. I immediately called "info" (sort of a combination of Unicom and Duty Officer) and told them about the fire, that someone should call 911 (112 over there), and that we should send our airport "rescue" truck over to the fire. I didn't think we could save the tractor, but perhaps we could keep the fire from spreading to the shed until the fire department arrived.

I was rather surprised when "info" replied in a rather hostile tone, that I wasn't in charge, he was. And he wasn't going to send our rescue vehicle off field. I ignored him and put out a general call for someone to call 911 and to get the rescue truck ready to roll. The only answers I got were "If we send our rescue truck off field, we'll have to stop flying until it's back", and "A burning tractor is more than we can handle". While all this was going on, I got lined up to do my next tow. My final remark, just before starting my takeoff roll was, "If we can't handle a burning tractor, what are we going to do when faced with a burning tow plane?"

After the glider released over one of the foothills of the nearby Alps, I turned back towards the field. Even from 12 kilometers out and 1 kilometer up, I could now easily see the smoke plume rising above my altitude. My normal landing pattern would have taken me right through the plume, so I went a little wide to get a better look at the fire. The tractor was completely obscured by smoke and flame, but it was fortunately far enough away from the shed. The fire department was still nowhere in sight. They finally showed up about 20 minutes after I first saw the fire. We could have been there in ten minutes.

We had missed several excellent opportunities. The first was to help a neighbor in need. Not doing that was unforgivable. For a little airport that needs good relations with its neighbors in order to survive, doubly so. Imagine the article that could have appeared in the local press titled "Local airport fire fighters help local farmer". What probably appeared was "Local airport gawks while farmer's tractor burns".

At the very least, it would have been an excellent drill of our rescue skills. The tractor was burning well inside our traffic pattern. It would have exposed numerous weaknesses that we could work on to make sure that our "rescue" truck could actually live up to



Beautiful photo by Dick Otis corrupted by Phil Jordan

its name. As it turned out, it did exactly that. Long after the real fire department put out the fire, someone went to the trouble of going over to the shed where our "rescue" truck is parked and tried to start it. The battery was dead and probably had been dead for weeks. According to our own rules, we should have grounded ourselves weeks ago.

[As followup, we asked Ron how well the airport's rescue truck was equipped to handle a vehicle fire, and he replied:]

I think the dangers of an exploding fuel tank, especially on a diesel powered tractor, are less than Hollywood leads us to believe. But, three of the tractor's tires, including the two back ones, caught on fire and exploded, sending burning rubber in all directions.

Our rescue truck is equipped with numerous powder extinguishers, a CO2 or two and a hand water pump with a small tank. We also have some protective clothing, but no helmet with a visor.

During a recent fire drill, which consisted merely of showing off the contents of the truck to whatever pilots bothered to show up, I noticed that the water tank was empty. When I tried to fill it, I noticed that it was empty because it had several leaks. I got the leaks fixed and the tank filled, but I need to check it again. Eternal vigilance is not only part of the price of liberty.

Speaking of being prepared, how up to date is your first aid knowledge? While walking to work the other day, I saw a lady, less than 10 meters away, fall off her bicycle and land on the side of her head. Even before she started to bleed heavily, I felt completely unprepared for dealing with this, but there was no one else around.

—Ron Hansen, a friend of the club who flies out of a busy gliderport in southern Germany, sends this report by way of Judah Milgram.



Tost Reel Magic

George Hazelrigg

A few years ago, our club switched from yellow nylon rope that we dropped near the approach end of the runway after each tow to the Tost reel system we currently use. I think that anyone who has worked with the old system can tell you why we made this switch. It requires much less effort on our part—no need to retrieve the rope after each tow—takes less time on the runway, and just plain works a lot better. Still, the system seems to be a bit of a mystery to many. So maybe I can debunk some of the magic.

The heart of the Tost reel system, as shown in Figure 1, is the reel. We use a 200-foot tow rope. All 200 feet are stored on the reel located just behind the pilot's seat in the Pawnee. An electric motor drives the reel through a clutch to retract the rope after use. The clutch limits the retraction force to about 20 pounds (that's the force needed to pull the rope out for a launch), so there's little chance that a glider could be retracted into the belly of the Pawnee even by the most diabolical of tow pilots. The tow rope is not tied firmly to the reel, however. It is held on by a piece of duct tape. (That stuff has many more uses than you may have thought.) This is very important, as the reel does not take the force of the tow. The maximum force that should ever be exerted on the reel is limited to about 20 pounds by the clutch.

So what keeps the rope attached to the Pawnee with the glider in tow? There is a little thing called the "slug." This is a little aluminum "nut" that houses a knot in the rope as shown in Figure 2 (yes, there is a knot in the rope at the Pawnee end). The slug is on the Pawnee end of the rope. As the rope pays out, the slug



Figure 1



Figure 2 a & b





Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6

passes into the tube shown in Figure 3 and, near the aft end of the Pawnee, comes to a stop, Figure 4. This is the point where that 1,000 pounds of force on the rope can be generated. The rope then passes out through the cone on the aft end of the Pawnee, and back to the glider.

At the glider end, we have the Tost ring that connects to the glider tow hitch. The rope we use is 2,000 pound test and, as you know, this is too strong for our gliders (remember the 80-200 percent-of-gross-weight rule). So weak links are required at both the glider and tow plane ends of the rope. The weak link is contained in the slug that is hooked up to the glider. It is rather important that you know what goes on inside that little slug. So here are some pictures. The rope passes through the end of the slug and is knotted as shown in Figure 5. This knot is all that keeps you on tow, so you want to be sure that you can see the end of that little pig tail that extends beyond the knot. That is your indication that the knot is still there and hasn't slipped.

Next, the end of the slug attaches to the weak link shown in Figure 6. The weak link itself is the white "dog bone" with the hole drilled in the middle. This dog bone is calibrated to break at 1,100 pounds, which is appropriate for all our gliders—it puts us in the 80-200 percent-of-gross-weight range. The dog bone is housed in a silver sheath also shown in Figure 6. The sheath prevents the dog bone from twisting, which would weaken it, but provides no additional strength to the dog bone. The sheath and the dog bone bolt to the slug, with the rope pushed to the side as shown in Figure 7, and the Tost ring bolts to the free end of the dog bone. The whole assembly is as shown in Figure 8.

Now let's come back to Figure 4. What about the weak link at the tow plane end? You'll notice that this mechanism is a bit complicated. On the left side, you see the tube that houses the Tost rope leading to the cone. Just in front of the cone is a red lever. That lever controls a guillotine, which the tow plane pilot can use to cut the rope in case of an emergency. And that mechanism



Figure 7

Figure 8



serves as the weak link at the tow plane end. To the right side of this mechanism, you can see an old-style Tost hookup for a drop-pable rope. As shown, the cable that would normally go to the guilotine is hooked to the Tost rope release. So, in a nutshell, that's the mechanism of the system. How can we get in trouble using the system? First, when you release from the tow plane, it is possible to knot the rope. I've seen some pretty incredible knots put in the rope just from the release. If a knot gets into the Tost rope, it will not retract properly. The tow plane will land with the rope out, and we will need to untie the knot and retract the rope on the ground. This is no big problem, and it does not pose a threat. A worse problem arises when the rope jumps off the reel, either during re-winding or extension. Rewinding isn't serious, and can be corrected after landing. During extension, it can be a problem. If the rope jumps off the reel during extension of the rope on the ground, the rope will bind and give the impression that it is fully extended. But, with the nut not seated at the end of the tube, the force of the tow is now borne by the Tost reel, which is not designed for this load. So it is very important to be sure that the rope is fully extended before the tow is begun.

One check we have implemented to be sure that the rope is fully extended before the tow is begun is to look for a little section of white tape, bordered by black tape, Figure 9, that is on the rope in a position that indicates full extension of the rope. The tow plane pilot (at least the more agile of our tow pilots) looks over his shoulder at the rope to see this marker. When the marker is visible, the rope is out, and the nut is properly seated.

Another problem, although rare, is that the knot in the slug can pull out. The glider pilot can check the security of this knot by looking for the pig tail in the slug assembly. It should be visible through the plastic sheath. If it is not visible, don't accept the rope. It only takes a few minutes to retie the knot. Better that than lose the rope during tow.

Now we have had one curious string of events with the system. We have had some six or eight actual premature terminations of tow (PTTs) during the time we have been using this system—actual rope breaks. The curious thing is that we have always broken the rope, not the weak link. Why is this when the tensile strength of the rope is 2,000 pounds, and the strength of the weak link is 1,100 pounds? It all has to do with the knot in the slug, which is right where the rope breaks. But first a few words about the rope

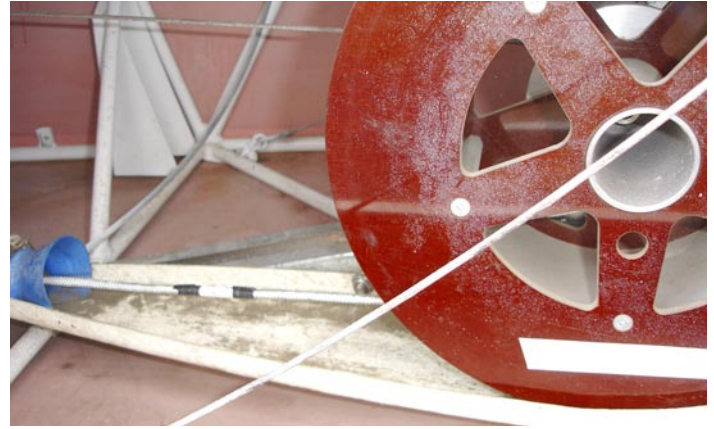


Figure 9

itself. This rope has a sheath around a core of synthetic fibers. The sheath protects the core fibers, but does not carry the load. The inner fibers carry the load and provide the rope with its strength. When the rope is bent or curved tightly into a knot, the fibers in the outer part of the rope (away from the center of the knot) are stretched, and they take the bulk of the load imposed on the rope, while the fibers on the inner part of the curve are compressed and take little or no load. To be overly simplistic, the half of the fibers on the outside of the knot take the load, and the half of the fibers on the inside of the knot are not under tension. Hence the rope, at the knot, has only about half its normal, unknotted, strength. That's why the rope breaks at about 1,000 pounds tension at the knot. And, since 1,000 pounds is less than 1,100 pounds, the knot breaks, not the dog bone.

By the way, this little slug assembly costs about \$100. And someday you're probably going to break the rope. The trick is to try not to lose the slug. So long as you don't have 50 feet of rope hanging down from the glider, the slug itself is no big threat. Leave it attached and land. Or, if you feel compelled to drop it prior to landing, try to drop it on the runway as you make your approach. But never trade money for safety. So if you feel that there is a problem that involves your safety, drop the slug. (*Whatever else we do, don't engrave "Property of Skyline Soaring on the slug".* —Judah Milgram) To date, however, all of the rope breaks we have experienced have been at the knot in the slug, and no rope has been left dangling. Why has the rope never broken in the nut at the Pawnee end? Ah, that is one of the great remaining mysteries. But hopefully, now you know more about our Tost reel system than perhaps you ever wanted to.



ASK 21 Model—Richard Hazlett—The kit is a recent release from **Revell-Germany**. It has made quite a stir in the plastic community because it's non-military and a glider to boot. It's an excellent kit. Parts fit could not be better and cockpit detail is very nice. It's 1/32 scale which comes out to about an 18 inch wing span. The canopies can be opened and closed. I got mine at Internet Hobbies. <<http://www.internethobbies.com>>. Their prices and service are very good. Hopefully more will follow. It should do well in Europe but seems to be in short supply in the states.

Glider models are hard to find. The other models I am aware of are all resin and in 1/72 and 1/48 scale. **Planet Models** offers some very nice models of the lovely pre-war German gull wing gliders. These are sometimes available at <<http://www.squadron.com>>. Their homepage is <<http://www.cmkkits.com>>www.cmkkits.com. I have built some of these kits and can vouch for their quality but resin can be difficult to work with if you are not familiar with it.

Another source is <http://stores.ebay.com/Joess-Models_1-72-1-48-Sailplanes_W0QQcolZ4QQdirZ1QQftidZ2QQtZkm>

Uvalde 2005

THE 15-METER NATIONAL SOARING CHAMPIONSHIP

Dave Weaver

The M-ASA contingent bound for the 15-Meter National Soaring Championship in Uvalde, TX was substantial this year.

Our group of intrepid adventures consisted of Convectio editor, Mike Higgins (KO – LS-6), Chris O’Callaghan (OC - Ventus 2bx), Dave Pixton (9X – Ventus 2b), George Green (5 – Ventus 2b), President Bob Jackson (RJ – ASW-27) and myself (DW – ASW-27b). All of us had the very good fortune to be supported by an outstanding crew. Mike brought his father, Gerry. George, Chris and Dave had their lovely wives Ann, Laura, and Sharon and Bob and I enlisted the help of friends Lou and Byron.

The weather in Texas was a little drier than last year but everything was still pretty green for Uvalde in August. Most of us were able to get in 2-3 days of practice before the contest and some of the practice flying gave us the promise of some great soaring conditions to come.

Charlie Spratt was back in the saddle as the Competition Director so we knew that we were in for some long missions that would test the abilities of some of the best pilots in the country. Just to keep our excitement level up, Charlie started the contest with a Turn Area Task (TAT) with a nominal distance of nearly 300 miles and a minimum task time of 4 hours. The entire M-ASA contingent completed the task in a fairly respectable manner. I flew about 325 miles at 71 mph, which netted me 33rd place overall. Let’s see ... I flew Diamond distance at 71 mph and that puts me in the bottom third. This could be tough.

We kept up the pace on the second day with a 313-mile assigned task but the weather was starting to get a little tricky. By the time most of us were running down the third leg toward Uno Mas, a number of thunderstorms and rain showers began to cover a significant portion of the task area. The top pilots were still turning in speeds in excess of 80 mph but the rest of us were in a battle with the forces of nature just to stay airborne. A couple of our folks founded what would become know as the Dilley branch of M-ASA when they were forced to land some 25 miles short of Uvalde after being cut off by the rain.

I was flying pretty slowly and the rain showers were really starting to become an issue about half way down the third leg. I made a huge deviation to the east just to stay airborne. I was really starting to wonder if there was enough time left in the day to get around the course. About 5 miles out of Uno Mas I hooked up with the best thermal of the day and climbed up to over 8,000’. A quick glance at my computer display told me that I had about 80 miles left to go when I turned the corner at Uno Mas. Overcast skies, rain showers and thunderstorms covered the entire flight path back toward Uvalde. So...“what to do?”, I ask myself. I have all of this altitude but there is nothing that looks like a thermal all the way to Uvalde and I definitely can’t glide 80 miles, especially through rain. I decided to aim my glider between two big rain showers, toward one, lone, raggedy looking cloud. It is now so dark from the clouds and rain that I have to take off my sunglasses. I expected to see some pretty bad sink but it never developed. I managed to tip toe my way between the two big rain showers and only got the glider a little wet. However, when you spend a

few hours soaring in Texas you tend to get this dirty film on the leading edges of your wings and when you mix that with rain it looks like you are flying with mud on your glider. I pulled up underneath that last cloud with about 45 miles left to fly and about 2000’ below final glide altitude. I found about 1 knot of lift and worked it up to about 2 knots, finally clawing my way up to about 200’ below a McCready (MC) 1 final glide. I thought about trying to squeeze a little more out of this last cloud but I did not want to loose what I had already gained so I headed out on the 45-mile final glide at MC 1. It was very smooth and very quiet and with a little help from some zero sink I was on glide slope. I landed straight in for a rolling finish after flying for nearly six hours. On day three the large sucking hole over Dilley grabbed RJ, 9X and myself. OC, KO and 5 all made it around in good shape. Day 4 brought more rain to the task area. Some of the faster finishers actually landed in the rain at Uvalde. I was forced to land at Dilley again, becoming a member of the elite 2X Dilley Flying Club. The good news was that my crew knew exactly how to get there and there is a Dairy Queen within easy walking distance of the airport. After landing, two other gliders soon joined me and we decided to discuss the day over a Blizzard at the DQ while waiting for the crews.

DAY 5 WAS CANCELLED after the launch because thunderstorms began to sprout up in all quadrants. Most of us landed shortly thereafter and put the gliders in the box before the heavens opened up. The local folks were having a cookout at the field and since the flying was finished early due to weather, the M-ASA contingent decided to have cocktails by the pool before dinner. The next day was already scheduled for a rest day so we were pretty relaxed while dining at the cookout. As the cookout started to wind down a few of us went over to Bill Bartell’s big ranch house for a few drinks and some good glider stories.

The rest day looked like one of the best soaring days that we had seen. It always turns out that way. Many of the pilots and crews took the opportunity, provided by the rest day, to float the Frio River. Byron and I just wanted to stay out of the sun for a day and catch up on our laundry.



catered fajita dinner was on tap for the evening at a beautiful spot up on the Frio River. The food was great and most of the pilots and crews attended even if they chose not to float the river.

Day 5 (revisited) dawned and it was immediately apparent that it would not be as good looking as the rest day. It was to be another long turn area task with a 370-mile nominal distance. The second leg of the task took us toward a small town about 30 miles north of Laredo. The lift was pretty good at times but I was making relatively slow progress against the 17-knot headwind. The Uvalde task area covers some fairly inhospitable terrain and it was my personal policy to make every attempt to keep an airport within gliding distance. In certain parts of the task area roads were the alternate landing site. While roads are typically not the ideal choice for an off-airport landing, there are several roads in the task area that are the best alternative if you have time to check them out.

On this particular day I was pushing hard to get into the circle for the southern turn point before it got too late in the day. I passed up some week lift because I was certain that I would reconnect to the good stuff further down the course line. As it turned out, this was not the case. In a matter of minutes I found myself at about 2,500’ above some of the most desolate ter-

rain in the contest area. Ahead of me was a highway that I had not previously surveyed. Behind me was the only airport within gliding distance, an unpaved ranch strip that was in the database as well as on the sectional chart, that I had not seen before. I only had enough altitude to go one-way or the other. Neither of these options was very good but I chose the airport as the higher percentage move. As I approached the coordinates for the airport the knot in my stomach got a bit tighter because I didn't see the airport. I had enough altitude to cross the coordinates about three times before I resigned myself to plan 'B'.

The knot was really tight now because plan 'B' was not looking too pure. The terrain below was pretty homogeneous. It consisted of seven-foot tall thorn bushes, mesquite and the healthiest crop of pear cactus that you've ever seen. Narrow ranch roads with very few open spaces crisscrossed the land. Well, a poor decision is better than no decision at all so at about 600' AGL I picked the best looking one to use as a runway. I adjusted my glide slope to touch down on the most open part of the road but I knew that it was going to be real close on width.



Shortly after touching down on the road my left wing caught a cactus plant which turned me into a barbed wire fence and the wing struck a fence post. Contacting the fence post initiated a full-blown ground loop. From this point on I was a passenger. During the ground loop, the right wing swept through the fence. The glider had pivoted about 180° but continued in the direction of flight for about another twenty yards. This motion caused the barbed wire on the fence to strip the control surfaces off the trailing edge of the right wing. The fuselage boom broke just aft of the cockpit and snapped the horizontal stabilizer in two. Sometime during all of this, a chunk was broken out of the canopy and the fence wire made it look like a large tiger had raked its claws along the top surface. My beautiful sailplane was now just so much carbon dust.

What about the pilot, you might ask? Not a scratch. Not even a bruise. I was very fortunate.

The good news was that I made the decision to land near the "ranch" so I gathered up my Camel Back and hiked up the road to the "ranch". As I approached the buildings it became clear that this was not much of a ranch. There were a couple of sheds, a small house and a coral.



As I approached the buildings a pack of six large dogs came charging toward me. There wasn't any place to run so I just stood there wondering if I would have injury added to insult by getting torn to shreds by wild dogs after walking away from my wrecked glider. All of the dogs halted about a foot from where I was standing as I was saying "Nice doggies". All but one of the dogs then just walked away and went about their business. The last of the beasts just hung out with me for the rest of the time that I spent on the ranch.

After I got my heart started again, I made the dismal cell phone calls to the retrieve office and Byron. I gave Byron some general directions and GPS coordinates but had to tell him that I could not find anyone on the ground to provide precise road instructions. I also told him that it looked pretty straightforward from the sectional chart.

I knew that I had a long wait ahead of me because I was a hundred air miles from Uvalde. After my cell call I hiked back to the glider and retrieved my survival kit, charts and PDA. I found an old plastic chair and sat down on the back porch of the house to get out of the sun and reflect. Before I left the glider, I pulled up

the invisible airport to see how far from it I had landed. The GPS indicated that I was only 0.2 miles from the strip but all that saw was cactus and thorn bush. I carefully plotted my GPS position on the sectional chart and the position plotted inside the circular symbol on the chart. According to the sectional chart there was a single unpaved road leading from the highway to where I was sitting. I measured it at about 15 miles from the pavement. I relayed this information to Byron and then sat down to inventory my survival kit.

Let's see here...1 cereal bar, 1 space blanket, 1 pen light, 1 Swiss Army knife... A fellow could have a pretty good time in Nuevo Laredo with all of this stuff (Dr. Strangelove fans may recognize this). This was all very entertaining for about 10 minutes. However, I estimated that Byron had about two hours to go before arriving at the point where he would depart the paved surface. I called Byron back when I estimated that he had reached the point where he needed to leave the highway. He reported that he was indeed at that point but it was not clear how to proceed from there because he was facing a veritable maze of dirt roads.

I was now starting to become concerned that this was not going to be easy and that it would be well after dark before Byron found me. A few minutes later Byron called back to report that he had flagged down two US Border Patrol Agents to enlist their assistance and was now riding with them. This sounded like a smart move. In addition, my trusty crew chief could "hable Espa ol" like a native. I was all set now. I just had to wait it out.



Later that same evening, as darkness had settled across the land, I was still waiting. At dusk I found an outdoor light switch that illuminated a work area and turned it on. I was forced to retreat to a screened in porch area to keep from being eaten by mosquitoes. Cell phone calls were breaking up now but they kept saying that they were getting closer. Finally, at around 2230 local time, with blue strobes flashing, the Border Patrol pulled up to the hunting camp. Nothing could be done about the glider that night so the Agents took us back to our vehicle by way of Laredo. We got back to Uvalde around 0400 and decided to get some sleep.

EPICLOG: It was another two days before the glider was removed from the ranch. With the assistance of the Border Patrol and a hand held GPS, we took the most direct route and we measured the distance off paved roads to be 23 miles. This would have been a long way to walk. The US Border Patrol was extremely helpful throughout this experience. Agents Marin and Gonzalez could not have been nicer folks. They later informed us that they were anxious to get us out of there that night because I had landed on one of the primary smuggling routes north of the border.

I would not want this story to deter any aspiring cross-country pilots from pursuing their goals. However, there are some lessons to be learned here. Although it should not have been a factor in the decision making process, the fact that I was racing made me somewhat more liberal with landing sites than I should have been. Most of the contest area contains plenty of airports. The part that I landed in has a lower airport density and fewer good off airport landing sites. I failed to change gears when I got down there. Planning a final glide into an unpaved airport that you have not seen before is not a great idea. I knew that and I have told students that but I still set myself up to do it anyway. I think that the worst part of the flight was resigning myself to land in a place that I knew was not very good because it was all that I had. **The**



key lesson is not allowing yourself to get into that situation.

This tale also emphasizes the value of a survival kit. I was a long way from help and I could have easily spent the night there if I didn't have cell phone coverage. Finally, I had an ELT in my glider and it did go off. This is a valuable thing to have if you

are incapacitated.

WHAT ABOUT THE CONTEST? There were two more contest days, with the last being a pretty tough one. Dave Mockler flew consistently and is the new 15 Meter Champion. This win also puts him on the team for the WGC in Sweden next year. ✈️



Homebuilders rejoice—your mistakes probably aren't that bad. British officials are wondering how the pilot and passengers (including two aircraft mechanics) on board a Cessna 210 could fly the plane for two hours without realizing—or expressing particular care—that a five-foot section of one wing was missing. The unnamed pilot, from a community called Dozy (we couldn't make that up), apparently hit a tree on takeoff from an airport in Ireland on his way to deliver the mechanics to a broken Boeing 767 in Portugal. The collision took off more than a third of the wing, including a fuel tank. It wasn't until the plane ran low on fuel over the English Channel that the pilot realized something was wrong and made an emergency landing at Jersey International Airport. He recalled the takeoff collision but said he thought the plane had been “struck by a little bird.” —**AVflash 11.34a**

Warrenton-Fauquier to hold Fly-In—W66 is having a Fly-In to celebrate the Grand Opening of its New Runway 14/32 which is now 5,000' x 100'. The ceremonies on September 10 are jointly sponsored by Fauquier County and Essar Aviation, LLC, the Fixed Base Operator.

Prior to the Grand Opening ceremony at Noon, there will be aerobatic routines by Nancy Lynn in her Extra 300L and ex-WSC member Charlie Schwenker flying his Pitts S1T to highlight the airshow activities.

The Flying Circus will perform and there will be static displays of vintage and experimental aircraft as well as a few warbirds. The Wright Experience will have their Wright Model B on display and will offer flight simulation rides to all pioneer aviation enthusiasts.

For further information contact Michele Glitzner at (540) 788-4959.

Hangar Rents Triple?— Aircraft owners at a Pittsburgh-area airport say they're being forced out of their hangars by a tripling of rents. The rent for hangar space for small planes at Allegheny County Airport is going from about \$550 a month to almost \$1,600 a month in a move that pilots claim is an attempt to force them off the field. “I think, in summary, they're trying to push us out,” Mooney owner Harry Neel told the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review. “It's a massive increase.” But county officials say FAA policy is behind the rent hikes, which take effect Oct. 8. Allegheny Airport Authority spokeswoman JoAnn Jenny said the FAA requires airports to charge fair market value for services they deliver and the airport hasn't been keeping up with the times. She said it may be as long as 50 years that the current



Bowlus-DuPont “Falcon” at UdarHazy. photo by Johnny Jordan

rental rates have been in place. “It is not our goal to evict people,” she said. A total of 53 aircraft are affected. Another 90 are kept outside. —**AVflash 11.33b**

New Alcohol Warning Label:

WARNING: The consumption of alcohol is the leading cause of inexplicable rug burns on the forehead.



Two old guys are pushing their carts around Wal-Mart when they collide. The first guy says to the second guy, “Sorry about that. I'm looking for my wife, and I guess I wasn't paying attention to where I was going.” The second guy says, “That's OK... It's a coincidence. I'm looking for my wife, too. I can't find her and I'm getting desperate.”

The first guy says, “Well, maybe we can help each other. What does your wife look like?”

The second guy says, “Well, she is 27 yrs old, tall, with red hair, blue eyes, long legs, and is wearing short shorts. What does your wife look like?”

The first old guy says, “Doesn't matter—let's look for yours.”



SKYLINES

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