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MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF SKYLINE SOARING CLUB, INC JANUARY 2012

Masthead photo by Dick Otis



President's Message

Well it's been a very busy month! Thanks to some great weather, and some enthusiastic flyers (including at the wave camp), as of the third week of March we were at an all-time record for this time of year, with 217 glider flights. I do have a few items to pass along...

Within the coming month, we hope to release a revised club operations manual. This will be a major

reorganization, hopefully with improved continuity and less redundancy, and will capture some of the recent changes. There will be no major shift in how we conduct operations, but the rules should be easier to understand. It will be important for everybody to read the document cover-to-cover.

Also within the next month, you will probably see a new med-evac helicopter service operating out of the airport, from the near end of the other main hangar building. Reggie is still working on some operating agreements, and we will meet with the new operators as soon as possible, but there should not be any major adverse impact on our operations. If you have not flown around helicopters before, the most important thing is to respect the power of their rotor wash.

A couple of weeks ago I sent out an email to all members announcing an informal cross-country challenge circuit. So far the weather has not been good enough for anybody to be the first to complete the course, but I'm hoping to see this take off soon. I will keep all the information available for easy download, you can pull it down from <http://noss.ws/ssc/xc.zip> and get the explanation of rules and the course, and turnpoint files, and kml files for Google Earth. Once a quarter, we will award a free (3K) tow to the member with the fastest handicapped time around the course in a club ship. This is designed to be an easy close-in course with minimum altitudes to ensure you are always within gliding distance of the field, but challenging enough to serve as a good training platform for serious cross-country concepts, and to generate some interest and friendly competition.



My thanks to all the folks that have volunteered time recently to keep our club equipment up and running and looking good. "Treat it like you own it" is always good advice. I do need to ask everybody to be careful to pay your bills as you go -- we wouldn't think of leaving a restaurant or gas station without paying the bill, and we need to use the same common sense at the airfield. It is your responsibility to talk to the Duty Officer before you leave the field at the end of the day, determine what your charges are, and pay by check. Cash is not an option, "on account" is only an option if you are certain you have enough of a positive balance to cover the entire amount, and credit cards are only an option for your convenience if the duty officer or other knowledgeable club officers are there with the tools to do it and the wireless connections cooperate that day. Just do it, please. Some clubs require members to leave a signed blank check before flying, and the Duty Officer fills out the amount later -- I would hate to have to resort to that!

Fly Safe, Fly Often, Have Fun!

John Noss

Annual inspections

Sunday march 25 was the yearly inspection of the club trainers. In Mike Christensens words: "Best non-flying day of the year!" Eric Litts "shined"! He prescribed car wax to lube the torque tube and aileron stop. It works well! (Elevator screech at aileron full travel is caused by the torque tube hitting the wood aileron stops, as designed).



Bruce Zivic benefited from seeing internal workings of the K controls led teardown and reassembly. New main wheel and brake disk huge credit to Mike Christensen with help from Ertan Tete and Eric Litt. Now that we have a new brake disk it is easier to land accurately just after the numbers and coast to a stop with minimal braking after full use of the dive brakes. New tip wheels were installed on the K thanks Frank Banas and Dave Collier.

Despite the best efforts of the K team the Grob team finished and signed off first.

Skyline Soaring Meets Soaring NV



On several occasions, Bela Gogos urged me to try soaring at Minden. So, when I had to do a workshop in Reno on Monday and Tuesday, March 26 and 27, I thought why fly out on Sunday? I decided to go out on Saturday and visit Minden. I e-mailed ex-SSC member Fred LaSor, who now flies out of Minden, and Fred encouraged my visit. I arrived at Soaring NV at about 10 AM Sunday morning, and called Fred. He confirmed the fact that I was leaning at about 20 degrees into the wind, noting that the winds at ridgetops were in the range of 50-60 kts. It was exceeding 30 kts on the ground. But gliders were already up. I walked inside and was immediately greeted by Laurie Harden, who runs the Soaring NV operation. She and everyone else there made me feel very welcome. Next, and completely unexpectedly, Curtis Wheeler walked in. Now I felt really at home. Curtis was trying for his diamond altitude and, for a while it looked encouraging. A glider was calling in from 17,000 MSL in lift, but at sub-zero temps and quite high winds.

Soon, Fred showed up and he strongly encouraged me to take advantage of the wave. Well, I wasn't dressed for the flight levels, but I agreed to take a short ride if Laurie could arrange it on such short notice. In the meantime, I helped Curtiss into 1R, a very well equipped LS-4 in great condition, and I watched him launch.

Of course, Laurie came through, scheduling me for a ride in the K-21, and I launched at about 1 PM. By then, the wind had diminished to a mere 30 kts straight down the runway. The main runway at Minden is 16-34, 4,700 MSL, and we launched to the south into the wind. We climbed heading south toward the mountains, releasing at 7,500 MSL. Strong sink for a couple minutes, then rotor. We circled a couple turns into wave and climbed to over 9,000 feet. Check out the vario. This is what Minden is about. We returned after about a half hour, and I was careful to turn base well before the end of the 7,400-foot runway. Our approach speed was between 65 and 70



kts, but the landing was not difficult as the wind was steady and the turbulence light.

Minden can be quite challenging. Their wave window extends to FL280, and that altitude is certainly reachable in good conditions. But the weather can change quite rapidly, and it can close out under you. So it helps to have a carefully thought out Plan B. Also, witness my flight, they fly in winds from which we would be hiding in the hangar. On the other hand, they don't have to contend with turbulators, such trees, and the high winds are easier to handle. The main advantage they have, however, is the Sierra Nevada mountains, which produce an incredible wave, enabling some of the highest soaring in the U.S.

I have soared at a few commercial operations in the U.S. and New Zealand. Some are better than others. Soaring NV is among the top. The equipment is top notch and well maintained, they are very helpful, and Laurie does a great job making everyone feel welcome. As a commercial operation, the costs are a bit higher than our club fees, though not prohibitive, and everyone is very well treated. I left with a feeling that my experience was well worth the cost. If you are headed west, I can give a strong recommendation that you don't pass up soaring at Minden.



Friday Flying



Ken Eckman's 1-26

photo by Dick Otis



"Fly Safe!"

photo by Dick Otis



Heading west toward the wave



All great Glider flights start backwards

Photo by Martin Gomez



"Kilo Siera turning 45..."

Spring Wave Camp Once More

Photos by paul Pruitt



Flights start early with frost removal



A wave camp alumni with freshman flyer



Scout aircraft a "Lambada"

Recycled

Information

Worth

Repeating

SAY AGAIN



Skyline Soaring Club, Inc.

Is a private, 501(C7) non-profit organization,
dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion
of the sport of soaring. SSC is based at
the Front Royal-Warren County, VA. Airport
and is an affiliate club of the
Soaring Society of America

For information about the club go to:

www.skyinesoaring.org

President - John Noss

Secretary - Jim Kellett

Treasurer - Thomas Park

Membership - Steve Rockwood

Chief Duty Officer - Craig Bendorf

Chief Tow Pilot - Martin Gomez

Chief Flight Instructor - Piet Barber

Safety Officer - Charles Norman

Skylines Editor - Douglas Hiranaka

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Directors - Daniel Ernst

Mike Christenson, Jim Kellett

John Noss, Thomas Park

Steve Rockwood, Ertan Tete

Party! Saturday May 5

Bill Burner has graciously invited Skyliners and their families to his airport in Woodstock, VA. To make the events more family freindly Bill has added indoor plumbing to his hangar. Soybeans have been planted so the Burner canyon will not be there this year. The weather should be milder for the hangar flying and Bill reminds us that both his birds will be available for curious and adventurous pilots.

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