

AY, BEE SEA DEM BADGES??

The Resident Curmudgeon

Skyline's training program rigorously prepares members to fly safely - - and that meets the Federal Aviation Administration's purposes, marked by achieving a private or commercial pilot certificate.

But Skyline also strives to develop members to be *soaring* pilots, not just *safe* pilots. And in so doing, uses the Soaring Society of America's program of objectively defined *performance* achievements in its A, B, C, and Bronze badge program.









That's why **all** SSC instructors are also designated Soaring Society of America Instructors, empowered to award these badges on the spot when the requirements have been met. You can review all the requirements at https://www.ssa.org/badges/#abc, but the key elements in the first three are solo flight, solo flight of at least 30 minutes, and solo flight of at least one hour plus demonstrated precision landings with a CFI. So, if you have accomplished the requirements of any of these badges but not yet received it, please touch base with a club instructor! Oh, and might as well send a picture of the two of you to Soaring Magazine's "Milestones" column!



ADVERSITY BUILDS CHARACTER

Piet Barber Challenges the Soaring Competition

Prologue:

Back in January, I sent a note to the membership, seeking copilots and crew for the 2022 20 Meter Multi-Seat Nationals to be held in Sunflower, KS. I got two responses in a few minutes after sending the email: Mark Schababerle and Chris Norris. One crewmember stands by for the inevitable landout, while the other one acts as copilot. Both seats in the glider are occupied for every flying day during the contest.

Sunday May 29th (five days before driving out to the contest), Chris is crewing for Shane up at Mifflin, Pennsylvania for a different glider contest, but drives back early because there was an outbreak of COVID, and six contestants withdrew from the contest. Chris was originally planning on being my co-driver for the epic 20 hour drive from Front Royal VA to Yoder, Kansas, but even though Chris had no symptoms he and I decide that he'll fly out to Wichita on some indeterminate date, and I'll drive to Kansas alone. Without Chris, I'll fly with Mark every day, and hope I don't land out.

Somehow Erik van Weezendonk (Weezy) gets wind that I need a helper to drive and volunteers. We rendezvous at Dulles Airport on Friday morning, get to Front Royal, hook up the trailer, and are on the road by 10:00 AM. We take the southern route, down I-81, to I-64 West, planning to overnight in Kentucky.

With a huge trailer, I have to be more picky about gas stations; hitting the back of the trailer on a gas pump, or smashing the wheel into a curb is no fun. Only once were we faced with a situation where we had to disconnect the trailer because "it just wouldn't fit."

We spent the night in Louisville, KY; where we met up with some old buddies of Weezy's.

On Saturday, I dropped off Weezy at Kansas International airport to fly home. (Driving through the passenger drop-off with a huge trailer was as weird a sight as you might think.) I continued the next 233 miles solo, arriving at Sunflower Aerodrome at around 10 PM that evening. Mark met me at the airport and helped me set up the tent in the dark after parking the trailer between two Ensign Hangars on the northern side of the massive glider tie-down areas.

Sunday: Practice Day 1
I assembled QQ with Mark, and were second in line to launch. I finally launched to the smoothest conditions I could ever imagine. We worked some marginal lift to stretch the flight out to 22 minutes.

Monday: Practice Day 2
I couldn't even get to the start line, the conditions were so weak. Mark and I put away QQ with some help from a neighboring glider pilot.

Tuesday: Contest Day 1 We get our grid position, right behind a Duo Discus from Harris Hill. The conditions were marginal. I head out on task anyway. We got to the first turnpoint without much difficulty but the journey to the second turnpoint was over a wildlife refuge known for its marshy wetlands, and zillions of different species of birds. Birdwatchers come from all over the world to this place. There were no thermals and no soaring birds, either. I spotted a wildfire to the southwest, so I immediately headed for it. There were three other gliders circling in that smoke. By the time I got to it, it wasn't really working anymore. On to the second turnpoint. I spotted some big black field. " Black has to be good, right? Black means dark, absorbs sunlight, makes thermals, right? This was bad black. It was a cattle feeding lot. We definitely smelled it as we passed overhead. It wasn't even seven minutes after flying over the cattle feeding lot that I found myself on the ground. There were all sorts of great fields all around. We chose the field that looked like recently-harvested wheat. Perfect.



Mark and I waited for about 1 and a half hours before the trailer appeared. We investigated the oil derrick that was adjacent to the wheat field we landed in. We talked to a few people who stopped to see if we were all right. The farmer never showed up to say hi. The Kansas Soaring Association's treasurer, Mike Davis, drove up with my truck and trailer. What a sight for sore eyes! The retrieve wasn't uneventful; we had a hard time getting the glider up to the ramp, since the fuselage had sunk into the soft dusty sandy soil. As we put the glider away, the sky turned from pure blue to an increasing amount of high cirrus overcast.

Wednesday: Contest Day 2 I'm in 8th place out of 9 contestants, actually only 245 points behind. This day "blue." When you're in a competition and it's blue, it's better to do some team flying with another glider. Nobody really gets ahead, but nobody really falls behind either, unless they're stupid or they're desperate to get back ahead. I might have demonstrated both. I make it to the first turnpoint, head out on course for the second turnpoint, hook up with a gaggleworking a garbage thermal. I find a great 3 knotter, climb above them all, and pass them. Awesome. I make the second turnpoint and find a great strong thermal. Maybe this contest isn't hopeless after all. Tango-Xray and I climbed to the top of this thermal after the second turnpoint.

Tango-Xray headed southeast (off of the courseline), and I headed out into the blue, directly following the courseline, confident that we would be able to find something else worth circling in.

I desperately scratch in a weak thermal. The 15 knot winds from the north blow us away from the field where the thermal came from. We sneak back upwind, losing all of the altitude we gained and I asked

the flight computer for landable airfields nearby. Nothing. We pick out our favorite 3 fields. I focus on the thermaling, Mark looks at the quality of the fields below.

We make an uneventful landing in the biggest field I've ever seen. Immediately after coming to a stop, a

gator full of farmers shows up to greet us.

We weren't that far away from the



airport. In the meantime, a second family of individuals, also named "Yoder" showed up. This one had his grandson, Theo. He was very interested in the glider, and of course, I promptly put him in the cockpit.

The retrieve was not without issues. My truck got stuck in the soft soil with the trailer attached. Despite my truck being in four-wheel-drive mode, the soil was too soft and sandy. Getting the glider up onto the cradle also proved to be a challenge. By the time we got home, all the food from the dinner being served was gone. :(

How did I do on the scoresheet!? I was hoping you wouldn't ask. I placed 7th out of 9 that day. Only 3 gliders in our class made it around the course that

day. The other gliders that landed out in my class were mostly motorgliders who used their motors to get home (must be nice). I've got 302 points and the leader has 666 points.

Midnight Tent Destruction

At 0200 I was awoken by something hitting my face. It was my tent. This tent had weathered 15 years of use, and was about to face its ultimate challenge: Kansas thunderstorms. The poles that held the tent up started to creak and break. Chris and I placed the cots side-by-side, piled as much of the stuff in the tent onto the cots as we could, and covered everything with a tarp.

Over the next two hours, we stood in the tent,

trying to keep it from collapsing any further. We spent the night in the clubhouse after the rain stopped. All of the items in the tent were at least damp. Somehow, I managed to get 6 and a half hours of sleep, and I wasn't drowsy at all during the day.



and limp toward the first turnpoint. Once we get to the first turnpoint, there's nothing but blue sky wasteland ahead.

Does this mean there are no thermals? What I do know, however, is I'm not freaking landing out today.

I hang out with Mike Brooks in his Genesis 2 and make the most of a tall thermal. Then I look across a vast swath of land, unmarked by thermals. It's 15 kilometers until we get to the third turnpoint, and all I feel along the way is: NOTHING. Not a blip on the variometer. It's the smoothest air I've seen all day. You know, landing out three days in a row isn't that bad, right?

Given our current speed so far, if we went approximately half-way into the third turnoint turn area, we would arrive at home exactly at 3 hours. What the flight computer doesn't know, however, is how terrible the soaring looks ahead. There is what appears to be one small cumulus cloud 20 kilometers ahead. Will it work? Will we have enough altitude to get there? Will we maybe find some kind of thermal between here and there?

Friday: Contest Day Three

Somewhere between Contest Day 2 and 3, we had a thunderstorm roll in and cancel a flying day. Chris Norris has arrived in town and this third contest day looked like it could actually work out. Chris took the back seat, while Mark acted as the retrieve crew. I definitely don't want to land out three days in a row. Getting on the podium wasn't ever really likely for me anyway, so let's just get this straight: Don't. Land. Out. Again.

The conditions are pretty dicey at the start. I watch the gliders that launched before us get to the starting line and go out on course without me. I struggle to gain enough altitude to get to the start, But "I'm not freaking landing out three freaking days in a row." I clip the edge of that turn area, and head for home. I will surely be penalized for returning as much as a half-hour early. I don't care. I just want to get home "Think skinny thoughts. Fly exactly Max L/D" I eventually found some very weak thermals of about a knot and the flight computer went from needing 4000 feet of climb, to needing 2000 feet of climb, to being 300 feet over final glide altitude. I'll take it.

We made it home. We were the first in our class to get home. I got penalized for showing up under the minimum time. There were three gliders in our 20m class who landed out on Contest Day 3, so I'm pretty

sure I made the right choice, limping home when I did.

Four Canceled Days in a Row

Of the five days cancelled due to weather, four of those happened consecutively. Between contest days 2 and 3 we had a thunderstorm roll in right during the best time of day for soaring. After contest day 3 we had strong southerly winds in excess of 30 knots that lasted for a few days. For two of the four consecutive days that were cancelled, we put all of the gliders on the runway, and then decided that it wasn't going to be flyable at all. In other words, we put all the effort to assemble the glider, drag it to the launch point, drag it back to the trailer, and put it away again.

I took a day off and went to the local Hutchinson Kansas museum called "<u>The Cosmosphere</u>." What a gem! There were all sorts of museum specimens from the US-USSR space race in the 1960s.

Wednesday: Contest Day Four:
Out of 9 contestants, here I sit: in eighth place. I think of that scene in Caddyshack, when Chevy Chase is consoling Rodney Dangerfield about how bad Rodney has been playing golf. "You're. You're. Not Good." There are only two potential contest days remaining. The conditions were looking pretty good via SkySight, and the mood around the clubhouse was that Wednesday was going to be a great soaring day.

Two gliders had withdrawn from the contest entirely. Hotel Seven had his canopy delaminate from the canopy rail due to the heat and Alpha Xray Charlie was so far down the list and the upcoming weather so hopeless that they decided to withdraw and cut their losses. What this means is that I can't come in dead-last place; there are two gliders that will definitely be below me in the rankings! (yay?)

There's a convergence of two air masses that will allow for people to use this lift line. The contest

managers made use of this convergence to make good speed. Here's the problem: I have zero experience with convergence lift. I've only read about them in books. They're not handled in the Condor flight simulator. I don't know how to use the fancy HAWK variometer to tell me that I'm in a convergence. I think I'm really at a disadvantage here!

Fifteen seconds after the Contest Director (CD) announces that our class starts, I head across the start line. We get kind of low before reaching the first turn area, but I find a good thermal and climb out. Sylvia Grandstaff is in an adjacent thermal, and I see her dump her water ballast.

I wander in various directions within the first turn area, following clouds that are getting weaker as we get further south. We hang out with Tango-Xray for a while. Eventually, we separated. Things aren't going as well as they were earlier in the task. Every cloud we find doesn't have much going on, and we're getting lower. The thermals we do work are a half knot or a knot of lift. We pass by 3 clouds that looked good, but produced nothing.

I head toward the second turnpoint with a headwind. There are several circular fields which look to be very wet and very green. It is unlikely that there are going to be any thermals coming off of those fields. I head further south, into the wind and barely touch the turn point. We are at 1500' AGL, and I should be planning a field to land in if this doesn't work out.

We connect with a solid 3 knot thermal and climb over 4000 feet in 12 minutes. The flight computer said we needed a few more hundred feet to get home. There were plenty of clouds marking the way ahead. We also had the benefit of a 19 knot tailwind at altitude. I found a nice thermal and climbed with Papa and Papa-Golf. The last 57 kilometers didn't offer any lift at all. As we got closer to the airfield, the winds changed

direction! Suddenly we were faced with a 10 knot headwind instead of a 19 knot tailwind.

This must be that convergence thing I heard about. In retrospect, I should have been able to find some sort of magical lift-all-the-way path where these two winds were meeting up. I will have to work on this skill.

We ended up in sixth place. There was one glider that landed out. All the other guys who placed ahead of me didn't get stuck down low. They managed to pick good lift lines and never get to the point that they needed to get a 3 knot thermal to save their bacon.

The Final Contest Day

The entire fleet launched for what was going to be a great soaring day. However, the thermals never really got good enough at the airport. It was surely a great soaring day between Sunflower and Dodge City. It wasn't that good near the airport. The contest was canceled about 30 seconds before I called in for a landing. We spent a lot of time scratching in 1 knot lift with a very crowded thermal.

Lessons Learned / Take-aways:

- Learn more about how to identify and make use of convergence lift.
- Learn more about how to line up the task with the terrain features;
- Spend more time looking at the land features and see if there are any areas where there is likely to be less lift. Just because it's Kansas and Kansas is flat, that doesn't mean the terrain is homogenous. Find out when the task might go over a marsh, and plan a way of avoiding it.
- When the conditions are blue skies and no thermal markers, stick together! It's unlikely you'll get really far ahead against this caliber of pilots.

- Make sure the FLARM is working well before the contest starts. There were times a glider appeared out of nowhere. (It turns out that the antenna has become loose on the PowerFLARM unit).
- Consider getting an electric winch to help get the glider unstuck from a sandy or muddy landout field.
- Tents and Kansas and thunderstorms don't mix



NEW SKYLINE SSOARING OPERATONS MANUAL Keith Hilton

A revised Skyline Soaring Operations Manual was published on 3 June. If you haven't taken a look at the new manual, it is worth a look. You can find the manual on the Club website at the following link: https://www.skylinesoaring.org/docs/SSC/. It contains a plethora of information that you should be familiar with. Here is a summary of many of the important changes.

Old information concerning the Grob-103, Cirrus, and Honda ATV were removed. Old references to such things at the Wing Runner Course were updated. Parking locations for the Gator tow vehicles when not in use was identified as the front of the terminal building or in the grass on the edge of the ramp/taxiway closest to the ops area.

Skyline Soaring Club membership category descriptions were removed from the Operations Manual and updated in the Club Bylaws. This prevents information from getting out of sync.

After many requests, our Treasurer, Ralph Vawter, has set up a method to accept electronic payments for flight operations and other payments to the Club. It is important to note that any fees for

electronic payments are the responsibility of the member making the payment and the Club will not incur any fees for accepting the electronic payments. Additionally, any previous reference to acceptance of credit cards for Club payments at the field was deleted.

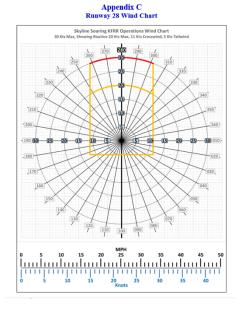
The manual clarifies Club operating hours. The assigned duty crew (Duty Officer, Assistant Duty Officer, Tow Pilot, and Instructor) shall normally arrive at the field by 0800 local in order to start operations no later than 0900 local (beginning with the Spring Equinox), and 0900 local in order to start operations no later than 1000 local (beginning with the Fall Equinox), unless prior arrangements are made to start operations at another time. Some special circumstances are badge attempts, practical tests, wave flights, or cross-country flights.

It is the responsibility of each Club member to maintain awareness of their flight currency status. The operations manual now clarifies that if not in compliance with the currency requirements the member shall coordinate with a club instructor to become current before flying a club ship solo or with passengers, as appropriate.

Transitioning to runway 10 is addressed. Previously Club members and guests were required to take the road to the North of the airport to drive to the runway 10 departure end. The new airport management now allows Club members with at least a student pilot certificate and are experienced driving on the taxiway to drive on the taxiway to the Runway 10 parking area. Guests and Club members without a minimum of a student pilot certificate will still have to drive around the North side of the airport and enter at the gate near the end of Runway 10 and park in the small parking area west of the taxiway.

Thanks to John Noss and Shane Neitzey, guidance for operations in windy conditions was expanded and clarified allowing operations with steady winds or gusts up to 30 knots. John Noss developed some very useful charts to assist in the computation of cross winds and tail winds.

The operations manual clarifies visitor participation in Club operations. Because of Club



insurance requirements, non-members must be supervised by Club members when ground handling gliders. For example, parents or friends may assist in staging gliders on the runway. They may also assist in removing or returning gliders to the hangar. However, they should be closely supervised. Non-members may not drive the ground tow vehicles when towing a Club glider.

With the acquisition of the PW-5 Smyk (Polish for: "Little Rascal"), the manual was updated to include requirements for flying the PW-5. It is assumed that students will be transitioned to the PW-5 and/or SGS 1-36 after dual instruction in the ASK-21. Pilots that do not hold a glider rating on their certificate must have at least three solo flights in a Club ASK-21 prior to flying solo in the Sprite or PW-5. A cockpit briefing and signoff by a Skyline instructor is required for all members prior to flying as Pilot in Command. The maximum flight time charged for the PW-5 or 1-36 on a single flight shall be three hours. General performance information for the PW-5 was also included.

Glider launch/takeoff considerations were updated, and obsolete diagrams were deleted. The most critical consideration is the initial climb from a point where the Glider can no longer abort and land

straight ahead, to about 150 ft above the departure end of the runway. The minimum altitude for initiating an intentional (practice/training) simulated rope break / Premature Termination to Tow (PTT) is 200 ft AGL. Student (not glider-rated) pilots may not practice a PTT without a club instructor on board the aircraft. The instructor pilot (or PIC) will coordinate with the Duty Officer prior to initiating an intentional PTT.

The fuel and oil requirements for the Husky as well as recommended towing speeds were updated. Reference to the Tost tow rope retract reel in the old Pawnee was deleted.

We all understand that cameras can be a great training aid as well as provide a guest with a memorable video after a flight. Externally mounted cameras may not be affixed to any Club gliders or towplanes. The manual directs that if a camera becomes dislodged (falls) from its fixed point during the tow, landing pattern, or other critical portion of the flight, the PIC should not attempt to retrieve or fix it until the critical flight period is over. Care should also be taken to ensure no camera or other device may fall into the foot wells where it may potentially interfere with rudder pedal operation.

This was just a summary of the latest updates to the Skyline Soaring Club Operations manual. Please ensure you review the latest manual for more detailed information.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE SUMMARY

Keith Hilton, Secretary

Your Board of Directors met on 14 April and 2 June.

Ralph Vawter and Marcelo Morichi moved the Club's accounting system on line; the Club accounting system is now completely on line.

The Club is in good financial health as of 1 June. He highlighted the following big ticket expenses for the first quarter of the year.

Aircraft Insurance	\$20,983.00
ASK Loan Closeout	\$27,976.11
Pawnee Annual	\$ 7,701.58
Husky Annual	\$ 2,615.35

Ralph is currently in search of a post office box in Front Royal so the Club has a permanent address so we won't have to go through any address changes when officers change.

The Sprite fully covered its expenses (\$466.20) through rental fees (\$547.50). It was the consensus of the Board to see if the Sprite can support itself. If not, the Board would reconsider selling it.

Ralph has set up a PAYPAL account for the Club. There will be a 2.89% plus \$0.60 fee on each transaction which using PAYPAL.

100 Low-Lead fuel is now over \$7.00 per gallon at KFRR and the Board raised the tow fee from \$22.00 to \$25.00 for the "hookup fee" (that provides a tow from 0-1,000 feet) and \$1.00 for every 100 feet over 1,000 feet. .

Club membership was 99 active members with 30 on the Student Waitlist as of 1 June.

Matt Vosika, our Community Relations officer, explained that the County is going to take a more active roll in managing the airport. Instead of contracting out the management, the County will be hiring an "Airport Supervisor" to manage day-to-day operations of the airport. Rock's current contract with the County to operate the airport expires in June.

One of the improvements is the newly installed security gate for access to the ramp and hangars.

The gate has a keypad and will also accept a key card. It is unknown when the gate will be in operation.

We had a very slow start to the season due to weather. March was the worst month as far back as we have records. 10 students have flown this year and three new student members have not yet flown; seven have not flown since last year, and three that are still on the books have not flown for more than a year. Of 28 total students, 15 have flown this year (all within the last 45 days, as of 1 June). Seven are new student members who have not yet flown at all, so the student load will continue to grow, as planned (to draw down the wait list).

The Board approved Allison Diaz and Tom Ward for the SSEF Board. They have volunteered to join the SSEF Board and Tom also has volunteered to take over our Treasury position which becomes vacant this summer when Bryant Smith is transferred to the Philippines.

The Board approved a request from Jerry O'Connor from Pittsburgh Soaring Club for a one-time exception to receive spin training at Skyline Soaring to obtain his CFI-G rating with the stipulation that Club students and members have priority.

The Board approved several changes to the Skyline Soaring operation manual (see note above).

With regard to late payment of Club ,club members will be notified in the October/November timeframe that Club dues are required to be paid 30-days after receipt of the invoice from the Club treasurer. If not paid in a timely manner, Club membership may be terminated.

The Club is still in need of a meister for the glider trailers. President Zilora has requested volunteers several times without any response. Erik van Weezendonk has found someone that was willing to come to KFRR to perform the inspections for \$100.00 plus the inspection cost for each trailer. The trailers should be inspected prior to the week of training. If you are interested in the coveted title of trailer meister, please notify, Stephanie.

The Board determined that members should follow their personal COVID protection procedures.

A new skydiving operation will be opening at FRR around the 4th of July weekend. There is a need to make sure we're talking through all the (numerous!) potential challenges. The safety officer will investigate further and a suggestion was made to include the skydivers in the morning safety briefing.

The Board voted unanimously to begin the installation of an ADS-B OUT transponder in either the Discus or the PW-5. Keith took the action to order the equipment and begin the installation on the Discus or PW-5.

The Board agreed that the proposal to hold joint ad hoc operstions with M-ASA at KFRR or M-ASA ore both was a good idea, but no further action was taken.

The Board discussed without making a decision the proposal to build a CONDIR simulator in the hangars across from the Club hangars.

The Board voted unanimously to approve the latest version of the Skyline Soaring Club Operations Manual. Highlights of the changes are also noted in this newsletter.

After having to delay the Club's 30th "Perl" Anniversary the Board has taken action to begin the planning. Having organized many successful functions for the Club, The Board asked Miriam Ellis to make some proposals to the Board and Miriam gave an overview of options she has explored. A recommendation was made to combine the holiday party with the 30th Anniversary Celebration. Zilora

took the action to poll the membership to see how many member would be interested in attending.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for 7 July 2022 at 1830 via ZOOM video teleconference. Please let Brain Clark know that you would like to attend and he will provide the meeting link.



SKYLINE SOARING CLUB'S BELATED 30TH ANNIVERSARY PARTY!

Stephanie Zilora

Thank you to all who responded to my recent poll regarding the SSC Anniversary/Holiday party. Based on the responses, the board thinks we have enough interest to move forward with booking the party! Many thanks to Greg and Miriam Ellis who checked out quite a few venues to find the best option. Once the booking is finalized, we'll send out information on how to purchase tickets. It will be my first SSC party, and I can't wait—I have heard that they have been wonderful galas in the past, and I'm quite confident this one will be, too! I hear we might even get to see Erik in his dress blues and Kellett in his tux....



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.skylinesoaring.org

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N341KS) Meister
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Grob Meister
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