
Silent Knights Soaring News

May 2001

President's Message

Looking at the sign-in book at the Bird House I see that a lot of our members have not been able to get out and fly yet this spring. Come on out and join us on these beautiful spring days! The lift is great both in the sky and on the ground. If you are new to the hobby there are lots of experienced guys who can get you in the air and back down in one piece. The field is in great shape.

Thanks to Dick we now have two new winches that will launch anything you can bring to the field. Be careful on that first launch off these winches as they can pull the plane right out of your hand on the first touch of the pedal. We all appreciate Dick's efforts to get us back to "full power" in the winch area.

We are counting on all club members to help on June 30, July 1 at the ESL contest. Check your newsletter for your area of responsibility, be sure your calendar is clear and be there!! This activity is our major fund raiser as well as a great weekend of soaring. See you at the field.

Dave DeGroodt

April Contest Results on P 5

April Meeting Minutes

Frank Nelson

Meeting was attended by 13 members and guests, the last of the season at the New Castle County Airport.

TREASURER Bill Groft reported a bank balance of \$2136. Recent expenses include the AMA charter fee, park sticker fees, and golf cart tire repair. Anticipated expenses include \$500 for mowing and \$500 for the East Coast Soaring Challenge (ECSC) preparation. (June 30-July 1) ECSC PLANS were discussed, including a checklist of materials and activity assignments. Greater emphasis will be placed on monitoring out-of-bounds control in an effort to make this run more smoothly. A pig (or turkey) roast is planned for Saturday (June 30) eve after the flying at about \$10 per person. Peter VanderKley or Jim Duffus will provide the roasting equipment.

John Kirchstein reported on experience with the FREQUENCY MONITOR at the Birdhouse. Channel 14 is showing near constant interference. Channel 40 also shows a peak all the time. Jim Faassen will update instructions for crasing

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May is the start of the Park Entry Fee season. On weekends. Get a sticker or pay daily fee.

Next Club Meeting is at the Big Pond Field at 10:00 AM

Prior to the Club Contest on May 5

Rain/Wind date – May 6

There is no meeting at the Airport during the summer

The calendar issued in January showing Tuesday meetings during the summer is in error

A Bit About Clouds

Excerpts from the book "Understanding the Sky" by Dennis Pagen. Reproduced by permission of Dennis & Claire Pagen.

"Anyone with normal vision and slightly more sense than a box of rocks is aware that clouds come in many shapes, types and sizes. To the casual observer classifying clouds may seem like a hopeless muddle. However, the matter is really so simple when organized properly that you may become disillusioned with your grade school science teacher.











"There are only two main type of clouds. These are *stratus* and *cumulus*. Stratus clouds are flat, layered clouds caused by the slow rise of widespread layers of air. These clouds cover broad areas of the sky and make the day gray. They are often found in stable conditions and are normally caused by frontal lifting or the slowly rising air around large low pressure systems. Some low-level stratus clouds can be formed when low level turbulence mixes the air and raises it above the condensation level.

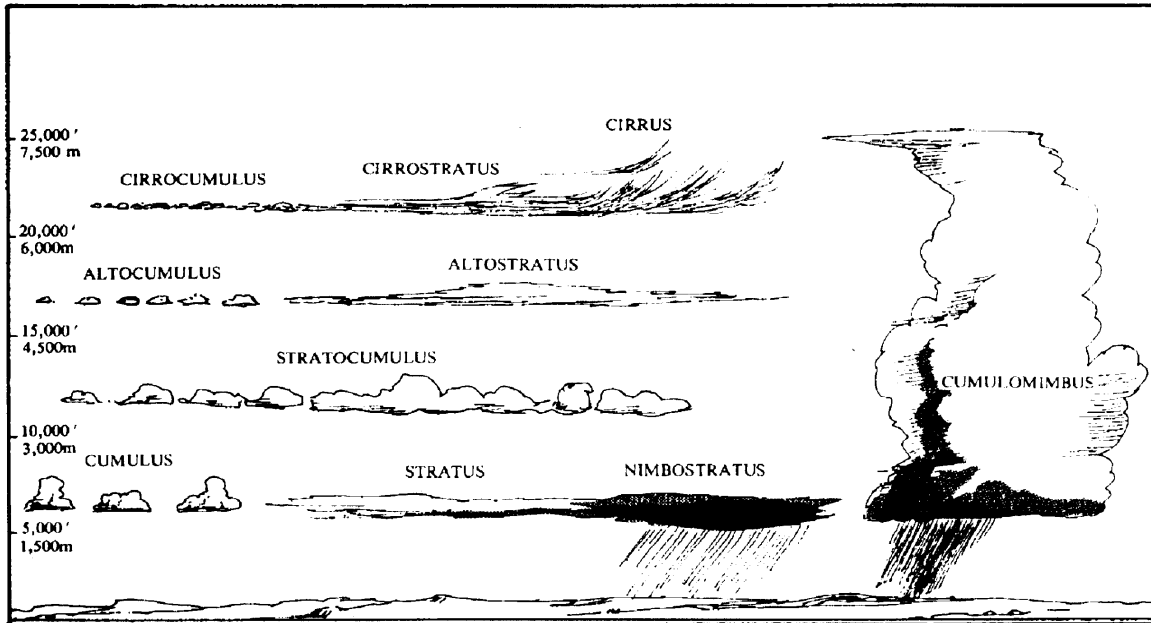
"Cumulus clouds are piled or tumbled and look like giant cotton puffs or cauliflowers floating on high. These clouds are often found in good weather and when they cover 1/4 or less of the sky they are known as fair weather cumulus. Cumulus clouds are created by individual updrafts or convection currents carrying moist air aloft.....

"To provide more information we further distinguish clouds by their general altitude. *Cirrus* Are the highest clouds and consist of wisps of ice crystals at altitudes of 18,000 to 40,000 feet in the temperate climes."

The table below and illustration on the following page show descriptions and appearance of the various cloud sub-types.

Cloud Types and Characteristics

CLOUD NAME	ABBR- AND SYMBOL	HOW FORMED	HEIGHT (TEMPERATE ZONES)	APPEARANCE
CIRRUS	Ci 	Warm air lifting over colder air (warm front).	Usually above 25,000 ft-8 km	Thin wisps, delicate patches, Narrow bands, mare's tails
CIRRO-CUMULUS	Cc Ci-Cu 	High lift above a warm front or wave-like action between layers.	20,000 to 25,000 ft 6 to 8 km	Wave-like or patchy Mackerel sky, thin sheet or layer cloud broken into small clumps or ripples.
CIRRO-STRATUS	Cs Ci-St 	Formed in warmer air lifted over colder air (warm front).	20,000 to 25,000 ft 6 to 8 km	High sheets that appear thin and transparent. May produce halo around sun or moon.
ALTO-CUMULUS	Ae 	High lifting of warm front or wave or slow overturning of layer.	Around 10,000 ft 3 km	Like cumulus puffs only higher and packed together in a layer (due to auto-convection of lifted layer).
ALTO-STRATUS	As 	Formed in a warm front or a cooled layer.	Around 10,000 ft 3 km	Pale sheets blurring the sun. May have occasional gray streaks. Does not cause Halo.
NIMBO-STRATUS	Ns 	Formed from stratocumulus in warm front or in cooled layer.	Usually below 6,500 ft-2 km	Darker than stratus. May appear wet. Blots out sun. Often visible rain falling.
STRATO-CUMULUS	Ss St-Cu 	Break-up of stratus due to a decreased stability; lifting in warm front; thermal clouds spreading out (overdevelopment).	Usually below 6,500 ft-2 km	Gray and dark cloud spread out in puffy layer. Often some blue sky. Rounded masses or rolls.
STRATUS	St 	Warm front lifting or cooling of air layer.	Below 6,500	Gray, low sheet covering a large area with a fairly uniform base.
CUMULUS	Cu 	Localized lifting convection currents (thermals).	Typically 2,000 to 14,000 ft 600 to 4,000 m but may reach 22,000 ft in high mountains	Like puffs of cotton or wool. Separate clouds with cauliflower type tops.
CUMULO-NIMBUS (Nim-bocumulus)	Cb Cu-Nb CuNim 	Lifting of unstable or humid air over mountains or due to cold front passage. Also excessive build-up of thermal currents.	Surface to 75,000 ft 25 km	Dark and towering with large billows. The upper reaches often exhibit smooth areas which may form an anvil head.



Signs of Lift

“Soaring pilots are always looking for lift and besides other gliders and birds climbing as well as dust devils, cumulus clouds are a glider pilot’s friend. Of course, the cumulus cloud must be of the lower variety or they won’t be based on ground thermals and thus are not readily usable. Even when cumulus clouds are thousands of feet above a pilot it often pays to move under them, for thermals tend to feed in multiples and the whole extent of the lift can be rather spread out and reach to the ground.”

(Continued from page 1) **Meeting Minutes**

peaks from on-field flying. John K expects to write an article for a model magazine.

DAVE DeGROODT presented a flyer announcing the **Eastern U.S. Freeflight Championships**, to be held near Chestertown, MD April 21,22. **Bill Brenchley** is expecting to enter several planes.

The club charter for **Leader Club Status** will be renewed. We could expand our outreach to public middle school kids. Demos could be flown in a suitable gym, using the new park flyers.

Bill Groft, Frank Nelson and Bob Chatman attended the ESL Clinic near East Petersburg, PA April 7-8. Weather was cold and camp but instruction given by the experts was great, centering on locating and utilizing thermals, plus critiques of winch launches and spot landings. Bob Chatman has been invited to write reviews for the newsletter.

SHOW & TELL: Dave Bourne and son John (Age 10) showed their miniature Butterfly parlor flyer.

Silent Knights Soaring Society

Dave DeGroodt - President 410 885 2234
 John Lane - Vice Pres 302 994 2906
 Bill Groft -Treas 610 255 4844
 Frank Nelson - Secty 302 738 0618
 Jim Faassen - News Ed 239-4923

*Circulated to SKSS Club Members
 Plus Dist IV VP, Assoc VP, LSF, WEB*

Has a 6 inch span, and is a rubber powered tissue covered stick model which comes from Czechoslovakia assembled, in a cigar box, ready to fly. From Horizon Hobby at \$20.

Mark Garfinkel brought the fuse of his 5 ft Miss Electric II. Dave DeGroodt showed off his 30 inch Lite Stic , modified to carry 9 NiMH cells.

Put your back to the wind and the low pressure region will be on your left.

Some club members may not be aware of the existence of this sign, at the pedestrian entrance to the Big Pond Field. Serves as a succinct reminder of the limitations on the use of the field.



Frequency Monitor Procedure

If you sometimes fly at the field without entering the Birdhouse, please alter your habits a bit. When you fly you will put a strong peak on the trace for the frequency monitor, and the monitor will hold that maximum peak until it is reset. So, unless it is reset after flying activity, those channels which were in use will not show any subsequent interference, should such occur.

Please enter the Birdhouse BEFORE you fly and follow the instructions for the monitor file saving and resetting.

(Remember that the Field Rules require all flyers to sign the register and take their frequency pin before flying, regardless of the number present.)

The Club Plane is again looking prim and proper, thanks to repairs by Bill Jordan and Bill Groft. Not only does it look good, but Bill Jordan had it setting the pace for the big planes on May 20, with duration flights which any veteran could envy.

Stew Swanson, of Harrisburg, is the first to register for the East Coast Soaring Challenge, with his entry in both Unlimited and RES categories, Expert class. Thanks to Stew for his early commitment.

Club members who wish to register may use the form in this newsletter.

Discovery is seeing what everybody else has seen and thinking what no one else has thought. *Albert Szent-Gyorgi*

April Contest

Dave DeGroot

April 7 was a clear day that brought a half dozen hungry pilots to the field in hopes of some friendly competition. Although the sun made a rare appearance, the winds soon followed. The winch was set up and several test flights flown, but the wind increased. Six ships lay on the field waiting for the start but one by one their pilots had second thoughts. Was it worth the risk of losing a plane when we might fly tomorrow? John Jenks seemed to enjoy every minute of each test flight, flying with great skill as he landed repeatedly on the mark. Bill Groft was also up to the task and piloted his Mantis in the 20 kt breeze as though the elements were the challenge and not the other pilots.

The tasks were set at three 5 minute rounds with 50 points for landing within reach of the tape. Round one found both pilots misjudging the speed of the wind and landing short of the tape. John's time was 3:07 and Bill got 4:57.

Round two was closer with both pilots finding the tape in spite of increasing winds. John stayed up for 4:36 while Bill nailed a perfect 5:00. It all came down to the final round as the winds showed no sign of letting the pilots off easy. Again, both pilots showed remarkable skill as they kite-like held their own over the landing tape and each earned their landing points. Although John was able to stay aloft 9 seconds longer than Bill, it wasn't enough to bring him victory as Bill's 4:41 was enough to give him a well earned first place by a score of 978 to 853. Both pilots demonstrated remarkable skill and will well represent SKSS in ESL competition.

Sorry, but it takes a minimum of 3 contestants for a REAL club contest. You two guys put up a great show, but you were just blowin' in the wind! Editor.

