
Silent Knights Soaring News

June 2001

President's Corner

We have enjoyed many "spec-out" days this spring with little rain to hinder our flying. The only nemeses has been the winds. Only a few seem to be brave when the winds blow above fifteen knots and for good reason! Smaller ships will not even make it up the tow line while the larger ones find it difficult to penetrate without the correct ballast and tuning of an expert. Hats off to those who can handle the wind which you must learn to do if you are going to survive the contest tour. Flying In the Wind might be a good topic for a meeting in the fall.

Final planes for the ESL contest will be discussed at our June 9th meeting before the contest. If you have any questions or concerns, this is our last chance to work them out. Remember this is our BIG EVENT of the year and we are counting on you to contribute to its success. *Dave DeGroot*

Welcome New Members

Dave Bourne and 10 year old son John, as well as Robert Muma are recent additions to the club roster. All three have been flying at Big Pond Field subsequent to joining. We welcome you!

May Meeting Notes

Meeting was held at the Birdhouse prior to the May club contest.

Dave DeGroot reviewed current assignments for providing materials and activities at the upcoming East Coast Soaring Challenge June 30/July 1. Discussions around the subject of relaying scores to the scorekeeper at the Birdhouse in the event that wind direction requires a remote launching station led to the proposal the scorecards be transferred in groups via the golf cart. (Better research the capacity of the golf cart to make all these trips on one battery charge?) Use of walkie-talkies is an option, but both of the systems now available are needed for boundary control; so, this option would require rustling up another set.

Provision of a roast pig for the barbecue is favored, and Dave Malone will research cost and options for this item.

Wednesday evenings are set as dates for electric plane pilots get-together. Telephoning will be used to alert participants in event of marginal weather.

Bill Jordan volunteered to paint the pedestrian door to the Birdhouse, as it is becoming somewhat shabby.

Bill Groft reported \$2338.79 in the treasury.

Jim Faassen was tapped to write a proposed amendment to the bylaws covering youth membership in the club.

Next Club Meeting is at the Big Pond Field – 10:00 AM June 9
Club Contest follows the meeting
Rain/Wind Date June 10
AND THEN THE BIG ONE
EAST COAST SOARING CHALLENGE JUNE 30/JULY 1

Flak in Wellington Downs model air- plane show

*Copied from an article in the Palm Beach Post
May 1, sent by Florida friends Bill & Helen
Church*

"Nina Rosato had just finished drying her hair when the plane crashed through her bathroom ceiling.

"She and her husband, Ira Green, were getting ready to move out of the Bedford Mews townhouse they live in during the season when a turbo-powered min-jet veered of course from the Top Gun Radio Control Invitational at the nearby Palm Beach Polo stadium. It crashed through their roof about 11:00 AM Saturday, missing her by inches.

"When it hit, it knocked her to the floor," Green said. "It ripped out the insulation and leaked fuel everywhere. The whole complex could have burned to the ground."

"The couple stayed in Wellington a little bit longer this year so Rosato would have time to recover from injuries she sustained in a car accident a few weeks back. They had never seen or heard of Top Gun, because they usually had left town well before the competition started.

"And they probably won't see it again, thanks to a series of bizarre incidents that began with the crash Saturday and ended Sunday with a standoff between residents and Top Gun organizer Frank Tiano."

*Unlike an article we ran a couple of years ago,
this ain't fiction, guys. It's for real, and a cog-
ent reminder to observe the Paper Mill Road
boundary at Big Pond Field Ed*

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*

**East
Coast
Soaring
Challenge
June 30
July 1
Be there!**

Thanks to Bill Jordan for a spiffy paint job on the Birdhouse pedestrian door. It now looks better than new. And while he was at it he ran the weed whacker around the place. And cleaned up housekeeping inside.

Proposed Bylaws Addi- tion

Pursuant to the request made at the May club meeting, a proposal for adding a new membership class has been prepared for consideration at the June club meeting. To become effective, changes in the bylaws require approval by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee followed by a majority vote of members at the following membership meeting.

The proposed change follows. The change would be added to **Article V. Membership** as item B.

There are two classes of membership in the Silent Knights. These are: (1) Junior, for members of age 21 or less as of July 1 in the year of application, and (2) Regular, for all others. Access to the lock on the vehicle gate of the Big Pond Field and to the Birdhouse entry codes is limited to Regular members. Junior members have access to the Birdhouse in the company of a Regular member. Junior members are not required to have a Regular member accompany them to access the field through the pedestrian gate. A differential in membership fees between membership classes will be maintained as determined by majority vote at any regularly scheduled membership meeting. Members of age 15 or older have voting rights in the club.

This proposal is subject to change by the Executive Committee and may be further revised by club members at the June meeting.

A change in bylaws is also required to provide for separation of the Secretary and Treasurer functions, which in the past have been combined in one office.

Remember ?

The old soy bean field next to Gunning Bedford School is no more. Instead, this handsome set of buildings representing an expansion of the school is looking almost ready for occupancy. And, two humongous piles of spoil adorn the landscape, one encroaching almost to the baseball diamond; the other to the south, narrowing the corridor between the old building and what used to be the soy bean (or, sometime, corn) field. Could you still fly there? Well, assuming permission were still available, you would have to be borderline desperate to do so. The east-west corridor is still untouched, though. Remember that? With the race track fence as a north boundary, and the power pole line as a south boundary? How many times has the chute draped over the power line, or fallen inside the track fence?



**Looking East
From the Garage
Area**



**Looking Northeast
Baseball Diamond
Out of View to the
Left**

You can't put your foot in the same river twice. Chinese Philosopher

The First Three Wednesday Evening Assemblies brought out a gaggle of pilots, a variety of planes, both electric and sailplane, and great weather. The lift wasn't too bad, either, in spite of the late day timing.

More on this subject by Bill Jordan next issue.

NOTICE – The number to the left of your address on this letter is your code number for the Birdhouse security system. Have it with you on your person or in your head when you go to the field. Permanent cards with these numbers will be issued later.

THE HARDER YOU WORK THE HARDER IT IS TO SURRENDER. *Vince Lombardi*

May Club Contest

Well, there was one this time, and although the wind was still blowing, four contestants braved the elements to fly. Joe Melchoirre won first place, Bill Groft took second, and Dave De-Grootd was third. John Lane was a DNF.

ESL Lancaster Contest

SKSS was well represented in the winners circle, with Bill Groft taking fourth and sixth in Sportsman, and Bob Chatman taking second on Saturday. John Lane was riding high Saturday until he messed up a landing and broke his Addiction. Congratulations to all three!

Golf Cart Etiquette

Please do not run the golf cart in the un-mowed areas of high grass. We have enough maintenance without courting more repair bills. Also, it is desired that the high grass be left untracked to preserve appearance and to provide the best hay yield when it is cut.

Spring Thermals Eternal

It took awhile for the wind to calm down (it still hasn't, on weekends), but on the days when the breeze has been mild the air has been suitably unstable, and the thermals have reached to altitudes which would take a plane to eye-testing heights. Spring has sprung at the Big Pond Field.

At times, pilots must savor victory if they go home with their plane unbroken. But lately there has been the added element of satisfaction in seeing flight after flight terminated by pilot fatigue rather than by lack of lift. Bill Jordan, John Lane, Frank Nelson, Jim Duffus, Bill Gofit, and Dave De-Grootd are among those who have lately sampled this free bounty dished out by nature. Frank's flights have been especially commendable, as he has managed to (1) keep his plane in sight at all times, (2) keep it in-bounds, and (3) bring it down outside the briar patch. Way to go, Frank!

Thermals

From the ESL Newsletter May 2001, Courtesy of Tom Kiesling

Locating Them

The air moving to fill the volume of air removed by the thermal generates wind. We can use this wind to tell us where the thermal is.

If there is no prevailing wind, it is easy to identify the location of the thermal. The wind will be blowing toward the thermal. However, we usually fly in conditions where there is wind. Joe Wurts suggests using vectors as a tool to help you locate the thermal. The concept is simple in principle and works for many of the situations we run into. The figure shows the basic premise. The heavy vectors in the figure are the ones we are interested in. Joe refers to these as the 3rd vector. It points to where the thermal is. The trick is to know what the prevailing vector is, judge what the perceived vector is, and estimate the 3rd vector. Once you master this finding the thermals is easy! Unfortunately, mastering this method is not easy – especially on the East Coast. We have tree lines and obstructions that make it difficult to determine what direction the prevailing wind is.

Identifying Them

Using the above technique you should be able to identify a likely place to search for a thermal.

How do you know when you have found it?

There are a few things to look for when your plane approaches or is in a thermal.

(1) The plane will fly faster. The resulting transient from when the plane enters the thermal causes the lightly loaded tail to lift and push the nose down causing the plane to speed up.

(2) The plane feels more responsive. This is a result of item 1. The controls should feel light. This is one of the ways to know you're in lift even if you do not see your plane show any of the more obvious signs of entering a thermal.

(3) The plane gets pushed to one side. This generally means that the thermal is to the side that is getting pushed. In other words, one wing is in the thermal and the other is not.

(4) The plane may also yaw as it transitions

(Continued on page 5)

The New Hand Launch For Old Guys

Dave DeGroodt

There is always something "new" out there! The Discus Handlaunch seems to be the "thing" today. Bill Groft, always on the cutting edge of technology, has added one to his hangar. This pic shows Bill with his new craft, a ship that will launch with a simple spin of body and arm. Great launch height. If you thought you were too old for handlaunch you are wrong!

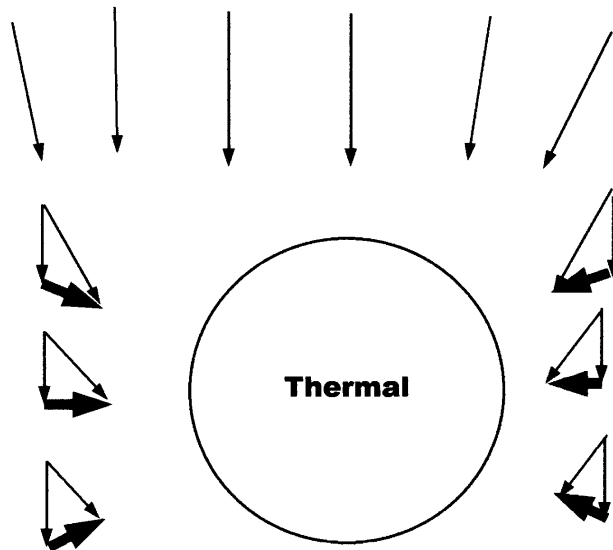
Dave Malone is another practitioner of the spinner launch.



Prevailing Wind Direction



**Velocity Increases Directly Upwind of
The Thermal**



Vertical Vectors = Prevailing Wind
Slant Vectors = Perceived Wind
Heavy Vectors Point to Thermal

*Wind Velocity Decreases Downwind of
Thermal*

(Continued from page 4) **Thermals**

through the prevailing wind vector into a thermal- altered wind vector.

(5) If your plane is in level flight and is noticeably gaining altitude, chances are you are in a thermal!

Sticking with the Thermal

(1) Make constant bank angle turns. This will insure that as the thermal drifts downwind your model will stay with it.

(2) Adjust your turns until you are centered in the thermal. If one side gives you a better kick, allow your circle to drift to that side. You can do this by opening up your circle on that side and resuming a constant bank angle.

(3) Pay attention. If your model is no longer showing signs you are in a thermal, chances are you did not execute items 1 and 2 properly. In many cases I have watched people circle to the ground, in which case they forgot tips to identify they are in a thermal. In most cases the thermal has gone downwind.

So try going downwind to see if you can engage the thermal again. If you don't find it, the bottom may have passed you, or it may have just dissipated.