

Towlines

The Newsletter of the Albuquerque Soaring Club

December 2006

From the President By *Bob Hudson*

On the 16th of December we held a membership meeting. If you were there (and we know who you are) I thank you. This was the most important meeting the Cub has had since I became a member because some serious issues were discussed. These important issues all basically dealt with financial matters. Your Club board has been grappling with cash hemorrhages for quite a while. When I say cash hemorrhaging, I don't mean a popped artery in the cranial cavity, but more like an ulcer that is slowly sapping your strength. Before the situation gets to the terminal stage we, the Board, tasked a select group of gray beards (Don Kawal, Stan Roeske and Tom Tichy) to take a look at the Cub revenues and the Cub expenses. They were told to leave no stone unturned and to their credit that did a superb job.

Space doesn't allow me to go into a great amount of detail, but I will have a pamphlet with copies of the spreadsheets our Blue Ribbon panel prepared and positioned at the Cub House so that you can see where we were coming from.

To save space I will get to the important issues, all passed by unanimous voice vote.

Oxygen use

The first item we tackled was the question of the use of oxygen. As you know almost all of our oxygen usage comes from airplane users, either club members or guests. Most of the time we eat that usage. It was passed that starting in April we will charge all private aircraft owners \$25 a year for the use of oxygen (club members) and \$10 a refill for guest and non-members. We will use the time between now and April to work out the details.

Annual Gala Dinner

Don't forget to grab your "glad rags" and join your soaring brothers and sisters at the annual Albuquerque Soaring Club Gala.

The event will be held on the 26th of January (Friday night) at the Marriott Pyramid. The cash bar will open at 6:30, dinner will be at 8:00 and a program will follow. It is \$35 a person so please RSVP (that means *reply please*, whether yes or no – and soon!) to bhudson964@aol.com, or 281-9219. Looking forward to seeing you there.

The Twin Astir

The next issue dealt with the use of the Twin Astir. Our records show that the Astir is used very sparsely and actually costs the Club just to own it. Additionally we pay \$1,800 a year in insurance due to its retractable landing gear. The members present voted to sell the Twin Astir and turn the profit from the sale into an asset account that we would not touch in an effort to ensure we would have funds to cover contingencies. This sale would also reduce our current insurance expense and open a hangar spot that we could garner some revenue from. (How about that ending a sentence with a preposition?)

Club hangar rentals

This opened the discussion to the use of hangar space. It was discovered that we could rearrange the hangar spacing by moving the oxygen cart to our other hangar, selling the tractor (to which I understand we have a potential buyer - they don't refer to Clay as an Aggie just because he drank his beer in College Station) and rearranging the cabinets in the main hangar we can add another spot. We voted and passed upping the price we charge for hangar space to \$90 a month (up from \$75 a month).

Tow prices

Next we took on the cost of tow prices. As a lot of you know we were forced to add a surcharge to our tow prices due to skyrocketing gas costs. Our team of financial gurus looked at the club's tow costs and for comparison at the prices being charged by Sundance. After discussion, we voted to make the club's tow prices competitive but still within the outlines of the surcharge.

Our new tow prices will be posted in the club house (per by-laws). A recap of what they are follows: \$15 to hook up and then \$.75 per 100 feet. This means that a 1400 foot tow (the minimum) would be \$25.50, up from the surcharged level of \$23.40. 2,000 foot tow would be \$30.00, up from \$29.50. A 4,000 foot tow would be \$45, up from \$44.

Aircraft rental prices

The membership also voted on raising the rental cost for club aircraft. These increased fees will also be posted in the club house per the by-laws. These increased fees were kept low so that we don't discourage flyers.

Items not voted on

We on purpose didn't suggest charging for training or increasing the initiation fees. However we chose to take a look at these opportunities if the voted on initiatives don't stem the cash flow problem. The bottom line is that thirty-one members took the time from their busy schedules and the holiday season to help formulate a plan to help the Albuquerque Soaring Club to reach a better financial position.

Good News

By Bob Hudson

The fact that our Club's financial situation is in Threat Level Yellow, but there is light at the end of the tunnel, has caused some members to step to the plate and they deserve recognition. First, Angela Pala has declared that he is changing his status from Associate Member to Regular member. While this move doesn't push us over the brink, it is an indication of the membership picking up the gauntlet.

Following in Angel's footsteps, Geoff Aiken has pledged to turn his year's end bonus over to the Club to be applied to our asset fund. I tried to talk Geoff into putting it in for his use, but he wanted to return something to a group he really appreciates being part of.

I am not telling you about Angel or Geoff to prod anyone into doing something that they are not moved to do, but you should know about the selfless actions of two of our members. At the Gala we should raise our glasses to members such as these.

Election of officers

At the recent Member's meeting, the officers for the upcoming year, 2007, were selected. The newly elected officers are:

President: Bob Hudson

Vice President: Mark Mocho

Secretary: Geoff Aiken

Treasurer: Brian Morrison

Members at large: Bob Carlton and Billy Hill

The appointed positions were also "populated" with:

Operations Officer: Constance Buenafe

Maintenance Officer: Open

Web Site: Brian Resor

Safety Officer: Billy Hill

Chief Tow Pilot: John Farris

Chief Instructor: John Daffer

Parachute Maintenance: Paul Briggs

Newsletter: Howard Banks

Membership (new position): Constance Buenafe

Emergencies on Tow By W. G. Hill

The greater majority of emergencies on tow are self induced. These generally are a result of something that was missed during the pre-takeoff checklist. On occasion, they may be aircraft related in that something has failed on the aircraft.

A few weeks ago I test flew a relatively new Ventus 2c. It looks like my Discus except that it has flaps. The reason I was test flying it was because the pilot had made a hard landing. Why did he do that you ask?

Shortly after takeoff, the spoilers popped open. As it turns out the detent on the spoilers was not adjusted sufficiently to keep them closed. The pilot attempted to close and lock them and here is where the situation morphed from a problem to a crash landing.

It takes a good deal of force to lock the spoilers closed, but not to hold them closed. The pilot in question made multiple attempts to lock them. Each time he did so, he induced a PIO, (pilot induced oscillation), which became violent enough to cause him to lose sight of the towplane. At that point, he released from tow and in the course of attempting to land straight ahead, made a very hard landing which fractured or perhaps broke his back along with trashing the landing gear.

So, what did he do incorrectly? He lost his focus while attempting to correct the problem. Had he merely held the spoilers closed rather than attempt to lock them, he would not have induced the PIOs. Once off tow, he could have trimmed the Ventus for level flight and he could have sorted out the spoiler problem.

Klem Bowman lost his life in Minden while flying the Genesis when the horizontal portion of the tail fell off during the first few feet of the takeoff roll. This happened because he was interrupted during the pre-flight and failed to secure the tail plane. He became airborne, and I'm quite sure he knew something was amiss. Rather than fly the glider which was somewhat stable in the pitch mode, he released at about one hundred or so feet. Without the tow rope and tow plane to hold the nose of the Genesis up, the glider pitched over past the vertical and Klem was killed on impact. Had

he remained on tow while he attempted to analyze the situation, he might be alive today.

I've mentioned this accident in previous safety articles, but because it's tow related and Klem was killed, and therefore it is worth repeating.

Getting back to the Ventus 2c test flight, before takeoff I set the flaps at one notch positive, set the trim for a neutral and off I went. As is my habit, once airborne, I attempted to trim off the stick pressures. As I did so, the flaps popped out of position and followed the position of the trim. Frankly I think this is a poor design on the part of Schempp-Hirth as the collar for the trim slides over the flap rod. Any friction on the trim collar combined with worn flap detents will allow the flaps to pop out of position. This didn't pose a problem since I was at minimum wing loading and the control forces were light. Had I been full of water and close to critical tow speed, it might have been another story. After landing, I alerted the owner of the problem.

Some other tow related issues are things like a rope break. Sure, you've done the simulated rope break on check rides, but you were expecting that to happen. Do you still do your three hundred foot call out during other than check rides?

I was giving instruction in the Sundance Grob and my student was consistently high on tow. I kept telling him to get back down and in position as Rick pulled us across the top of the airport at mid field. At that point I noticed the tow plane was well below us and getting lower. Rick had had a total engine failure, and was about to feed us the tow rope when I realized what had happened. This took but a few seconds to recognize, but frankly it had caught me off guard. I should have reacted sooner, but didn't. Rick did a masterful job of getting the Callair back on the ground. With no power and a windmilling prop, that thing falls out of the sky like a set of dropped car keys!

During the course of mentoring from the back seat of a too-dirty-three, I've had the canopy pop open not once but twice! The reason that happened is because I didn't cross check the student to ensure he had properly closed and locked it. In both cases I was able to catch the

canopy by the cross bar and prevent it from fully opening. Although I was lucky enough to catch the canopy, I was still a bad CFI for not following up on the student's pre-takeoff actions. No banana for me on those days!

Many many seasons ago, while flying a Phoebus, I retracted the gear while on tow. After getting to release altitude I was unable to release because the tow rope is attached to the landing gear. Needless to say I stayed on tow while I reviewed the whole process and finally figured out what I had done wrong one thousand feet later.

What you may be asking is the point of all these examples? Don't turn a challenging situation into an emergency by exacerbating the problem! Above all, devote all your brain cells and efforts to flying the glider. Far more

often than not, (rope breaks and tow plane engine failures not with standing), there will be ample time to sort out the problem. If you ain't sure what's broke, then don't try and fix it!

See you at the airport.

Want to be a partner in the Twin Astir?

Club member Phil Newman is interested in finding another club member who might want to buy the Twin Astir with him. Phil says that he is a very careful pilot and very meticulous in all that he does. He wants to see the plane in perfect shape. Phil is a weekend pilot who wants to fly cross country.

Contact Phil on (505) 281 2688.

2007 Moriarty Operations

Date	OPS 1	OPS 2	Instructor	Tow Pilot
Jan 6 Saturday	BLOCH J	WILSON B	WIER J	HILL W
Jan 7 Sunday	MARTINEZ J	DAVISON B		THOMAS R
Jan 13 Saturday	HARMONY D	BRIGGS P	BUEHRE K	TICHY T
Jan 14 Sunday	HUSS J	MORRISON L		WADSWORTH H
Jan 20 Saturday	BIELEK K	AIKEN G	COLLINS A	WRIGHT R
Jan 21 Sunday	MOCHO M	BOYCE J		CARLTON R
Jan 27 Saturday	BUENAFE C	CUMIFORD Jr. J	MORRISON B	WIER J
Jan 28 Sunday	STEWART W	WILSON B		HILL W
Feb 3 Saturday	PALA A	FERGUSON K	DAFFER J	STOGNER M
Feb 4 Sunday	BROTHERS L	STOLL F		THOMAS R
Feb 10 Saturday	KAWAL D	HARE J	ROESKE S	TICHY T
Feb 11 Sunday	EKDAHL C	NEWMAN P		WADSWORTH H
Feb 17 Saturday	HEERMANN A	OKANDAN M		WRIGHT R
Feb 18 Sunday	BANKS H	CARRIS M	TAYLOR K	CARLTON R
Feb 24 Saturday	McKNIGHT P	GUILLORY S	WIER J	DAFFER J
Feb 25 Sunday	HUDSON R	ANDERSON R		STOGNER M
Mar 3 Saturday	RESOR B	PHILLIPS C		
Mar 4 Sunday	BLOCH J	WILSON B		
Mar 10 Saturday	HARMONY D	CATES J		
Mar 11 Sunday	DAVISON B	MARTINEZ J		