

Towlines

The Newsletter of the Albuquerque Soaring Club

September 2009



President's Notes

By Bob Hudson

Well, we did it!!! We were able to capture the World, and U.S. National, On Line Contest

League titles, which is based on speed. We also won the U.S. club distance award (OLC Classic), though the world distance award is going down to the wire – the contest year ends mid-October – where we remain in second place. Any chance of winning this one (we're close) will depend on September's weather being kinder than it has so far. There are lots of other OLC awards, including individual awards, and Brian Resor will (we all hope) be producing his annual summary once the dust has finally settled.

It goes without saying that we could not have been this successful if it wasn't for a total Albuquerque Soaring Club effort. It is easy to recognize those who actually "won" individual Rounds and to ignore the folks who contributed behind the scenes; I am talking about those who pulled Ops and towed so that we could field a competitive "grid". Everyone worked hard to garner this title and we will figure out some way to recognize it...watch this spot.

Monday, the 7th of September, the Club celebrated Labor Day with a burger burn at the Club house that was very well attended. As part of the event we also celebrated Mark Mocho's, and your President's, birthday. I want to thank those

that attended (as I gave a very short notice) and to apologize to those who did not see the invitation due to my using a corrupted e-mail list. My bad, I will make it up to you by allowing each of you to have an extra Ops day. (Once again Angel Pala came through by donating the meat, buns and condiments for the cook out.)



On the new member front, Stan Cooper has joined the Club. He will begin his flying phase very soon. Be sure to introduce yourself to Stan and help him learn the ropes.

On the 12th of September, Club member Kathy Fosha set a National Female Free Distance Record. Flying from Tehachapi,



CA, Kathy flew 640 km (343 miles) to Austin, NV. Kathy accomplished her feat in a Libelle 201 and she was “crewed” by her father.

While we are recognizing member achievement, the SSA has recognized Kathy Taylor with an “Exceptional Service Award” for her effort in digitizing untold years of *Soaring* magazines. Kathy’s work means that Soaring pilots and students of aviation will have access to these valuable resources. Kathy will be presented her award at the SSA’s National Convention, in Little Rock, next January.

Well, I finally finished the paperwork for the 1-26 and World Class Championships and much to my surprise we made \$8,700. Wow! I really thought we would clear around \$2,000 when I saw how few contestants there were, but we were able to do very well. Thanks for all those who helped make this a success.

Good news, the FAA has finally approved the TT21 Mode S transponder. So what, you might ask? Well your Club has ordered one to put into our Libelle. This will be the start of our upgrading the safety features of our fleet. This small unit is almost half the price of similar transponders and it is the smallest, lightest general aviation transponder available. At the same time we are adding a transponder to one of our tow planes which will give us that little extra cushion of safety.

And while we are speaking of safety, the UAV school house is moving from Creech AFB, just north of Las Vegas, Nevada, to Holloman AFB here in New Mexico. What this means is that we will have students



flying these vehicles inside air space we frequently share. This will have the effect of making it more necessary to have transponders aboard when operating that far south. Of course transponders are not always the answer; you need to keep your head out of the cockpit. If you see one of these (this close)...”**break right!**”

It’s time to start thinking about the GALA. I am looking for suggestions as to a speaker. If you have a speaker in mind, drop me a note.

Lastly, last month I started a dialog about possibly changing the name that we use to score on the OLC. I initiated this effort due to some conversations I had been apart of and was looking for input. Boy did I get input, some of it not so civil. No, I am not a fascist, nor am I anti ASC...I was just asking on behalf of some members. The bottom line is that we will continue to score under the name Albuquerque Soaring.

Okay, fall is approaching but the flying is still good...come out and enjoy your club, but, as always, fly safe. Your Prez.

In a spin

By Angel Pala



[One of the best ways to learn about flying safety is to read and

study honest and open accounts of an aviation incident from someone who has been there. This report by Angel makes it clear why our instructors make us repeat safe flying practices until they become habit – since in an emergency it is to ingrained habit that we revert. Even better is when there is perceptive analysis by our resident safety guru, Z (also known as William Hill). So Angel and your fearless editor asked Billy to review this article and add whatever he thought might help in understanding what happened to Angel as well as what might be learned from his experience. Billy made it clear it is not his intent to find fault in anything Angel did during this incident, but perhaps to shed some light on various aspects of what occurred in order to preclude a recurrence by a less experienced pilot. Angel's report begins first, with Billy's comments inserted in a different typeface in the relevant position.-Ed.]

Although as pilots we have been taught unusual attitude and spin recovery techniques, few of us have had a flying event occur that forces us to apply, as a mean of survival, those lessons learned and perhaps seldom practiced. That in fact happened to me during the Region 9 at Logan in early August, where I was flying in 18 meter and was using full water ballast to help my speed.

As background, to the east of the Logan airport, there are two parallel ridges running north and south. The ridges are nearly 30 miles long with tops around 10000' in elevation. During the contest, to

escape the airport we were required to ridge/thermal soar to the top of those ridges and then fly north on task. These two ridges run very close to each other separated only by a narrow and steep ravine. The west facing rocks of both ridges warm up quite nicely during the day, and become the source of strong thermals. In some places the thermals from both ridges seem to coalesce at or about the top of the ridges. This unusual condition results in not only very strong but also violent thermals and shears. Flying in this mixed air mass plays havoc with the glider and challenges one's ability to maintain flight control.

[Hill: Increased wing loading using ballast is great for achieving a higher average cross country speed, but the penalty paid is a reduction in control effectiveness at thermaling speed and in increase in stall speed.

Under the above mentioned conditions it is best to enter a thermal at a speed somewhat above what you might normally use for thermaling. This becomes even more important when the glider is ballasted with water which will add to the inertia. Yet another factor that may have contributed to this incident is the likelihood of a strong vertical component under the left wing of Angel's glider which added to the rolling moment to the right.]

During the next to the last day as we departed the start gate area I started an 80 Knot glide heading north on task at an altitude of 11500' together with some other gliders. After 7 or 8 miles the lead glider, which was about a ¼ of mile ahead, pulled up and right to work a thermal. As my glider arrived at the rising air, as we all have done hundreds of times to center a thermal, I pulled my nose above the horizon and banked right. At that moment with no warning, and with plenty of airspeed for the maneuver (above the yellow triangle), my glider departed

flight. Immediately it went completely inverted. As I was hanging inverted from my harness straps, the nose pitched down through the horizon and went perfectly vertical entering a quick and tight spin to the right.

[Hill: Thermal entry into what might be a violent updraft should be accomplished as smoothly as possible. At the apogee of the thermal entry it is best to unload or relax back pressure on the stick in order not to induce a high speed stall. In conjunction with that, flying the glider in a coordinated fashion is of utmost importance. Positive G's combined with too much rudder in the direction of turn can result in exactly what happened to Angel.]

After the Oh F.... moment, and fighting the overpowering desire to yank back on the control stick, I unloaded the glider by relaxing back pressure, releasing right rudder and gently pressing left rudder to stop the rotation. My DG performed as advertised, stopping the spin before completing the third rotation. I used the increased airspeed from the dive to pull up, rejoin the thermal and climb. The High Definition view of the leaves on the trees in front of me faded rapidly as I continued to finish the three hour task of the day.

[Hill: Clearly Angel made all the correct control inputs in order to effect a recovery from the spin.

He had the good fortune to recover without hitting any one or any thing. This could have been an incident were the spin occurred with other glider traffic below. Fortunately that was not the case, but it could have been. Yet another reason to enter a thermal expecting a worse case scenario, that is a turbulent thermal which will require a higher than normal thermaling speed.]

What did I learn??

First and foremost, training works. Practicing unusual attitudes and spin recovery can save your life. Second, without prior warning, aircraft and gliders can depart normal flight with dangerous consequences. In my case, before going inverted, there was absolutely no warning or the slightest hint that a problem was headed my way. Thankfully, at that moment recovery training kept me from serious trouble. Had I gone with the initial intuitive reaction and pulled on the control stick I would probably still be on that ridge in northern Utah, stinking up the countryside.

Be alert about the general conditions over the terrain you are flying and go practice.....

[Hill: As for practice; before initiating a spin in the sailplane you are currently flying be sure to review the information in your POH (pilot's operating handbook). Better yet, get together with an instructor in the Grob for a little unusual attitude work to include spin entry and recovery. It's also important to brief all maneuvers to be performed prior to takeoff so that there are no surprises for either you or the instructor.

As a general rule, an aircraft will not depart a normal mode of flight without some form of warning. However, the warning may be masked by conditions at the time of the upset. The thing to remember is you should be aware of what atmospheric conditions are likely to create a problem for you so that you will react accordingly when Mother Nature tries to challenge your ability.]

Region 9 South, 2010

Next year's regional is to be held at El Tiro gliderport, near Tucson, AZ. Practice day will be May 9th and the contest will run from the 10th to May 15th. More

details will be announced soon, but in the meantime information can be found at their web site: www.tucsonsoaring.org. Put it in your calendar!

ASC Operations Schedule

Date	OPS 1	OPS 2	Instructor	Tow Pilot
Sep 26 Saturday	AIKEN G	Waldron D	DAFFER J	STEVENSON D/
Sep 27 Sunday	LEMON B	BRIGGS P		TICHY T/
Oct 3 Saturday	Talarczyk R	BLOCH J	ROESKE S	WADSWORTH H/
Oct 4 Sunday	BANKS H	THOMSON T		WRIGHT R/
Oct 10 Saturday	McKNIGHT P	OKANDAN M	WIER J	BUSS P/
Oct 11 Sunday	PHILLIPS C	STEWART W		HAWKINS T/
Oct 17 Saturday	HARE J	BOYCE J		HILL W/
Oct 18 Sunday	RESOR B	BIELEK K	TAYLOR K	STEVENSON D/
Oct 24 Saturday	MORRISON L	Sapp J		TICHY T/
Oct 25 Sunday	ROZZONI R	CUMIFORD Jr. J		WADSWORTH H/
Oct 31 Saturday	HARMONY D	PALA A	WILLAN V	WRIGHT R/
Nov 1 Sunday	HUSS J	KAWAL D		BUSS P/
Nov 7 Saturday	HAWKINS My	Roberts D		HAWKINS T/
Nov 8 Sunday	MARTINEZ J	STOLL F		HILL W/
Nov 14 Saturday				STEVENSON D/
Nov 15 Sunday				TICHY T/