THE LEADING EDGE
The Newsletter of the M.I.T. Soaring Association, Inc.
May 1997

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News briefs

Mark Tuttle

Dues reminder: Remember that club dues must be paid by May 15 or your flying privileges will be suspended. Send your payments to Steve Glow at 1 Lakeshore Dr, Sterling, MA 01564. If you have any questions, contact Steve at (508) 368-1260 or sag@world.std.com.

New certificates: Carl Johnson is now a commercial pilot. He went down to Keystone Gliderport for a weekend with Jim Emken, and ended up taking his commercial exam from Tom Knauff in a Duo Discus. Carl has written a terrific newsletter article about the experience for the next newsletter.

New marathoners: Sharon Johnson has completed her first marathon. She ran the London Marathon in April, and less than a month later, she is already making crazy statements like, "I just want to get out there and run." Sharon is married to Carl Johnson.

New private owners: Walter Hollister is the partner with Joe Kwasnik and Al Gold in 692. Roy and Dan Bourgeois sold their interest in the 1-26 to Walter this spring.

Good flights: Bill Brine flew over 600K on Saturday and Sunday, April 26 and 27, and Phil Gaisford and Harvey Howell flew even more. Jim Emken completed all three legs of his silver badge — 50K flight one day and 1,000 meter altitude gain and five-hour flight the next — at Keystone Gliderport in Pennsylvania. I was also at Keystone that weekend, and completed the altitude and duration legs of my silver badge.

CFI revalidation clinic

Carl Johnson

During the annual MITSA party, John Wren mentioned to Mark Tuttle, Jim Emken, and me that Tom Knauff would be holding a CFI revalidation clinic in the middle of March. Normally these clinics are taken by instructors as a means to renew their certificates, but John felt that the information would also be useful to private or commercial pilots studying to become instructors. John had nothing but praise for Tom's clinics, and when I later spoke to Ken Rosenberg he also agreed that they were worthwhile. Considering the severe shortage of instructors in the club, the timing seemed good for the three of us to accelerate our training. After a few phone calls by Mark to set up the reservations and accommodations, the three of us drove to Pennsylvania for the weekend of March 8th and 9th, not really knowing what to expect.

The clinic was held in a small cafeteria of the Hull Corporation, and when we arrived on Saturday morning, we saw that the clinic was well attended by about 30 people. Mark and I each had a chance to meet Tom and Doris Grove, and we were immediately struck by their warmth and charm. Jim was already well acquainted with Tom and Doris, since he had been flying his Janus out of their gliderport the previous season.

As we sat down to begin the clinic, we noticed that Tom had set up a big screen television connected to a computer for a PowerPoint presentation. Very professional. We also noticed the sixteen-hour printed schedule.

Yikes! This was going to be a serious weekend. Tom began the clinic by throwing a stuffed toy dog into the audience, explaining that whoever held the dog would be called upon to answer the next question. This dog would soon become a hot potato as people realized that they didn't want to be holding it when Tom called.

He next emphasized the seriousness of instructor responsibilities by reviewing the 1996 accident statistics. During 1996 there were six glider fatalities in the United States. There were also 41,000 automobile fatalities. This number of glider fatalities didn't seem bad when compared with automobile fatalities until Tom pointed out that these numbers correspond to a ratio of one death out

Day One (470 minutes total)

- 0900 - 0910 Introduction and briefing
- 0910 - 1010 1996 accidents
- 1010 - 1110 Fundamentals of Flight Instruction
- 1120 - 1210 Regulations and Airspace
- 1310 - 1410 Teaching Aerodynamics
- 1415 - 1505 Flight Information and Publications
- 1510 - 1600 Teaching Flight Maneuvers, Stalls
- 1605 - 1655 What pilots need to know about Weather
- 1655 - 1725 Teaching Cockpit Checklists
- 1730 - 1830 Teaching Turning Stalls
- Test

Day Two (490 minutes total)

- 0800 - 0850 Teaching Aerotow, PT3
- 0900 - 0950 Instructor Professional Responsibilities
- 0950 - 1020 Teaching Benign Spiral Mode
- 1030 - 1120 Teaching Landings
- 1120 - 1220 Transitions Training
- 1310 - 1410 Teaching Flight Safety (white, yellow, red)
- 1410 - 1500 Recurrency Training (BFR)
- 1510 - 1610 Human Factors (Judgment)
- 1615 - 1705 Teaching Off Field Landings
- 1705 - 1735 ABC & Bronze Badge Program
- Final Exam

of 6,463 drivers compared with one out of 2,333 for glider pilots. Viewed in this way, glider flying is more dangerous than all other activities combined, including parachuting and scuba diving!

After sobering us with these statistics, Tom went on to explain that pilot error accounted for 83% of these fatalities. Most fatalities occur during takeoffs and landings, and usually are the result of preventable stall/spin accidents. He then made the point that a clear, concise and consistently applied training regimen with special emphasis on stall/spin awareness is the single greatest way to reduce these sort of accidents.

Tom next introduced Wally Miller, who appears often with Tom in his clinics. Wally's specialty is in teaching some of the drier subjects in the clinic, such as regulations and airspace, fundamentals of instruction, human factors, and weather. He began with the fundamentals of instruction and a review of the federal aviation regulations. To his credit, he succeeded in making these dry subjects palatable. I think he managed to point out some things that many people were unaware of. For example, a common glider club practice of setting the altimeter to 0 feet at field elevation breaks regulation 91.121. He then went on to wax euphoric about advisory circulars and the aeronautical information manual. He began to lose us when he mentioned that he likes to read these publications while in the bathtub, but all in all he did a very good job reviewing this material with us.

Most of the teaching sections of the schedule were reviewed by Tom, who has a clear-headed and simple technique for teaching everything. He seems to have a genius for distilling each lesson down to its essentials; central points are clearly driven home without being swamped by detail. Mark, Jim and I were captivated by each of his lesson plans, and our reactions were always the same — I wish it had been taught to me that way!

The weekend was packed full of information and I took over twenty pages of notes, far too much to review in a newsletter article. Several points did stand out, however (at least to me):

1. A simple way to avoid PIO's in any glider is to hold the stick 1/4 inch back from the neutral position during the takeoff roll. By maintaining this stick position, the glider will naturally lift off at the appropriate time. After liftoff, only gentle stick movements will be required to maintain the proper tow position.
2. A great way to teach landing patterns is to walk out typical glide angles on the ground. Most people walk their height in two strides, so a 20:1 glide angle may be viewed by walking forty paces and then looking down at where your feet were when you started. Tom teaches the angles of 20:1 for the maximum glide in a pattern, and 5:1 for the steepest descent with full dive brakes. Most pilots should aim for an angle of 12:1 during the pattern. By viewing each of these glide angles on the ground, a student can get a better idea of how an ideal approach should look from the air. Students and low time pilots typically come in too high and turn to base leg too soon (the cause of 80% of off-field landing accidents). This simple ground exercise illustrates how surprisingly shallow a typical approach should be.
3. I have seen many fiberglass glider pilots takeoff with their spoilers initially open in an effort to improve aileron effectiveness. Tom believes that this is nearly always a mistake, except in clearly defined cases (such as in an ASW-24).
4. Never under any circumstances land with your gear up (even in water).
5. You can first see the legs of a cow when you are 800 feet above the ground. You can see the legs of a sheep at 500 feet above the ground. (I'm not sure when I'll ever use this, but it seemed worth filing away.)

After the clinic was finished, we were given a final exam (not too difficult) and a diploma. We loaded up on new books (Tom and Doris had quite a collection for sale) and had a chance to thank Tom, Wally and Doris. During our drive home, we all remarked on how much we had learned that weekend. I would wholeheartedly recommend this clinic to anyone interested in teaching soaring.

The view of Lake Tahoe.

Badge roulette

Andrew Watson

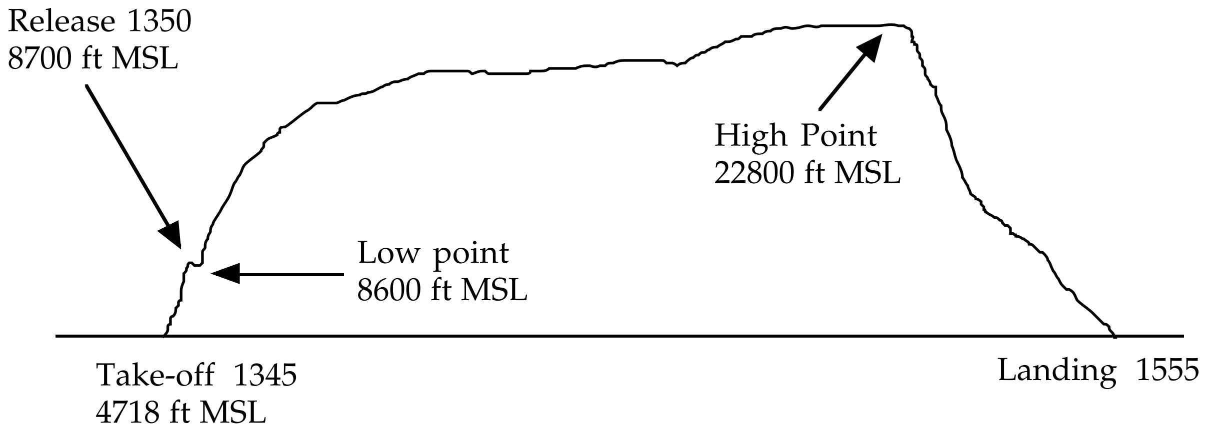
Nineteen ninety-six was the year I became a nomad, and spent far too many soarable days doing the other, less interesting kind of flying at back of a 747. Despite having the good fortune to find MITSA soon after beginning my self-imposed American exile, and taking every opportunity to fly at my UK club on my trips home, as the end of the year drew closer I was in danger of finishing '96 without completing any new FAI badge legs. Decisive action was called for, so I booked a Grob 103 at Soar Minden for two days in December adjoining a business trip to San Francisco, hoping to catch the wave. Only two days was a gamble, but why else does anyone go to Nevada?

As a flat site pilot born and bred, I'd no experience of wave. My Cambridge (the original one, in East Anglia) is hundreds of miles from anything resembling a mountain, and wave has a the same mythical quality as the Unicorn. I prepared for my gambling trip by reading Mark Palmer's "Practical Wave Flying" (bought by mail order from the SSA). Learning in advance about oxygen system checklists and wave windows would turn out to be time well spent. I packed my logbook, all my skiing clothes and five pairs of socks, and set off for the ostensible purpose of my trip, a meeting in San Francisco.

My plan was to leave the meeting promptly at 5PM on Thursday 12th December and drive to Minden in one evening, which is one of those trips you plan when you've no idea what you're getting yourself into. It's a touch over 200 miles by road, initially on clogged freeways leaving San Francisco, then an easy three-hour section east across the width of California. However, after turning on to Route 50 to go over the Sierras via Echo Pass I found the road starting to climb, narrow, and switch back on itself. By about 10PM all the other traffic had disappeared and the persistent rain had turned to snow, which was beginning to lie on the road. I pressed on, and my guardian angel must have been working overtime, because the hire car somehow kept going and I made it over the top and into the miraculously clear night on the Nevada side of the mountains. In the end it took five and a half hours, and it's not a trip I'm ever attempting again. If the Good Lord had intended us to drive over the Sierras he wouldn't have given us Reno airport.

Friday morning dawns clear and cold. After a comfortable night in a Minden motel, I sit myself by the diner window at breakfast and try to work out if I've won my gamble on the wave. The sky is almost completely clear, except for a few wisps of low-ish cloud, and the winds seem light and variable, so I'm a little surprised to arrive at Soar Minden at 9AM to be greeted with, "It's been waving for five days and it's still going strong." Lesson two: wave in dry air isn't necessarily marked by clouds. No worries about the undercast closing up beneath me today!

Douglas County airfield, where where Soar Minden is based, is a spectacular location five miles from the rather precipitous eastern edge of the Sierras — they rise quite suddenly 2,000 feet out of the flat valley floor. The airfield has two main tarmac runways (34/16 and 30/12). The charts mark a third runway (21/03), which is directly into



The barograph trace.

the prevailing wind, but ironically it's closed, and the surface is rather pot-holed, so it's only an option for emergency landings. Presumably power pilots don't like taking off directly towards a two thousand-foot ridge.

Every gliding site I visit in the USA seems to have a British connection, and Soar Minden is no exception. Tony Sabeno, the owner, started gliding with the RAF at Bicester, near Oxford, and my instructor, Sam Whiteside, is a Northern Irish ex-pat. Sam takes me through a comprehensive ground briefing, then we check out the glider, a Grob 103 Twin II, almost a carbon copy of the machine I'd flown back in Cambridge, right down to the wretched airbrake lever positioned to slam your left elbow into the seat when the brakes suck open. Sam reminds me to expect strong and variable cross winds during the takeoff roll, and then we hook up behind the Pawnee towplane. The rate of climb is noticeably lower than in Cambridge. Lesson three: 4,700 feet MSL affects towplane performance.

After a couple of circuits to get used to the location, Sam takes me to find the wave. This involves towing upwind through the primary rotor, and after all the dire warnings I'd read I'd expected it to be pretty rough. In fact, on this particular day the rotor is no worse than a strong thermal. However, I quickly learn that it'll move you sideways as well as vertically; while talking to Sam during a gentle turn I take my eye off the tow rope, and the next thing I know there's such a large bow in it that it seems wise to release. Lesson four: even gentle rotor commands respect. Turning a problem into an opportunity, Sam shows me how to work the up side of the rotor like a thermal, circling in the rough, rising air to gain height and contact the wave. And then suddenly, there it is! Everything goes smooth and the vario swings round to plus six and stays there. We climb through 12,000 feet MSL, and I try out the oxygen system, then it's down out of the wave and back to Douglas County. Time to try for my badge.

Wearing about six layers of clothing, countless socks and thick lined snow boots I waddle back out to the Grob, and strap myself in with two ticking barographs. Towing out through the rotor once more, my world shrinks down to 150 feet of rope and the Pawnee, as I focus on not letting the rotor catch me out again. After five minutes plugging upwind, at about 8,500 feet MSL, the bumping stops. Give it another 20 seconds to make sure we've really arrived, then release, trim out, and see what the vario does. It shows a nice healthy 6-7 up, so it's time to fully open the brakes and push forward to 70 knots for a slow count of 20 to notch the trace, being careful to fly slightly across the wind so as not to penetrate out of the leading edge of the wave. After working off a couple of hundred feet, close up, trim for minimum sink at 45 knots, and start exploring to find the best lift.

Initially the rate of climb is a steady 6-7 knots. I go on to oxygen without problem at about 12,000 feet MSL, and at 16,000 call back down to Tony on the ground to ask for the wave window to be opened. In a remarkably short time he's back from the phone to say that ATC have given us a window to 26,000 feet until 4:30PM. By my reckoning my low point at the bottom of the notch was 8,500 feet MSL, so as I go through 18,000 into the wave window I already have gold height. It's still surprisingly warm in the sunny cockpit as the view of the mountains and Lake Tahoe expands below me. Far below me the orange-painted South Western 737s line up for their final approach on Reno airport. Odd to be looking down on jet airliners. Sam's warned me to keep an eye out for them on my descent, since they sometimes take a shortcut into Reno that takes them directly over Douglas County.

Unfortunately, the rate of climb is slackening noticeably as I ascend, and feeling my way around my local piece of primary wave doesn't seem to help. Somewhere around 20,000 feet the vario finally sinks back to zero. Time to start exploring to see if there's anything better along the wave. The only other glider flying the wave is north of me, and he seems to be doing better, so I turn right and start crabbing up the wave in search of more lift.

Darth Watson.

I find three up, but it also fades away after a couple of thousand feet. I finally top out at an indicated 23,400 feet MSL, which only gives me 14,900 feet of height gain, still a tantalizing 1,500 feet short of the diamond (in fact, when Tony reads the barograph later he comes up with 14,200 feet gain, over 2,000 feet short).

Well, it was probably asking too much to get a diamond on my first wave day. The wave is definitely dying, and in fact the next day will turn out to be completely flat. But for now there's time to sit back and admire the view for half an hour, take a few photos, then as the sun starts to get low, open the brakes and drop back into the down side of the wave to get back down on the ground. And suddenly it's extremely cold and I'm losing touch with my toes. They'd warned me about this — opening the brakes sucks the warm air out of the cockpit. Now I definitely want to get on to the ground soon. Push forward towards orange line at 90 knots to work off the height as quickly as possible, I rattle and bump through the rotor up the valley towards Douglas County for a landing two hours ten minutes after takeoff. The gamble has paid off, and my 1996 badge leg is in the bag. It's all too easy, really — almost like buying a badge rather than earning it. As I fly the circuit I try to convince myself to get the 300K distance before I come back for another crack at diamond height, but the view from 23,000 feet over Lake Tahoe in clear Nevada sky is too beautiful to pass up for long. I'll be back next winter. For longer. And I'm definitely flying into Reno next time.

Maintenance news

Jim Emken

Ship captains: I am still looking for ship captains for the coming year. This job entails looking after one of the gliders, organizing the cleaning and waxing of the glider on a regular basis, and letting me know if there is a problem that needs to be taken care of. So far I have Steve Glow as the ship captain for the L33 with Bruce Easom assisting, and I have Matt and Steve Sovis for the 1-26. I am looking for some 1-34 pilots to sign up for the 1-34 and some volunteers for the two seat trainers.

Gliders: The re-painting of the 1-26 is complete and it will be flying again soon. We have three gliders due for annuals this month. They are the 1-34, the L33, and 117BB.

Towplane: Ian Clark has volunteered once again to look after the tow plane for another year. To do this job effectively, Ian needs the help of the tow pilots. Please let Ian know of any problems that occur with the towplane, including the type of fault, the frequency of the occurrence, etc. If any maintenance is done, even as small as pumping up a tire, please let Ian know so that he may establish the history of the fault. Please note that the oil needs to be changed every 25 hours. Ian will note the oil change in the book in the plane. Please check the hours since the last change and let Ian know if an oil change is due. Feel free to copy me on any correspondence relating to the towplane and definitely contact me if you have an issue and cannot reach Ian.

Golf carts: Please use regular unleaded car gas, not 100LL, in the golf carts. A green gas can is available in the Citabria hanger. Please check the oil and gas in each golf cart each morning before starting an operation. The golf carts run better if they are used every weekend so try to use each golf cart every weekend. Report any problems with the golf carts to Ian Clark, and Jim Emken.

Special thanks to everyone who helped with the club project of stripping the 1-26. Further thanks go out to Joe Kwasnik, Ian Clark, and Richard Gammon for their further help with the 1-26, to Bill Brine for picking up the Blanik trailer at Plymouth, to Joe Kwasnik for digging a 4x4x4 foot hole to repair the damaged tie down for 118BB, to Ian Clark for towplane and golf cart maintenance, to John Wren and Bill Brine for their efforts on the audio vario for the L33, to Steve Glow for getting the barograph calibrated, and to anyone that I missed.

Minutes of the Board of Directors

Rob Playter

These minutes have been heavily edited by Mark Tuttle for publication in the newsletter. —Editor

April 8, 1997

Directors present: Steve Glow, Phil Gaisford, Al Gold, Jim Emken, Bruce Easom, and Robert Playter.

The Citabria syndicate: The availability of the Citabria as a second towplane is a very valuable asset to MITSA, especially during the busy part of the season which lies just ahead. The syndicate that owns it is currently in a state of financial transition. In order to preserve the availability of the ship for towing during this period, if the Citabria and a pilot checked out to tow in it are available on the field, then the Citabria should be given priority to perform tows over 094. Long tows (such as aero retrieves) should be steered to the Citabria when practical.

Towplane replacement: We discussed the purchase of a tail-dragger towplane. Having a Pawnee may allow us to achieve greater launch numbers. It could take off from the grass and would have a higher climb rate than the Cessna. It may be difficult to find tow pilots to fly it. For insurance purposes a minimum of 25 hours in a tail dragger is required of any tow pilot.

Instructors: This is the most important problem facing us. We agreed to waive the instructor fees for one year in an effort to lure additional instructors to the club. We are investigating the possibility of inviting instructors from GBSC to instruct with MITSA. We may consider a joint membership arrangement with GBSC.

Radios and audio varios: The vario for L33 is in. We will order two more for Blaniks. The priority for radios will be the L33.

Airport use of hangar: The airport management is not interested in renting the large hangar space to MITSA for glider storage since they want a mechanic in there.

Golf carts: We are looking into buying another used golf cart.

Glider trailer registration: We will pursue getting one registration plate that would get moved between trailers as necessary.

May 1, 1997

Directors present: Steve Glow, Al Gold, Jim Emken, Bruce Easom, Phil Gaisford, and Robert Playter. Others present: Ian Clark.

Joe Kwasnik worked hard looking for the Blanik tie down, but was unsuccessful.

We discussed things we can do to foster a sense of team spirit among the club.

- Buy a trailer as club house.
- Organize work parties.
- Advertise upcoming work parties.
- Recognize people's hard work for the club.
- Follow work parties with barbecues and beer. Bruce Easom volunteered $100 towards feeding a work party for the club house and attached deck.
- Organize quarterly get-togethers.

Joe Kwasnik will continue to pursue the trailer as club house.

Citabria syndicate: They are happy with our proposal. Currently only two pilots can tow in it. Ian will have to OK tow pilots for Citabria.

Replacement towplane: Ian argued that we won't speed up operations much with a new plane. The main slow down is waiting for gliders and instructors. The DO can do the most to speed up operations. The Cessna is very useful because of the tremendous range of pilots who can fly it.

Golf carts: It was suggested that the golf carts should have some more life in them. Ian said they have had it. Time to buy another. Should we lease golf carts as many golf courses do? Ian will look into getting a new/used golf cart. We really need two.

Instructors: MITSA's relationship with instructors is strained. They are working very hard and much of their efforts go unrecognized. Let's be careful not to expect instructors to instruct when they come to the field on their off days. Same for tow pilots. This is a difficult time for the club. Let's all be patient. Let's respect the efforts of the instructors, tow pilots, and other hard workers in the club. Let's all pitch in to help. This is supposed to be fun!!

Roy Bourgeois will do some instructing this month. Al has made several calls to GBSC about instructors. We might want to post an advertisement to newsgroups about our need for instructors.

Carl has his commercial license now.

Should MITSA reimburse out-of-pocket expenses for instructors? The membership fee has been waived for this year. Every two years they have to have 16 hours of instruction. We do not want to pay for trips to Minden. We did not come to agreement about this topic yet. Bruce Easom claimed that this is not an issue for tow pilots. They get to fly for free. That is enough compensation.

Ship captains: No one has volunteered. Jim Emken will call folks up to twist their arms. All that needs doing is occasional wash and wax. This is a fairly simple job.

Maintenance: Ian recognized Kevin Account as a valuable resource for the club. He painted the 1-26, and did a very nice job. The plastic cover in Cessna cockpit needs replacement. Ian will look around for something to work. Ian looked at the ailerons on the Cessna, and it looked fine. Jim Emken will look into fixing chipped paint on four gliders.

The trailer registration is still pending.

Safety comments

Steve Moysey

Steve Moysey is the club's chief instructor. —Editor

Just thought I'd send out a little message to remind people of a few minor MITSA regulations and pet peeves of mine, now that spring is really here...

1. DO's: Please take note that in order for a pilot to fly demo rides, the pilot needs two things: a commercial glider rating, and a sign-off from the MITSA chief instructor to carry out demo rides. I have heard of some flights that have been carried out by commercial pilots without sign-offs. This practice must stop, and I will ask the board to ground, indefinitely, any pilots who carry out unauthorized rides.
2. Private pilots flying with students: I am not in favor of this type of "unofficial" instruction and will be actively discouraging this in future. I know the temporary shortage of instructors is frustrating to everyone, but the board is doing all it can to rectify the situation. I do not want to see the club reverting to the old ways of members instructing students. This does the student no good at all, especially as the flight time can't be logged.
   I also do not condone the concept of private pilots flying students to get them "air time." There are several reasons for this, from an instructional standpoint, especially the ones concerning the laws of primacy and what the student picks up from the pilot-in-command. Strictly speaking, the student can't, or shouldn't, perform the takeoff, early tow, or landing, since if there is an emergency situation, the PIC is responsible. I'm not sure how many private pilots have been behind students when things have gone wrong. The students are going to look to the PIC to pull the chestnuts out of the fire, so I question who is getting the benefit, the student or the private pilot.
   However, I have no real problem with a student sitting in the back as ballast while being flown — operative word — by another pilot.
3. Back-seat flying: All pilots without a commercial rating intending to fly from the back seat must have a check ride with a MITSA instructor and a sign-off for back-seat flying. For example, if you want to fly from the back seat while giving a guest a ride — different issue than flying students — or while flying with another rated pilot in the front seat, you must have a back-seat sign-off. I fully encourage members to take guests for flights, but the pilot must be in the front unless signed-off for back seat operations.
4. Check rides: Other than for instructors, any club member who has not flown in 90 days must receive what I would describe as an annual check ride before flying MITSA equipment.
5. Airmanship: I have not been available to spend much time at the field of late, but come the end of April my university commitments end for the summer and I will be at the field one day each weekend. I have had concerns over several near misses last season, both on the ground and in the air. Airmanship, and judgment, form an essential part of flying gliders, so be aware that the instructors will not hesitate to put pilots — private or student — back on daily check rides if they exhibit poor airmanship, lack of judgment, or downright unsafe flying.

Please forward any comments to me. Have a safe and enjoyable season.

In Memoriam

George Foote has been an honorary member of the club for years, so it was sad to learn from his wife that he passed away in March. "Thank you for continuing his honorary membership," she wrote. "It was a source of pride and pleasure to George that he had 'recycled' his beloved Altosaurus glider and that he'd given a plane (glider?) to your organization to help further a sport about which he cared deeply." George donated two gliders, one to MITSA and one to a former MIT soaring club. The club's sympathy and best wishes go out to Mrs. Anna Foote and her family.

Usenet soaring ladder

Stephen Crabb

John Wren is involved in running an Internet soaring contest. "It may seem familiar to MITSA members because it is based on the same concept as the 'Beaver Contest' I ran at MITSA for several seasons." John asked me to print this message that Stephen Crabb posted to the Usenet newsgroup rec.aviation.soaring. Contact John Wren (jwren@chelmsford.com, 508 244-0647) or Stephen Crabb (stephen@crabcom.demon.co.uk) for more information. —Editor

There seems to be enough people willing to help and support the idea of a RecAviation competition, so we had better get on with it. Here are some proposals which will very quickly turn into rules if there isn't too much opposition. The plan is for simplicity and honesty. We will get a web age organized in the future (thanks for the kind offers of help and space) but for now it is more important to get the flights. [Guenther Eichhorn has since developed the web page at http://acro.harvard.edu/LEAGUE. —Editor]

General Rules

1. Anyone can enter as long as they can get the flights posted on the Net to the scorer. This can be done by themselves or on their behalf.
2. Verification of flights will only be required for the final top three places. All you need is for an official observer to verify that the flight is valid and that you have the evidence. All we need is the official observer number. Remember, this is for the final top three places only. It would be nice however to supply the logger traces of any submitted flights for people to download and look at.
3. I suggest we start the competition on May 1, 1997, and end it on April 30, 1998. That gives you six days to dust off your cameras and clear down the Dataloggers! Prize giving will be at the end of May, 1998. To generate interest and a good flow of flights we could run a monthly sub-competition where we recognize the best flights/scores for that month.

Specific Rules I intend to score each flight using the UK national ladder scoring system, but with a few differences to try and iron out the regional differences. I will post these specific rules in the next day or two. But they go something like this.

1. Points are scored for distance flown.
2. Points are scored for the speed at which that distance is flown. For example, a longer flight flown at the same speed as a shorter flight gets more speed and distance points.
3. A landout on a declared task will get distance points to the landout point and 75 percent of the speed calculated on the distance flown. This encourages big task declarations and doesn't penalize the people who try to fly farther but just fail their goal.
4. Glider handicaps will be applied to speed and distance. The handicaps used will be the ones currently used in the Baron Hilton Cup.
5. Another handicap to attempt to iron out the regional differences will be applied and this is where I will need some input from representatives from different countries. I am proposing (rightly or wrongly) to use the maximum speed achieved around an FAI 300K triangle by a 15M glider as the benchmark for the soaring potential of that country. In one country, this will be the world record and will be the top limit. It will work like this. If the world record is 200 KPH set in South Africa and the fastest FAI 300K flown in the UK is 120 KPH, then any flights originating in the UK would have their points factored by 200/120.
6. The four top scoring flights for each pilot during the competition period (month or year) will be used to give the score. These scores will be used to construct the RecAviation ladders.
7. We could have two ladders, one for flights started on weekends and national holidays and an open ladder for flights started on any day. Flights submitted for the weekend ladder can be used for the open ladder.

Thats it for specific rules for now. I will post the formulae for calculating points in my next installment.

Prizes Ian Molesworth who makes the BlakBox range of flight recorders has very kindly offered to donate a BlakBox II to one of the winners (if we have two ladders). For the record, this isn't a cynical attempt to sell dataloggers. (Ian wasn't aware this was in the offing!) Enough said about prizes other than if anyone else would like to donate something please don't be shy.

Operations schedule

Al Gold

Here is the MITSA duty roster for May through July. The July instructor schedule is indeterminate since Ken Rosenberg's vacation plans are not yet solidified. Roy Bourgeois will do some instructing in May and may also be available on occasion later in the season. We continue to seek additional instructor help from outside of the club, but have no commitments so far.

MITSA DUTY SCHEDULE
May - July, 1997

Date	DO	Instructor	AM Tow	PM Tow
5/10	Evans	Bourgeois*	Proops	Ryan
5/11	Kucan	NA	Poduje	Kazan
5/17	Johnson	NA	Dershowitz	Clark
5/18	Gold	Rosenberg	Easom	Friedman
5/24	Loraditch	Moysey	Gamon	Hollister
5/25	Sovis	NA	Poduje	Kazan
5/26	Watson	NA	Proops	Ryan
5/31	Kwasnik	NA	Gassett	Clark
6/1	Welles	NA	Easom	Friedman
6/7	Wong	NA	Gamon	Hollister
6/8	Gold	Rosenberg	Poduje	Kazan
6/14	Evans	Moysey	Proops	Ryan
6/15	Johnson	NA	Dershowitz	Clark
6/21	Kwasnik	NA	Easom	Friedman
6/22	Kucan	NA	Gamon	Hollister
6/28	Loraditch	NA	Kazan	Proops
6/29	Sovis	Rosenberg	Poduje	Ryan
7/4	Watson	NA	Gassett	Clark
7/5	Welles	NA	Easom	Fletcher
7/6	Evans	?	Gammon	Friedman
7/12	Wong	Moysey	Hollister	Kazan
7/13	Gold	?	Poduje	Proops
7/19	Johnson	NA	Ryan	Gassett
7/20	Wong	?	Dershowitz	Easom
7/26	Loraditch	NA	Fletcher	Friedman
7/27	Sovis	?	Gamon	Hollister
8/2	Kucan	Moysey	Kazan	Proops
8/3	Welles	NA	Ryan	Clark

* Roy Bourgeois will be available to instruct
from 9:00AM to 2:00PM only.
The Citabria tow pilots are
Ian Clark (617 924-7637) and John Wren (508 244-0647).

DO's should send out an email message to the membership only if the instructor status for the day has changed. DO's should mail logsheets to Albert Gold, 8B Locust Lane, Watertown, MA 02172. DO's should mail the daily summary, money, membership forms, waivers, and anything else to Steve Glow, 1 Lakeshore Drive, Sterling, MA 01564.

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For more information about MITSA, you can contact the club by email, visit our web page, or contact Joe Kwasnik, our director of membership listed above.

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