

Auxiliary-powered Sailplane Association

January-February 1999 Newsletter

Stan Nelson-President • Bruce Templeton, Vice President

Issue # 66 Vol. XI

ASA, Inc. is a Division of the Soaring Society of America

BiMonthly

President's Message....

The 1999 SSA Convention will be held in Knoxville, Tennessee on February 24-27. Be sure and register early for the Convention and the Auxiliary-powered Sailplane Association Breakfast on Friday morning. Convention registration prior to 1/31/98 is \$50.00 for regular and an additional \$25.00 for family. The Breakfast is \$14.00. The speaker for the Breakfast will be David Volkmann, winner of two Auxiliary-powered Nationals and other regional contests. David is an experienced mountain pilot who lends his expertise to the many soaring camps and clinics that are available in the Sierras such as the camp sponsored by Air Sailing, Nevada. We will also be hearing from Brian Utley, ASA Membership Chairman, who will speak about his attendance at the Elmira Symposium on Motorgliders and Self-Launching Sailplanes that he attended this past summer.

Plans are underway to site the 1999 Auxiliary-powered Sailplane National Contest at Tonopah, Nevada during July 10-17. Long time Tonopah soaring pilot, Bill Seed, has offered to lend a helping hand and may be available at the SSA Convention Breakfast to give us his personal observations about flying in Tonopah. Tonopah is a fascinating town with a past history of mining and a recent history of supporting the Air Force Facility that tests some of the more exotic aircraft in the Air Force inventory. Abundant and reasonable hotel and restaurant facilities are available. The airport was a B-24 training base during WWII and has a wide, long runway and a huge ramp reminiscent of Hobbs. My first flight at Tonopah was very memorable. On tow at 800 feet agl we flew through a thermal that almost caused me to release because of its strength. The tow pilot took me back to the thermal and I released and climbed to 14,500' before the next glider was towed.

Immediately after the Breakfast, all ASA members are asked to remain in their seats for a short membership meeting during which time members will vote on standing committees and the Board membership.

ASA Board members will meet after the membership meeting. An agenda will be mailed to each Board member. Each Board member will give his or her report on Membership, Safety, Rules, Records, Minutes and the Treasurer's report.

Stan Nelson

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PILOT REPORTS
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Tonopah Soaring Area Pilot's Brief

Pilots interested in learning more about soaring out of Tonopah Airport can send for a 6-page brief covering the field facilities, soaring area, weather and local accommodations. Please send 66 cents in stamps to: Pete Williams 1033 Dresslerville, Rd., Gardnerville, NV 89410 USA.

Submission of Newsletter Articles and Advertising

The deadline dates for submissions are
15 Dec for Jan-Feb; 15 Feb for Mar-Apr;
15 Apr for May-June; 15 June for Jul-Aug

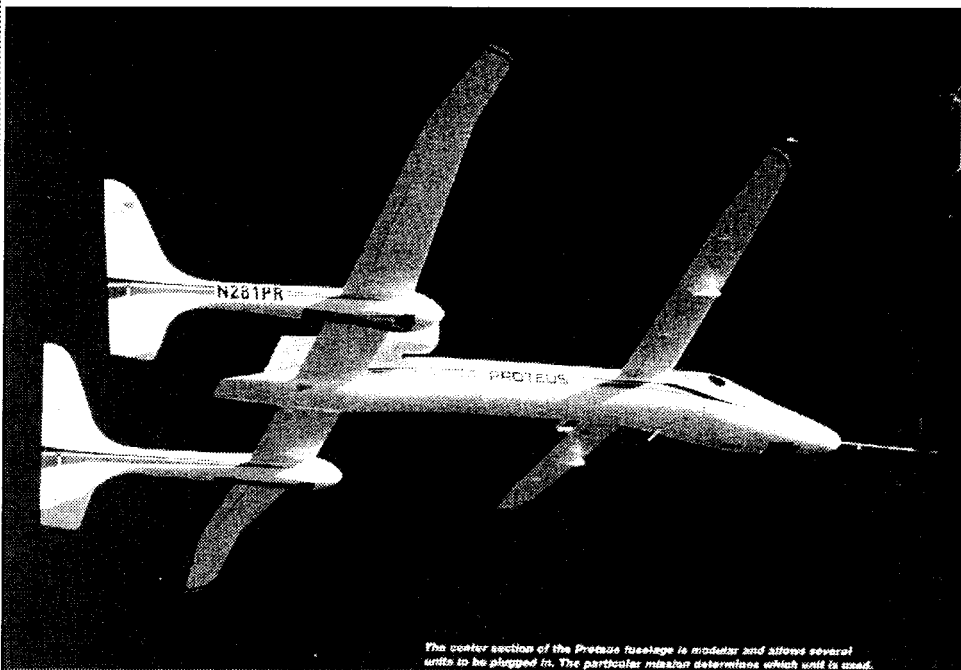
15 Aug for Sept-Oct and 15 Oct for Nov-Dec. Issues. Please mail hard copy typewritten or keyboarded text in 12 pt. font size. Photos will be returned. Send to Pete Williams, 1033 Dresslerville Rd., Gardnerville, NV 89410 USA

Please note new numbers:
Pho: 775-265-3877; Fax:: 775-265-6179.
These numbers effective 12-12-98.

Self-Launch! Retractable Engine Sailplanes Book

Pete Williams new book has sold over 800 copies since its introduction in January 1998. It is available direct from Pete's publishing company, For The Birds. It can also be purchased from SSA or Sporty's Pilot Shop using a credit card.

European pilots, contact:
Hans Disma (Netherlands)
Fax: xxx-31-30-691-5222 or Karl Abhau (Germany) Fax: xxx-49-2132-4102



The center section of the Proteus fuselage is modular and allows several units to be plugged in. The particular mission determines which unit is used.

Burt Rutan's new PROTEUS low orbit research canard aircraft may be the U-2 of the future. Glider-like with its high aspect ratio wings, it is powered by 2 Williams/Rolls-Royce turbofans of 2,300 lb. thrust each. Its wing loading varies from 12.1 to 26.1 sq. ft. The aft wing has extendable tips (77.6' to 91.8') and the canard span is adjustable from 54.7-64.7' according to the mission flown. Its missions can vary but the initial use will be atmospheric research and as a telecommunications relay platform. Takeoff roll is 1,450' with a climb rate of 3,400fpm at max gross of 12,500lb. Best range speed at 40,000' is 280ktas. The cabin is pressurized to 8,000ft at an altitude of 60,000ft.

FLIGHT JOURNAL, Feb. 1999. Article by Contributing Editor Peter Lert

Pilot Reports

First Impressions

By Peter Kelly

I bought a new DG-800B, with a Cobra trailer. Having ordered it in July 1997, it was shipped to me the following July. This article is a report of my experience in the first week of operation. Sure, it's a bit early to form a conclusion about the ship, but I think some people may be interested in this, my initial reactions and experiences. Because of a lot of info from friends, well in advance, I was prepared for most all events. Everything from ordering it to setting up the tiedowns was explained to me in advance. Sources of this info came from Gary Gammal, Oliver Dyer-Bennet, Pete and Charm Williams, Hank Marlowe, and numerous others.

The reception by Hutt Aviation at Minden Airport, where I keep the ship, was both warm and friendly. They're nice people to do business with. Tom Stowers at High Country Soaring was invaluable in getting me prepared for my visit with the FAA, providing me with sample letters, and application forms. I phoned the Reno District Office and set up an appointment with Inspector Don Morgan a few days ahead of time. When I arrived, I found him to be both friendly and efficient, and I was treated very well. The Air Worthiness Certificate and all paperwork was completed in less than three hours.

As for becoming familiar with the ship itself, I was fortunate to have Pete Williams and his wife Charm (pronounced Sharm) to help me out. If anyone anywhere has questions about motor gliders, the acknowledged expert in that field is Pete Williams. Read his book, and you will have to agree. Here it was, a flying machine that costs as much as my first house. The ship and the trailer were a thing of beauty. I've owned gliders before, but I had rarely even seen a new one. I was concerned about doing something that might damage it, or that I might operate it incorrectly. Pete and Charm literally spent days with me, as I learned to rig, and derig, do some taxi practice, and finally take a couple of flights.

My first flight was completely unpowered - as I wanted to become familiar with the ship strictly as a glider. I hadn't yet customized the seat cushions, I was borrowing a parachute from Tom Stowers, electric vario, computer, oxygen system were yet to be installed, etc.. Lift wasn't great on that first flight, and no one else was going anywhere, but I did a lot of dives and zooms, and cruised the Carson Valley for 90 minutes before heading back to the field after completing a 50 mile triangle.

During the preceding four years, I had been flying both the Pegasus and the ASW-20 - both excellent soaring machines. By the end of this first flight I was already beginning to feel comfortable in the DG-800. Lots of flap positions to choose from, so I'd be busy moving that lever all the time, just like in the ASW-20. The transition from thermal climb

to enroute cruise was fairly easy, but I could see it will take some finesse to learn to do it well. The same was true for the pull up from cruise into thermals. The visibility through that long canopy - unique to the DG's, is unmatched by any other ship that I've ever seen, but the price you pay for that view is the inordinate amount of reflection on the inside of the canopy. It will be helpful if I wear dark pants, socks and shoes while flying this ship.

The pitot-static system was OK, with no flaws noted. I tested for stick thermals on my mechanical vario, but found none. That was good news. The altimeter was something else! I had ordered a small one made by Winters, but it only had two hands, and the dial was in increments of threes ranging from 3 to 27. Thus, if the little hand was just past the 3 and the big hand was past the 15 (on about 17), that indicated you were at 3,000 plus 1,700 or 4,700 feet above sea level. After 30 something years of glancing at the other kind of altimeter, I felt this was too much for me! I sent an Email to Wolfgang Wessing, Chief of Sales at the DG factory in Germany, stating that I found it difficult to read this altimeter. The next day, I received an apologetic reply, and a week later I had a new altimeter in my hands, direct from Germany. Now that's what I call good factory support. And then, less than a few days after that first Email exchange, I sent another note to Wolfgang, this time telling him that although the contest letters looked good, I would have preferred to have them painted on, rather than to be vinyl. I was concerned about the smooth flow of air over the surfaces. Again, I received an immediate response. In a very direct manner, he explained that he would be glad to accommodate my wishes and invited me to have them painted on and to send the bill to DG - he would pay for the painting. Finally, I had a third exchange with him, this time about the weight of the ship. I thought my flight manual, weight and balance data sheet, stated that the empty weight of the ship was 390 kilos, so I told him in an Email that I thought this was extremely heavy. He said he would confer with the production manager and engineers, and would get back to me. A day later, I was told the ship weighed 340, not 390. Now that I read the weight and balance data again, I see that I had misread the "four" for the number nine. My mistake, not theirs. I was relieved to see the ship was 100 pounds lighter than I had first thought.

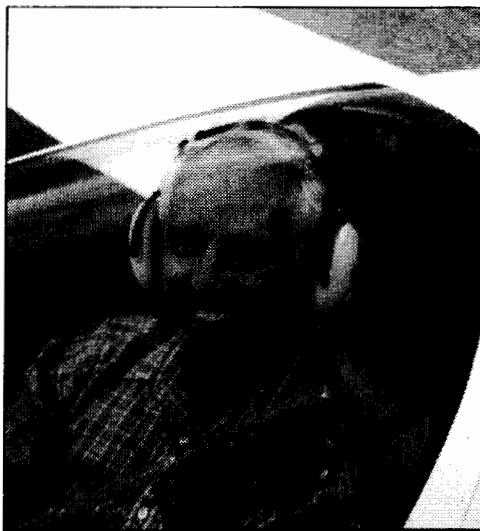
On my second flight, after a few more hours of cockpit time on the ground and taxi practice, I launched using the engine. I followed all of the advice I had received from Pete Williams, and had no problems. I was impressed with the ground roll of only a few hundred feet, and was pleased to see that I was 500 feet above the field by the time I got to the end of the runway. A most impressive climb profile with a 10 knot headwind. I shut down the engine, and later restarted in-flight without any incidents. The systems are so simple and automatic, that it would be difficult to do it incorrectly. There are back-up systems which allow you to bypass the automatic functions, but thus far, I have only

practiced those procedures on the ground.

Although I do have many hours in powered planes, less than ten percent of that is in propeller type aircraft. Having read about the increased horsepower of this new Solo engine, I was uncertain what my reactions would be. I was very pleased. I found the vibration and noise level of the DG at full power to be quite acceptable. It was certainly much quieter than I was expecting. In fact, I started the engine after landing and taxied back to the parking area without the earphones on, and was not at all uncomfortable with the noise level.

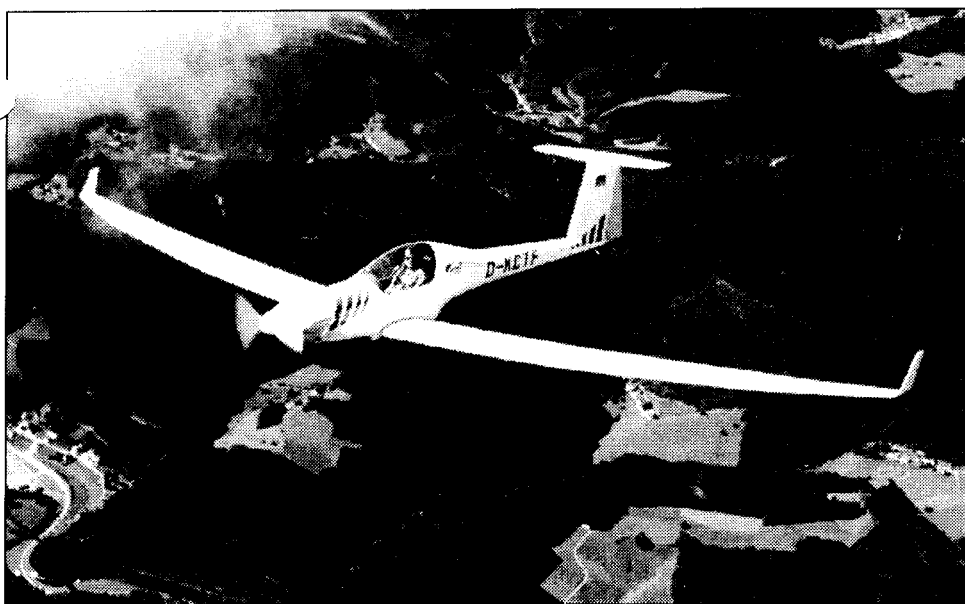
As for the Cobra Trailer, I must say that it receives as many complements as the Glider. All visitors who have looked over the glider and trailer make comments about how nice the trailer looks and how well it is put together. The thoughtful and clever engineering incorporated in its construction reflect the lessons learned over the years. Alfred Spindelberger has a right to be proud of his Cobra Trailers.

In summary, I am highly pleased with the glider and the trailer. Both are excellent examples of fine German craftsmanship. I am not at all disappointed with the transaction of ordering and purchasing the equipment, and you can see by the examples that I've provided that I am very satisfied with the factory support. I am eager to begin logging some long cross country flights.



Peter Kelly is a retired Air Force pilot with a total of 20,000 hrs in powered aircraft including 16,000 hrs in jets. He soloed a glider in 1982 and has over 2,000 hrs in gliders. His home is in Vacaville, CA. Peter is currently a pilot flying for American Airlines and is qualified in the MD-80 (DC-9) aircraft.





PILOT REPORT: THE TECHNOFLUG CARAT A New Touring Motorglider

After producing the Piccolo in more than 170 units in the past years, Technoflug adds the Carat to its production line. Although being a touring sailplane, the Carat features a lot of specs, which make the Carat a true glider as well. The design concept was very simple. Take some existing well flying set of wings from a Standard Class Glider that is no more in production, add a fuselage with a conventionally located powerplant and reduce drag as much as you can.

The wing chosen are the very well performing wings of the DISCUS. Drag in gliding is dramatically reduced by folding the propeller blades forward, like a huge spinner. The blades are interconnected and fold forward like the leaves of a lotus flower. During the startup procedure, centrifugal forces unfold the propeller smoothly. No pilot action is required. It is just that simple. The Carat is trailerable and fits into a Standard class Discus trailer. Some modifications on the rails of the trailer and another fuselage dolly are needed, if a genuine existing Discus trailer will be used. The Carat is designed to be put together alone. This is easy to be done in less than 10 minutes. After extending the landing gear, the fuselage is pulled backwards on its own landing gear. Then the wings are inserted into the fuselage, just like on a glider. The only difference is, that the spars are guided into the mounting position, there is no back and forth or ups and downs for mounting.

The wings are secured by one central bolt, that connects the two spars and which snaps into a safety latch. Of course, the controls for speed brakes, aileron and elevator, connect automatically. No tools or loose parts are involved for the assembly. The rudder pedals adjust for different pilot sizes, as well as the seat rest which is adjustable in length and angle.

The seating position is very good and the rudder pedals are not too narrow. The fuel tank is located ahead the instrument panel. It holds 45 Liters which equals 11.5 US gals usable fuel.

After a short check, the Carat is ready to go. Climbing into the cockpit is easy, even without stepping on the seat. If the canopy isn't secured the locking lever sticks right into the cockpit to remind the knucklehead that there is something wrong. Power is supplied by a Volkswagen engine conversion by Sauer. The reliable 4 cylinder opposed engine delivers 54 HP at 3000 RPM. The engine compartment has no baffles. The cooling air is guided through two inlets directly to the cylinders, which are covered by a fiberglass fairing. I have seen this kind of cooling before in Reno at the Formula 1 racers. It is very effective and has a low drag coefficient. Oil level is checked through a small opening in the cowling.

Starting the engine is just like starting a motorcycle. Pull the enrich-starter knob and turn the ignition switch to ON. Then press the starter button and the engine will fire and run. After a while, depress the enrich knob at your convenience and you're ready to go. On my first engine starting attempt, I felt uncomfortable, because the sound and the vision did not fit together. You hear an engine cranking up front, but you don't see a prop turning. But as soon as the engine fires, the prop unfolds and everything looks as usual. Instrumentation on the prototype is a blast. The new single screen color EFIS of BHD uses solid state gyros with no moving parts. The screen is very readable. The system displays a airspeed, airspeed trend, stall speed as a function of G loads. G loads, attitude, turn rate, heading and track, altitude, vertical speed and VNAV information from the GPS, just like in an Airbus or a Boeing. A Filser total energy compensated gliding computer / VSI and moving map do their part for navigation and climb information.

The Carat has a steerable tailwheel, connected to the rudder. It does not swivel 360°, but with a full rudder deflection, the Carat turns nicely around its wingtip. Steering is very direct. The forward visibility, while taxiing straight is limited, but taxiing in shallow S-turns allows you to see the entire taxiway in front of the airplane. After a 450 ft takeoff run, the Carat lifts off, in a 3-point attitude. The gear takes 20 seconds to retract. The retractable gear is worked by an electric pump, that actuates two hydraulic cylinders. A small manual backup allows to extend the gear with no electrical power. With the gear down the climb rate is 550 ft/min. Gear up shows 750 ft/min at 68 kts.

The overall impression I had from the Carat after flying it for a couple of hours is extremely good. Handling characteristics on the ground and in flight are excellent. The engine is dependable and the propeller's construction is so simple, that it can't cause a problem. The workmanship equals other German-built gliders, excellent and unmatched. The effort and time required to put the Carat in the trailer are the shortest I have ever seen. The gliding performance is as good as the performance offered by a Standard Class Glider of an early 80s design. The fuel consumption at 2.7 gals/hr at 115 kts is reasonable. The two luggage compartments have a volume of 32 gals. This should be enough for camping gear etc. The power-on range with no reserves, no wind at 115kts is more than 500nm. If you want to extend that and time is not a factor, it is no problem. Simply cruise - climb to 12,000 ft, shut the engine and glide the next 50 miles engine off. Restart at 3,000 ft and climb to 12,000ft again. This sawtooth profile works even without thermals and ridge lift and brings the range to over 1,000nm! The Carat is the ultimate tool for recreational flying if you are interested in independent soaring. Not to mention the limited acrobatic capabilities. The Carat will be certified to do loops, lazy eights, hammerheads, immelmans and other easy acrobatic maneuvers. The list price ex-factory for the basic airplane without optional instruments will be DM 122,000. By the time you are ready to fly and want to have a nice trailer, you are talking around \$ 95,000 + US dollars.

The visibility, while flying the Carat is excellent. The feeling sitting just behind those wide spread wings is really cool, almost like cloud-surfing. The Carat proves once more that the ability to have fun in an airplane is only limited to the pilot and his imagination.

Thomas PAUL for AEROKURIER

For more information contact: Technoflug GmbH at Dr.-Kurt-Steim-Strasse 6, D-78713, Schramberg, Germany
Tel: 011-49-7422-8423
Fax: 011-49-7422-8744
email: snowbirdxx@aol.com



Motorglider International Editor Visits Minden

Gillian Bryce-Smith and husband Bryce spent a few days in Minden in October as part of their vacation to the USA. Bryce was seeking the wave but the weather did not materialize. He is an ex-RAF pilot having been in one of the first squadrons flying the Gloster Meteor twin jet fighter. He is retired civil engineer with over 4,000 glider hrs and 4,100 hrs in powered aircraft. He currently owns and flies a Ventus CT, DG-500-22 and a Vega 17L. His first glider solo was in 1947. Their son is a KLM captain and their daughter is a first officer flying 747/400s

Gillian's background is as a journalist with a provincial daily newspaper in England. Her position was the women's editor as well as the drama, music and art critic. Today she is the Editor of Sailplane and Gliding and the new MGI magazine both of which display her energy and professionalism as top notch soaring publications. To subscribe to Motorgliding International (6 Issues/yr), send \$34 to SSA, P.O. Box 2100, Hobbs, NM 88241-2100 USA. Pho: 505-392-1177, Fax: 505-392-8154 E-Mail: Info@ssa.org To subscribe through the British Gliding Association send 20£ to Kimberly House, Vaughan Way, Leicester LE1 4SE, United Kingdom, Tel: xx-44-116-2531051; Fax: xx-44-116-2515939; E-Mail bgahq@aol.com

PIK-20 Parts

- 2 - PIK 20E compression valves
- 1 - Dual ignition compression valve
- 1 - Tail wheel axle nut plate and screw
- 1 - Tail wheel axle with screw, nut plate and nut
- 1 - Guide for fuselage push tube
- 1 - PIK 20 control stick assembly
- 11 - Seat pan nuts
- 1 - Long bolt used on PIK trailer front support
- 1 - Canopy seal pump
- 4 - Control bearing(s)
- 2 - Rudder cables
- 1 - L'Hotellier horizontal tail control connection - L'Hotellier fitting)
- 2 - Safety pins used on the (L'Hotellier tail fitting)
- 2 - Safety pins for aileron connections - PIK 20D
- 1 - Main wheel axle assembly (B- model)
- Selected pieces of Interglas cloth
- Nuts - M-6 & M-8 (quant. small)
- Misc. Knobs & Handles (cockpit)

Copies available of PIK - 20 flight, repair and maintenance manuals.

CONTACT MIKE ADAMS
1231 2nd. Street, Manhattan Beach, CA
90266, Tel: 310-372-1252

Correction to Honing Your Landing Skills-Part II

Under Level Off and Touchdown, Bill Ivans brought to my attention that in the Nimbus-4DM the preferred way, after touchdown, is to keep the tail low as speed diminishes and to come to a stop with the tailwheel in contact with the runway. Bills says if the aircraft is brought to a stop with the nose wheel in contact with the runway, the tailwheel drops hard onto the runway and may cause damage. This has something to do with the location of the center of gravity in relation to the main wheel and the same procedure applies to the Nimbus 3DM. Thanks Bill for the input.

For the Grob 103 SL and DG-500M, the aircraft can be braked to a stop with the nosewheel in contact with the runway as the CG is forward of the main landing gear.

BALLARD STREET By Jerry Van Amerongen



"Evidently you got your new wheel bearings."

FOR SALE

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TWO-PLACE SELF LAUNCHING POWERED SAILPLANE, 1994, TTAF-430, TTE-87, FULLY LOADED, COBRA TRAILER, EXCELLENT CONDITION: \$139,700.
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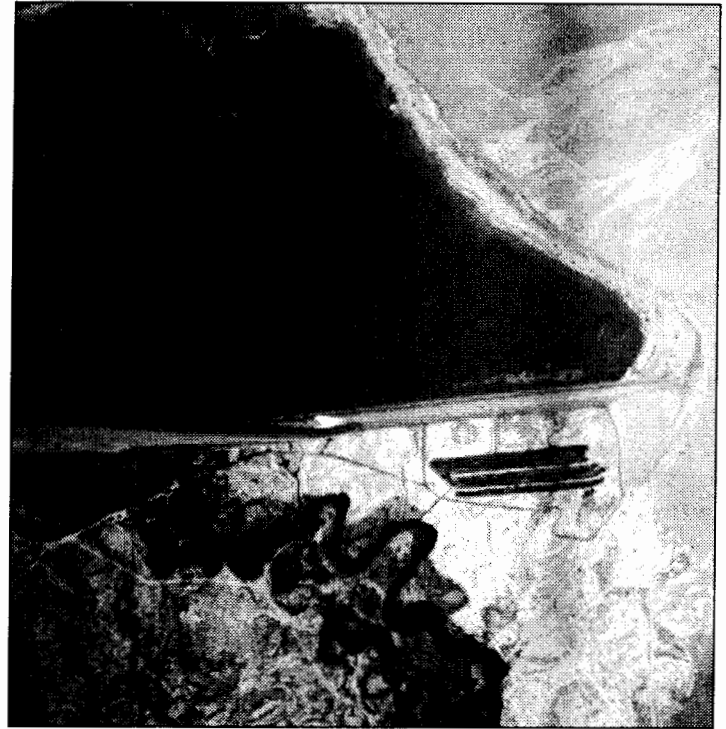
WINTERIZING YOUR ENGINE

If you do not expect to fly for a period of over 6 weeks, it is a good idea to inject some preservative oil into the engine to combat bearing corrosion. OMC makes a storage fogging oil for this purpose. This fogging oil is available from most boat or cycle shops and is ideal for both 2 and 4-stroke engines. Follow the directions and inject directly into the carbs while the engine is running or you can spray the carbs of a warm engine and hand turn the prop several blades. Do not put an excessive amount in, 1-2 oz is adequate. Be prepared for white smoke to emit during startup.

News and Views



Dan Matzke and Terry Honikman in Terry's Stemme preparing for takeoff on a cold November day at Minden-Tahoe airport. Dan had a camera mounted on the wing to record the flight. Williams



Tinemaha Reservoir dam spillway framed in a turn point photo from Pete Williams DG-800B. This is a popular 500km O/R turn point located about 25 mi. south of Bishop, CA. The Owens River can be seen at the bottom of the frame.



Peter Kelly photographs Pete Williams DG-800B during a high speed letdown over Minden-Tahoe airport. To our knowledge this is the first time two 800Bs flew together in the USA.

Tonopah, Nevada airport as seen from Pete Williams DG-400. Photo taken in late afternoon looking north. The huge 500'X5,000' white concrete parking ramp permitted adequate parking for many B-24 bombers during WW2. The main runway (15/33- 7,126X76') and taxiway are seen just to the right of the parking ramp. Runway 11/29 at mid-right is closed but can be used in an emergency.

The town of Tonopah is six miles to the west (left) on highway 6. Highway 376 can be seen heading north toward Austin. The mountain ranges seen in the distance rise to over 11,000'. Field altitude is 5,426' msl.

Tonopah boasts 350 days per year VFR weather. In the summer temperatures can rise to over 90 degrees but the nights are cool. Winds blow normally from the north in the AM and south in the PM. Gusty thermals can start as early as 10AM. This is high speed cross-country territory with thermals (and sink) in excess of 1,000fpm. Places to outland are limited. The high desert dry climate requires adequate pilot preparation for survival after a landout.



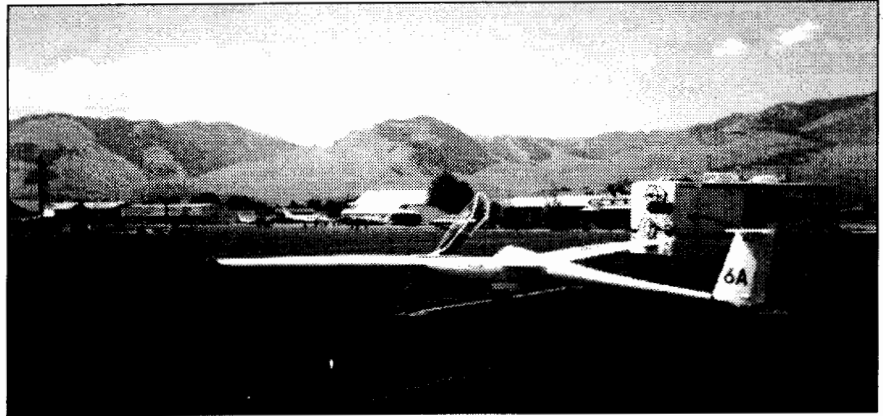
A Summer Safari :

Lewiston, Hamilton, Salmon, and Sun Valley

By Eric Greenwell

Eric flies his ASH-26E out of Richland Washington Airport and normally visits the Hailey, Idaho airport each summer. This is an account of his 1998 sorties to and out of Hailey..

Bored without the usual interstate 84 route to Sun Valley, I devised a more interesting approach: we would go to Lewiston, Idaho, and attempt to fly from there to Hamilton on the first day, then to Salmon on the second, and finally arrive at Sun Valley (Hailey) on the third day. It'd take longer, but it had to be more interesting than the all day, 10 hour drive from Richland to Sun Valley.



Eric's ASH-26E on the flight line at Hamilton Airport

After leaving Richland early on Saturday morning, we drove past Lewiston, hoping the blue skies would offer a few clouds by the time we got to Orofino, about 44 miles farther. A recurring vibration in our MH chassis made us turn back to Lewiston, where we waited until Monday for the Ford dealer to determine there was not any problem. This delay, and lack of obvious lift to ease the way over the 100 miles of unlandable mountains and rivers of the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests encouraged us to simply drive on. We stopped at the Orofino airport, which appeared suitable for my ASH 26 E self-launching sailplane, though there isn't much to land on if you can't get turned around after a launch failure. The next town, Kamiah, had an excellent grass strip, wide and well-kept. We parked the motor home near the hangars, with a view of the strip and the mountains to the east, while we had dinner.

A long drive to Lolo followed, burning deeply into my mind that there was nothing to safe to land on between Kamiah and the long valley with Missoula on the North and Darby on the south. After spending the night in a truck stop at Lolo, we drove towards Hamilton. Soaring conditions seemed to be developing slowly, so we stopped at the Stevensville golf course for a nine-hole round. The Hamilton airport seemed much bigger than we remembered from the safari through there about 15 years ago, during the SSA's 50th anniversary celebration. Besides the taxiway next to the runway, there were three other parallel taxiways, all with hangars. A lot of money has moved into Hamilton. Nonetheless, I assembled unmolested in the middle of one the taxiways, near the Hamilton club's Blanik, with the help of a large fellow working in an avionics shop at the end of one of the taxiways.

It took a 4000' climb to contact lift over the ridges to the west of the airfield; going east might have allowed a lower launch at the expense of going a

greater distance. All the cumulus were over the hills, with only smooth air in the valley. Once I contacted lift, the soaring was great! I headed west towards Orofino until the clouds ended, still 65 miles away. The airstrip at Kamiah was 10 miles closer and an easy glide, except there were only trees, mountains, and lakes in between. Well, I didn't want to go there anyway, so I returned to Hamilton and headed across the valley towards Wisdom, MT. Meanwhile, Jan was making good progress with the motor home and trailer towards Salmon, our next destination. I continued past Wisdom about 20 miles in the direction of Dillon, then turned towards Salmon, now only 45 miles away. I was able to coast over the ridges into Salmon.

That evening, a thunderstorm came up so quickly, I decided it was safer to leave the glider out, rather than risk de-rigging in the approaching rain, wind, and lightening. In the morning, things had dried out enough that we went golfing at a nifty course right in town. Launching from Salmon, I had the same problem that I had at Hamilton, again taking almost a 4000' climb to contact the lift over the hills. I suspect someone familiar with the area, or in better conditions, could get away with a lower launch, as one attempt doesn't give you much chance to experiment. Once on my way towards the south, I could hear the Sun Valley pilots were already on their way, so I headed for Mt. Bora to intercept Tom Seim on his way to Henry's Lake and return for a Diamond Distance attempt. The lift was only fair and I couldn't even get to the bases around 13,000'. As a result, I made pretty good time because I didn't spend much of it circling. Jan found the road to Sun Valley via Challis and Stanley interesting but slow.

Next time, she says she'll try going around by Mackay and Arco. I didn't catch Tom until we'd turned Henry's Lake. The soaring became a bit uneven after that, and we struggled with weak lift and long glides for a time passing Dubois, but the Lost River Range had one cloud that was Gangbusters. We divided there, with Tom going more southerly, while I headed mostly West. We intersected again about 20 miles out. I continued in, while Tom hung around, relaying for Roger Frank until it was clear he would also make it back; in his case, from a round trip of 350 miles to the Grand Teton in Wyoming! One more name on the Louis Stur trophy for 1998.

A couple days later Tom and I headed for the Grand Teton. After climbing out, we diverged almost immediately, because Tom had a much clearer idea of the direction to the Grand Teton. By the time I realized my mistake, it was best to continue on a southerly route around a storm cell. Good streets led us east, but the clouds ended as the farming began near Idaho Falls. My navigational goof put me at the last cloud higher and ahead of Tom, who slid in under me about a 1000 feet below. We maintained this separation after using the last of the lift and heading east again, flying very slowly towards some wisps in the foothills about 20 miles away. With my extra altitude, I aimed for the northern most cloud, figuring I could coast under the clouds in the hills west of Driggs if the wisps in between didn't work. Tom headed a bit more southeasterly, aiming for a group of wisps. This deviation proved crucial, as I contacted good lift at my wisp, enabling me to continue quickly to the street south of Driggs that led directly to the Grand Teton, but Tom did not connect right away and quickly fell behind.

I rounded the Grand Teton a few hundred feet below the peak, hoping the light wind produced down currents that were equally light. Rounding the Grand from the west side is an intense experience because that side gradually rises to the base of the peak, but the back side plummets 7000' to the Jackson Hole valley floor. It felt like I was flinging my self off a cliff, even though I was securely belted into my glider.

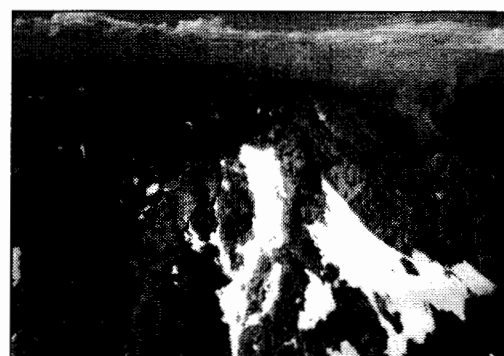
All that fine weather and tail wind that got me down there in a little over 2 hours became a huge thunderstorm and a head wind. The next two hours were long, long glides with only weak thermals to get me only half way back to Hailey, but at last I was around the line of virga and overcast that had spread out from Idaho Falls. Conditions improved markedly, as I was able to make good climbs to 15,000 feet again, and pressed on quickly as the day was winding down. At the east edge of the Lost River Range, east of Mackay, I climbed to 16,000 feet,

then followed a street for 10 miles, making it an easy glide into Hailey, then only 55 miles away and into a diminishing head wind.

Tom never made up the time he lost when we parted company at Idaho Falls, and finally the dying day forced him to use the engine to cover the last 35 miles from Antelope to Hailey. It's fascinating how sometimes a small difference in altitude or position at one moment in flight can make such a big difference later on. My blunder when leaving Hailey in the wrong direction, even though it cost me 15 or 20 minutes then, was all wiped away by the time we got to Idaho Falls, where my more southerly route put me in a better position to use that last cloud. It's this kind of thing that contest rules handle by using multiple days and devaluing days when only a very few get around. My plans to fly towards home from Hailey were thwarted by marginal cloud bases and strong winds, so we just hooked up and headed out a couple days later. But what a great flying I had on the trip down!



Two spectacular views from Eric's cockpit of the Teton. Above is 13,770' Grand Teton Peak looking NE.



Right: In the foreground is Grand Teton Peak. View taken looking North along the Teton Range.

ASA Mission

The Auxiliary powered Sailplane Association, Inc. is a non-profit organization founded to encourage the design, development and safe use of motorgliders, self-launching and sustainer engine sailplanes to advance the art of soaring by promoting:

- * Participation in World, National and Regional Championships.
- * Mutual exchange of safe flying procedures, servicing, repair and maintenance information.
- * The establishment of F.A.I Soaring Records and Badge flights.
- * The development of friendly relations between U.S. and foreign pilots who fly motorgliders, self-launching and sustainer engine sailplanes.

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Membership in ASA is open to anyone interested in powered sailplanes. Write or call:
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ASA desires input on what the members want in this newsletter and we are doing all we can to keep it informative and interesting. It's your newsletter, so let us hear from you!

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