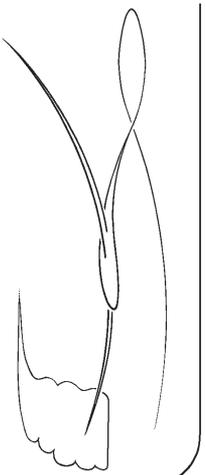


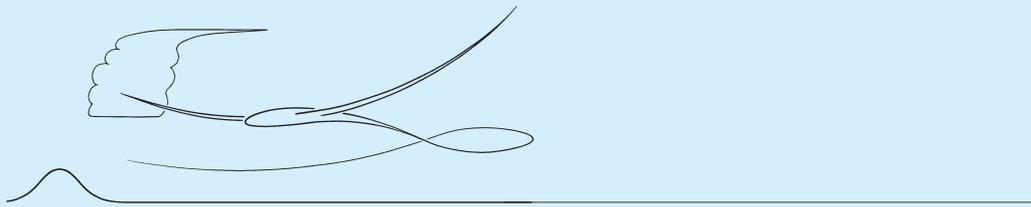
# ASCent

the journal of the Alberta Soaring Council



2017 Season

# ASCent *the 2017 season*



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## **ASCent is the annual journal of the Alberta Soaring Council**

The Alberta Soaring Council is an alliance of Alberta soaring clubs supporting the Soaring Association of Canada.

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### **Cover**

*Zulu Alpha casts its shadow on the Livingstone Range while taking advantage of ridge lift at the Cowley Summer Camp.*

*photo: Patrick Pelletier*



**I**N EARLY 2016 we decided it was time to expand our fleet and by May we were deep into *Wings & Wheels* and *Segelflug.de* classifieds. It was relatively easy to create a detailed list of aircraft that we might consider but the task became a lot more complex when it came to focusing on a specific glider to pursue. The proverbial shiny objects were distracting us one way or the other, so our discussions swung wildly from motor gliders to tandem two-seaters to aerobatic ships. In June, 2016 we got down to work and hundreds of e-mails and several meetings later, we decided that a newer model single-seater for cross-country and competition flying would meet our needs. With the narrower focus and a price range approved by the club we hoped to quickly respond to new ads on the internet.

By mid-November we had researched numerous possibilities but no particular aircraft was meeting all our requirements. Most of them looked great in the photos but we were getting better at reading between the lines: 'carefully maintained by mechanic owner' could mean 'never inspected by anyone else', and 'some minor damage' could mean 'had accident but didn't fix it'.

The first encounter with our ASW-28 was on *Gliderforsale.org* and *Segelflug.de* in late November 2016 and by the end of the day on the 23rd we had agreed on a deal including a deposit. It's always a judgement call on trusting sellers enough to put down cash, but within hours of contacting the seller we were impressed by his candor. Online searches and many years of OLC results for that aircraft and pilot added to our confidence. Before sending the money we also spoke with the Terlet Service Centre mechanic in the Netherlands and received a detailed verbal report on the condition of the glider based on his recent polishing work and previous annual inspections. Beyond that, our seller, Bas Seiffert, was particularly easy to deal with. As a KLM pilot he flies into Calgary every few years and in January his schedule provided him with a layover and chance to visit Cu Nim. YouTube videos of his airshow flying <<https://youtu.be/ABOTox-FX6A>> and his two times at the Worlds had us intrigued, so a good

sized group of club pilots met for supper at the field on 21 January. Of course there were lots of great stories of growing up around gliding clubs, an epic retrieve that included a police chase with his mother in the back seat of the cruiser, flying in Junior competitions, the Worlds and, to the point, what it was like to fly the 28. By the end of the evening we could hardly wait to fly the new aircraft.

Once the decision to buy had been made it would have been good to have a formal to-do list to reduce the delays in completing the import. The COPA 'Guide to Importing an Aircraft' provided a standard approach but I discovered gliders coming from Europe may have a number of issues that require a specialized list. Early in the list would be:

- type certification.
- de-registration.
- contact a Minister's Delegate – Maintenance.
- engage an AME.
- get a detailed list of all instruments including make, model and serial number.
- determine which instruments should be removed for sale before shipping and which ones must be converted from metric to imperial.
- order all replacement instruments after confirming size required and space available.
- obtain copy of log book and technical log to determine that all repairs were correctly performed by qualified persons.
- contact a shipper and determine availability of shipping container, then determine who will pack it.
- negotiate shipping insurance.
- find a place where the container can be unloaded safely.
- ensure the serial number on the trailer is acceptable in North America and that the towing coupler and all lights are or will be converted.

Well it didn't go as smoothly as it could have, but eventually the glider had the first Canadian type certification for a -28. The fun started when it arrived; first there was a → 25

# a fine week of soaring

Jay Allardyce, Patrick McMahon, & Chris Gough

**For 5 days in May, southern Alberta was the place to be for great soaring in North America.**

**O**NE OF THE GREAT BENEFITS of owning a glider is having the ability to take it away from home field and visit new and interesting places to fly. For five years I have owned a share in DX, an ASW-19, and for the last three have made a point of taking some time off work to fly at different sites. My 2015 trip took me to Netook to fly the Canadian Nationals. I met Bruce Friesen there, having enviously followed his amazing flights out of ESC. I was eager to sample the air around Chipman, so 2016 brought me back to Alberta to participate in one of ESC's May flying weeks. The added benefit of going to ESC was the opportunity to hang out and do some flying with long time friend and ESC member Chris Gough. Chris had also recently purchased his own glider, a Ventus b, so I was looking forward to doing some flying with him in his new ship.

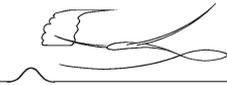
Many text messages were exchanged with Chris in the week leading up to my planned departure evaluating our options, and eventually we ended up at Cu Nim rather than a wet ESC. A fringe benefit of flying out of Cu Nim was that Chris and Denise live in Calgary so that meant I wouldn't have to sleep in a tent for at least some of the trip. After a 14 hour drive from Winnipeg, I arrived in Calgary shortly after 7 pm on Wednesday. Fellow glider pilot and new friend Patrick McMahon joined us for a lovely dinner that Chris and Denise prepared. The soaring outlook was decent for Thursday so we headed to bed at a reasonable hour in anticipation of a good day of flying.

**Thursday, May 18** The goal for today was to familiarize myself with the area to prepare for what was looking to be even better soaring days ahead when I could hopefully attempt some ambitious tasks. Other than students flying in the DG-1000, Chris and I were the only other gliders that flew that day. We took off shortly after 1 pm. Chris and I connected post-release and he suggested we follow a cloud street to the southwest into the hills; however, it was starting to overdevelop and the path to the hills would see us dodging rain showers. After climbing slowly in a weak thermal in light rain, I suggested that we head into the sun.

We had a decent run to the Porkies about 50 km south, then headed east to just past the McGregor reservoir, a landmark that would become quite familiar the next several days. After I got a bit low there, we decided to head back towards the club since at that point we were more than 100 km away. We pointed our nose towards Okotoks and once there Chris decided to head straight back to the club while I elected to take advantage of a few good clouds to the southwest before turning home, good for just over 300 km at a reasonable average speed of 86 km/h. Not bad for a warm up flight to shake the dust off on what was only my second flight in DX this season. *OLC: 304 km @ 86 km/h, 3:47 hr.*

**Friday, May 19** Today promised to be even better. Chris and I both planned to fly with water and rigged as quickly as possible to give us enough time to fill 'er up. As we were rigging, the cu were already starting to pop so we were eager to get into the air. Chris headed to the faucet first and filled his ballast tanks to the max. I had planned a 500 km flight the night before with hopes of completing my final Diamond distance badge leg. I elected to fly with about half of the total capacity but discovered that the drains were leaking. I decided it was better to dump all the water and fly dry. What a waste of time.

Off tow, I had a bit of a challenge connecting right away but eventually climbed to the airspace ceiling of 8000 feet and headed off. The task for the day was Cu Nim – Stand Off – Patricia (northeast of Brooks) – Cu Nim, an FAI triangle of just over 500 km. The day predicted towering cu and I could already see some starting to form on my first leg. I managed to stay in the working band, which was between 7500 and 10,000 feet most of the way to Stand Off. When I was about 30 km from Stand Off, it was starting to overdevelop on track so I stayed as high as possible. Fortunately, the clouds were working well with what sun was hitting the ground and getting to the turn was no problem. When I radioed Chris, he informed me that he was already on the second leg of his triangle and was just passing Taber after making his first turnpoint at Del Bonita on the USA border.



My flight track towards Patricia was as straight as could be for 100 km until I had to deviate 30 km east around a tcu. It was now 4 pm and the clouds were getting a little thinner but still working reasonably well.

On turning Patricia at 4:30, I was about 180 km from Cu Nim. Covering this distance would have had me landing about 6:30, not unreasonable if the conditions had remained consistent, but towering cu had cut a lot of the ground heating and the day was starting to die. Almost every decent looking cloud I tried had about half their earlier lift strength – getting home was going to be a challenge. The clouds lined up along Highway #1, so I followed them to maximize my chances. I had my last good climb at Rosemary, north of Brooks, and then it was a smooth 50 km glide to my land-out in a field bordering Highway #1.

Chris made it back after completing a 600 km triangle so he came to pick me up. As I reflected on the day, my biggest mistake was not taking off early enough. Had I taken off about the same time as Chris, I may have been able to make it home. *OLC: 452 km @ 86 km/h, 5:32 hr.*

**Saturday, May 20** Wanting to take another stab at a 500, I came up with a slightly different task from the day before. Given the predicted overdevelopment, I wanted to stay a bit closer to Cu Nim to make the trip home on the last leg a bit easier late in the day. The other motivation was to make a retrieve easier if I did land out again. The resulting task was in the shape of an arrow with four legs: Cu Nim – Lethbridge – Standard – Champion – Cu Nim.

Today the club was a beehive of activity. Patrick also came out and was able to wrangle the club Jantar for the day and was excited to join Chris and me. I tried my best to secure my place for an early take-off but the line up was longer and I didn't get up until noon – not as early as I had hoped. Patrick joined me for a bit. We had hoped to fly more of the flight together but we got separated and had trouble reconnecting on task.

**Patrick** ... *When I moved west for work I thought the draw of Alberta was flying in the mountains – ridge and wave. In the extremely limited flying time I'd had getting checked out and loosely acquainting myself with flying in Alberta, I had already been very impressed by the thermal conditions, both strength and height. On the Victoria Day weekend, glider bros Chris Gough (99) of Cu Nim and Jay Allardyce (DX) of Winnipeg Gliding Club were hoping for some great cross-country weather to fly together. They weren't disappointed and put up some great flights before I arrived at Cu Nim on Saturday to tag along if I could.*

*I thought my chances of getting an aircraft were low as a new member, a great forecast on a long weekend, and three aircraft available at the time. But around 11 am, a member who had been planning to do some spot landing exercises in the Jantar changed their mind and I had an airplane to chase my new friends. Getting airborne, my second thermal took me up to the 8000 ceiling so I ran out towards High River. Being concerned about the airspace top was a new concept for me, someone who had only twice before flown a glider through 10,000 feet. I pushed to a better looking cloud along the route toward Lethbridge, 150 km away – more a directional point than a goal. Soon enough, strong lift above and beyond 10,000 was easy to find and Lethbridge appeared quickly. With a limited turnpoint file and wanting to stay relatively close to Cu Nim, I chose my next direction towards Drumheller while other pilots were heading further east to Brooks. To my surprise I made it to within 40 km of Drumheller before deciding to turn back. Lift remained strong on the leg around the YYC airspace to Cu Nim then, with my extra altitude, I flew toward the mountains before a 30 km final glide home.*

*Before that flight, my best OLC flight was a 387 km, 451 point, trace in southern Ontario. This second XC flight in Alberta was 517 km at 97 km/h, worth 647 points. I was shocked! Chris had the best flight of the day in North America, I had the third best and Jay was sixth. This was an OLC page I'd never looked for my name on before! What a day!*

**Jay** My first leg was going well until I got low about 40 km from Lethbridge. The path ahead was dark with overdeveloped cumulus. Patrick was ahead of me and made it through but I didn't want to risk getting low again and my landout from the day before had me hoping for a shorter day, so I elected to abandon my task and fly for OLC points instead. Studying my options, I decided to fly northeast towards Brooks and I managed to avoid any low spots. My highest point was just over 11,500 feet after leaving Brooks.

The trip home was a long 145 km leg which was not overly difficult but did require quite a large deviation to the south to avoid a giant blue hole. Once I had Cu Nim made, the lift was still quite good so I pushed about 25 km northwest of Cu Nim to extend my flight. Chris landed shortly after I did and we tied down the gliders to save us a bit of energy in the morning and allow us to sleep in a little. *OLC: 458 km at 84 km/h, 5:35 hr.*

**Sunday, May 21** Chris and I had just experienced three fantastic soaring days in a row so I thought that there was no way that this was going to continue. To my surprise, Sunday was predicted to be even better with cloud bases forecast

to go as high as 13,000 feet! The only challenge for today would be the northwest winds which were estimated to be around 25 kts at altitude. I figured it was worthwhile to keep the same task that I had abandoned on Saturday.

Today's conditions did not allow for an early take-off so I was rolling down the runway at about 12:20. The biggest challenge for me initially was getting away from Cu Nim. The high cloud base made finding the cores quite difficult considering you must stay below 8000 feet until about 30 km from Cu Nim. It wasn't until I was 40 km from Cu Nim that I was able to climb close to cloud base. The 8000 feet airspace ceiling around Cu Nim was a challenge as it meant leaving good climbs sooner than I would have liked. After I was able to climb to cloud base, the run to Lethbridge was good. The tailwind on this leg helped my ground speed substantially. Climbs to over 12,000 feet were common and I actually made it to the turnpoint. My mindset today was that I was either going to finish the task or land out.

The leg north from Lethbridge to Standard was a tough slog. The strong wind resulted in an average speed on this leg of only 70 km/h so it took me almost 2.5 hours to complete the 170 km. At two points on this leg I got down to 7000 feet (~3800 feet agl) but given that cloud base was at 13,000, I was well below the working band. After I dug myself out of that hole, the rest of the run north was uneventful. I reached Standard at 4:40 and there still seemed to be lots of day left. At this point, it was either 90 km straight home to Cu Nim or 100 km to Champion. Remembering my earlier philosophy, finish or land out, I opted to go for it. I had 180 km to go to finish the task but the last leg from Champion would be completely into wind and it had only reduced slightly from earlier in the day. I pointed towards Champion determined to finish the task. I remarked to myself as I was flying to Champion that my distance back to Cu Nim wasn't getting any shorter so this eased the temptation to abandon the task and head home. The biggest change on this leg was that the lift was definitely not as strong as earlier in the day and I wasn't getting as high either.

When I rounded Champion, I was at 10,000 feet. The clouds were way above me but thermals weren't working nearly well enough to get me to cloud base and that's really where I needed to be so late in the day to have a hope at making it home. It was now just after 5:30 and I had 90 km to go. After leaving Champion, I flew under every cloud I could reach with the hope of finding any little scrap of lift that remained. I had flown 16 km from Champion and with the strong wind and sink I lost 3500 feet. It was like flying in a lead brick. Fortunately I was over the Kirkcaldy airport and also had a marginal glide to Vulcan airport 10 km away.

Vulcan was my first choice as I could hang out there and grab a bite to eat while waiting for my crew. I was pretty much resigned to the fact that I was either landing at Kirkcaldy or Vulcan when I hit a bump. I almost discounted it as I had grown accustomed to 4 and 5 knot thermals so a 1 knotter was just a blip. However, I quickly reminded myself that you never know when a 1 knot thermal could grow into a 5. I worked that thermal for 25 minutes and eventually found myself back at 8300 feet. Not high by any means but high enough to make it to the next clouds which would hopefully yield better lift. I then set my sights on getting as close as I could to High River. I figured that if I could at least get there, the retrieve would be much easier. After gliding a bit to the next bank of clouds, I was treated to 3 knots which took me to 11,000 feet. I was elated as I now had High River made with height to spare and I set off at best L/D speed. Along the way, I drifted under any wisp of cloud in an attempt to get that final few thousand feet to make Cu Nim. Aside from a few unworkable bumps, the glide was largely smooth and I sat back and tried to relax and enjoy the smooth air.

I arrived over High River at about 2500 feet agl so I had some time to try to work some bumps. I tried every scrap but once it was clear that climbing away was impossible, I shifted my focus to landing, and I was down at 7:55 and pushed the glider off the runway.

Then tried to call Chris but my phone was completely dead as I had neglected to charge my external battery from the previous flight. I went to every hangar that had a car parked next to it but the airport was completely deserted. By this point I had been on the ground 20 minutes and knew Chris would be getting concerned that he hadn't heard from me. He had an idea of where I was as we had some broken contact via radio when I was over High River. Fortunately, an RV8 landed and taxied over to one of the hangars so I explained my predicament to the couple and they lent me their phone. The couple was kind enough to charge my phone and give me some assistance moving the glider to the apron. Chris arrived, we derigged and made plans to go to the only place in town that would be open late on a Sunday, Boston Pizza. *OLC: 533 km @ 71 km/h, 7:34 hr.*

*Patrick I was late to the field on Sunday with no expectation that I'd have a club glider for two whole days on a long weekend, with conditions like these... How could I even consider another flight after the high water mark set the day before? But again, no other interest in the Jantar so I put it on the line and launched second behind 99 and before DX around noon. Almost immediately I caught a thermal and was flying up to 100 kts just to stay out of the 8000 foot airspace above. Once clear, another took me to the next*

ceiling and I was under a cloud street headed right to my destination of Lethbridge. These were the strongest conditions I'd ever flown in, and radioed that I was on an autobahn to Lethbridge even while 99 and DX were struggling to break through 9000 at the time. The day before I had let the flight happen and left a lot of energy in the sky, today I was intent on making it happen.

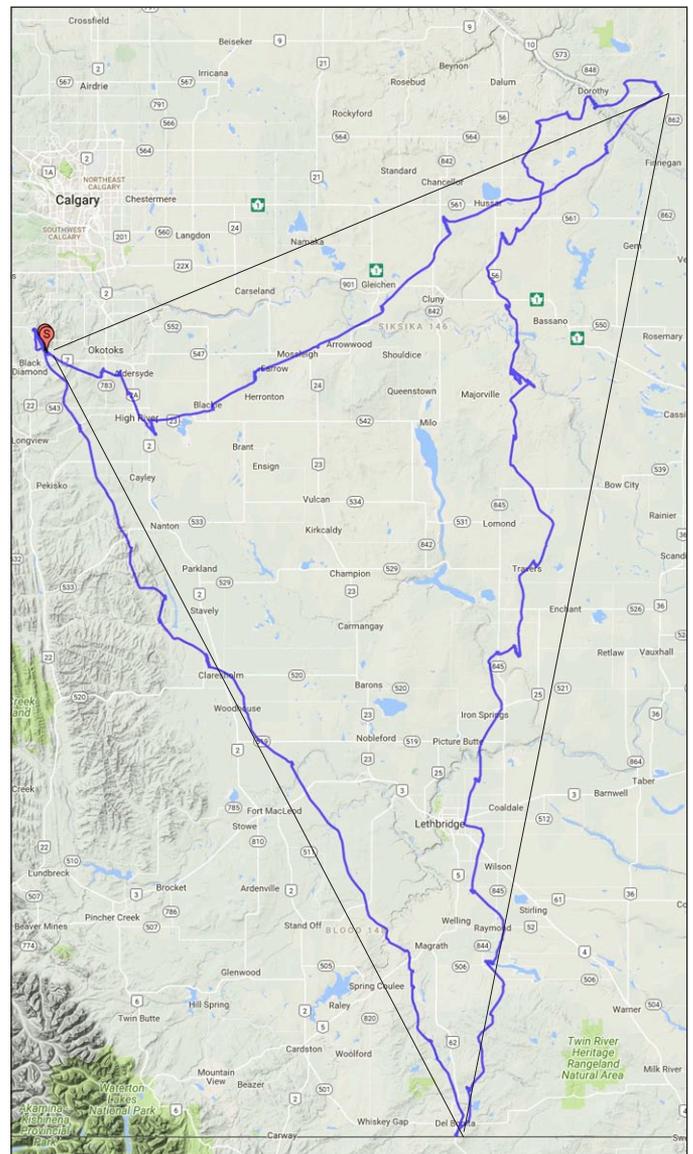
Conditions became less easy toward Lethbridge which I overflew and made a small leg west. The 17 knot tailwind turned into a headwind with broken clouds that weren't working reliably. The push north was a slow grind. The strong winds made it hard to connect with clouds a few thousand feet above. At 16:45 I was 80 km out of Hanna when clouds started to work a little more reliably and lined up and the wind was down to about 11 kts. The flight had started strong, become difficult, and now was starting to look easy just in time to head back home. I had gained a few thousand feet up to about 12,000 but the lift kept going and if I wasn't careful I'd run into airspace at 12.5. Minutes went past racing along at nearly 100 kts with my left hand on the spoiler handle, skimming along below cloud towards Drumheller, now 350 km into my second real cross-country flight in Alberta – only my fifth flight in a Jantar ... I flew under just 'one more cloud' about eight times and ended up under 20 km from Drumheller to my 10 o'clock and turned to come home over the badlands.

Clouds quickly started to dissipate on the way back. 99 made Hanna and turned about 40 km behind me around the same time. We ended up at the edge of a big blue hole enroute home and the path with clouds was too far for how late in the day things were. I went for it, headlong into the great blue abyss hoping for lift, bumping where I got some indication of lift, but always found that stopping to turn was a waste. This was different air, and it wasn't working. By 20 km from High River I was down to 1300 agl and scratching. For 5-1/2 hours I'd been worried about getting sucked into airspace above, now the concern is landing out. Where at some points I wouldn't stop for anything less than 6 knots, now I'd scratch with 20 ft/min for a little more altitude to push a bit further for something a little better – dark fields, a town, circling birds, and a farmer tilling his field. All kept me alive, but uncomfortably low. The remaining wind ensured that small gains in altitude had next to no impact on the 2800 feet of climb I'd need to make a safe final glide.

Eventually I landed in an enormous cut hay field just west of Hwy 2A between High River and Okotoks, startling a resting deer on short final, and Tony Burton and John Gruber promptly retrieved me. I wrestled with my emotions that night – are these conditions normal – should I be proud

about the flight or disappointed by the landout? The trace was 556 km at an average speed of 84 km/h and I was just a few km from closing what would have been close to a 500 km triangle, catapulting a 570 OLC point flight to about 700.

Chris I declared an ambitious task of Del Bonita–Castor, an 800 km FAI triangle. Cu were slow to form compared to the previous days. I launched at noon and found a weak thermal off tow that turned into 4 knots or so. Pushing south I soon got a 6 knots to 10,500 feet. My leg to Del Bonita was fantastic, mostly running cloud streets and taking strong climbs with the wind at my back. Average speed for the first leg was 140 km/h. Turning north to my second turnpoint proved much more difficult. The 25 knot northwest wind caused cloud streets to form almost perpendicular to task. There were still strong climbs around; however, in →13



# the provincials

Tony Burton, with Al Hoar and Bruce Friesen

**T**HE CONTEST AT NETOOK, organized by Chris Gough and Patrick McMahon, began as a cancelled Nationals when not enough pilots around the country indicated interest. This shorter competition, starting later in the week, also gave Chris and Tony a few more days to get back from their flying in Ephrata at the Region 8 event. (That weather was quite substandard, with only 2 of 6 days scored – Chris was 2nd of 7 in 15m and Tony 6th of 11 in Sports.)

Thirteen pilots arrived, flying with a wide range of contest experience and glider performance: DG-1000 to Russia, first timers to old pros, and the club two-seaters gave some pilots their first experience of cross-country. The soaring conditions were a real challenge with low to moderate thermal strength and quite short active periods when they worked. Tasks were set or changed on the grid every day, with no muttering from the pilots about task committee skills. The weather was guessed at by Al, Tony, and Bruce, and the tasks set by Contest Director Al.

**Bruce** *Each day I dragged myself out of my cozy, warm sleeping bag at an ungodly hour, paid for a shower at the Olds public swimming pool, purchased some “almost food” at one fast food joint or another with internet access, and assembled my little package in time to report for the Task Committee meeting at 9 am. I am not sure how much information any contestant gained beyond what they already knew from their own research on their smart phones, but it helped make it feel like we were having a real, grown-up contest, with a weather briefing and all, so there was that. Truth be told, it was great fun, and an adventure, working with CD Al Hoar and weatherman Tony Burton, teasing plausible tasks from dubious weather.*

**29 June, practice day** Bruce queued up a *PowerPoint* presentation containing some screen grabs of the public forecast and the GFAs and a skew-T plot and some relevant maps from XCSkies. The task was southeast to Three Hills with a 10 km ring, then north to Elnora (15 km ring), 2-hour minimum time.

We started at 2 pm with cloud base starting at only at 7000 that rose to 7800 (Netook is at 3330 feet), but the lift quit

very quickly around 4. That left most pilots having careful glides back home into wind. Chris won the day. Tony, who landed out about 12 km east of Innisfail, said his newly seeded and rolled field was actually smoother than Netook's.

**30 June** A 2-hour minimum task, north to Innisfail a/p (10 km circle), and then west to Caroline (20 km circle). At launch time the cu just started but was quite thin, topping out at less than 8000, strength 2-3 kts with occasional 4 kts. Most pilots didn't get on course until 3 pm. There was cu to the northeast and north but it was totally blue for a long time going towards Caroline. I actually got stuck over Innisfail for a half hour by which time some cu *did* show up that way. Lift was certainly spotty with many cu not working, but 6 of 10 pilots got around.

Chris won with 840 points, all the way down to the DG-1000 that landed out 21 km away, scoring 114 pts. The Duo also landed out for 149 pts. Patrick landed out with 460. I thought I might get back from the Caroline circle, needing just 2000 feet more climb but three cu didn't work and I landed out (again) for 547 points – I suppose you can call my flight the “best of the worst”. Not a great day for Cu Nim.

**1 July** A close-in turnpoint was set with pilots free to go anywhere after that. But no flying today: no cu, just cirrus, and a cold front forecast to go through at supertime with the chance of severe weather. Everyone derigged, and that gave us some spare time to relax for the evening's pig roast. And it was an excellent pig, slow roasted all day by Denise, who followed a *YouTube* video to the pixel.

**July 2** No task. The various weather forecast(s) were quite contradictory. The sounding said thermals to 8000 with potential tcu if the temperature got to the max of 26 in Red Deer. However the public forecast said blue. Also rain from the previous day wetting areas might be a factor.

Only the rare cu appeared. The task committee decided to send pilots to Three Hills, after which they could go to any other turnpoint to get a minimum 2 hour flight in. Gridded, nothing was happening above and sniffers were thrown aloft at 1, 1:30, 2, and 2:30, with no one able to sustain → 11



John Mulder

John Mulder's Genesis 2 in the foreground.

ESC's Perkoz had its very first landout with Ray and Lauren Troppmann on Day 2 a little northwest of the Dickson Dam reservoir.



Laura Troppmann

### The Competition Director's report on the Alberta Provincials – summary

- Each morning Bruce looked at the WX.
- Tony and I looked at the WX.
- Then Bruce came to my motorhome and we talked about the WX.
- Tried out some task ideas on SeeYou to pick an appropriate task.
- Later I printed the task – maybe a second task too.
- We all talked at the pilot's meeting.
- We meet again on grid and watch the WX.
- I handed out the final task.
- On two days the gliders could climb.
- On one day they couldn't – task cancelled.
- Best soaring day was the practice day.
- Pig roast was really good.
- The evening piled blocks game around the camp fire was fun.

				Practice (2 hr TAT)				Day 1 (1.5 hr TAT)				Day 3 (1.5 hr TAT)				total pts
	Pilot	glider	hdcp	speed		dist	pts	speed		dist	pts	speed		dist	pts	
				hdcp	true	hdcp	pts	hdcp	true	hdcp	pts	hdcp	true	hdcp	pts	
1	Chris Gough	Ventus b	0.89	74.35	83.54	167.9	904	*59.9	67.3	89.5	818	58.8	66.1	93.9	711	1529
2	Bruce Friesen	Discus b	0.92	50.61	54.97	167.2	641	51.9	56.4	97.1	710			78.8	451	1161
3	Leo Deschamp	Nimbus 2	0.89	60.20	67.64	126.2	732	41.2	46.3	87.8	564			75.4	432	996
4	Drew Hammond	RS-15	1.02	*60.18	59.01	118.8	731	54.2	53.2	90.0	741	#		42.7	244	985
5	Tony Burton	Russia	1.17			150.4	549			91.5	539	#		50.4	289	828
6	George Haeh	ASW-27	0.88			0	0	41.7	47.5	80.5	570	#		36.1	207	777
7	Pat McMahon	Jantar	0.99			0	0			77.0	454	#		46.6	266	720
8	Allan Wood team	DG-1000	0.89	59.21	66.23	132.7	688	#B		19.1	137	45.6	51.0	77.1	552	689
9	John Mulder	Genesis 2	0.96			0	0	40.1	41.8	94.2	586			0	0	586
10	Team ZH	Duo Disc.	0.89			0	0	#		49.7	293	dnc		0	0	293
11	Ray Troppmann	Perkoz	0.99			0	0			0	0	#		50.7	290	290
12	Gary Hill	Jantar	0.99			110.5	404	#		24.9	147			0	0	147
13	Guy Blood	Kestrel 19	0.89			137.5	502	#B		14.4	110	dnc		0	0	110
* B	Flight under minimum task time 25 pt airfield landout bonus			#	Flight under minimum distance (65 km)			dnc	did not compete							



Jordan Lewis

Above, the first recipients of the SAC 150 km pin constitute almost the whole of the contestant list. Left to right are Gary Hill, Bruce Friesen, Allan Wood, John Mulder, Patrick McMahon, Tony Burton, CD Al Hoar, Leo Deschamp, Gerald Ince (of the ZH team) and winner Chris Gough (also below).



Laura Troppmann

Left, Denise Vanderkooi begins dissecting her 1 July pig roast masterpiece.



Laura Troppmann



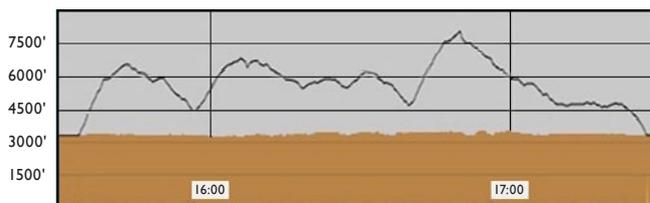
Dale Brodhu

*Al offers another task change on the grid on 2 July – but it stayed blue with few usable thermals to 3000 agl so the day was called.*

above 3000 agl, which would be the safe height to send them off. Towards the later time, the task was shortened to 1-1/2 hours with a very much closer turnpoint.

Al Hoar, CD, pulled the plug at 3 pm after which most of the grid took 3000 foot tows for fun.

**Bruce** *Many launched anyway to practise in challenging conditions and struggled to stay in the air above release height, let alone set out cross-country. On a day when conditions remained too weak to launch the entire grid into a confined height band, a pilot claimed to have found a 6 knot thermal to 8000 feet, just as the sounding predicted. The next morning the Contest Manager displayed the trace and there it was, towering like a mountain over a line of foothills, one strong thermal. Where did it come from? Where were its buddies? What an interesting sport we pursue.*



*I, charged with optimism, set off to try the tiny task. No more thermals. Touched the mandatory first turnpoint and*

*headed for another. No more thermals. Claimed one more turnpoint, the Olds-Didsbury airport where I landed and was aerotowed home, smooth as smooth could be.*

**3 July** It's 9 am and Al and I are trying to figure out a task but there is a big difference in the public forecast of blue and 23C, and the sounding that predicts tall cu. The sky began showing cu at 2 pm and it looked good to the north and northeast. The task set on the grid was to within 5 km of Davey Lake (18 km to the NE), then within 30 km of the Hespero airport to the NNW.

The start gate opened at 3:05 and the cu started to disappear by 4 pm. Just making it to the Hespero ring was a challenge, and only Chris and the DG-1000 team of Allan Wood and Derek Jones survived with everyone averaging release height during their flights. Chris flew 105 km, 20 km more than anyone else, while spending more than half his flight time before the start, and he found one good thermal (5 kts to 7000 ft) on the way out to Hespero. The Al and Derek team spent 40 minutes near the Hespero ring, averaging a 1/2 kt climb over that time to get a 30 km final glide home. Well done to them.

The sounding was accurate – monster tcu built up over Red Deer, and we got rained on while at the fine awards dinner that evening in Olds. □

# Brainstorming a way out

Rafal Dzwonek, Cu Nim

## *a lesson on frontal weather*

**A**FTER ANTICIPATING FAVOURABLE conditions all week, I attempted a two-hour Bronze badge flight at Cu Nim when the opportunity presented itself on Sunday, 16 July. I took off for the first of three flights that day at about twelve in the afternoon, staying up a mere 25 minutes in what were mostly tight and broken thermals that got me no higher than 5200 feet (1500 agl). During my second flight, conditions had further deteriorated, resulting in a sled ride through sink. But as 4 pm approached, the strong wind that had been blowing all day began to ease and the ground started to heat up. Not expecting much, I took off for the third time, with the hope of at least getting a half hour flight.

After release, I encountered strong sink and began to make my way back, but as I was preparing to cross the airfield and join downwind, I hit a strong bump over the gravel pit at the end of runway 25. Quickly I began turning in what was a beautiful 5 knot thermal that took me all the way to the 8000 foot ceiling over Cu Nim. With the calming wind, thermals had begun to sprout and I was having a joyful time speeding around the sky. Here and there small puffs would form below me, giving me a fun “cloud flying” experience. To the east however, a front was slowly taking shape and moving in towards the airfield, and smoke from the BC forest fires began drifting in below, topping at about 6500 feet. Seeing no danger, I flew on keeping a watchful eye both on the front and the smoke. About an hour into the flight, I was advised that the winds had shifted from runway 07, and the favourable runway was now 25.

At 5:24 I decided to call it quits as the front abruptly began moving in over Cu Nim. As I cruised back at 95 knots, I started getting pulled above 8000 as the lift and turbulence began significantly picking up. I reached for the spoilers and began to deploy them. To my horror, as soon as the panels emerged from the wings, the glider began to shudder violently, blurring my vision, sending my phone and dust flying across the cockpit, and knocking my head against the top of the canopy. I felt the straps digging into my shoulders as I was thrown around as the glider jerked in all directions. With one final jolt all the shaking stopped, and the dust settled as I slammed the brakes shut, letting the glider climb. I looked around the cockpit and at the wings, struggling to make sense of everything. The beeping audio vario was suddenly interrupted as the radio came to life and a voice asked for a position report. After deciphering the jumble of words,

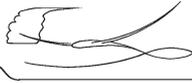
I took a moment to gather my thoughts. “X-ray Charlie being sucked up above 8000 ft. I’m not in cloud. Heading west towards Turner Valley”. As my confusion eased, I kept cool and thought, “Just think and fly. That’s all you need to do.”

First things first, I had to slow down enough to be able to operate the spoilers without being tossed around again. As I pulled the nose up and re-trimmed to bleed off the excess speed, I turned away from the looming front and began to fly west hoping to get out of the strong lift. As the glider slowed down, I pulled out the airbrakes once again and entered a strong side slip, voicing all my actions and airspeed to avoid panicking or making mistakes. Still somewhat disoriented, I was aware that any further errors could quickly amplify the severity of the situation.



Rafal Dzwonek

*Here it comes! The Cu Nim runways are in the cloud shadow at the bottom of the photo.*



As the glider dropped, I began calling out my altitude to myself every 200 feet as a precaution to avoid getting too low. As I reached 5000, I closed my spoilers and flew towards the field in decreased visibility from the smoke and shade from the towering cloud above. In less than 10 minutes from taking my last picture, the cloud ceiling had dropped from 7500 feet to about 6000. Still feeling some disorientation, I did not look at the windssock, and failed to realize the winds had shifted again and were now blowing at over 25 knots. Making my runway choice based on information previously given to me half an hour earlier, I called in a left hand circuit for runway 25. In a moment, Al Wood, our CFI, was on the radio instructing me to land on 07. I yanked open the spoilers once again, called in a right hand circuit and performed an S-turn to position myself at the edge of the runway. Turning final quite low, I set up for landing with an airspeed of 70 knots, touching down at 5:35. When the glider came to a stop, I paused and sat on the canopy rail and

for the first time took a look at the windssock, which was horizontal. Had I not been warned, landing on 25 with such a strong tailwind could have had disastrous consequences for both the glider and myself.

From first pulling the spoilers to landing, it seemed an hour had passed – it was less than 5 minutes. Looking back at the flight, I can only credit my safe return to my training, which led me to act automatically, and Al's watchful eye. Although I fell 30 minutes short of my goal of a 2-hour flight, I felt entirely compensated by the experience gained which will be ingrained in my memory for years to come. Who would have ever known that a glider pilot could find too much lift ...

*This is Rafal's third season as a licensed pilot, and he has about 40 hours on the club's DG-303. In the 303 manual, there is a warning to open spoilers slowly at higher speeds. I likely opened the spoilers too quickly.* □

## A fine week of soaring

from page 7

contrast to the first leg where I could follow cloud streets and not lose much height between thermals, I was forced to cross the sink between the cloud streets while flying on task, so I could not sample the rising air as much.

As I approached the Trans-Canada Highway, it was becoming apparent that Castor was not going to be possible with the pace I was flying at. I first decided to try for Hanna which would be a 700 km triangle but then realized that even that would be difficult. XCSoar has a triangle assistant that graphically shows you where you must fly to make a larger OLC triangle. It showed I needed to head east another 30 km before heading back to Cu Nim. While heading that direction I was looking back home and saw the clouds thinning out. I made it into the triangle area, then headed back.

At first there were nice climbs under cumulus, but hiding behind those clouds was a large blue hole between me and home. I looked at my glide computer which had me below glide by a few thousand feet and figured I would go through the hole and find some weaker climbs in the blue to get me home. I found mostly 1 knot climbs which barely gained on the final glide because the wind was pushing me away so fast while circling. Over High River a 1.5 knot thermal got me closer. I pushed towards the Okotoks airport and found another 1.5 knot thermal that finally gave me a comfortable final glide. *689 km OLC with a 637 km FAI triangle.*

*Tony was flying E2 also, and his claim to fame this fine Sunday was a good flight that earned exactly 499.99 OLC points!*

**Monday, May 22 Jay** At this point I had flown 22 hours in four days without any breaks and was starting to feel the

fatigue. Monday's weather wasn't looking as phenomenal as the last three days but it would still be flyable. I had decided that I would fly one more day and have a nice relaxing flight and explore some more of the countryside without the pressure of a task. I have already bored you with all the details of my previous flight so I won't say much about this one. The highlight was pushing west of Cu Nim into the foothills where I enjoyed beautiful views of the snowcapped mountains. *OLC: 320 km @ 81 km/h, 4:11 hr.*

Total distance: 2067 km, total flight time: 26:39 hours. It was a fantastic trip and I am glad everything came together the way it did. Special thanks to all Cu Nim members for the warm welcome, allowing me to sample some fantastic Alberta soaring. I will certainly be back and hope the stars align as well as they did this year.

*Patrick I opted to work on finishing my checkout in the DG-1000 to be able to take friends and instruct at my new club that had already given me so much so soon. Those flights were simple, fun, and low stakes, a welcome break. I took my first solo on type to complete the check and finish up my greatest weekend of glider flying... yet.*

*When I was adding the weekend flights to my logbook, it just so happened that my first solo in the DG-1000 was also my 1000th glider flight. I took that as a karmic nod to the magical weekend that was.*

*Every flight is a learning opportunity, and the more we know the more we realize how much is left to learn. I'm anxious for the lessons from my next 1000 flights as I continue to try to improve on something every flight. I've never been more anxious for the next time a glider finds itself without a pilot and 13,000 cloud bottoms dot the sky from the Rockies to, well, who knows? Go west young man... then fly east!* □

# Cowley 2017

**Phil Stade, Cu Nim**

*It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good.* Perhaps that summarizes our 2017 Summer Camp experience! Our expectation was that west winds would prevail, however most of the ten day camp delivered easterly breezes... along with a lot of forest fire smoke. Not to be discouraged, thirty-two pilots registered and spent more time than usual along the east side of the 'Rocks' at altitudes that provided excellent views of the Livingstone Range. Some of us got to see the rocks even closer than our comfort level allowed but more on that later.

As all glider pilots know, it's not booming thermals and fantastic wave that teach us the greatest lessons. We are challenged most when conditions are weak and variable. With that in mind our Cowley campers can assure you that this summer we learned a lot. I for one learned that if a pilot averages 39 km/h over 4:55 hours then he likely circled about 290 times! In spite of the many circles it was a delightful flight with Shulamit Kuttner on her first of the year. It was quite a way to jump back in!

It was good to see all the Alberta clubs represented with the exception of the Grande Prairie Soaring Society. We hope GPSS is able to participate next year. Ben Manton returned from Regina, Richard Visscher and Dan Cook flew in from BC in C-GVRO, a Stemme S10-VT, and Patrick Pelletier represented the Texas Soaring Association (he is in the USA now for a tour as an RCAF Exchange Officer). Mark Westphal and Orlan Dowdeswell from Regina joined in with their DG400 from the Pincher Creek Airport as did Struan Vaughan.

Ken McNeil and I had a rather unusual flight to the rocks near the end of Day 4. There had been a gentle breeze from the east all afternoon so it was my hope to enjoy a relaxing run along the Livingstone Range as the evening settled in. That might have been the way it worked out if I hadn't made a wide turn toward Frank Slide over the west side of the ridge within one minute of arriving at the ridge and fallen into 15 knots down! Things changed fast at that point. We were immediately unable to turn back to the east as the ridge rose above us so the only escape was to run south until we could cross at a lower point. We lost 1500 feet in 90 seconds before we were again looking at the east slopes but the airfield was no longer reachable and the field I landed in at the base

of the slope two years before was looking like our only option. Since we were still about 1200 feet above our landout field I moved over to the slopes that were facing the wind and found a bit of lift. Thirteen minutes later we had climbed 290 feet and my 'final glide' said we could make the 15 km home. I had practised trusting the *iGlide* program and again it didn't let us down. I'm still trying to unpack all there is to learn from that flight but one obvious item – when close to a ridge line, stay away from its lee side, even in seemingly benign conditions!

Visibility was often a problem throughout the week as smoke from fires in BC was blown our way. Fortunately the easterly wind gave us some clearer days. Patrick took advantage of better visibility conditions on Thursday. The winch had been operational for a few hours reflecting the expectation that lift would be minimal so Patrick chose a high tow to the ridge where he spent the next two hours at altitudes up to about 12,200. Conditions improved in the area to the west so he eventually headed to the Elk Valley overlooking the Sparwood-Elkford airport. Unfortunately, conditions in the Crowsnest area were less than expected as he headed home so an outlanding in a very unforgiving area alongside the highway became a necessity. We learned a lot (where exactly is Sentinal in the Pass?) from listening to Patrick's description of choosing a suitable spot to land on early and then practising at altitude the approach and touchdown into his difficult field. Great airmanship, Patrick... and a safe landing as a result.

Al Stirling came 'out of retirement' in BC to celebrate 40 years since his first Summer Camp. He and I enjoyed a magical flight as we climbed above cloud base in the convergence west of the Gap with spoilers open for extended periods to stay below 12,500 feet. Our return flight out over the Porkies and home took us alongside incredible towering clouds and scenery fit for the special occasion.

An uncritical look at this year's camp might lead one to think that the smoke and mediocre thermals had diminished it. However, by the end of the camp many were satisfied by the challenges and their opportunity to battle gravity in one of the most natural expressions of cooperation with the forces of nature – soaring.

## the Fall Wave Camp

**Y**OU'VE got to be there. You can't 'time' the market and you certainly can't time good soaring! I had bravely declared a week or so before the camp that conditions were looking great for wave during the entire camp. Unfortunately, it wasn't to be quite so straightforward. There was to be a lot of rigging and derigging involved in all the rain and snow that we actually experienced mid-week, but eventually most of us got what we came for.

The first Saturday of Cowley Camps is usually focused on getting aircraft and support equipment to the field but, as with clean-up day, the 'good stuff' showed up and changed our plans. Patrick Pelletier had taken a flight, packed up, and headed for the motel... a sure sign lift was done for the day. However, the desire to fly was strong so four flights launched just after 5 pm and all of them resulted in memorable flights. Jeremy Bruns and Nadene to 14,660 in the K-21, Bruce MacGowan in his Libelle, myself to 16,080 in the Jantar and Wilf Plester and Holly Peterson to 13,460 in the DG-1000 (an enthusiastic Holly talks more about their flight on page 20). We flew to the last moments of civil twilight and the evening was topped off with flying conversation, photos, and pizza. It can't get much better than that. There was only one flight from then until Thursday(!), and then the flights were largely sleigh rides (a 5000 foot tow took 34 min).

But was Friday ever good! There were three Diamond altitude climbs included in the eight flights that got over 20,000 feet. Skylar Guest – 27,540, Dave Hocking – 28,390, and Bruce – 28,150. The really great news was that the airspace above FL280 was opened for the first time in many years. The requests gave Patrick clearance to 32,000 feet and he topped out at 30,470, and Gary Hill and Geoff Minors got to 32,000 with a clearance of 35,000 feet. Flight following was

provided throughout and all went well with everyone below 28,000 within the times allotted. I had the privilege of taking two wave neophytes, Claude Chamberland and Ben Manton to over 20,000. The air was smooth and the wave strong... just the way it is supposed to be, especially for first wave flights.

The final Saturday was another short flight day with one exception. After taking a 3000 foot tow, Chris Gough dropped down to about 1500-2000 agl for more than forty minutes but then was able to battle his way up to 17,540 feet for the highest flight by far for the day.

Monday. It's always hard to say goodbye so we went flying to ease the pain. And it worked! The twelve flights yielded seven over 18,000 with only one not getting into wave. Bruce did it again with a climb to 22,110. Geoff climbed away in his Ka6CR to 22,590 and Pavan Kumar got his DG400 to 26,200. After a really poor showing on our first flight, Casey Brown and I tried again mid afternoon and we found it hard to come down without intentionally doing so. This flight to 19,030 feet gave Casey a chance to familiarize himself with wave. One notable item was flying east across the valley to the stacked lannies back over the Porkies. We arrived at about 17,500 feet and to our surprise, there was 10-12 knots that took us up 1500 more in a couple of minutes. Then we pulled spoilers, put the nose down to 80 knots, and were on the ground ten minutes later. Denis Nolan and I did the camp's last flight and, as so often in the last three or four years, it was memorable and getting to 19,410 certainly topped off our flying.

The snow, rain and ice certainly could have put pilots off, but 39 did sign in during the week and somehow by the time we headed home on Monday most felt the camp had been far more productive than expected. □

*A hiker in the Porcupine Hills admires the view of Cowley's valley and the Livingstone Range.*



# towplane soaring?

Ted Sorensen, Cu Nim

well, all considered, perhaps not

ONE of the 'givens' of being a human is that different people will gain a diverse variety of experiences from any given situation. One of the major drivers can be age, as just one situation can give varying lessons through the years.

Personally, dim memories flicker of Cook's ranch, and more clearly, Cowley, with the glider line-up on runway 11 glinting in the autumn sun. Thanksgiving was wave camp during my childhood. A week of rounding up tow ropes, removing dew or frost from dad's I-23, polishing canopies, smoking or inking barographs, and running wingtips. Mum cranking out a full-on Thanksgiving roast turkey dinner using a 24"x18" propane oven in the camper. Then, once I was old enough to fly myself, towing and soaring.

The aircraft and people change, the procedures and safety considerations evolve, the weather is always a wild card, but the mountains are a constant.

Back in the 70s and 80s, Red Deer usually used I45 to 195 hp Cessna 172s, and 230 hp 180 or 182s, compared with the other clubs 150 hp Super Cubs or Citabrias. Wave towing with 150 hp was a battle with the elements, hoping for 200 fpm pulling a two-seater, and then crashing through the rotor. Climbing in the secondary to transition to the primary was not the done thing. I think it was a combination of tradition, lower performance gliders that would have had trouble beating into the wind/traversing the sink, and a less sophisticated understanding of wave structure and behaviour.

This past Fall Camp brought back a gust of nostalgia. The conditions were such that towing with the Scout into the primary was suitable and we hooked into it a mile or two east of Centre Peak. After release and the turn, the feeling of *deja vu* was very strong, and then the memories crystalized ...

Back in the day, I would usually tow over the south end of the valley and aim for the south end of the Livingstone Range to reduce the rotor effect, while the standard Super Cub and Citabria route was straight for Centre Peak.

On the last day of one camp, I was the sole towpilot left, my usual mount (a 182) was down mechanically, and I ended up towing with the Citabria. The forecast hadn't been all that good the night before, but the morning dawned with some very clear cut lennies. However, earlier in the day, the wave bands had been unstable, hard to locate and stay in. This

afternoon, the rotor seemed to smooth out a bit and we reached the primary with a wide band of lift just southeast of Center Peak. After the release at 8000, I turned left while pulling off the power and speeding up to 90 mph, and found myself at 8500! Since no one was waiting on the ground for a tow, the devil on my right shoulder (the devil on my left shoulder was reading or something) had a great idea!

Soaring!

Turning to the southeast, I cooled the engine for five or six minutes, climbing at about 200 fpm all the while.

Before pulling the mixture to idle, I checked the height – about 9100 feet and straight west of the field – so an easy glide back. Iron Rules: a) restart the engine at a bare minimum height of 8500 feet, and b) stay south of Center Peak to minimize the distance to fly and the chances of running through big areas of **BIG** sink. Turning back towards the Livingstones, I slowed to the stall to get the prop to stop windmilling – less drag. Stopping it seemed to improve the glide ratio from 1/anvil to 1/brick. Full nose up trim wasn't enough to hold the 50 mph IAS I figured was minimum sink, but it was close to my calculated 55 mph best L/D. I thought, "I'll just do this for a few minutes, no one will notice."

Jotting down the numbers helped me keep track of where the lift was. It was smooth but inconsistent. Five minutes after shutdown I was at 10,600, but sinking at 200 fpm, then after another five minutes I was up to 11,300 and rising at 600 fpm.

Watching the oil temperature slide reminded me that if I waited too long a restart wasn't guaranteed, and how much prime do you need at 8500 feet anyway? If the battery or starter failed, I wanted a backup, but some aircraft need to dive to redline to 'pushstart'. Thinking of sinking below my minimum of 8500 and running into rotor while diving to 120+ mph gave me pause, so I checked. By gradually increasing airspeed the engine started turning over at 80 mph. That I could work with. Boy, 'this tank' is quite a bit noisier and vibrates more than the gliders. It was a lot draftier, more than a Blanik, even more than the old 2-33. Without the greenhouse effect of lovely glider canopies, it was kinda cold.

Closer to the ridge, the lift became more consistent and steadily increased to 600 fpm passing through 12,000, about two miles east. The initial thought had been that five to ten minutes would be enough, but this was starting to be too

much fun. Although the Citabria was equipped with oxygen, no masks were on board. Increasing the speed to 80 mph to stay within the airspace and oxygen requirements wasn't enough, and almost full rudder was needed to sideslip in order to stay below 12,500.

Tacking down the ridge, it was easy to stay in the lift, so exploring the east and west edges of the primary was next. The lift was about a mile wide and gently tapered off, so a couple runs were made up and down the ridgeline. After 25 minutes, gently easing down to 10,000 east of the wave, renewed the legalities of oxygen requirements, but increased the chances of falling into the rotor. Whoops! Back! Back! Driving straight at the ridge brought us back into the lift again and the peak climb of the flight was here at 780 fpm. Keep in mind the normal minimum sink rate of this aircraft would be about 650 fpm, so the wave was cranking out over 14 knots at 11,000 feet!

Back and forth, to and fro, running between 11,000 and 12,500, the engine became cold, so at the 50 minute mark, I decided to go for the secondary. Earlier, it had been fairly stable close to or over the airfield, and I wanted to sink to 10,000 feet again for the oxygen. I thought, *"This is a lot of fun, but am I hypoxic?"* Voice in head: *"Non-smoker, non-drinker, regular exercise – naw – being up for an hour with a dead engine IS pretty funny."*

Heading directly for Cowley, downwind, and above the rotor, we made the field at 9600 feet. It was cold in the cockpit, so sitting on my hands one at a time helped. The temperature at altitude was around -10C, so the plan was to find warmer air before restarting the engine. Finding lift, the plane rumbled back up to 12,500 at around 700 fpm. The wave over the airfield was pumping well, moving around a bit, but broad with generous margins except over the river, where the sink built up quickly.

The temperature at 6500 was +10C. Since holding 200 to 300 fpm up over a wide area was easy, I decided to hold 6500 for ten minutes to rewarm the engine before starting. The windshear and downdraft possibilities at Cowley are too unpredictable for a deadstick landing to be reasonable. Aware of the setting sun, I was careful to not plan to land too late. I was going to land at the 1:30 mark when I heard the glider I had towed returning. Because, "Beat the tug down!" would be hilarious for him after a 2:00 flight, I decided to wait for him to land before restarting.



While he landed, I was at 6500 holding my height in a markedly smaller band of lift compared to ten minutes previously. One hour and 40 minutes after shutdown, the engine reluctantly started, as the battery had suffered from the cold as I had been running the battery for the radio. It was a surprisingly difficult start, with priming, starting, leaning, etc. made all the more difficult by the now constantly shifting lift.

After idling for five minutes to warm the engine, the approach was started. A tight power-off circuit, with a sideslip to kill the extra height brought the flight to a close. Thankfully, no inversion or wind shear.

Lessons learned: you can glide anything with enough lift, but you shouldn't *necessarily* glide anything, because:

- The potential for the wave to shift and dump me short was already there. Luckily it didn't do so.
- Nobody knew where I was. As far as I know, no one had noticed the towplane hadn't landed two hours after take-off. I hadn't told anybody, and it wasn't anyone's responsibility. Everyone on the field was busy packing up and leaving and quite preoccupied with their own situation.
- Worst case scenario; big sink

and no restart. How is your airstart procedure – do you know the one in the manual? "The engine failed when?", "What do you mean, when you shut it down?" Carrying out the Cowley 'duty landout' in the towplane for fun is not going to go over well. There is a much greater chance of damage to the tug than to a glider in an off-airport landing. The likelihood and repercussions of an engine failing to restart under these conditions is much greater. The "forgiveness vs permission" thing doesn't work too well with the insurance company.

- Oxygen! Just because something's legal doesn't mean it's a good idea. A minute at 9999 feet doesn't magically flush the lungs and give you 97% saturation, 12,500 feet for a while will drop a healthy person to 86%. For comparison, I am given to understand that in the medical field, a patient with an O<sub>2</sub> level of 88-90% is *not* considered to have the capacity to give informed consent!
- Battery The battery was nearly run flat. The generator field is powered with the master 'ON' and is a much higher drain than the radio alone. Unless recharged, it would have frozen that cold night, or resulted in someone having to do a boosted start or charge the battery themselves, resulting in at least a delay in towing.

Fun times, lovely memories, but like smoking a barograph or routinely towing through the rotor, the risks of deadstick wave soaring in the tug is best left in the past. □

# Flying over Everest

**Gary Hill, ESC**

**T**HIS TALE BEGAN at the 2013 fall camp, and it started me on a quest – a new bucket list item to add. I was fortunate at that camp to earn the Stachow Wave Trophy, presented annually to the pilot who has obtained the maximum absolute altitude in a flight in Canada, provided that the height gain has been 5000 metres or better.

That flight almost didn't happen, because I gave up the ESC's Puchacz two-seat club glider to another club member who took off to find the wave while I headed to town to have a shower at the community swimming pool and pick up some groceries. Upon returning to the field I found the glider back on the ground – the pilot had discovered that he had neglected to turn on the oxygen supply and had to return to the field, so now it was open for me to take it up. I have flown in wave before but that day I was able to go to the top of the Livingstone Block at 28,000 feet where I had to stop climbing. That's right, I had to pull the air brakes full open and put the nose down in order to stop climbing and to start my decent. I got my Diamond climb.

After the camp was over I started getting more information for an idea that I had come up with for a bucket list flight. If I was still rising at FL280, how much higher would I have to go to make it over the highest point on the planet – Mount Everest? A quick Google search and 29,029 ft looks like the target altitude, well maybe 30,000 feet as a nice round number to give me a little bit of clearance.

This became my goal and my quest. I had to find out how to get clearance to go higher than the FL280 top of the Block at Cowley. I talked to a retired air traffic controller back at our club and his reply was to have the person responsible for the Livingstone Block check on the procedures to get clearance above FL280. After talking with Phil Stade, the person responsible for opening the Block, I found that he could facilitate this request quite easily – nobody had made the request before, that he knew of.

I won't bore you with all of the preparations and the stories of the multiple trips that I made back to Cowley that just didn't produce the opportunity to fly high enough to pass safely over my Mount Everest.

Back to the present day, on the morning of 6 October, conditions looked like record flights could be attempted in the wave. Phil called Edmonton Centre and requested the top of CYA 201(S) be increased to FL320, later to FL340 and finally to FL350. We were briefed that he was our contact with air traffic control and that we should radio Cowley ground to ask him for any other clearances required and to wait for a reply before proceeding. We were also told that we could be given instructions to return below FL280 by air traffic control if required and he would relay that to us. In effect, Edmonton Centre passes the responsibility of air traffic control within the Block to the Alberta Soaring Council.

This year I was flying ESC's Perkoz so I decided to take Geoff Minors (Lethbridge Soaring Club's president) along as copilot so we would have member/pilots from the most northern and southern active soaring clubs in Alberta trying to top Everest's height.

Our flight began at 9:55 from runway 21, and shortly turned due west on tow until release at 2000 feet agl. We turned north and began climbing in the secondary wave to pass clear under the V300 airway and continued to climb to 14,000 before proceeding west again to contact the primary wave. This brought us down below 12,000 where we began to climb again, reaching 29,600 feet.

The cloud structure could be visualized as a cross-section of a mushroom with a domed cloud and the stem representing vertical clouds such as stacked lenticulars. With this shape we had a large vertical area to climb under the cloud. As we came to 29,600 feet it became evident that clouds were forming to the north and south of us and wispy clouds would suddenly appear below us before moving to the clouds behind us. The leading edge of the cloud to the west appeared to be moving to the east (and did in fact move east all day across the valley to the Porcupine Hills) so we decided to descend while proceeding to the western edge of the cloud.

Here we had a small problem – the air brakes wouldn't open more than about 1-3/4 inches. We got a firm 'clunk' every time we tried and the handle stopped. We thought they were frozen and that's not what you want at 30,000 feet.



Gary (front) and Geoff,  
on the ascent.

Gary Hill

Think about this – the average temperature of rising air drops about 2C per 1000 foot, so by climbing 26,000 feet we could expect a 52C drop in ground temperature! We don't want to be forcing anything given the air temperature at that altitude so we kept trying the air brakes and descending until they opened fully and we leveled off around 23,000 past the leading edge of the cloud.

In the meantime my phone, which I run the XCSoar program on, shut off due to the cold draining the battery. I link to the *PowerFlarm* by Bluetooth to have access to the flight recorder GPS altitude as a backup to the glider altimeter, so now that wasn't available any more. Now that we were clear of the cloud cover we began to climb again and once more soon surpassed Everest's summit. Now the remaining oxygen was a limiting factor so we pulled the air brakes handle to begin our decent and got that same clunk. It's a good thing we had turned back because the air brakes wouldn't fully deploy again but we found some sink to help out and soon we were once more able to fully deploy the air brakes for a much quicker descent.

One of the most prominent features within the Livingstone Block is the Frank Slide area which we could see to the south of us so we turned to fly directly toward Frank Slide as we descended. Just below 20,000 feet we turned north-east and crossed by Center Peak at 18,000 clear of the V300 airway running through the Livingstone Block from east to west between 12,500 and 18,000 and flew to the Porcupine

Hills to the east, then south and west to land back at Cowley at 12:27.

A couple of points from this flight – at the altitude we were flying the Vne for the Perkoz is 88 knots indicated air speed (IAS) so we used 75 knots as our chosen maximum. There was a 'bit' of a breeze up there so at 70 kts IAS the GPS ground speed forward was 34 kts into wind and 148 kts with the breeze at 45 degrees to our track. When we got lower and turned from east of the field over the Porcupine Hills to head west to join downwind and come in for a landing we flew at 120 kts IAS, which gave us a 50 knot ground speed. This is why we don't fly past the threshold on downwind in our circuits when the wind is blowing at Cowley. When you turn base you really have to crab into the wind and final is like an elevator with a high IAS and a short run on the ground – you should come try it out.

We found what was blocking the air brakes opening all the way – it was a warped aluminum part catching on the lip of the spoiler box that works fine on the ground most of the time.

I know there were other notable flights at this camp with climbs to 28,000 feet and higher, and one very happy pilot from Saskatchewan who got his Diamond height gain (then packed up and headed back for the prairies). Congratulations Skylar. I also know I will be back because I have another couple of goals in mind – how about you??



# before and After

Holly Peterson, Cu Nim

## *gliding is wonderful*

**O**KAY, HOLLY, we have reached our soaring altitude. It's time to release." These were the last words I remember from before I gave up my heart and soul to the air. They mark a significant milestone in my life: a *Before* and an *After*. A time when I didn't know what I know now.

Once those words were uttered, I reached forward for the yellow ball. "I can pull this now?" I asked. Part question, part grounding myself into a moment where we would be soaring silently, without the aid of the towplane. I was already pulling the release – there was no time for a response from my instructor. Immediately the sensations overtook me – the moment where time slows, the feeling of complete immersion enralls, and the awareness my environment left me speechless. I was captivated by soaring.

I'm not sure how many glider pilots remember their first flight. I don't know if they remember that first momentary sensation of lightness. I do. That was the moment I knew that I stumbled into a magical world of flight. Powerless flight. I still struggle to believe that I am fortunate enough to experience the thrill and serenity of soaring. I am now firmly taking my place in my soaring 'After'.

I remember that first flight. I remember almost everything about it. I remember soaring above a Swainson's Hawk. As an avid bird lover, I was always envious of their view from the air. There I was, graciously sharing their view. Later flights would take us into the thermals with hawks and a quick visit with a bald eagle.

I remember trying the controls and feeling out the cause-and-effect with complete astonishment – how can you control this craft with only three things to work?, I lamented. I pushed the rudder to the left with my foot, surprised that the yaw string would actually move as a result – on this flight it constantly moved away from centre. I persistently pulled the nose up – I thought I was saving us from plummeting

towards the earth! I learned that I have no idea where true horizontal is, since I constantly tip my head to the left side.

Now I have a few more flights under my belt: I'm on lucky number thirteen. In those thirteen, I have shared a beautiful three hour soaring flight around the Black Diamond area with a friend, experienced the exhilaration of riding the Cowley wave (the sound of the variometer and watching the altimeter climb were simply magnificent), and looked down on the Earth with curiosity and awe.

Most importantly, I have joined an amazing community of passionate flyers and their families. I have made exceptional friendships. The soaring community is unlike anything I encountered before. I have never been part of a tribe that is so supportive, encouraging, and engaging.

Let me tell you of my experience soaring the Cowley wave. Another first that deepened my connection to the sport. It was the first Saturday of the Cowley Fall Camp. I spent the night in Pincher Creek and arose bright eyed and eager to participate. Pilots from all over were assembling their gliders – these marvels of engineering. Pleasantries and catch-ups were exchanged between those on the airfield along with reminiscent memories of previous Cowley flights.

Then it was my time. Wilf Plester, a kindred spirit of mine, was there with me as pilot in command. Our first flight took us towards the mountains and we ran right into high sink; we were back on the ground in a half hour. Seizing another opportunity soon after, we went back up, this time towards those who had found the wave. It took just a few moments from releasing off the tow. It happened so suddenly – we connected to the wave – it was silent and smooth, barely conveying a sense of movement at all. We climbed so rapidly, the variometer was maxed out and the audio was chirping happily along with our own laughter and exclamations of amazement. We climbed as high as we were able to safely

go, traversing the countryside up to 13,500 feet, all the while admiring the stunning views that open up to those in flight. Soaring alongside dense, puffy, white clouds we could see forever. The Chain Lakes to the north, rolling hills to the east. Center Peak! Frank Slide! We were treated to spectacular colours in the sky as we lost the sun for the day, which signalled the end to this aerial journey. We bested the falling darkness and landed just before last light, elated, and a little cold.

That night we gathered together for dinner with anyone we could round up. We relished in recalling our experiences, reliving memorable moments, and the warmth associated with being in good company.

Learning to fly is a challenge. There is a lot of information to learn, to remember, and to keep track of. There is a new language, and new expectations. There is helping out with the flying operation and helping out with the club. Learning about towplanes, tractors, runway maintenance, and the

proper way to clean a canopy. Tow rope daisy chains and weak links. Toggles and switches. Logbooks and more logbooks. Radios and signals. Landouts and pickups. The triumphs and rights of passage of cross-country flight. The firm – yet delicate – operation of the elevator, ailerons, and rudder. Pitch, yaw, roll. How to read the ground and the sky for clues and signs of lift. How to keep a good flying attitude while simultaneously watching the airspace, maintaining control, and, of course, enjoying the ride. I laugh and smile from take-off through touchdown.

Soaring has taught me many things, but there is one quality that continues to astonish me. Soaring has pointed me to the beauty of living in the moment, to revel in each instance and pay attention to my surroundings. To be ready to act. To slow down and observe this miraculous world in the clean silence that only soaring can offer. And now, here in the soaring 'After', it is a beautiful, elegant world. I see that now, and I can see it all from above. Thank you for letting me be a part of it. □



Wulf Plester

*Holly enjoying a Rocky Mountain high. Have a look at the instrument panel!*

# the Ogar saga

John Broomhall (ESC) and Geoff Minors (LSC)  
with Jack Lambie (*Light Plane World*, Jan 1987)



Tony Burton

Ogar, SZD-45A, 17.5m wing span, first flew in 1973  
Wt empty: 470 kg (1036 lbs), max 700 kg (1543 lbs)  
Vstall: 68 kml/h, Vmaneuver 89 kml/h, Vne 225 kml/h  
Max L/D: 27.5 @ 100 kml/h Min sink: 190 ft/min @ 73 kml/h

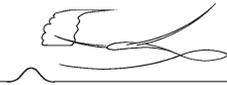
*“Edmonton philanthropist Sandy Mactaggart dies at 89.”  
news item, Edmonton Journal, 3 July 2017*

**Y**EARS AGO, IN THE LATE EIGHTIES, I got a phone call out of the blue from a fellow who introduced himself as Sandy Mactaggart. I knew the name as my wife and I were subscribers at the Citadel Theatre, and the ‘Mac’ in the ‘Maclab’ theatre was him. He had been a big financial supporter. I was president of ESC then, and he called to ask me if we would like a donation of a motorglider called an Ogar.

I had no idea what an Ogar was, but quickly accepted with thanks. I asked what the story was behind the glider. He told me that he was a pilot, and interested in different kinds of flying, and that when he heard about the Ogar in Chino, CA, and he bought it sight unseen. He arranged to find someone to fly it to Canada. This guy, rumoured to be a hot Pitts pilot, apparently turned up at the airport in a pink flight suit and matching race driver shoes, and with no checkout, off he went, neglecting to lock the front opening canopy. On takeoff, it departed through the prop, also damaging the horizontal stabilizer. He got back on the ground with some further damage, then disappeared after removing an expensive NavCom from the instrument panel.

For a couple more years (wrote Jack Lambie, a noted western US soaring pilot of the day), it sat in a dusty corner of the Chino airport, the canopyless cockpit semi-sheltered with a sagging cover taped to the wing and nose, no prop or horizontal stab. The Ogar got more bleached and dustier, and Jack took pity on it (he said it looked like an egg on a pencil) and made a deal with Sandy to repair it and fly it to Edmonton. He wrote, *“We spent weeks cleaning the mud-filled cockpit and engine bay, fixed the rusted brakes and seized wheel bearings, got a new prop and canopy and a tailwheel from another Ogar owner, repaired the stab and freed the sticky ailerons, found an engine cowling and other bits from the Revmaster on-site shops, and put on a new tire.”*

Finally ready a year later, Jack’s flight to Edmonton with his girl friend and Cessna pilot Dori, much of it soaring in strong thermals, was a real adventure, as given in the magazine account. They found that the combination of high altitude true airspeed, turbulence from the prop, and a somewhat flexible tail caused a worrying shake at times, and they made a precautionary landing at a desert airstrip in Nevada to see if there was some structural problem. (A sign said “Cottontail Ranch” – did Jack know this was a licensed bordello at the time?) Finding none, they flew with care, finding that a quick rudder input would stop the effect until the next bout of turbulence.



The next day the engine kept gradually leaning out and losing power and Jack kept adjusting the mixture control until it was at full rich so they made their second precautionary landing at Coeur d'Alene, ID to find that the control at the carburetor had moved despite the clamps and safety wire. Next, the oil filter broke right *after* landing at Bonners Ferry, spraying oil over the tail. That was fixed with an off-brand car filter and a DIY gasket.

Finally, the original engine in the Ogar was a turbocharged Revmaster, and apparently problematic because if a turbo seal leaked, the back pressure would prevent engine oil from circulating. Of course that happened while flying up the Columbia Valley north of the border, and the final emergency landing was made on a gravel farm airstrip at Canal Flats. The probable loss of oil pressure was a mystery solved by a call once again back to the Revmaster expert at Chino. With no new seal available, an on-the-spot fix was devised involving blocking the existing oil line and rerouting the oil into the engine. And that got the Ogar to Edmonton, whew!

So, ESC took possession of the Ogar after Sandy offered it to us. Our initial assessment was that it was too much of a project for the club to take on, so we sold the Ogar to a group of members, I recall Dave Marsden, Mike Apps, Dierdre Duffy, Hugh Waller being some of those involved. Dave was an aeronautical engineer, designer and builder of numerous aircraft. He put a Subaru engine on the Ogar, with a unique reduction gear for the propeller that he designed. I recall having a flight in it in Cowley once.

The Ogar syndicate had people come and go over its time with ESC, and eventually was put up for sale. Some Americans were interested, and flew to Edmonton to have a look at it. The test flight was eventful: the reduction gear failed, the propeller dislodged and sliced part way into the tail boom. Fortunately the boom held, the elevator controls were untouched, and they managed to land safely. The Americans quickly left, thankful to be alive, never to be heard from again.

Hugh bought the remains from the insurance company but nothing was done on it for a year or two. My friend and glider partner, Dave Puckrin, then acquired it and began a repair. He managed to get a new tail boom from the factory and bought a used Rotax 912 engine. It was quite a project installing a water-cooled engine with a radiator, with all manner of electrically-operated cowl flaps and fans to ensure good cooling. I even had a hand in this project, doing most of the electrical wiring. Dave offered me use of the Ogar, but I wasn't enamoured with it. To me, it was neither fish nor fowl: I thought it wasn't a good plane or a good glider.

I lost track of Sandy – the newspaper article said he died back in Scotland, his birthplace.

### Geoff's story

Purchasing the Ogar was not an easy decision, having seen it several times at ESC in its homemade hangar where pigeons had been very busy. The decision was made with my wife that we should look at it again together. The idea of flying together side by side was very appealing. Being an instructor and president of the Lethbridge Soaring Club took its toll on flying my ASW-19, which I sold. When we looked at the Ogar it was in a very sorry state and needed to be saved very soon. Several negotiations with Loretta Puckrin secured the purchase in the fall of 2016. The plan was to go back to ESC in the spring of 2017.

George Haeh and I drove up to Chipman as soon as ESC told me the weather was suitable. On arriving we opened the hangar doors for the first time in a few years. Pulling the Ogar out into daylight was very satisfying but now the hard work lay ahead making sure she was airworthy. Lots of cleaning, checking the airframe, lubricating, more cleaning and of course inspecting the Rotax 912. I also fitted a new propeller as the old one showed some cracks. Many hours later it was time to start the engine. Filling with fresh gas, pressing the starter a few times with the ignition off to get the oil circulated, then the final moment – would she start after all these years? Ignition on, choke on, throttle set to idle, first push on the starter, nothing, second try, nothing, but on the third attempt that Rotax just fired up and sounded sweet. Taxiing down and up the runway confirmed the motor was good.

Bob Hagen used to fly the Ogar with Dave Puckrin and he was at Chipman watching our progress. Then Bob and I decided to take it for a test flight around Chipman. The Ogar flew just as I expected it to, the engine performing very well within specifications. The flight back to Lethbridge was uneventful, stopping at Drumheller for fuel. At just under four hours, that was my longest cross-country flight. A week later I flew it to Cowley where she is now in the hangar and flown regularly by me and partner Pavan Kumar.

The Ogar is heavy on the controls and flies like it's on rails. Turning the engine off for the first time was a bit nerve wracking as I didn't know what it would glide like. The glide is very satisfying, quiet but still heavy on the controls. Performance is about 25/1 at 52 knots. Stalls around 39 knots depending on 1 or 2 on board. The seating is side-by-side and very comfortable with lots of room. Its large canopy gives a really good view. Fuel use averages 9 litres per hour. Cruise speed with power is 70 knots at 5000 rpm.

Does it soar? Yes it does, and very nicely, I have had several good soaring flights. To be able to take off with no assistance and turn the engine off in lift is very satisfying. Going for a 2-hour soaring flight and only using \$5 of gas is pretty appealing also. □

# the Junior Camp

**Ryland Kruk**

Western Canada Junior Development Camp is a huge success!

**T**HIS WAS THE SEVENTH YEAR that the Edmonton Soaring Club has hosted the Junior Development Camp, and it continues to attract young pilots interested in improving their skills and knowledge about the sport of soaring. The camp was held in Chipman 21-27 August, and provided eleven junior pilots the opportunity to learn new skills and pilot-decision making.

Each year the camp sees a strong interest from the summer's graduates of the Air Cadet Gliding Scholarship program. These cadets are keen on getting more experience with gliding and soaring. The number is determined by the volunteers and equipment available. As in previous years, there was an excellent response from the ESC instructors and towpilots to assist with the camp and ESC had all of their aircraft available (3 singles and 3 trainers). In comparison to the year prior where rain put a damper on the camp, the weather this year turned out to be wonderful, allowing for lots of instruction and experience. The camp is a huge interest to all of us young pilots. It is a way that we can challenge ourselves on the more daunting task of gliding farther from our originating location. We all appreciate the instructors and their expertise with soaring. It has interested us in pursuing soaring as a sport and enjoy every chance we get to soar.

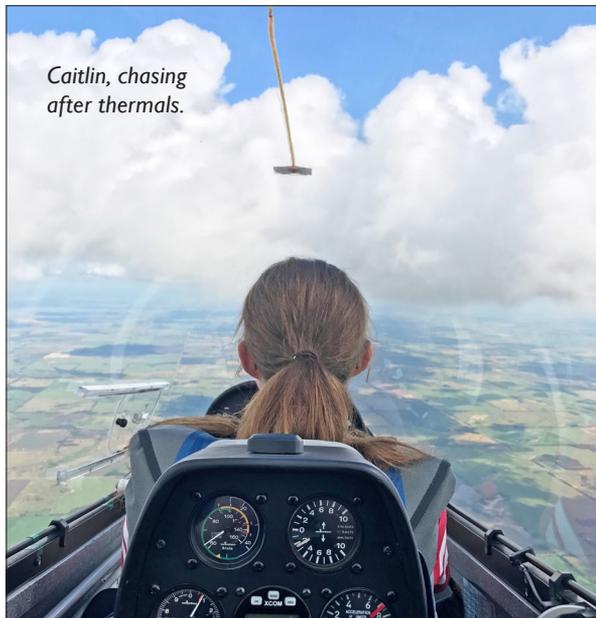
The excellent weather this year allowed us to really put in some serious soaring over all seven days of the camp! In total, we logged 144 flights with each averaging over 20 min. Collectively, our group of junior pilots racked up 38 hours of solo time and over 21 hours of dual training time. We were motivated to develop our thermalling skills (most of us received our B badges and will be submitting paperwork for our C badges) and work towards our individual goals. Our goals ranged from building the 10 hours needed to be able to fly passengers, to making cross-country flights and being prepared to land off-field.

Throughout the week, we received daily lectures on topics ranging from how to read skew-T/log-P diagrams, cross-country instruments and land-out kits. The lectures were reinforced with opportunities for us to deliver daily weather briefings, discuss cross-country planning issues and review the post-operation flight safety incidents. I am grateful for the opportunity to have participated in this year's camp and want to thank all of the members of the Edmonton Soaring Club for hosting us, the Alberta Soaring Council for their continued support of youth, and the Soaring Association of Canada for the SAC Youth Bursary program for supporting our continued development.



Allendria Brunjes

Standing (L-R) Chris Glassford, Jason Acker (instructor), Nicole Boyle, Paul Ferner (guest), Caitlin Acker, Kelan Lynch, Luke Towers, Tori Davidson, Chris Gough (instructor); kneeling: Ryland Kruk, Ty Hatt; laying down: Jasmine Gordon, Megan Boyle



Caitlin, chasing after thermals.

Jason Ackler

The Edmonton Soaring Club offered their first junior camp in 2011 with much success, and this year demonstrated the club's continued commitment to attract, develop, and retrain youth in our sport. Over the past seven years, the ESC Junior Development Camp has been able to host sixty young pilots from Western Canada. Here are some comments from the participants:

**Nicole Boyle** The skillful group of instructors are knowledgeable, fun and easy to work with! They meet you where you're at and teach you valuable soaring skills for any young pilot. I would highly recommend this camp to any young pilot looking to expand their soaring abilities!

**Jasmine Gordon** The Junior Soaring Camp at ESC was a wonderful experience. The opportunity to be introduced to the sport of soaring is not available in the Air Cadet Gliding program, where I got my Glider pilot licence through the glider pilot scholarship. The instructors are all friendly and accommodating, and I had an overall great experience.

**Ty Hatt** After taking the glider pilot course through the cadets in 2016 and doing this camp for the second time, it was a great experience to be able to work with knowledgeable instructors who helped me work towards my Bronze badge. I had an amazing week doing many things like landing out practice and finishing my back seat checkout. I also did a mini cross-country and a 4.5 hour flight in an ASW-15.

**Megan Boyle** The Edmonton Soaring Camp was an incredible learning opportunity for young adults like myself coming off the Glider Pilot Scholarship Course. I made many friends and was taught many skills by the experienced instructors there. I can't wait to go back again!

**Ryland Kruk** The Junior Soaring Camp is truly an amazing experience. It has given me the opportunity to improve my skills as a pilot and expand my comfort zone from soaring close to the airport to much farther away. My great accomplishment this year was planning a cross-country to Mundare and being successful. The ESC continues to spark my interest for soaring and the thrill of soaring! □

*About the author: Ryland is an 18 year old glider pilot who has been flying ever since he was 3 months old. He is a member of the Royal Canadian Air Cadet Program (88 RCACS) and has participated in the ESC Junior Development Camp for the past two years. He received his private pilot licence through the Air Cadet program.*

## Importing GOCU

from page 3

significant threat to the future of the Cobra trailer in Canada! I knew the 13-digit serial number on the trailer did not have a check digit in the 9th position since the European system does not require that. What I was surprised to learn was that number had to be a '7' or the trailer would have to be sent back or destroyed! Fortunately the issue had been discussed with the manufacturer and, although he thought it was crazy that our registration system needed it, he sent us a corrected serial number plate with covering letter so that it could be registered. Whew! With that out of the way the rest of the import inspections rolled along smoothly. As soon as we had the CofA in hand, C-GOCU was up and away with new tail competition letters of '28'.

The Cu Nim fleet has been progressing from metal Blaniks to fibreglass over the last ten years and each time we get a new aircraft it seems to outdo the last (see photo on p29). An often-heard expression from our pilots has been, "I

thought it couldn't get any better but it has and this is incredible." The ASW-28 model first flew in 2000 and greatly benefits from the CS-22 standard and years of improvements in European design. The cockpit looks and feels safer and stronger while providing great visibility and ergonomics. The shortest of us have been able to fit in comfortably without the use of extra cushions... a real plus for confidence on first flights and the long tasks the aircraft promotes. I'm looking forward to trying out the 200 kgs of water ballast on a strong thermic day next year. Should be a real blast!

The seven months and twelve days from the first day of negotiations until the first launch on 1 July 2017 included more than 300 e-mails, many hours of discussion, negotiations, waiting and wondering, but it was all worth it. Thanks especially to Sandy Stevenson for his advice on shipping, and to Casey Brown for help unloading the container and with instruments, trailer wiring, and just getting stuff done. I'd love to do another import sometime. Hopefully the Euro will be down and the wisdom of experience up. □

## Wyoming bound

Tony Burton, Cu Nim

IT BEGAN WHEN I E-MAILED CU NIM members saying that I was going to drive down to the Wyoming desert to see the total eclipse, then Al Hoar said he was going to fly to the Douglas airport east of Casper – does anyone else want to share the gas? After Simon Youens booked the right seat in Al's RV6, Derek Jones got in touch with Mitch Drzymala about flying down in his Cherokee 6. Mitch's passengers were Derek, Jean Claude, Alison, and Wilf Plester and son Quentin. The drive was two days for Ursula and me through interesting landscapes, seven hours for the flyers.

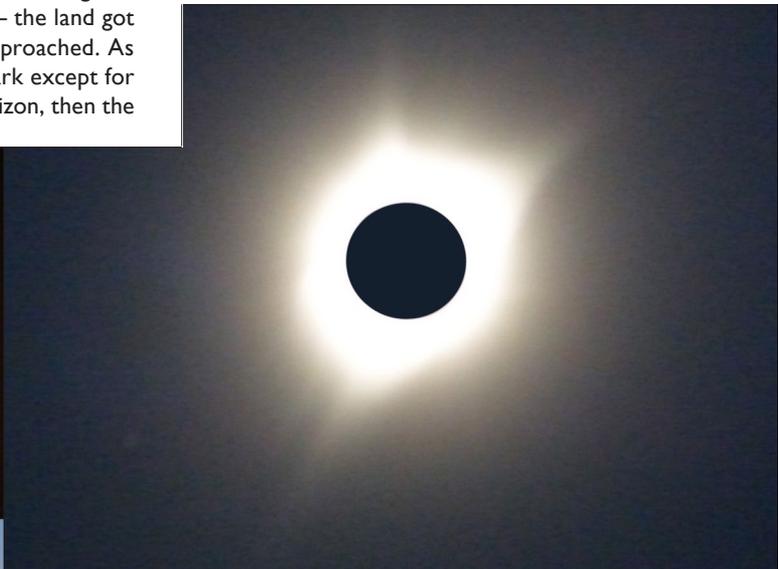
Everyone had a great time and experienced something few ever get to see. All descriptions were similar – the land got dimmer and dimmer and cooler as totality approached. As the last of the sun disappeared, it got quite dark except for a sunset glow on the landscape around the horizon, then the

sun's corona blazed into place behind the black moon. The waiting crowd was eerily quiet for a moment or two, then there was a mass "oooh!" With my binoculars, a lot of details of the sun's near surface were visible like a couple of red-pink dots of flares. It ended too soon with first flash of the sun forming the "diamond ring". It was just awesome! An eclipse calculator told me that at my location the shadow diameter was 108 km and travelling at 2827 km/h (1526 kts)!

Simon wrote, "I had taken my sextant and so was able to look at a 10x image of the sun. Seeing the sun look exactly like the slimmest of crescent moons, prior to totality, was spectacular. There were some hills about 30 km west of the airport and we watched them rapidly fade and disappear into blackness as the moon's shadow approached..." □



Al Hoar



Tony Burton



Al Hoar

Waiting for totality and looking cool at the Douglas, WY airport: l to r, Derek, Mitch, Alison, Quentin, Simon, and Wilf.

## milestones Tony Burton, Cu Nim

**M**Y THREE HOUR FLIGHT on 20 July completed the century mark of 100 landouts in my soaring life.

And what a start to the flight at 12:40 – 6-1/2 minutes from roll to 8000 feet – the towplane hadn't even landed. The initial concern was the wind strength, 20 or so knots out of the WNW. I wasn't sure where to go, so I flew south and got as far as the Bar U Ranch where I was blocked by a blue hole. A cloud street headed eastwards, so off I went under an 11,000 foot cloud base. SE of Vulcan I decided to turn back home, going SW at first as clouds were better that way, then westward at about Champion. I wasn't finding much and was down to 6000 SE of Parkland at 2:40. I got some lift back up to 10,500 after being drifted downwind 7 km. I followed the edge of the working cloud and got some good lift a couple of times by flying into vapoury wisps rising under the cloud bottoms. But by Nanton I kept on being pushed off the NW course home by the northerly wind.

Gerald Ince and Guy Peasley were in the same general area flying the Duo-Discus, and managed to stay connected and got home. With my lack of penetration, I had the choice of pressing on with the good probability of visiting a farmer, or making a hard right turn for an easy glide to High River a/p and a more convenient retrieve (see my track on the OLC). I landed at 3:40 – my thanks to Rafal for picking me up. Back at the clubhouse, I got 100-landout applause from Guy and Gerald as well as a congratulatory beer.

It's easy to do 100 – mostly you just have to fly a long time and in a lot of Canadian contests, and especially if you are determined to get out there and do cross-country flying. For me, it averaged about once every 40 hours of flying.

I'm not the only pilot to claim milestones in their flying this year: Patrick McMahon and Wilf Plester completed their 1000th flights, and Matt Swain his 500th. □

## a pilot named Charlie Doug Scott & Tony Burton

( to the tune of "the MTA" by the Kingston Trio )

Let me tell you the story  
Of a pilot named Charlie  
On a sorry and fateful day,  
He rigged his graceful glider and  
He kissed his wife and children,  
And went to ride on the mountain wave.

Charlie gave his tow ticket  
To the lad on the flight line  
And got pulled to Centre Peak.  
When he got through the rotor,  
He was sucked straight upwards –  
He couldn't get out of that wave.

Well, did he ever return?  
No, he never returned.  
He may fly forever  
O'er the airstrip at Cowley,  
He's the man who never returned.

During all the day long now  
Charlie soars o'er the mountains  
Asking, "What will become of me?  
How can I get down to see  
My most beautiful children,  
And my dear wife Annabelle Lee?"

Chorus

Annabelle goes on down to  
The old Cowley runway  
Each day at a quarter past two.  
And then over the airwaves,  
She gives Charlie the forecast  
As he glides on over her head.

Chorus

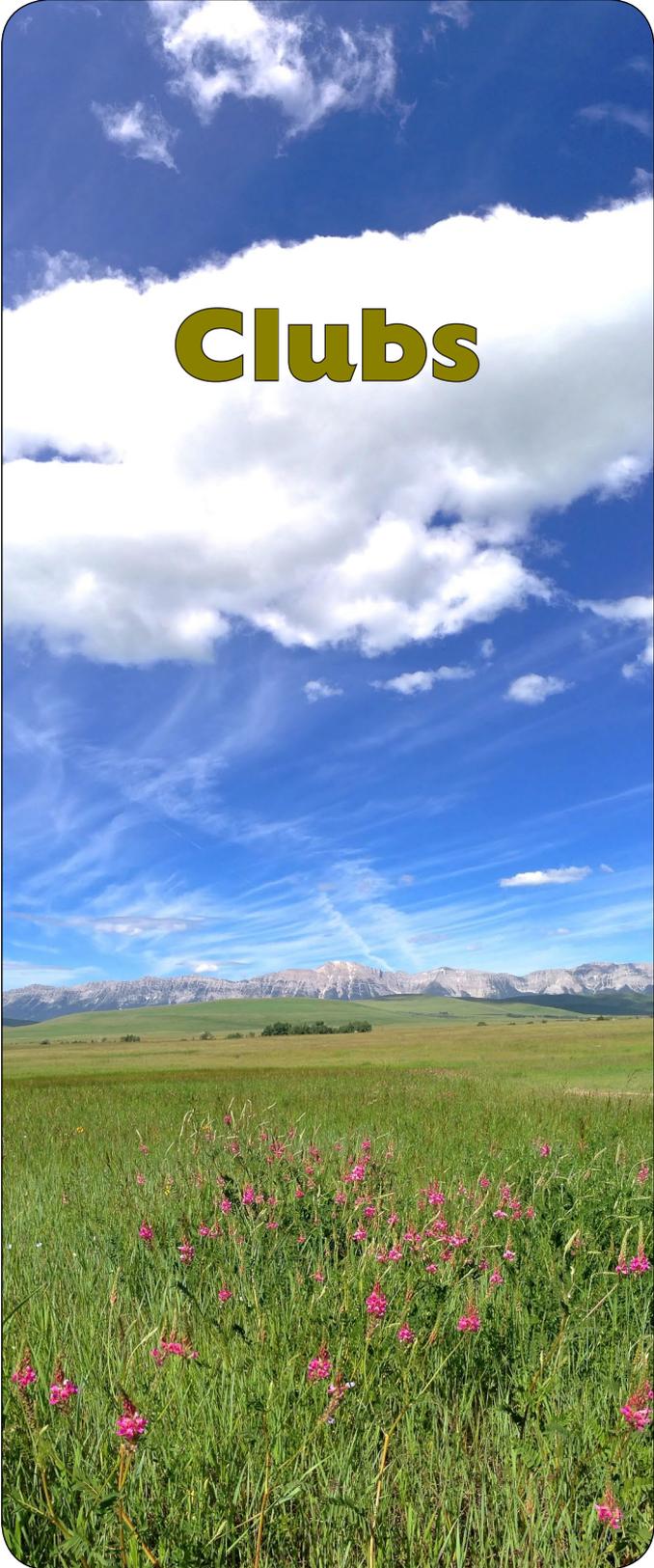
As his ship flew on under  
The Chinook Arch of wonder,  
Charlie looked all round and cried:  
Well, I'm so cold and hypoxic,  
And I'm sorely despondent,  
I can't flee from this awesome wave.

Chorus

Now you sky sailing pilots  
Don't you think it's so tragic  
The air is the devil at times.  
So have a care for your flying  
And forever be mindful  
Of Charlie, still soaring above.

Chorus

He's the man (who's the man?)  
He's the man who never returned...



# Clubs

## Cu Nim

**T**here is a time to develop and a time to rest. I'm not an economist, but I have never believed that any system, either human, animal or floral, can continuously grow with a limited set of resources. If something continues to grow, something has to give way. Similarly with the economy of a country, I have a hard time understanding that economists may consider a failure to decrease is equivalent to the growth of a society, and even suggest that not to grow means to shrink. I believe there is a time to push and evolve, and a time to rest and recover forces. During this rest time, you are not just sitting doing nothing, but actually planning for the future, analyzing strategies and getting a feeling of how the system is working with the new status achieved and evolving. In this way, the next push of development is a planned one and not rushed.

A gliding club has similar lines of evolution. People vary in their energy level and dedication, and there are times when a club needs to be aggressive in developing and acquiring new aircraft, but then make time to settle a bit, pay down debt, and plan for the near future. Failing to plan would mean not to be ready when you need to act again. Six to seven years ago, Cu Nim began a forced fleet renewal after the Blanik L-13s were grounded. Needless to say, I believe it was the best prompt ever for the evolution of the club. Now, after having invested more than half a million, a large amount of cash indeed, I believe we have achieved a new balance that requires some thought and settling.

We now have one of the best fleets in Canada as you can see in the photo on the next page.

It is worth mentioning that the development was achieved by a combination of bank and member loans of which the repayment has been very good indeed, as we now have only around 20% of the total investment to repay. All this comes of course with a human cost, and now it is time to enjoy our fleet and regain forces.

The club this year saw a relative decrease in membership with a bit less than 60 members. However, this was no surprise since early in the year we decided to eliminate our long time 5-flight student intro package. The decision was made to enhance the flying experience of our regular full-time students and respect their priority in having more instructor resources for their teaching. It was a good decision with fewer students but better individual achieve-

ment within a year. Instructors also felt that their time was well invested and students made progress, although our numbers did go down a bit. There is always an initial trade between investing in members wellbeing and short-term cash flow but I am sure it has been a worthwhile investment in time and dedication, and will bring benefits to the club. Next year we may be contemplating a middle ground approach where we can offer discounted packages for intro flights, but they would not be considered students and, as such, would not take instructor time away from our regular students. Flights would then be done by intro pilots.

For daily planning this year, we started using *ClicknGlide*, an online system designed for organizing operations within gliding clubs. In just a matter of clicks, you can literally see the rostered instructors, towpilots, sign for instructional flights, put down your name for being an intro pilot or create new events such as meetings or fly-in breakfasts. By using *ClicknGlide* we saw a decrease in e-mailing and less confusion in our operation. Based on conversations with some members, I contacted the creator of *ClicknGlide* and suggested some new features that could be added. It would be great if it had an online logbook system where students could input their instructor evaluations and comments (info from the Pilot Training Record), then instructors could have easy access to student records prior to an instructional day. It would aid in planning and skills development.

With 762 two-seater and 215 single-seat club flights as of the end of October, 106 private flights, 8 students with two solo and one licensed, the purchase of our ASW-28 (see Phil's story on page 3) and the repair of our ASK-21 early in the year, 2017 was for sure a handful. Thanks everyone for your help, energy, and passion for flying – Cu Nim is a wonderful group of people. You definitely make a difference.

As I write these lines, we are still flying and have had some nice wave flights from Cu Nim. Gerald and Guy always surprise us with good flights in late October. I wonder how next year will be. New challenges are on the horizon as the club may need me to fill in another position instead of being president. I have now been our president since 2011 and for

sure it has been exciting, challenging and enriching. Thanks everyone for the fun I have had doing so!

Get ready, the 2018 season will surely come quickly as you dream a lot about being in the air again on those beautiful early spring days!

Pablo Wainstein

## Edmonton

ESC had an amazing and progressive year, with many new faces including new students, new licensed pilots, and new members of the public all becoming acquainted with and enjoying the soaring life style.

Once again the rest of the season was quite wet and we lost several weekends due to our soft/wet runway. The club had an engineering company give us a quote to resurface the field and improve drainage, but this number quickly added up to over \$1,000,000. So we decided to create a contingency plan that would allow us to fly at a nearby paved airport on weekends when our runway is unusable.

We started this season a bit later than last year, in early May rather than late April, but we managed to still do about 976 flights this season at the time I write, just shy of the 1000 flights we did last year. We had about 52 active pilots this year who achieved a combined 421 hours and 23 minutes of flight time.

We had a very succesful 7th annual Junior Camp with twelve pilots participating, a full compliment. More about it is in Ryland's story on page 24. What a great group of talented young aviators, I know the future is bright for this sport.

We even had one air cadet drive out to ESC at the last minute to complete his glider pilot licence after being unable to do so at Gimli because of weather and logistics. He completed all his required solo flights and flight tests in one weekend. Thanks to our CFI Jason Acker and his team for helping pull off this feat.



Phil Stade

Ladies and gentlemen, the entire operational Cu Nim fleet: DG-1000 (NIM), ASK-21 (LTY), Jantar (FG), ASW-28 (28 back right), DG-303 (GO back left), and Cessna 182 (PZE). This is a mammoth upgrade given our Blaniks of a short few years ago.

Our number of familiarization flights appear to be on target with or have slightly increased from last year. The ESC has continued to expand our social media footprint as a way to spread public awareness about our club and sport. The results have been impressive with many more public users liking our Facebook page and following our club activities.

We completed the repairs needed to make our second Pawnee towplane airworthy again. It proved to be very useful on busy flying days and at our Junior Camp.

We had a very keen and active group of students this year with several licences and solos being achieved. Our instructors were kept busy and we continue to have a need for more trained instructors, hopefully this will be solved at the next instructor course planned for the spring.

ESC continues to grow and work towards expanding our membership and interest in the sport of soaring. With our young and energetic executive board I expect this will continue into the future.

We are currently in discussions of building a new hangar for our towplanes and the possible acquisition of a new two-seat glider suitable for training and cross-country flights. That's all for now as we patiently wait for the start of next season ...

**Aaron McDermid**

## **Lethbridge**

**L**SC has again been very busy working on the hangar. Getting the main door up and working was a major milestone. We now have a fully enclosed hangar with just minor things to do to complete it.

During the ASC camps we had the hangar full with gliders and PCK – it is very nice to see it being used as we intended. I now hope that next year we can concentrate on flying more. The hangar has been a major project for the club and now to see it completed is really a testament to our club members on securing the future of the Lethbridge Soaring Club. It will be around for many years to come and will open up Cowley for more people to enjoy the fantastic flying we have here.

We are still mainly a winch operation and enjoy the use of the ASC Roman winch. During the ASC camps we have introduced pilots to the thrill of a ground launch and teaching safe winching methods.

We now have a new instructor, Bruce Aleman, helping to teach our student pilots. Jeff Sligerland is our first ab initio student to go solo and should be licensed very soon. We also have several other students close to going solo.

LSC is very involved in promoting the club and sport which has been paying off and should see the reward of this hard work in the near future. In early 2017 we applied for two grants to help support our *Freedom Wings* flights. Richardson Oil Seed in Lethbridge, which holds a golf tournament charity, accepted our application and gave us the funds to buy our new Kubota utility vehicle. We will attach a hoist to this to raise people in and out of the glider. We were also accepted for a CIP grant which will secure the purchase of the *Freedom Wings/Youth Flight Canada*, Grob 103.

This year the club set a goal to fly every month of 2017 and so far we have achieved this and hope to carry this on through 2018. Flying during the winter did provide us with some challenges but our hardy members managed to come out and get some flights in. If you would like to join us during the winter months, let me know.

LSC is growing fast and is securing a good foundation for its future.

**Geoff Minors**

## **Central Alberta**

**T**hese are the highlights of our season. There wasn't much going on at the club this season. Due to the economy we only had four returning students that showed up at the beginning of the season and as the summer went on they just stopped coming.

There were three events worth mentioning. The first was the Provincial contest at Netook where the club helped support the contest executive at the facilities and where we had John Mulder, Drew Hammond, and Leo Deschamps participate. Leo earned third place over all. A highlight was the award of the Canada 150 pin from SAC to all three pilots. This was the award for doing a 150 km flight in the Canada 150th birthday year.

The second big event, initiated by Dale Brown, was going to the Lacombe Airport for two days of glider rides for charity. Our two aircraft were ferried to the Lacombe airport and back. It was a great experience for our novice pilots who haven't really flown over a semi built-up area. We managed to do a few training flights and a good time was had by all. It was 32C the first day and on the final day, the winds went from 10 km/h to 86 km/h. What a surprise, but our two passengers loved the exciting landings. The club raised \$625 for the Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Lacombe.

Last was the hard work Judy Soroka did at the Springbank airshow and arranging over 25 intro rides herself this year to make the club's year a financial success. Our club did over 50 intro flights this year.

**Leo Deschamps**



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