

The Press Release:

**Who handles this?** Assign one person. As the designated media contact, this person's primary qualification is their communication skill. Second, they need to be knowledgeable about the subject. Third, they need to have the authority to speak for your club.

**Why are we doing this?** Decide what your club's story actually is. Distill it into one short phrase.

**Now what?** Once you have the story, develop the press release around it. Use the W5 format: Who, What, Why, When and Where. Make it short enough to grasp in a few seconds. (A suggested template is on page 2)

**The list:** Well in advance of the event, create a media list. It doesn't have to be long but it has to be seen by the right people. Send the release directly via e-mail, using the group feature in your e-mail program so the entire list is not revealed. Search local media (television, radio, newspaper and news websites) for "contact us" information. Exclude political talk show hosts, restaurant critics, and the like. Include community event reporters, feature writers, sports reporters and anyone reporting on outdoor sports, young people, etc. Photographers and videographers should see the visual impact of our sport via your club website.

**Timing and content:** People who work in media are bombarded with press release e-mail. Stay on their radar. Send updates as your event day approaches. E-mail a few weeks ahead, a week away, and the day prior to the event. Add something new and interesting to the top of each one. When writing and talking about our sport, remember that hardly anyone knows about it, and that if they do, they often mistake it for hang gliding.

Suggested media release template follows (this template was originally designed for the National Day of Soaring. With a few changes, it will be appropriate for any event):

News Release: The public is invited to give the kids their first glider flight. It's also our fundraiser: 2008 National World Contest Fam Flight Day.

(Name) Club, (nearest town), is holding a fundraising day on (date). We're doing our part to help defray the costs of getting Canada's National Soaring Team to Leusse, Germany in August, for the World Gliding Championships.

Soaring clubs are holding National World Contest Fam Flight Days across Canada this spring. It's the very first time we've all come together for a fundraiser in support of our top national pilots, who receive no outside funding.

We're calling the event "fam flights" for another good reason: we want to familiarize you and your young folk to one of the world's most interesting flight challenges: soaring. The proceeds from each introductory glider flight during Fam Flight Day will help our national team.

Soaring is also called gliding – the terms are interchangeable. Today's gliders (also called sailplanes) are very different from hang gliders. They are highly efficient aircraft that, in the hands of skilled pilots, fly surprising distances and speeds, and remain aloft for many hours powered by energy in the sky. Soaring is one of the greatest life-long sports a young person can learn. From first lessons and ground school to solo, to the challenges of multi-hour duration, and distance flights of several hundred kilometres, it provides a lifetime of challenges and accomplishments.

And who knows? One day, they might make our national team.

Date of event

Rain Date

Cost per introductory flight

Map (web link via Mapquest, Google etc)

Find out more about soaring here:

Your club website, and

[www.sac.ca](http://www.sac.ca)

Media interviews are welcome. Contact here:

(Contact name, e-mail, phone number)

Today's date