

DUST DEVIL TRIBUNE

Issue #41

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T.J.'s East Coast Experience

The soaring community is a special subculture in its own right, and when we talk of promoting this fantastic sport, we often omit one of the more important factors. The factor that I speak of is what defines the personality of a soaring organization and its operation. It is the climate set by the collective members that determines the fun factor, or quality of the experience when visiting other soaring organizations.

Being active duty military, currently assigned to Joint Task Force Six in El Paso, Texas, I recently had the pleasure of attending the three month Joint Professional Military Education course at the Joint Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia. While there, I wanted to stay current and found Tidewater Soaring Society (TSS) on the SSA website under places to fly on the east coast.

TSS is comfortably located at the Garner Gliderport (3VA8) in the Isle of Wight County of Virginia. This is a member owned and operated organization that is totally devoted to the enjoyment and challenge of the sport of

soaring. Their enthusiasm, dedication, and camaraderie beckons all that desire to fly like an Eagle.

My intent was to remain current and make some new friends, and I must say that my reception on the first visit was one of the best. I was promptly introduced to Louise Hibbard (Treasurer & CFIG) and she provided me with the details for an associate membership and a brief overview on TSS flight safety and operations. In

no time at all, my field orientation and checkout ride was complete.

I expressed an interest in flying their new fleet of Blaniks (L23 & L33), since this was my first time seeing them for real. Previously, I had

only read about them and reviewed pictures on a website. A couple of weekends later, Louise had me checked out and I was giving personal demonstration rides to my fellow classmates. The Blaniks flew very well and the pleasure was all mine. Their fleet of five gliders and two tow planes are well maintained and always ready to fly, and operating from the 2,600 foot

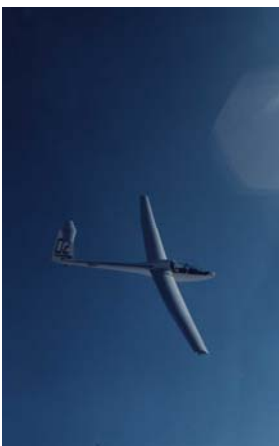
(Continued on page 3)



Towplane Status



Factoid:
Thermals can be extremely narrow. Bank angles exceeding 45° may be required to successfully climb.



As you may already know, we have been tracking down an oil leak on the tow plane for a few months. John Hardy has found the cause: a hair-line crack in the engine case. Although the degree of the crack isn't currently operationally prohibitive, it will get worse. If we act now, the case may be repairable. If we continue to fly with it as is, it will need to be replaced, which will cost more than three times as much. Even worse, the entire engine may need to be replaced. Worst case: we could have a catastrophic engine failure, which may include the loss of life. We can't let that happen!

The Board of Directors has therefore chosen to ground the towplane. We will disassemble the engine and ship the case away for repairs.

The club will continue with flight operations while our tow plane is being repaired. The club is considering two launching alternatives: using the winch with a new cable or leasing a Piper Pawnee Towplane from Odessa.

Also, the next few months will be a great opportunity for other club projects, including replacing the awning over the picnic tables and replacing the SGS 2-33's brake.

Labor Day Cookout

Mark your calendars! Sunday, September 5th, will be the club's Labor Day Cookout! The club will provide the burgers and hot dogs, and maybe even some bratwurst! We need everybody to bring a covered dish to pass around.

We will start the day by pulling the gliders out of the hangar at noon, and do a quick cleaning of the club's hangar. We'll then fly

all day, and finally migrate over to the picnic tables at the airport office to feast and laugh until sunset. We hope



that everybody can come for the whole day!

And for those late night folks, we'll watch (and make fun of) the high-school kids race their cars and mo-

torcycles down the runway afterwards! Believe it or not, it is much more entertaining than you might think!

“T.J.” Continued

“TSS’s fleet of five gliders and two tow planes are well maintained and always ready to fly, and operating from the 2,600 foot grass landing strip was too much fun!”

grass landing strip was too much fun!

One weekend, as I was heading out the door with my flight bag in hand, my roommate (Peter) asked where I was going? I told him I was going to fly gliders, and when I saw that it sparked his interest, I invited him along. Being a USAF C-130 pilot, Peter could not pass up on an opportunity like this. I introduced him to Bodo, who immediately took him up for a Demo ride in the L23 Super Blanik. Upon his return to earth, it was clear that

Peter was hooked. His eyes were sparkling and he had that smile, you know the one we all exhibit when we discover something new. After I introduced him to Louise, he was well on his way to getting his glider rating.

From that day on, Peter accompanied me out to TSS each weekend for a full day of flight training. While he was training, I was accumulating as much time as possible, sharing my love of soaring with as many people as I could.

Within two months time, Peter had met all the requirements and had achieved his glider pilot license. This was one experience that Peter will always remember. As for me, Peter was one more friend that I was able to in-

troduce to the sport of soaring. As Louise puts it, “He found his Magic.”

Unfortunately, as life plays out, all good things must come to an end. All the fun we were having with the wonderful members of TSS had to be put on hold, as we graduated from our course and headed back to our home stations. Much thanks goes to Byrd Saville for leading such a great organization and making it a very personal experience - not commercial. Also, thanks to all those at TSS with which I routinely shared the sky on the weekends.

Needless to say, I departed TSS with great reservation, as this experience ranks as one of the best in my soaring experience. The memory of the warm, inviting, and professional people at the Garner Gliderport will never be forgotten. There will always be an open invitation to all to come to El Paso to fly the giant thermals with me. The reciprocity rule is certainly in effect with the El Paso Soaring Society.

Fly High – Fly Safe – Fly Often... and share the experience!

By: “TJ” Neely



Thermals, Part 4: Climbing Techniques



“Rules-of-thumb aren’t perfect, and they may even cause us to fly in the wrong direction!”



In the first three parts of the “Thermals” series, we learned where thermals come from and how to forecast their strength. This month we strap ourselves into the glider and actually get to climb within a thermal, and soar!

When we first learn to fly gliders, we only get an introduction to climbing in thermals. We hear basic rules-of-thumb techniques on how to keep the glider centered in the lift. But those rules-of-thumb aren’t perfect, and they may even cause us to fly in the wrong direction!

The most common technique is to roll out of a turn when we encounter strong lift. If we look at Figure 1, the black circle is our flight path as we circle counter-clockwise near a color-coded thermal. We enter the thermal at point A, and we notice weak lift. We continue our turn and reach strong lift at point B, and using this technique, we roll out of our turn.

In this example, however, this technique causes to fly away from the center of the thermal, and exit the lift at point C.

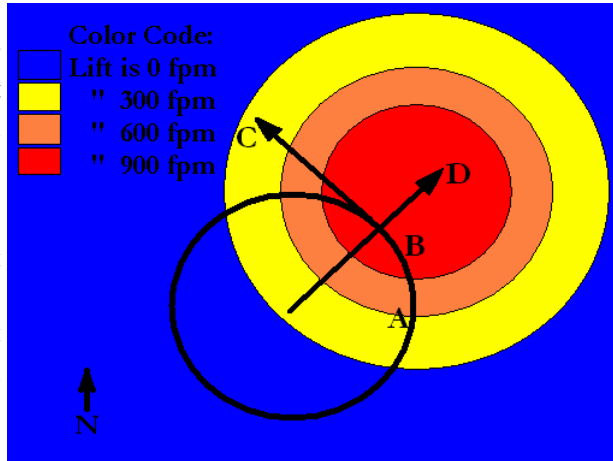


Figure: 1.

There are many techniques to center the glider within a thermal, but all of them must include some form of situational awareness. Situational awareness is our ability to visualize the position of our glider in

relation to its surroundings; in this case: the thermal.

If we fly a complete circle before attempting to center the glider within the thermal, we note that the strongest lift was encountered at the northeast corner of our circle. Therefore, the core of the thermal (and the strongest lift) is to our northeast, at point D.

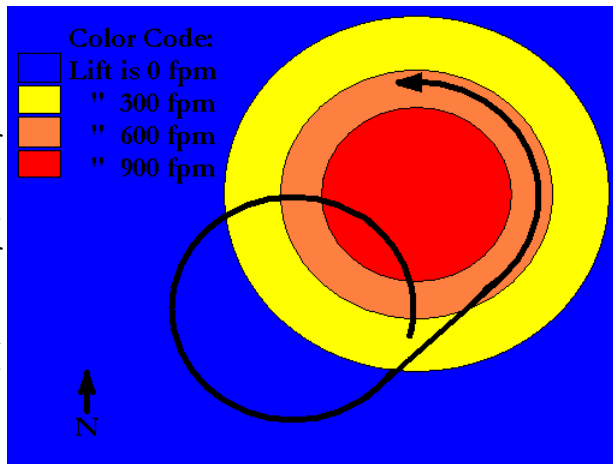


Figure: 2.

To move our glider into the strongest lift, we need to roll out of our turn and fly for a moment to the northeast, and then resume our turn to the left (Figure 2). (Continued on page 5)

“Thermals” Continued



“The most common error that glider pilots do is to incorrectly associate the glider’s heading with the location of the thermal’s core.”



The most common error that glider pilots do is to incorrectly associate the glider’s heading with the location of the thermal’s core. In our example, during our initial circle we encountered the strongest lift at point B, while the glider was heading to the northwest. It is easy to think that the lift is in front of us at that point, rather than considering the entire circle.

Another common error is to underestimate the importance of avoiding areas of sink. This may seem obvious to most, but I routinely watch pilots fly through areas of sink, only to fly through the same area of sink a mo-

ment later! A simple way of breaking this bad habit is to try a technique that I call ‘Reverse-Thermalling.’ Rather than concentrating on flying towards lift, concentrate on flying away from sink! Again, we need to visualize the position of our glider in relation to its surroundings; in this case: areas of sink. If we assume that the blue area in figure 1 is an area of sink, we make a note that while the glider was at the western and southern points of our circle we encountered sink, and we choose to not fly there again. We again choose to move our entire circle to the northeast: towards point D.

By: Chris Fleming

Horizon City’s New Airport

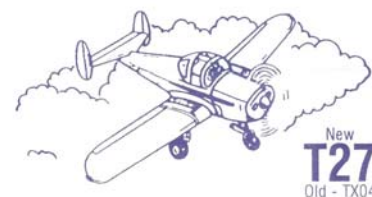
West Texas Airport is changing its name to Horizon Airport. Phil Barrett is trying to secure long-term funding from the City of Horizon, and this is the logical next step in that process.

For us, it means a change in radio procedures. Some of us still refer to the tow plane as “91V,” two years after that plane last flew! Now, instead of calling “West Texas Traffic” when making your traffic pattern position reports, you need to say: “Horizon Traffic.”

Some things will not change, however. “Glider Ground” will remain “Glider Ground!”

New Name
HORIZON AIRPORT
 FORMERLY
 WEST TEXAS AIRPORT

SAME FINE
 SERVICES
 AND
 MANAGEMENT



12787 TAXIWAY • EL PASO, TX 79928
 (915) 852-3554

INFORMATION ABOUT JOINING THE EL PASO SOARING SOCIETY

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
OF THE
EL PASO
SOARING SOCIETY

EL PASO, TEXAS

FLY GLIDERS WITH THE
EL PASO SOARING SOCIETY!
WE NORMALLY BEGIN
OPERATIONS AT NOON ON
WEEKENDS.

WE ARE LOCATED AT
WEST TEXAS AIRPORT,
WHICH IS LOCATED 2.5 MILES
NORTH OF INTERSTATE 10 ON
AMERICAS AVENUE, TURN
EAST ON PELLICANO DRIVE,
AND GO 1 MILE, THEN FOLLOW
THE AIRPORT SIGNS.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CALL US
FOR MORE INFORMATION!

KEITH FONG, PRESIDENT:
(915) 351-7535

JAMES COX, TREASURER:
(915) 585-9135

JOHN HARDY, FAA EXAMINER:
(915) 852-7674

WEST TEXAS AIRPORT:
(915) 852-3554

VISIT US ON THE WEB AT
ELPASOSOARING.ORG



EL PASO SOARING SOCIETY

The El Paso Soaring Society is a non-profit sports organization dedicated to the pursuit of soaring flight. Membership participation in club activities allows all of us to enjoy the sport at a reasonable cost. We have three sailplanes available for member use, as well as our own tow plane. Flight instruction is available to all club members who desire to learn how to soar. Student pilots can solo gliders as young as 14 years old, and get their license by age 16; there is no maximum age limit. Generally, a student can solo after 30 instructional flights. Transition pilot training is also available.

Membership Costs:

Introductory Ride	\$50
Initiation Fee	\$250
Club Dues	\$40/mo.
SSA Dues	\$64/yr.
Typical Tow Charge	\$20
Glider Rental:	
SGS 2-33	\$10/hr.
SGS 1-26	\$10/hr.
Grob 103	\$15/hr.
Total cost to join, including books; non-refundable:	\$395

Club Officer's Meeting

The Board of Directors held a meeting on July 24th to discuss a growing list of subjects. Some highlights of the meeting included:

- A brief review of the financial status of the club. The club continues to be cash-flow positive, and the Board chose not to raise club dues.
- An incentive program to encourage club members to become tow pilots and flight instructors. The Board voted to reduce monthly dues of any tow pilot or flight instructor who actively participates in the club.
- An incentive program to encourage students to take lessons in the mornings. Pattern tows before noon will now be charged at a flat rate of \$10 each, a savings of \$5.
- A review of cross-country flying in club gliders. The Board chose to create a committee to discuss this issue in more detail.
- A discussion about the Women Soaring Pilots Association's interest in holding a convention in El Paso. The Board chose to gather more information before extending a formal invitation.