

Convector



www.m-asa.org

Newsletter of the Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association

Ridge Decisions

by Val Brain

Those of us who fly west to run the ridges in a northwest wind know that ridge running is much faster than thermal soaring, so that we can increase our average task speed by 50% or more.

From Fairfield a ridge flight usually has three components: an into-wind leg to a turnpoint 33 miles or so to the west, such as Burnt Cabins or McConnellsburg; a ridge running leg south to Lockings or north to Thompsontown; and a downwind leg from the last ridge turnpoint home.

The into-wind leg is often the most difficult. One must get high enough to make a good start five miles out and clear the first range of hills, which offer few landing fields. One must then cross the valley near Chambersburg and plan to cross three ridges before reaching Burnt Cabins, taking into account the down currents to be expected low over the hills. If one plans to then turn north toward Thompsontown, one need only clear the last ridge by 200' before continuing on to clip the one mile circle around the turnpoint, but if one has another 300' or so, one can head on upwind and round the knob that begins the ridge that runs south to McConnellsburg and Lockings.

On ridge days facing a 15-20 knot headwind, crossing the valley requires a spe-



cial technique. The thermals are often oriented in lift streets with sink alleys in between, so one must avoid crossing them obliquely but follow one directly to where it intersects the ridge, and then run the ridge to the turnpoint. Sometimes it is possible to make only two or three stops in superior thermals while crossing the valley while following a lift street connecting the clouds – if there are any.

Once down on the ridge, it is not uncommon to find two positions where the lift is strongest and speed can be maximized. One is right down on the trees close to the steepest slope; the other is 200-300 above the crest, where the ridge lift is augmented by orographic thermals. The latter is psychologically more

comfortable and the view is better, if you like a scenic route, but it may be rougher because the thermals coming off the ridge produce more turbulence. At 110 knots a 5 knot thermal can give your head a nasty bang, so I keep a foam pad to jam in between my hat and the canopy.

Thermals are associated with clouds on the ridge and can result in shifting wind speeds and directions. An approaching storm can even reverse the wind direction

and make it treacherous to press on. Crossing minor gaps along the ridge line (“wind gaps”) rarely presents a problem. Often the lift seems to just carry on over. But a big gap, like the one from the razorback ridge that runs from Burnt Cabins to near Honey Grove to the Hog’s Back ridge that goes on to Thompsontown, requires a transition strategy. I always used to slow down and climb 300’ or so before cruising upwind to the Hog’s Back, but **Jonathan Gere** showed me that rather than taking time to climb, one can just locate a thermal and follow it upwind across the gap without climbing. Then, when parallel with the Hog’s Back, one turns along it. The hill rises as you descend, until with luck you pick up the ridge lift again.

(Continued on page 6)

President's Notes

By Glenn Collins

I'm about to give up trying to maintain any concept of a schedule. It seems like the harder I try the further behind I fall. I just can't believe fall is upon us and winter is rapidly approaching. This morning I was able to notice a marked decline in the tree's coloration on the way to the office. The golds and reds are giving way to the browns. I hate to see the change after such a limited season. However, it will bring us the opportunity for new soaring challenges and usher in a new season before we know it.

With the 2003 season mostly behind us, it is time to start thinking about next year. We really need to move forward and complete the 2-33 recover project. I am sure Dave wants it out of his house but we also need the extra training ship since next year is going to be the best flying any of us can remember in all of M-ASA's years. Well, at least it should be better than this year. We also need to look at ways to improve our proficiency. One proposal I have for future boards is to begin the practice of holding a mid season safety meeting similar to the one we held this past August. I would however make an attempt to schedule it for an evening associated with the July 10-day weekend so there might be some flying opportunities before the meeting. I have also proposed to the board a dedicated M-ASA cleanup and recurrency weekend to be held around the annual meeting in March.

A cleanup and recurrency weekend? What might I possibly mean? For most, it might not seem like that great of a deal at first blush. Basically I am stealing a page from some of the European clubs and dedicating the same weekend toward investing some club resources in our instructor and tow pilot members in hopes of a return through a better operation that year. I propose the creation of a weekend where we shutdown normal operations and perform specific training and cleanup tasks. The flying aspect of the weekend would center

around our instructors and tow pilots. These valuable members would meet in the morning to discuss topics pertaining to M-ASA's training and towing operation. After the morning meetings, they would head out to the flight line and practice what they have been preaching. It would be an ideal time for tow pilots to get reacquainted with gliders and also give some of our instructors the opportunity to fly some of the club gliders they might be asked to sign folks off in although they may not have flown them in years. As an incentive the flying costs would be covered by the club. We could tag students to perform the support duties to run the flight line and keep the records. My intent is to make this a two day event so one day would be done at each location. This would serve the added benefit of getting our instructors out to each field and syncing up the operational procedures.

Now for all you non instructor/tow pilot types: no free lunch on this one. I mentioned stealing a page from our European friends. Many of the overseas clubs specify and enforce mandatory work requirements to be a club member. I would want to develop detailed lists of maintenance activities which could be performed by various work parties during the specified weekend. Clubhouse painting, aircraft washing, hangar cleanout are just a few of the needed tasks. I would expect all members to participate on one of the two days and pitch in doing some of the work. We can make it fun by including a cookout as well.

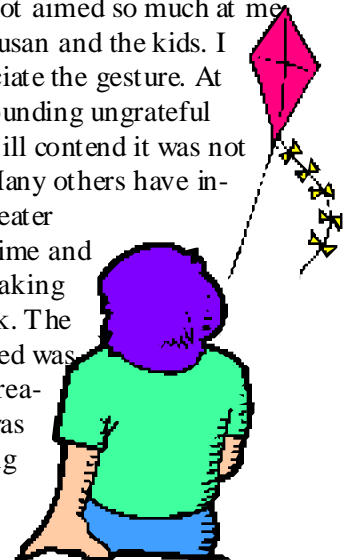
I think this would be a workable way to accomplish many of the activities required to launch a successful season. This will help ensure tow pilots get some glider time and instructors review what we are teaching and sample the various techniques and get the opportunity to fly some of the club single seat gliders. It would also give us a good opportunity to work off necessary maintenance items at each location. A picnic should be part of the festivities.

Everyone would be expected to help on one of the two days. Instructors and tow pilots get to participate on both days but they also get some extra flying for their efforts. We need to decide if this is worthwhile and start organizing now. So far responses are positive. I would like to hear from others so I can present to the board in November a recommendation to proceed or can the idea. Right now I would target the third weekend in March for the activity.

Thank You

In closing I want to extend a warm thank you to the many members who have expressed thanks and participated in presenting my family with gift certificates for bed and breakfast accommodations. At Oktoberfest's Saturday dinner, those in attendance were subjected to Mike Vance rattling on about the efforts which culminated in our TFR waiver. When Mike finished he presented my family with the gift certificates. I contend the resultant gift was unnecessary but the presentation was well done and hard to fight since it was wisely not aimed so much at me but toward Susan and the kids. I really appreciate the gesture. At the risk of sounding ungrateful however, I still contend it was not necessary. Many others have invested far greater amounts of time and effort into making M-ASA work. The time I invested was for no other reason than it was the right thing to do.

Glenn 



Calendar

November 14 7:30PM	General meeting (FDK)
November 20	Convector deadline (convector@m-asa.org)

A Trip to Elmira

by Carlos Reyes

From my home in Rockville, Harris Hill is a five hour drive away. I had been wanting to visit this soaring "holy ground" for a long time, but it is a little too far for a one day road trip. It took over five years for the right opportunity to come along. You see, Elmira also lies a little over two hours north of Leesburg, "as the Cessna flies". When my good friend **Rick Witter** offered to fly us up there, I immediately jumped at the opportunity.

We took off under IFR conditions, but Elmira had beautiful blue skies. Too blue - not a cloud in sight, even though it was already noon. We didn't mind. This was Elmira! Even before we landed at Elmira-Corning Regional Airport, there was no mistaking where we were. At least three times the friendly voice from the airport alerted us to watch out for gliders to our left. We sure looked, but we never saw them.

Immediately upon landing, we ran into **Stephen Garner**. We didn't know it at the time, but this was our lucky break. We learned later that Steve is an active member of both the Harris Hill Soaring Center (HHSC, www.harrishillsoaring.org) and the local Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) chapter, #533. That day, as our luck would have it, he was helping host a visit to Elmira by members of the famous 99ers women pilot's association. When he learned that we needed a ride up to Harris Hill, he immediately offered to drive us up.

The National Soaring Museum (NSM, www.soaringmuseum.org) is right next to the runway on Harris Hill. We were very impressed by the quality and diversity of the gliders on display. Of course, the collection of Schweizer gliders is very extensive and truly excellent. Next time you see **Bob Ball** (President of the NSM Board of Trustees), be sure

and thank him for a job well done.

After the museum, we wandered over to the flight line. I quickly realized that very few club members were present - almost all of the activity at the busy flight line was from guests to the club. Yup, there were no clouds or thermals that day. That did not keep us or anybody else visiting Harris Hill from having a great time.

Just as we were wondering how we would finagle cheap glider rides for ourselves, Steve came to our rescue again. When he saw that we were waiting around, he quickly arranged for us to fly. Special thanks go to **Corky** and **Dana**, the two A+ fellows that took us up in beautiful ASK-21s.

After it was over, we helped put the gliders away and Steve drove us back to Elmira Regional for a dusk take-off. The trip lasted twelve hours, but the many pleasant memories will last a lifetime. 🌄



Carlos Reyes

Corky and Rick after their flight



Carlos Reyes

The famous Flying Plank

1-23 Model Raffle

by *Frauke Elber*

This model was donated to WSPA by **Ray Kleber** from Eagle Brand Products and it will be raffled off. Raffle tickets are available now. The drawing will be next June during the women seminar in Elmira. For information contact f_elber@yahoo.com or call 757-595-7963 and ask for **Frauke**.

Here is a brief history of this particular 1-23. Registration # N91874, Serial #9, year 1949. Originally sold to a Mr. **Gonzolas** who owned it until 1995. Mr. Gonzolas passed away shortly after he sold the 1-23. It is in reality silver since it has never been painted. The only other owner has been **Christopher Manley**, Mojave, CA. 🇺🇸



Jim Furlong

New sign at Fairfield



Jim Furlong

Collins family opens presents at Oktoberfest

Duty Schedule

Date	Frederick			Fairfield		
	Operations Dir	Asisstant OD	Tow Pilot	Operations Dir	Asisstant OD	Tow Pilot
Nov-1	Peter English	Nicholas Bonilla	Gene Wilburn	Gary Goldberg	Gerry Tighe	Pete Welles
Nov-2	Roger Andes	Garry Calvalho	Tom Judkins	Roger Thompson		Mike Grinder
Nov-8	Harry Bates		Scott Petrasek	David MacVeigh		Don Robb
Nov-9	Michael Higgins		Jane Robens	Jean Compton		David Pixton
Nov-11	Jim Furlong		Hans Jorgensen	Scott Myers		Bill Savory
Nov-15	Robert Compton		Robert Robins	Ali Abrishami		Mike Smith
Nov-16	Ramon DeJesus		Jan Steenblik	Fred Bane		Max Ullmann
Nov-22	Harry LaBrie		Sam Harry	Aurel Trandafir	Mark Mercer	Rich Horgan
Nov-23	Tom Davidson		Bob Andrew	Steven Shelton		Jim Chick
Nov-29	Urs Thierstein		Lance Nuckolls	Chris O'Callaghan		George Green

M-ASA Duty Notes: Members assigned to operations duty must be on site in enough time to start operations by 10:00 a.m. and stay at the field until operations are concluded. Each person listed on the duty roster is responsible for that day's assignment. In the case of "no-shows," the person acting as OD should indicate this fact on the flight sheet. "No-shows" will be fined \$100. M-ASA's training process requires all new members to serve as Apprentice OD (AOD) at both M-ASA operating locations. This is to familiarize new members with the operating practices at each field. Any member who joined the previous year and who was not scheduled for AOD duty at each field, will be scheduled for AOD duty at each field in the current year. Note that AOD scheduling is done independently of duty preference information submitted on the member's duty preference form. After the AOD cycles have been completed every effort will be made to accommodate the new member's stated duty preference whenever possible.
 M-ASA Scheduler: Ray Watson 410-484-0333.

Sarah's Racing News

by Sarah Macpherson

This month, fall settles in, bringing much of the same type of weather we saw during the spring. September was a rough month for the pilots, producing only one weekend good enough for task day flying. The weather began to get better in October, with two tasks round-

ing out the score-sheets this month.

Baude Litt (LBL) "leap-frogs" over **Jonathan Gere** (34) this month to land [Groan. -Editor] in first place with 8906 points. Jonathan "tails" him with 8830. **Michael Higgins** (X6) wins a task this month to take third



place with 8305 points. Joining us for tasks (mostly flown on the 5th of October) are **Val Brain** (13), **David Pixton** (9X), **George Burns** (T8), **Christophe Blanchi** (A2) and **John Hearn** (T1). Join us next month as I'm sure the wind will have picked up and the task day racers begin their ridge battles. 🏁

	LBL	34	X6	13	9X	T8	A2	CL	P6	T1	9
Mar-23	1000	0	850	344	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Apr-12	1000	968	0	238	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Apr-13	1000	0	900	0	0	212	589	47	0	0	0
Apr-27	0	1000	0	752	0	497	0	719	789	727	0
May-3	566	0	444	1000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
May-4	1000	913	0	0	0	0	775	0	909	0	0
Jun-28	1000	935	637	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jun-29	1000	315	994	335	0	0	233	0	0	0	0
Jul-13	0	1000	0	924	0	635	0	0	0	0	0
Jul-19	0	959	928	1000	592	809	0	0	0	0	766
Jul-20	0	971	895	768	1000	666	759	612	0	0	0
Jul-26	333	1000	0	0	0	0	0	47	0	0	0
Aug-17	1000	997	739	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aug-23	0	265	1000	786	823	0	0	763	587	629	249
Aug-24	0	1000	406	937	922	0	0	0	0	340	0
Sep-6	840	856	1000	389	0	0	0	572	0	0	532
Oct-5	906	333	1000	870	837	582	500	0	0	508	0
Oct-13	1000	686	382	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	8,906	8,830	8,305	7,427	4,175	3,401	2,856	2,760	2,284	2,204	1,546

Ridge Decisions

(Continued from page 1)

The same technique is used to fly out to the turnpoint at Thompsontown Bridge – following a lift street out into the valley and back again without climbing. But it doesn't pay to get too low on the ridge at this point, and finding the right "sweet spot" and the best lift is important. Since you must climb back up the Hog's Back, it may be necessary to slow down to avoid sinking way below the ridge crest.

But the transition from the Hog's Back to the razorback ridge that runs to Burnt Cabins is the one that often causes me the most trouble. One can't just reverse the technique one used to cross the gap on the way out, because the Hog's Back sinks down as one heads south, and if one were to just follow it down to the previous transition point, one would be too low to cross the gap over unlandable terrain. In consequence I always try to gain another 300' or so over the top of the ridge where the power line crosses, before heading toward the spur where the razor back ridge begins. But gaining this 300' is not always easy, and on occasion I have been delayed there for some time if a thermal is not forthcoming. It's these delays that can really slow down a ridge flight. There's only one little square field on the way over, which slopes visibly, and I hope I never have to land there.

Transitioning at Burnt Cabins south to the upwind ridge that runs to McConnellsburg is usually done by finding a thermal on the ridge near the Pennsyl-

vania Turnpike tunnel and following it upwind until one can peel off and dive for the spur with just enough height to round it and press on. When you arrive, that ridge better be working, because it runs for about three miles over forested hills before the valley becomes landable again.

Towards McConnellsburg the ridge bends around to the southwest, which is inconvenient in a northwest wind, so it is advisable to pull back in any thermal one can find and try to float around to the turnpoint where the ridge straightens out again and on to Lockings. Just before the Lockings turnpoint is reached, the ridges come together and the one you are running can be blanked out. A few degrees difference in wind direction can make a big difference.

Once the last turnpoint has been reached, all one has to do is find a good thermal and climb fast up to 5000' or so, from where you can make a straight glide back to Fairfield – allowing enough altitude to clear the hills. A fast run along the ridge toward the best-looking cloud in the vicinity is often the best bet. Drifting back over the valley in a weak thermal is treacherous, because if it quits you may not be able to get back to the ridge again for another try. Making it back to Fairfield late in the evening in the weak valley thermals is a real let down after all the fast ridge running, so I always try to make a fast climb in a thermal off the ridge which is still facing the setting sun. A 34 mile final glide

downwind is a nice conclusion to a ridge flight, and with a 70 knot cruising speed one can see from the GPS that the groundspeed is over 100 mph.

In PST and MAT tasks it's usually better not to exceed the minimum task duration by much, so as to make the best use of the 5000' start height bonus, which is worth 25 miles of cruise distance without having to climb. But ridge tasks are different: the more time you spend running the ridges at high speed, the higher will be your task average. But you have to wait until the day has developed enough to make a fast first leg to the ridges, and not wait so long you miss that last good thermal to get you home.

At my age a 2 ½ hour task is long enough, and I like to get back in time for tea or something stronger by around 4:30 p.m. after a 300 km flight. I also opt for a more comfortable ridge position and rarely exceed 110 knots. But for serious task competitors, minimizing the time lost in transitions and flying in the sweetest spot on the ridge are essential. A ten minute increase in time for a four hour task lowers the average speed from 50 mph to 47.6, but for a two hour ridge running task of the same distance it lowers it from 100 mph to 90.9. Two years ago Jonathan Gere completed a ridge flight out of Fairfield at an average speed of 101 mph, which included 33 miles against a substantial headwind. I know I can never get close to that, but an occasional ridge flight is still fun, in moderation. 🌱

Trivial Teasers

by Carlos Reyes and Maurice Deland

1. While waiting for your turn to fly, you decide to help out the flight operation by running a few wings. It is something you have done many times before. The winds are very light, with variable direction. The glider at the front of the line is being piloted by a very experienced member. Everything starts out fine. After taking a couple of steps, you notice that the wing you are holding suddenly gets very heavy. You are holding the

wings level, so you conclude that the pilot must be thinking there is a cross wind. You lower the wing, but there is still too much downward pressure. You are afraid that if you let go, the wing will slam into the ground and the glider will groundloop. Your legs are screaming "no mas". What do you do?

Answers to last month

1. E) The altitude loss is the same for both. The key phrase is "free flight bal-

loons." Everything will drift with the wind, canceling its effects.

2. Not having permission to take a club ship in a cross country flight, you must always be within gliding range of your origination airport. A safe rule of thumb is ½ best L/D plus pattern altitude. If the ridge is seven miles away, Miss Daisy at best does 20 L/D, and FDK is at 300' MSL, we have $7 * 2 * (20/2) * 5280 + 800 + 300 = 8492'$. In other words, at 5000' MSL you are about 3500' too low. 🌱

Saleplanes and Buyplanes

Repeat:

FOR SALE: 1/2 Share in Rolladen Schneider **LS6-a** 1164TT. \$17,000. ILEC SB-8 vario/speed to fly, Sage mech. vario, oxygen, Cambridge GPS-NAV. Flight computer. Contact John Mitchell 301-437-4409 or jminmd@yahoo.com

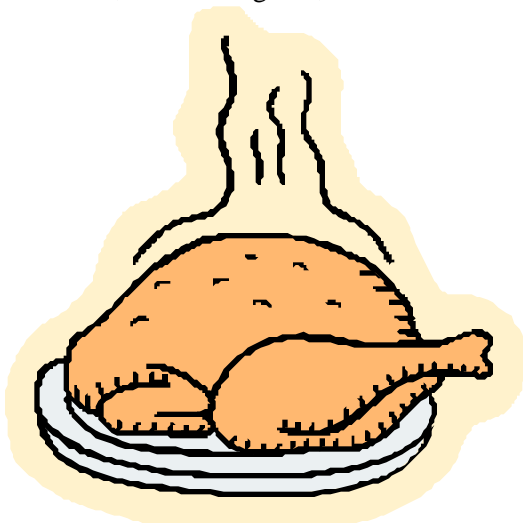
FOR SALE: Schweizer 1-35c. Kilo Whiskey for sale. 2200 TT. Current annual, good overall condition, open trailer and easy to assemble light wings. Cambridge audio netto, new Borgelt B-40 w/audio, G-meter. 10 amp hour battery, O2, new tire and brakes. \$15,500. This is an excellent first x-country glider, it has taken me from hanging about the field to a Gold badge in just a few short years and could do the same for you! Paul Rehm 703-430-7625 or darthbaitr@aol.com

FOR SALE: One third share in an **ASW-15**. Based at Fairfield in a trailer hangar. \$5000. Rich Adkins at 717-765-8695 or clayplay@innernet.net

FOR SALE: Centrair **Pegasus 101A**. 590 TT. Great shape. \$22,200. Contact Steve Hanes from Blue Ridge Soaring Society at New Castle, VA. stevenhanes@cox.net

FOR SALE: Schleicher **ASW-20**. 1056 TT. NDH. Komet trailer, new National parachute, tow out gear, water bags, flight computer, fresh annual. For detailed info, creyes123@yahoo.com or 301-564-4340

FOR SALE: Rolladen-Schneider LS3-17. 519 TT, fly as 15m or 17m; Winter instruments; Sage mechanical vario; Blumenauer speed to fly; Terra Tx 760D transceiver; Aerox/Scott oxygen; Komet trailer; annual 08/02; John Allingham, 301-986-0498



Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association

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WHO TO CALL

Godfathers:

ASK-13	Dan Brown/Frank Larson
Grob 103 (FDK)	James "Garv" Garvin
Grob 103 (FFD)	Frank Larson
Ka-7	Paul Rehm
Ka-8	Rick Latoff
Pilatus B-4	Andrew Dessler
Pilatus trailer	Ed Breau
SGS-2-33 (FDK/Orange)	Jean Posbic
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CONVECTOR is the newsletter of the Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association



Carlos Reyes

For the curious: this is what a Berg falke (II/55) looks like, right side up and fully assembled.

Convector



c/o Carlos Reyes
10401 Grosvenor PL Apt. 1428
Rockville, MD 20852