

CONVECTOR

July
2007



NEWSLETTER OF
THE MID-ATLANTIC SOARING ASSOCIATION

photo by Jim Furlong

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Mike Smith Wins Sports Class National Championship!

by Bob Jackson (RJ)

The Sports Class National Contest is a dichotomy. On one hand the Sports Class is supposed to be for relatively inexperienced pilots to cut their teeth on contest flying. On the other hand it is the venue for choosing a champion who will represent the US at the World Club Class Competition. This year the Nationals were held at Caesar Creek Soaring Club one of the best soaring sites in the country (except for M-ASA, of course). The weather was exceptionally good and we flew for eight days of the ten day event. The best part was the Championship Victory by M-ASA member Mike Smith who bested a field of determined veteran competitors. The first four days of the contest saw 7 knot thermals to 7000'. The tasks were 200 miles plus on every day with mostly 3:30 minimum times. Mike finished first on one of these days and second on another. Perhaps the toughest competitor was Sam Giltner flying a beautifully refinished LS-1 with a handicap advantage of about 20%. The World Competition requires the use of older sailplanes so there is a trend among serious candidates to find a ship with a good handicap and then finish it to perfection.

Then came the thunderstorm day. A 2 hour MAT was called meaning that after a close-by mandatory turnpoint, contestants could go anywhere they chose. Shortly after launch it became apparent the home base would be hit soon by a large storm. The nervous Nellies stayed close to home so they could retreat to safety on short notice. The braver, and smarter pilots got as far away as possible in the direction of good weather racking up a bunch of miles and figuring on coping with the weather later on. Andy McQuigg, the CD announced a "safety finish" rule in effect. This means if you are within 5 miles of the finish at an altitude of 1000' or higher you can get a good finish and then retreat to a safer place to land. Many did so landing at a nearby airport. Several top pilots claimed the safety finish but on review it turned out they were slightly under the minimum altitude so they ended with a "landout". Mike Smith went far away then waited



Mike Smith, 2007 Sports Class National Champion

photo by Fred Mueller

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until conditions at the field improved slightly so he could make a normal finish. The “safety finish” rule is new and used infrequently so most of us were not very familiar with the details.

The eighth day was the contest maker. Conditions were normal East Coast, i.e. weak lift, but the last leg was 70 miles into a 17 MPH headwind. Mike had a lead of 33 points going into the final day. The three pilots behind him had to push especially hard and this was not a day for pushing as the wind broke up the thermals at low altitude. All three bit the dust and Mike won the contest.

George Green and I were the other participants from M-ASA. Both of us shot ourselves in the foot. Me, by doing a lawn dart flight on the best day of the contest and George by using a 20 mile TAT circle when the task specified 15 miles. After these character building stunts we both enjoyed the rest of the contest. Great weather, great competition, nice people, super site, fine organization so give it a try the next time they have a contest.

From the Board...

by Mike Higgins

“If you are looking for perfect safety, you will do well to sit on a fence and watch the birds; but if you really wish to learn, you must mount a machine and become acquainted with its tricks by actual trial.”

— Wilbur Wright, from an address to the Western Society of Engineers in Chicago, 18 September 1901.

One of the top priorities, perhaps the highest priority, of the Officers and Directors of M-ASA is to manage the club’s operational risk and balance it with the joy of soaring for the members. Let’s face it; since M-ASA is a soaring club, we must accept some risk. We don’t sit on fences. We “mount a machine and become acquainted...” as Wilbur put it so well.

Risk assessment and management impacts our flying and operational decisions daily, and results in our club’s published rules and procedures. But even with the most carefully constructed procedures, and with well-trained and competent pilots, accidents can and will occasionally occur. With that understanding, the Board recently conducted a review our insurance policies, looking at the types and limits, and depth and breath of coverage. We wanted to know if we have adequate coverage to protect ourselves and our substantial assets, given our normal operational risks. M-ASA’s aircraft operations insurance is provided through the SSA insurance program, and is really the only such coverage available to a soaring club. (If you ever wondered about the value of the SSA, don’t forget about this insurance program. Without the SSA, we would likely not have a coverage at all, or perhaps from a much more expensive source.)

The insurance review showed that our coverages are sufficient to cover most risk, but the limits are low compared to the worst-case exposure that we have during flying operations. We must remember that M-ASA has substantial assets with increasing value, which we must try to protect. Unfortunately, we are at the maximum limits that the SSA program offers, and cannot increase the limits further. Not much more can be done to minimize this exposure.

One new insurance issue did come up during this review at the last Board meeting and was thoroughly debated – should private gliders operating with M-ASA tow planes and at M-ASA facilities be required to carry liability insurance? Other clubs and organizations have addressed this, but M-ASA has ignored the issue for 55 years. All SSA-sanctioned soaring contests require proof of liability insurance before flying. And many soaring clubs now also require liability insurance coverage on their members’ private gliders (probably most do, based on a survey we did of other eastern soaring clubs). Such private insurance coverage will likely provide some extra protection should there be an accident and lawsuit involving a private glider during take-off and landing operations. This issue was put before the Board for a vote, and passed with 3 ayes, 1 nay, and 1 Director absent. So, effective the first day of the 2008 flying season, all private gliders that launch behind M-ASA tow planes or fly from M-ASA facilities must carry liability insurance. The administration of this requirement is still being worked out, and the details will be disclosed in the coming months.

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The Board is confident that we are doing everything practically possible to minimize the operational risk and protect the club. Of course, please remember that the best way to protect the club is to minimize accidents. Each of us must maintain a sharp focus on operational safety. When at the airport, watch what goes on during flight operations. Step up and help if you see a questionable situation developing. Remember that any member can and should stop the operation if the situation is about to turn bad. Safety is not solely the OD's and PIC's responsibility – all of us have a role. Speak to one of our club Safety Officers (Rick Fuller at Fairfield, and Dan Morris at Frederick) if you have suggestions or concerns.

Also with the intent of improving launch/towing safety and offering more effective flight instruction, on June 16th Glenn Collins (M-ASA's Chief Flight Instructor) and Lance Nuckolls (Chief Tow Pilot) hosted a tow-pilot and CFG meeting at the FDK clubhouse. Most of our instructors and tow pilots attended and had a productive discussion about what is going well, and what needs improvement at M-ASA. Several valuable suggestions came out of the meeting and are being presented to the Board for review, which will likely result improved operational procedures. If you have ideas for improved towing procedures or flight instruction, please contact Glenn or Lance directly – all member input is appreciated and valued.

Finally, on a positive note, remember that when this newsletter is published, the Frederick “fly all week” event will be underway. Please come out and fly on the days surrounding the 4th of July. This event is always a highlight of the M-ASA-FDK soaring season, and offers great fun and flying. Call Hope Howard for more details.

Also mark Sunday July 29th on your calendar – M-ASA is co-hosting a Fairfield airport “open house” with Save Our Liberty. Bob Jackson is championing this event, which will feature antique cars and aircraft, and other displays, along with food and drink. And, yes – there will also be normal glider flying operations that day, assuming the weather cooperates. See you there.

Soaring Gift Certificates

by Jean Posbic

Most of you have been aware that last year, the board approved the issue of gift certificates that would allow potential members to get a good feel of what soaring is all about and giving the opportunity to potentially join M-ASA. Chris O'Callaghan has been very gracious to design the certificate and Bob Jackson and I have been handing them out for a donation of \$60 per ride. The ride assumes a tow up to 3,000 AGL and a 30 to 45 minutes flight if conditions permit. With the damage to the Frederick Twin Astir wing, I would like to formally thank Holland Ford for graciously allowing us to use his Twin Astir (1ET) for giving some of the rides. Furthermore, OD's and record keepers, as the rides have been paid by check to M-ASA (often send directly to our treasurer Hans Jorgensen), please enter the rides as “no charge” flights into the flight sheets (there is a box that can be checked in the M-ASA flight sheet software) and make sure the gift certificate is taken from the guest and cancelled (a large X across it). The pilot giving the ride should not be charged for the flight. Finally don't forget to have all guests sign the appropriate waiver form (more copies can be made either from the club computer or the copying machine). In the event someone stops by without a valid gift certificate, then can still get a ride if someone takes them up with a \$60 donation preferably made via a check to M-ASA.

Thanks to all that make this experience possible, we have given more than 20 rides of this kind so far. Safe flying.

Task Day

The Capacity to Resist Fatigue

by Chris O'Callaghan (OC)



#1. Skill Managing the Aircraft – March

#2. Skill Assessing the Evolution of Weather Conditions – April

#3. The Capacity to Reformulate Competition Strategy – May

#4. The Capacity to Adopt Tactical Decisions According to Circumstances – June

#5. The Capacity to Resist Fatigue

This may be the most important single factor in competitive soaring. Most of us are willing to admit gaps in our knowledge, like the ones featured over the past several months in this column. Few of us, however, are willing to admit the degree to which fatigue can influence our reasoning.

First, let's separate fatigue from pathology. We are not talking about dehydration or chronic illness. When the Brigliadoris cite resisting fatigue as a factor in competitive soaring, they are talking about the pilot's ability to endure prolonged physical and mental stress with minimal impact on rational decision making. This is an important consideration, especially since the majority of pilots are incapable of measuring their diminished capacity as the flight progresses.

The only way to minimize diminishing capacity over the course of a flight, a weekend, or a contest is to increase your endurance. Physical conditioning is certainly an important factor, but the key to resisting fatigue is mental conditioning. Call it an exercise in attitude. Call it self-hypnosis. The best way to combat fatigue in the cockpit is to embrace the type of flights you dread: long flights; flights over challenging terrain; low cloud bases; blue days; strong winds; impossible tasks that can only lead to landouts with long retrieves... By viewing these worst-case task scenarios as opportunities to explore every aspect of the sport, we remove a significant psychological impediment.

Over the years, more than once (and more recently than I'd like to admit) I've watched myself (in hindsight) make poor decisions that affected the outcomes of my flights, giving me very low speeds compared to the rest of the field, or leaving me waiting for a retrieve and no speed points at all. In almost all cases, the culprit was fatigue.

Over the years, I've recognized loss of patience as the first symptoms that I've exceeded my threshold. Sometimes this can work out to my advantage, assuming the conditions will support my increasingly aggressive posture. But impatience leads to even greater levels of nervous energy, which saps my remaining strength. Further fatigue leads to second guessing my decisions. During a MAT, in the later hours of a long flight, I am much more likely to wander (almost aimlessly), trying to decide which final turnpoint offers the least risk in the waning conditions of day's end. This loss of concentration costs speed points. It increases anxiety levels. It increases the risk of thinking myself right into a worst case scenario – a landout a few miles short of airport, and the sad task of reviewing my trace and realizing that I had ample opportunity to fly home with altitude to spare and at a respectable speed.

The choice most of us make is not to expose ourselves to this level of fatigue. But I'd argue that unless you've made a directed effort at increasing your endurance through mental and physical training, you may not be able to endure even the shortest competitive flights (at least not in a way that lets you make good strategic and tactical decisions). Anxiety can sap away your energy in mere minutes. Which is why I always remind myself that there's nothing I'd rather be doing on a Saturday afternoon than grinding my way up from 500 feet agl over Pretty Boy Reservoir, and looking forward to repeating the process over Hanover. And maybe once more at Gettysburg before finally getting high enough for a 0-0 return to a rolling finish at Fairfield.

Or not...

15 Meter Nationals

by Bob Jackson (RJ)

The 15 Meter Nationals were held this year at Mifflin County Airport and sponsored by the usual professional team lead by Iris Striedieck. This is always one of the best organized contests attended by the best pilots in the country and Mifflin is one of the most challenging locations. This year was one of the most exciting ever because the results will determine the US Team Participants for next year's World Championship in Germany. In a field of 50 there were two World Champions, half a dozen National Champions, a dozen US Team Members, two dozen Regional Champions and the rest of us wannabee champions. Representing M-ASA were Fred Mueller and yours truly. At the beginning of the contest Fred and I decided to lay back so as not to embarrass any of the hypersensitive champion types. We were successful.



Finish Time at Mifflin

photo by Fred Mueller

The tow pilot ranks included three M-ASA pilots, Jim Trygg, Chuck Forrester and John Machamer, flying one of our Pawnees. The original plan was for Jim Chick to do the towing but he was forced to drop out at the last minute because of a family emergency.

After a slow start with an opening day rain-out the weather really began to cooperate. Expected overdevelopment did not occur on the second day and the result was 7 knots to 7000' throughout the entire contest area. The most spectacular day was with Northwest winds at 25 MPH. Of course the ridges were working and the task was an MAT including a mandatory upwind leg of some 30 miles with no ridges. Karl Striedieck won the day with a distance of 495 miles at a speed of almost 100MPH. Rick Walters ignored the minimum time and flew 620 miles. From then on there were no ridge missions because the winds were relatively light but soaring conditions were good and the smart pilots used the ridges to their advantage where possible to improve speed. We flew tasks on 8 of 10 days which is pretty good for this part of the country. After his spectacular ridge flight Karl lead the contest until the last day when he lost by a few points and ended in second place to Gary Itner a West Coast pilot who doesn't say much but flies superbly.

With all those pilots flying all those days there was zero sailplane damage. The only injury was to Charlie Miner the CD who accidentally caught the speed lever on his wheelchair with his sleeve, catapulting him out the office door into a parked car, breaking his leg. Charlie was air-lifted to a hospital where they put a cast on his leg and he returned to duty the next day.

Perhaps the best part of the Mifflin is the social activity. This is a beautiful rural area replete with Amish Farms. There are relatively few restaurants so there is a cookout at the field every other night. This year the festivities included a 20th anniversary celebration for Brian and Cheri Milner. The party included fancy decorations, a disc jockey for dancing and of course, abundant libation.

Mifflin is one of the most fun contests in the country, probably in the world. They hold Nationals, Regionals, Sports, and just plain fun events. I believe there is a M-ASA Safari taking place there as this Convector goes to press. It is a short three hour drive from Frederick so if you haven't done so, give it a try. They are open for tows seven days a week, year round (with a little advance notice).

Regional Ramblings

by *Jim Kelleth, Director*
Soaring Society of America, Region IV

On June 16, three gliders and one motorglider were on prominent display at the annual "Family Day" at the Smithsonian's Udvar-Hazy center at Dulles that attracted over 17,000 people. See www.ssa.org and select Home > News & Information > General News for more information. Last year, Tidewater Soaring provided a display at another large fly-in in Virginia. These promotional activities are crucial to the long-term self interest of our sport; at the very minimum, it 'inoculates' the general public about gliders. That general awareness is important when communities have to deal with airport issues, when accidents happen, or when grossly inaccurate news articles appear. Please think about seeking out such opportunities and asking your members to participate! (Note: another substantial appearance is planned for Oskosh this year – check it out if you're going.)

As of last weekend when I checked with the staff at Hobbs, there had been no nominations for Regional Director for Region IV received at SSA (see "Ramblings" for May 7 for more details about the process and progress in our Region). Eight days remain to submit nominations (see page 12 of the May issue of Soaring for how to nominate) if there is to be an elected Director for this Region.

Freedom's Wings

by *Richard Fucci, Program Director*
Freedom's Wings International

Freedom's Wings International and Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association have scheduled a soaring event for persons with disabilities for Saturday, October 20th and Sunday, October 21st at the M-ASA gliderport in Fairfield, PA.

Attached is a flyer with all the details. We would greatly appreciate your posting it on your calendar, duplicating it in your newsletter and circulating it to any person with a disability who would like to experience the joy of soaring.

As Bill who flew with us last year commented "I love the fact that you can get out of your wheelchair and fly in the sky with the birds and all the clouds and forget about any stress you may be having at the time. It was great therapy and it doesn't end when you land. It has been days since I flew and I am still on cloud nine". Check out Past Events on our website at www.freedomswings.org for pictures and more comments from participants.

Thank you for your assistance in getting the word out on our event. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Richard

Richard Fucci, Program Director
 Freedom's Wings International
 C:(203) 494-5422

FOR SALE: Security Seat Pack Parachute, highest offer over \$650 will take it, free shipping, contact ex-M-ASA member John Brent at 601-796-4932 or jtbrent@bellsouth.net.

FOR SALE: Schweizer 1-35C, 2400 hrs, open trailer, Winter & Cambridge varios w/ netto. Time for paint. Contact Paul Rehm at 540-882-4251.

FOR SALE: 1/5 memberships offered in '47 Luscombe 8E, all metal, 30 gal fuel, good looking interior, new glass, Cessna seats, GPS, Com+transponder, low-time engine, hydraulic breaks, wheel pants. Based at FDK, well run LLC, 3 year operation. Put the fun back in flying basic stick and rudder, plus tail wheel endorsement. All at a cost that is really affordable. Call me for a demo. Dick Bernstein 240-446-5827

Duty Schedule

<i>Date</i>	<i>Field</i>	<i>Safety Officer (OD)</i>	<i>Tow Pilot</i>	<i>Record Keeper (AOD)</i>
07/07/2007	FDK	Steven Silverman	David Schober	Gary Cassell
07/07/2007	FRF	Peter Blacklin	Rich Horigan	
07/08/2007	FDK	Roger Thompson	Bob Andrew	Stanley Faust
07/08/2007	FRF	Bob Kryzstan	Jim Chick	
07/14/2007	FDK	Gyorgy Fekete	Mark Mercer	Steven Shelton
07/14/2007	FRF	Jim Homer	John Machamer	
07/15/2007	FDK	Nathan Butler	Sam Harry	Nicolo Costanzo
07/15/2007	FRF	Baude Litt	Don Robb	
07/21/2007	FDK	Michael Hearn	Karl Bernstein	John Thornhill
07/21/2007	FRF	Richard Latoff	Chuck Forrester	
07/22/2007	FDK	Wilmar Sick	Bob Ball	Warren Oxman
07/22/2007	FRF	Jim Lewis	Mike Grinder	
07/28/2007	FDK	Tom Jones	Hans Jorgensen	Ricky Cordell
07/28/2007	FRF	Christophe Blanchi	Buddy Denham	
07/29/2007	FDK	Mark Segall	Glenn Collins	Gerald White
07/29/2007	FRF	Chris Scarlett	Jim Trygg	
08/04/2007	FDK	John Kidd	David Schober	Robert Bigler
08/04/2007	FRF	Chris Scarlett	Mike Smith	
08/05/2007	FDK	Steven Oxman	Robert Jackson	Michael Dalke
08/05/2007	FRF	Laura Hession	George Green	
08/11/2007	FDK	Mike Vance	Dee Torgerson	Andreas Schliessler
08/11/2007	FRF	Chris O'Callaghan	David Pixton	
08/12/2007	FDK	Rob Myhre	Bob Andrew	Chris Burns
08/12/2007	FRF	Manfred Beutgen	Bill Savory	
08/18/2007	FDK	Dick Mott	Mark Mercer	Neal Drobenare
08/18/2007	FRF	Kolie Lombard	Pete Welles	
08/19/2007	FDK	Eric Schuyler	Bill Judge	Jose Matheus
08/19/2007	FRF	Todd Wichman	Rich Horigan	
08/25/2007	FDK	Holland Ford	Hans Jorgensen	Warren Oxman
08/25/2007	FRF	Kai Rasmussen	Jim Chick	
08/26/2007	FDK	Mitch Lambros	Olin Kinney	Robert Bigler
08/26/2007	FRF	David Weaver	Don Robb	
09/01/2007	FDK	Mehrdad Bayat	Olin Kinney	Robert Bigler
09/01/2007	FRF	Danny Brotto	Mike Smith	
09/02/2007	FDK	Gary Baker	Bill Judge	Michael Dalke
09/02/2007	FRF	Chris Scarlett	David Pixton	
09/03/2007	FDK	John Kidd	Hans Jorgensen	Chris Burns
09/03/2007	FRF	Manfred Beutgen	Bill Savory	
09/08/2007	FDK	Jim Furlong	David Schober	Andreas Schliessler
09/08/2007	FRF	Laura Hession	Robert Jackson	

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<i>Date</i>	<i>Field</i>	<i>Safety Officer (OD)</i>	<i>Tow Pilot</i>	<i>Record Keeper (AOD)</i>
09/09/2007	FDK	Steven Oxman	Dee Torgerson	Mark Vanreuth
09/09/2007	FRF	Todd Wichman	Pete Welles	
09/15/2007	FDK	Gary Cassell	Bob Andrew	Neal Drobenare
09/15/2007	FRF	Kai Rasmussen	Rich Horigan	
09/16/2007	FDK	Mike Vance	Mark Mercer	Ricardo Cibotti
09/16/2007	FRF	Mike Vore	Jim Chick	
09/22/2007	FDK	Dick Mott	Sam Harry	Jose Matheus
09/22/2007	FRF	John Hearn	Buddy Denham	
09/23/2007	FDK	Rob Myhre	Karl Bernstein	Robert Bigler
09/23/2007	FRF	Chris O'Callaghan	Don Robb	
09/29/2007	FDK	Holland Ford	Bob Ball	Michael Dalke
09/29/2007	FRF	Kolie Lombard	Mike Smith	
09/30/2007	FDK	Mitch Lambros	Bill Judge	Chris Burns
09/30/2007	FRF	David Weaver	Mike Grinder	

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. Every effort will be made to accommodate the new member's stated duty preference whenever possible. M-ASA Scheduler: Ray Watson 410-484-0333.



Ray Watson (left) and Rob Myhre tune up Janus in compliance with the annual inspection requirements

photo by Peter Kern

WHO TO CALL

Godfathers:

Grob 103 (FDK)	
Grob 103 (FFD)	Chris Williams
Ka-7	Paul Rehm
Ka-8	Rick Latoff
Pilatus B-4	Mehrdad Bayat
Pilatus trailer	Ed Breau
SGS-2-33 (FDK/Orange)	Jean Posbic
SGS-2-33 (FFD/Yellow)	Jerry White
SGS-2-33 (FDK/R&W)	Jim Furlong
SGS 1-36	Gary Baker
SGS 1-36 trailer	
Tug N7799Z (FFD)	
Tugs N82096 and N8658L	Bob Andrew (FDK)
Tug N9809 (FDK)	John Vaughan

Chief CFI:	Glenn Collins
Chief Tow Pilot:	Lance Nuckolls
Fairfield Glider Maintenance:	Rich Horigan
Frederick Glider Maintenance:	Dave Schober
Tug Maintenance Officer:	Jim May
Field Safety Officer:	Rick Fuller (FFD) Dan Morris (FDK)
Fairfield Facility Manager :	George Burns
Frederick Facility Manager:	
Mentor Program Lead:	Wayne Elseth
Membership Chairman:	Hope Howard
Convector Editor:	Fred Mueller
Flight Sheet Manager:	David Pixton (FFD) Bob Dutilly (FDK)
Hangar Waiting List Officer:	Danny Brotto (FFD) Bill Whelan (FDK)
Roster / Mailing List:	Dan Meyer
Scheduler:	Ray Watson
Task Day Chairman:	Chris O'Callaghan
Webmaster:	Alan Meyer

SSA Regional Director: Jim Kellett
(jim@kellett.com)

(Volunteers are requested to fill empty slots above. Contact the Board if you are interested.)

Mid-Atlantic Soaring Association

Board of Directors: Preston Burch
Robert Jackson
Hans Jorgensen
Jean Posbic
James Trygg

Officers: President - Mike Higgins
Vice President - James Trygg
Secretary - Bill Whelan
Treasurer - Hans Jorgensen

Club Introductory Meetings

By Wayne Elseth

We are continuing our series of M-ASA Club Introductory Meetings for 2007. The intent for these meetings is to quickly bring a prospective, new, or returning club members up to speed in club procedures, safety, flight operations, and related topics. The meetings are held monthly, typically alternating between Frederick and Fairfield (but not always), on the Saturday after the monthly club meeting, at 9am. We have a prepared presentation that takes around 1.5 to 2 hours to run through explaining how we run our operations. For folks who can't attend a Saturday morning meeting, we can arrange a personal briefing at a more convenient time. The information being presented is important and we want everyone to attend one of these briefings prior to flying.

If you are interested in being a presenter please contact Wayne Elseth.

July 14	Frederick	9am
August 11	Fairfield	9am
September 15	Frederick	9am
October 13	Fairfield	9am
November	Only if requested	
December	Only if requested	

Upcoming Events

Club Introductory Meeting (see above)	July 14
August Convector Submission Deadline	July 28
Region 4 North Contest	October 7-13
Freedoms Wings (see page 6)	October 20-21

If you have an event you would like to appear on this schedule, email convector@m-asa.org