Soaring News

Vol. 2 Issue 1 "Newsletter of the Orlando Buzzards R/C Soaring Society" January 1997

CLUB OFFICERS

Don Cleveland, President
John Masiello, Vice President
Lewis Gray, Treasurer
Jerre Ferguson, Secretary

NEXT MEETING

Feb 2nd, Noon at Club Field
Mar 2nd, Noon at Club Field

The Buzzard's new President, Don Cleveland, has been a member for 3½ years and recently graduated to the Master's Class. Don practices often, experiments with custom designs, and has been the backbone for many club events. We are very fortunate to have Don's passion and participation, and look forward to his leadership.

President's Corner

Don Cleveland

First and foremost, I would like to thank all of you for your support and confidence in electing the new officers for 1997 (even though no one else would take the jobs). John, Jerre, Lewis and I will attempt to uphold the honor you have bestowed upon us.

I dragged home after Tangerine, collapsed in my chair, and was thinking about the Buzzards and all the things that need to happen to have a successful club. The greatest impression I had of the Tangerine (it wasn't my flying) was the hard work all the members did to make Tangerine a success. Everyone (I mean EVERYONE!) jumped–in and worked very hard for all three days. This is what made Tangerine a success. It was obvious to me that the strength of the Orlando Buzzards is its members; and this is where we want to focus our efforts for 1997. I want to make 1997 a fun year for all the members. You can't look forward until you understand where you've been. I think the last several years have been great for the Buzzards. The club has grown in active membership, we have an excellent club field (thanks to Stan Pfost), a great club newsletter, the equipment is in excellent condition, a premiere contest field, the skill level of the members has increased, and we are financially sound. I think we are fast becoming one of the premiere soaring clubs in the south. The real challenge for us is: where do we go from here?

My goal for 1997 is to keep the momentum going. I have asked Rob Rierson to head–up a committee to attract new members. We need to grow the membership by at least 50% in 1997. I want to see this sport grow and we are the ones who have to make it happen. Rob has developed several programs to help us attract new members and he will review those programs with us in January. Rich Kiburis has graciously accepted the position of Equipment Program Manager (with the promise of my left over chicken wings). I have asked Ed While (he can't decline now) and Scott Hunt to head up our contest efforts for this year. Terry Cusack (who produces one of the finest club newsletters I have seen) is continuing as editor. Be prepared!!! Every one will be asked to contribute. If you see something that needs doing, JUMP–IN; or expect to be volunteered. My goal is to get as many members involved as I can.

For 1997, club meeting dates (first Sunday in each month) will be designated as League of Silent Flight (LSF) qualification days instead of conducting monthly club contests. For those not familiar with the LSF, we have informational packets. LSF is a way of recognizing individual soaring proficiencies and accomplishments through a series of defined task. I understand we already have a Level V and a Level IV in our club. See Jerre Ferguson or myself to get sign–up information. If you have any suggestions, ideas to improve the club, or any changes you would like to see, please speak up!!!!

Remember – Never insult an alligator until you have crossed the river.

Don

When was the last time you read the AMA Safety Code for operating radio control aircraft? Do you know the minimum flying requirements necessary to assure AMA Liability Protection? Here are four of the rules which we should be mindful of:

1. At all flying sites a straight or curved line must be established in front of which all flying takes place with the other side for spectators.
2. I will not fly my model unless it is identified with my name and address or AMA number, on or in the model.
3. I will have completed a successful radio equipment ground range check before the first flight of a new or repaired model.
4. I will not consume alcoholic beverages prior to, nor during, participation in any model operations.

I would like to suggest another rule: if persons other than the pilot are present at a flying site, at least one person must act as a safety observer. The safety observer must effectively communicate hazards to all person's concerned. COMMUNICATION IS THE SINGLE MOST EFFECTIVE DETERRENT TO INJURY!!! At the last contest there were two incidents which caused people to be struck by landing aircraft. Luckily, neither incident caused serious injury (although it took 24 hrs for one person's shoulder to feel better). These incidents could have been avoided with just a little bit of communication from the timers. Timers must be observers too; and when injury is eminent, timers must abandon their role as timer and switch the priority to the safety of people. It is much more important to ensure that no one in the landing area is hit with a flying aircraft than it is to hope that your pilot will salvage the approach and you'll be there to stop the watch at touch–down. The timer is THE observer; THE only person who is aware of everything that goes on around the pilot and spectators; THE one who watches for holes in the field; THE one who safely maneuvers his pilot out of the winch area. The timer must COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY!

The same applies to flyers observing at our leisure flying field. They must act as safety observers and communicate when safety is compromised. There is no shame in yelling–out when a hazard exist. And I would be shocked if anyone challenged or condemned a member acting in the interest of safety. To be defensive or ignore the warning would be stupid. Next time you fly, talk–it–up with others and remember to COMMUNICATE SAFETY FIRST.

INTRODUCTION TO LSF

Many club members are preparing to start participation in the League of Silent Flight (LSF). LSF promotes the sport of R/C Soaring through a system of accomplishments. Accomplishment levels get progressively harder as an individual graduates from a level one to the ultimate level of five. As each level is completed, an appropriate voucher is completed and forwarded to LSF for recording. For computer surfers, the LSF has a web site at *http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/calplst*. LSF membership is free and processing of vouchers is only $2.00 each. For planning purposes, the basic accomplishment levels are:

Level I
5 min thermal flight, 15 min slope 5 landings 3 meters from spot.

Level II
15 min thermal, 1 hour slope, 10 landings 1.5 meters from spot 6 contests 1 place or 3,000 pts Minimum 5 competitors.

Level III
30 min thermal flight, 2 hour slope, 1 kilometer goal and return 6 contests 2 places or 4,500 pts. Minimum 10 competitors.

Level IV
1 hour thermal flight, 4 hour slope, 2 Kilometer goal and return 6 contests 2 places and win or 6,000 pts. Min 15 competitors

Level V
2 hour thermal flight, 8 hour slope, 10 kilometer goal and return 6 contests with 12,000 including three wins Min 20 compet.

Letter to a Hand Launch Glider Devotee

Yep. You're hooked. I think it took me several months before I really hooked a thermal and spec'd out. Your dues should be about paid – so you should catch a thermal any day now!

Let's see, you've mastered: the CG location; the launch with a good top–off turn; and turning tight 360's while keeping the plane upwind. So, the next thing to work on is anticipating thermals. This is a skill that myself have not necessarily mastered. Although I now hook thermals fairly regularly (once every 10 to 15 throws – depending on conditions) I am still practicing how to "read" the air.

Basically there are two ways to find thermals: anticipate them based on wind changes or find them with your glider. To find them based on wind changes, you must first carefully feel the wind and decide its basic direction and strength. Once you have gaged the basic wind you must wait for a signal that a thermal is nearby. You can watch the movement of grass and trees or feel for wind shifts. If the wind is fairly steady but then you feel a breath of air on your left cheek, it often means that a thermal is off to the right and a little upwind. If the wind speed simply drops slightly, the thermal is directly upwind. If the wind speed increases, the thermal is down wind and you are standing in the "sinking" air behind the thermal. Remember that a thermal gathers air from all around itself, causing discontinuities in the wind. Also remember that a thermal **drags sink behind it** and that is **NOT** where you want your plane to be.

The second way to identify thermals is to carefully watch how your plane is flying. Certainly when the plane rises, you've found a thermal. Similarly if the plane sinks fast, you've found "down air". A couple of times I have found great thermals by picking up my plane quickly after being pushed to the ground by sink and throwing downwind into the thermal that caused it. Sometimes your plane will just skirt the edge of a thermal and and react by raising one wing. The plane is responding to the "push" away from the air currents of the thermal. When that happens turn back into the "push".

Practice flying fast. **Do not** try to keep the plane at minimum sink (edge of stall) after you throw it. Try to cover a lot of ground while still being able to get the plane back to you. When the plane indicates a thermal, turn as tightly as you can and keep flying through the rising air or staying in the column of rising air. Thermals near the ground are small. Often as small a 5' in diameter, but usually more like 10'. The stronger they are, the smaller in diameter they will be and the tougher to fly.

Keep practicing, practicing, practicing... and good luck!

Rick "Still Crazy After All These Thermals" Eckel

Future Contest Dates:

Jan 11–12	FSS#1, Punta Gorda—2 mtr/Unlimited CD: Olie Wilson (941) 627–2117
Feb 16–17	FSS#2, Cape Coral—2 mtr/Unlimited CD: John Agnew (941) 936–7148
Mar 15–16	FSS#3, Orlando—2 meter/Unlimited CD: Ben Cleveland (904) 589–1866
April 19–20	FSS#4, Orlando—2 meter/Unlimited CD: Hank McDaniel (407) 831–3688
May 24–25	FSS#5, Morriston—2 meter/Unlimited CD: Ken Goodwin (904) 528–3744
June 21–22	Mid–South Championship, Huntsville HLG/2 meter/Unlimited. (Contact Don Cleveland for info and share travel)
June 28–29	FSS#6, West Palm—2 meter/Unlimited CD: Charlie Brecht
July 20	Annual, Orlando—Gentle Lady 2+2 (senior/junior team award too) CD: Rick Eckel
July26–31	AMA Nationals, Muncie, Indiana (see Model Aviation Magazine for info)
Aug 30–31	FSS#7, Morriston—2 meter/Unlimited CD: Ken Goodwin
Sep 21–22	FSS#8, West Palm—2 meter/Unlimited CD: Charlie Brecht
Oct 18–19	FSS#9, Morriston—2 meter/Unlimited CD: Bob Wargo
Nov 29–Dec1	Tangerine Championship, Orlando CD: TBA

There was only one year-end contest to report on; The 23rd Annual Tangerine Soaring Championship! And it was one great event for which the Buzzards should be very proud. Lots of out-of-town participation, no delays caused by weather or winch problems, and a whole bunch of smiling people who promised to return next year. Over all Points Champions were Joe Melchiorre and Don Vickers. Tom Beckman won the Airtronics Stylus radio. If you missed this contest, you missed one heck of a great raffle! Lewis Gray took home a Lasoar 960 kit. Several others won JR Radio T-shirts and John Masiello won the 2-meter Kummerow design. I believe Woody Blanchard bought the plane from John so he could take it home to Virginia with him. Thanks again to Rob Rierson, John Masiello, Ed White and Don Cleveland for obtaining such great raffle items. Watch for detailed articles of the Tangerine Contest in Sailplane and Electric Modeler and/or RC Soaring Digest.

TANGERINE CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS (DAY 1)		
PLACE/CLASS	EVENT	NAME
1-Sportsman	2meter	JOHN MASIELLO
2-Sportsman	2meter	JOE MELCHIORRE
3-Sportsman	2meter	KEITH MCCORMICK
4-Sportsman	2meter	ROB RIERSON
5-Sportsman	2meter	CURTIS SMITH
1-Expert	2meter	DON HARRIS
2-Expert	2meter	DON VICKERS
3-Expert	2meter	DON CLEVELAND
4-Expert	2meter	CARL LUFT
5-Expert	2meter	TOM TOCK
Contest Director		Rick Eckel

TANGERINE CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS (DAY 2)		
PLACE/CLASS	EVENT	NAME
1-Sportsman	2meter	MAX HURST
2-Sportsman	2meter	JOE MELCHIORRE
3-Sportsman	2meter	TERRY CUSACK
4-Sportsman	2meter	ROB RIERSON
5 Sportsman	2meter	KEITH MCCORMICK
1-Expert	2meter	TOM TOCK
2 Expert	2meter	JOHN AGNEW
3-Expert	2meter	JOHN HAUFF
4-Expert	2meter	CHIP VIGNOLINI
5 Expert	2meter	HERB RINDFLEISCH
Contest Director		Garnett White

TANGERINE CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS (DAY 3)		
PLACE/CLASS	EVENT	NAME
1-Sportsman	2meter	FRANK MANGUS
2-Sportsman	2meter	JOHN MASIELLO
3-Sportsman	2meter	JOE MELCHIORRE
4-Sportsman	2meter	CURTIS SMITH
5-Sportsman	2meter	DEANNA VIGNOLINI
1-Expert	2meter	ED SEGER
2-Expert	2meter	DEREK KHAW
3-Expert	2meter	MARK KUMMEROW
4-Expert	2meter	TREY WOOD
5-Expert	2meter	MARK BEISER
Contest Director		Ed White

★See the latest Contest info at http://www.resoaring.com/flclubs.htm★

ODDs-N-ENDs

☐**CORRECTION!** I apologize for my first (*and last*) technical error. I listed Rich Kiburis as the new Club Secretary. It should have read Jerry Furguson.(*I'm just kidding Jerre! It's spelled "Jerre Forguson".)*

☐**DUES ARE DUE!** 1997 Dues are now over due! BUT don't let that stop you from forwarding your money to Lewis Gray today. The club offers some great benefits, such as launch equipment, an isolated flying location, and access to veteran competition pilots.

☐**DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE TRYING TO GET STARTED IN RC SOARING?** All the extra copies of the May 96 Soaring News were gobbled-up at Tangerine. But the club has an information packet which can be obtained at the February club meeting. The leaflet contains a map directing people to the club field, our standard meeting times, Club Officer Phone Numbers, and a little intro about the sport.

☐**THANK YOU!!! TANGERINE CONTEST VOLUNTEERS.** Tangerine ran like clock-work, despite the windy weather. For a club membership of less than 40 people, the Orlando Buzzards have accomplished a lot this year. It has only been possible due to the many talented and dedicated volunteers. It is especially noteworthy, that many of our recent volunteers were members of the club for less than 3 months! Lack of experience did not limit people from responding to the need for a helping hand. If interested in voluntooring for future contests, contact the designated Contest Director (CD) or Don Cleveland 696-7516.

☐**DO YOU HAVE E-MAIL?** If you can receive email, please provide your email address to Lewis Gray. Electronic communications within the club is advancing and the next Club Roster will include email addresses.

☐**NEED ASSISTANCE?** Did you know that our club has designated instructors to assist in building and flying your glider? Contact one of these people if you need help; they are ready and waiting.
Cy Baylor (407) 699-8750
Don Cleveland (407) 696-7516 / 281-2366
Rick Eckel (407) 365-9757 / 366-8852
Hank McDaniel (407) 831-3688

Give us a hand Jot it down!

Your words could appear in SOARING NEWS! If you have news, safety issues, technical ideas, or equipment to sell, write it up and mail to: Terry Cusack, SOARING NEWS
1471 San Carlos Ave
Deltona, FL 32738-9771
or call: (904) 789-0323. I can accept disk copies in MS WORD, WORDPERFECT, WORDSTAR...or you-name-it. Watch for email address in near future.

TECH-TIPS

REMOVING CA FROM BOTTLE NOZZLE

We all love CA glue for its ability to cure instantly. Unfortunately, it is that same trait that causes the bottle nozzle to clog and build-up until the cap will not stay put. Buzzard member Bill Townsend says the solution is simple. Soak the nozzle in acetone. Acetone removes the CA and keeps the nozzle flowing freely. And it sure is nice to be able to put the cap back on! *(Thanks Bill)*

SAVE THOSE FLAP SERVOS

I recently investigated ways to protect the flap servo gears from shearing when the flaps are left down during landing. While the sure thing to do is to land with the flaps up, I have not been very successful. Metal gear servos are a step in the right direction, but something still has to give when those flaps meet the ground. Rick Eckel and myself are using "servo savers" which are used in RC

cars to asorb the shock felt by the steering servo arm (cost is $5 ea). These are fairly compact and simply mount in place of your normal servo control arm. Dwight Parks uses the unique method of attaching a clevis or tube to the control rod using heat shrink tubing (cost approx. $2). The heat shrink has just enough hold to let go if the flaps hit. But the heat shrink tubing must be replaced if it fails, so plan appropriate tools for field repairs. Another inexpensive method is a Dubro setup which uses a spring over the control rod secured by a collar (cost $2). This setup looks like it would be good because the collar could be adjusted to set the desired hold-tension on the spring. The down side is that the collar and spring are exposed, hanging outside your wing. Need a fix for those sloppy servo gears (I think in the HS-80s)? Don and Ben Cleveland insert a metal bushing in the worn-out plastic hole that the gear pin sits in. Another gold mine from Sky Craft Salvage. Does anybody else have ideas on this subject? It seems that the metal geared servos that we use are the most costly expense we have in this sport. Any suggestions on how to preserve them or use plastic gears would certainly be beneficial.

Soaring World Wide Web Sites

Many club members have new modems from Santa, so it's time to go "soaring" out on the NET. Here is a short sampling of some great web sites pertaining to R/C Soaring. If You find things of interest, pass them on.

Northeast Sailplane products/catalog. A MUST SEE location of products and specials.
http://www.nesail.com/index2.html

Dodgson Designs catalog/articles. My favorite address because of all the great articles on thermal flying.
http://www.eskimo.com/~dodgsonb/

R/C Soaring in the UK. Want to see what the United Kingdom is doing in R/C Soaring? Great stuff here.
http://biomednet.com/rc-soar/

Sailplane & Electric Modeler Magazine. Just recently constructed, some nice pictures, but weak on data.
http://www.sailplanemodeler.com/sailplane.html

Sheldon Hobbies Online Shopping. Challenging Tower Hobbies to be King of Internet mail order.
http://www.btown.com/sheldon/sheldons.html

Tower Hobbies R/C Web. King of mail order.
http://www.towerhobbbies.com/rcweb.html

RA Cores. A MUST for sailplane builders that want a fair price on custom cut and designed foam wing cores.
http://world.std.com/~racores/

Full Scale Sailplane Pictures. Big Boy Toys!
http://www.rose-hulman.edu/~gillbc/sailplan.htm

Directory of R/C Model Aviation. Starting point.
ftp://ftp.nis.net/pub/rmathes/rc-dirct.htm

Classified Advertisements

For Sale – Laser, without servos: $250. Another Laser with servos–$500. Call Ed White, 277–3862

HOBBY LOBBY DISCOUNT!! Hank McDaniel has a direct connection to Hobby Lobby (his daughter) and might be able to save you money. Call Hank, (407) 831–3688

Wanted – Small portable helium tanks. Call Ben Cleveland at (904) 589–1866

MORE DISCOUNTS!! Bob Burns has a friend that distributes adhesives and other hobby items at deep discount. Contact Bob, (407) 366–4886

For Sale – Winch equipment. Ford long shaft motor with pedal switch. Call Henry LeLong (904) 7674773

For Sale – Sagitta 600 with RCD radio. Also, Christy Mixer. Make Offer to Ben Cleveland at (904) 589–1866

LANDING TO WIN

by Dave Johnson

Reprinted from The Portland Area Sailplane Society Newsletter and Dodgson Designs building instructions

I've always been a firm believer that the difference between a good flierand a winning flier is simply paying attention to all the little things that most people seem to overlook. I like to think of flying your airplane as a big thing, and landing it as a little thing. That may not be totally accurate since landings can account for as much as 50% of your score, but landings, to my mind, are a combination of many little things the importance of which too many pilots seem to underestimate. A good flier gets into the trophies — but only a good flier who can land can win. So how do you learn to land? Practice, right? Well, no, not just yet because most of what you have ever learned about landing isn't what you need to know if you're landing to win.

SETTING UP

You've probably seen articles written about landing an airplane. "At two minutes (to go) you should be at such and such . . . at one minute you turn here . . . at 30 seconds . . . etc., etc." That may be OK if you're just learning to land, but it doesn't work for contests. You simply cannot count on the check–points being there. You'll be scratching for time, or you'll be far downwind, or whatever — but you can't count on a textbook landing approach. You're going to need a setup that you can use in almost every situation. Don't lock yourself into any one landing approach — learn to turn left into final, right into final, a short final, a long final, etc. Avoid using visual check–points (except one, which I'll explain later) to set up your landing. On your home field you'll unconsciously be using trees, or power lines or other visual references to locate your plane in setting up a landing. On a strange field those reference points won't be there.

So what can you count on to be there wherever you're flying? Just two things — YOU and your AIRPLANE. You're there standing on the ground next to the landing circle. The one visual checkpoint you can use (it's good about 95% of the time) is to bring the airplane close enough to yourself before landing that you can "know" precisely where it is. I think of it as bringing it within "touching distance". Not literally, of course, but close enough so that if your arm was that long you could reach up and touch it; just as surely as you can now reach out and touch something within your normal arm's reach. You know precisely where it is. For me it means bringing my plane to within perhaps 75 feet of myself about 30 seconds before landing. The exact position is not critical, nor is the exact time. Once I have thus pinpointed my airplane, I feel like I have located it relative both to the countdown and to the landing spot and I can now fly out an set up an approach and still retain this feeling of contact.

THE COUNTDOWN

The countdown to landing is a lot less important than most people realize — one of the most important lessons for me was learning to view the countdown in its proper perspective.

First of all, keep it simple. Most pilots use countdowns that are far too complex. "At one minute to go, give me a 10–second count, at 30 seconds a 5–second count, at 10 to go give me every second . . . backwards . . . in Yiddish." Even if you have your favorite timer trained to your own peculiar count, he won't necessarily be there just when you need him most. I use a 5 second count UP the last minute of flight. Always count UP — that way the timer can read directly from the watch. ("Five, ten, fifteen, etc.") Count–DOWNS require too much from the timer (besides, how do you count backwards toward the target time on an "add 'em–up", anyway?). Start the count early enough (in this case with one minute still to go) that you can coach him if he forgets your instructions; and don't change that count within the final minute. With 30 seconds or 20 seconds to go, you need to be thinking about your landing, not trying to get the proper count from your timer.

Finally, — and this is the most important thing I have ever learned about countdowns — HAVE HIM STOP COUNTING at "fifty" (10 seconds to go). Forget about the count and just land your airplane. Stop and think about it — your plane is on final, approaching the spot and will touch down in about 10 seconds. How many flight points do you still have control over at this point? One or two? That means that about 99.5% of all your flight points are in the bag. And how many of your landing points are certain at this point? That's right, zero, niente, ZIP. So why are you concerning yourself about two points when you still have 100 points just 10 seconds away? A point is a point is a point. What do you consider a good landing? 85 or 90 points? (I'm thinking in this case of a 100 point landing circle.) That gives you 10 or 15 points to try to improve on, so forget about those two flight points. Besides, what if you ARE late? Having your timer continue the count is like having him holler in your ear, "YOU'RE LATE, YOU'RE LATE." That's about the last thing you need to hear when you should be concentrating on those 100 landing points.