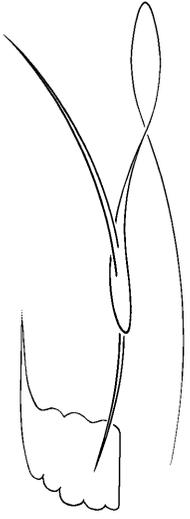
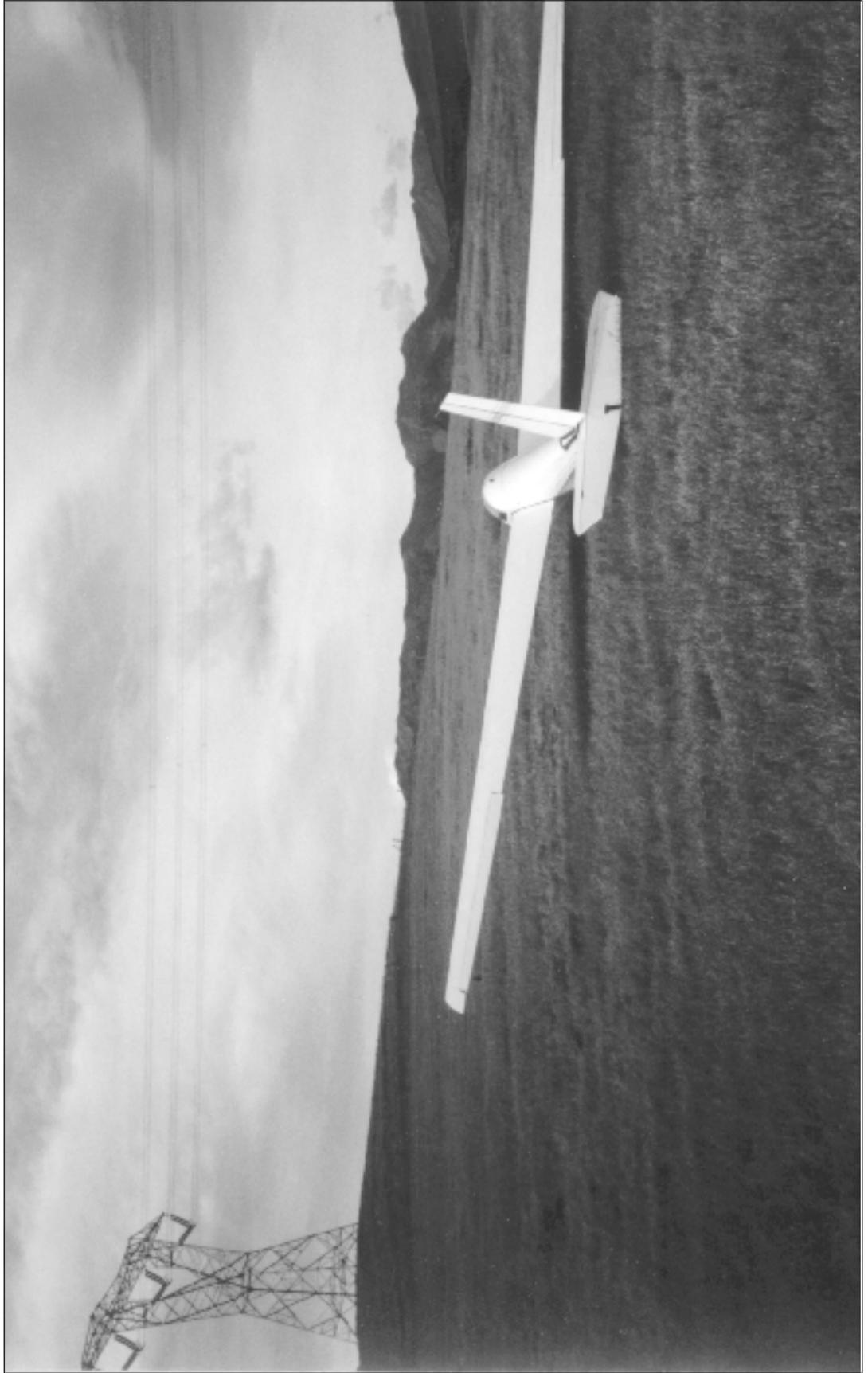


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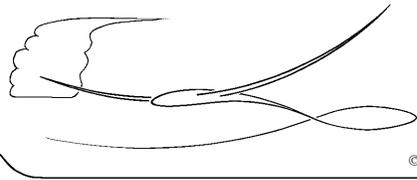
Journal of the Alberta Soaring Council



Fall/Winter 1991

ASCent

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Paul Moquin

editor Rick Zabrodski typing Ursula Wiese
layout Tony Burton printer Dave Puckrin

Editor's notes

This final edition of *ASCent* in 1991 brings to a close ASC's Silver anniversary year. An informative piece dealing with the past is provided by our "in house" historian, Ursula Wiese. There are also two interesting flying articles to enjoy by the fireplace while the snow flies.

This will be my last time at a keyboard as your editor as I am stepping down to allow several others (hopefully) to provide their fresh ideas and perspectives. My suggestions will hopefully be put forth for discussion at the ASC AGM. I have enjoyed being editor even though getting articles to print was sometimes akin to pulling teeth without an anaesthetic!

My thanks to Marty, Tony and Ursula and all those who did contribute. I will probably surface from time to time to provide some medical insight and answer any medical aviation questions. I hope you enjoyed the effort and hope to see you all writing articles and flying more than ever next year.

Merry Christmas and
Best Wishes in the New Year!

Rick Zabrodski

. . . from our president

The second planning meeting, awards luncheon, and annual general meeting will be held in that order on 1 February at the Nisku Inn near the Edmonton international airport. It will be a busy and enjoyable day. I urge good attendance from every club, and especially from the province's most active pilots, as there are important decisions to be made.

The later phase doesn't include me anymore, regrettably, and as it would be detrimental to the ASC for me to continue, I will be abandoning the President's task before completing the second leg. It is not a huge task, but I think it now requires someone actively involved in

soaring on a weekend by weekend basis to give it adequate thought and timely effort. Ursula and Tony are immensely helpful by the way, and have made the task as easy as it is possible to be.

In this issue are letters written to me in reply to my concern about a "protocol" for introducing inexperienced mountain flyers to mountain thermal flying. Dick Mamini and

Al Stirling both wrote thoughtful replies and I hope all those involved in mountain soaring will benefit from the wisdom of their comments. I wish you all a successful and enjoyable 1992 soaring season.

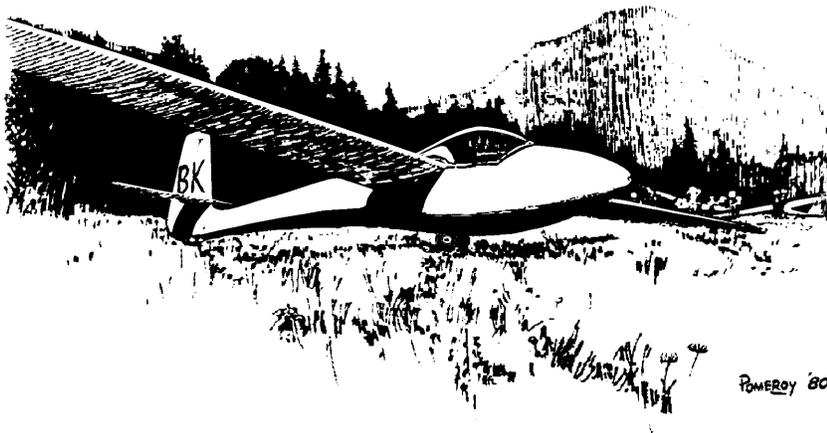
Garnet Thomas

Letters

This is a belated thank-you to all the members of your Council, and associated clubs for allowing outside pilots, such as myself, to come and enjoy the great experience at Cowley. This was my first time to Cowley at your summer camp, and being there, to witness the smoothness of the operation, from the first pilots' meetings, to the cooperation from volunteers on the flight line, time keepers, tow pilots, met briefers, safety officers, etc. says a lot for the people involved in organizing such a camp.

It is my intention to attend the fall camp this October as well, and hope to contribute in some way if it is possible. It is a privilege to rub shoulders with the experienced pilots of the area, with the chance to learn more about the wave. Thanks again from an Alberni Valley Soaring Club member, to all members of your great organization.

Don Matheson,
Campbell River, BC



Yahoo Cu !!

Hans König, Cu Nim Gliding Club

The alarm woke me at 6 am as usual. It was Sunday, September 1, the Labour Day weekend. I dragged myself up to the window for a weather check. Nuts! Solid high overcast!! The contemplated long weekend pilgrimage to Invermere, BC had been scrubbed at the last minute on Friday due to lack of general interest and a poor forecast. Looks like they were right again. Actually, Saturday proved to be a decent day, however a myriad of mounting projects kept me trapped at home. I HAD to get out for a flight on Sunday. After a slow start, I find myself at the Cu Nim field after noon. Strange, there's virtually nobody around. One Blanik is airborne on another training run, and only two private ships are rigged. Surprisingly, the overcast has moved east, leaving a sunny clear blue sky overhead. I add my name to the manifest and engage in small talk with the guys hanging around the field manager's table. We discuss the wind, apparent lack of lift, and lunch.

My attention is drawn to a solid looking cloud which has been forming for the last half hour or so west over Turner Valley. The Blanik, aloft again, now seems to be holding its own over the north hill. The club Jantar is idle, sitting at the end of the short takeoff line since John Gruber's last exploratory hop. No one ahead of me on the list appears the least bit interested, so I decide to risk a tow ticket.

Iain Colquhoun dishes out another exemplary tow, hauling "Fruit Juice" and I through a surprisingly strong thermal just off the east end of 07. After a short duel with this whirlwind, lift becomes more elusive, I bong off into weak lift due north of the field, and quickly head for the Blanik cored in a reasonable thermal over a plowed quarter section below. Denis Bergeron and I jockey for altitude, and at 8000 asl after another 10 minutes, he wanders off to the northeast toward some rapidly cycling wisps. I grind on to bank a little more height. The cloud to the SE, definitely growing into a substantial, dark, flat bottomed cu, beckons. And I'm cruising. Weakening lift is quickly replaced by sickening sink! The wind! It must be howling from the southwest up here! Chasing the MacCready setting doesn't seem to help. Halfway toward the cu seems agonizingly slow, and the thought of being back on the deck before reaching the lift looms in my mind. At 5800 feet, over the wee ridge between Black Diamond town and Turner Valley, way under the black patch overhead, the vario changes its tune. A strong surge. I'm tempted to circle in the first solid lift, resist, pull up and climb straight ahead. The lift gets better and better. Just before bursting back into the sunshine on the southwest side of the cu, the vario needle

disappears off the top end — I estimate it at least 12 to 15 knots. The core is quite large as I wrap FJ into a moderate left turn. After only three minutes, and half a dozen turns, I'm in the dome of this cu. Breathtaking! A quick therm-out through the core, accelerating into the yellow arc, keeps me clear of the scud at about 9000. More developing cu to the southwest that I noticed during the exhilarating climb determine the new heading. The lift steadily diminishes as we burst back into the sunshine, but never drops below 4 knots! Hmmm. Very interesting. I've experienced similar conditions several times before. I turn back toward the leading edge of the cloud whose form, billowing brilliantly above me to the east, now becomes apparent. I roll the Jantar into ridge running mode, weaving in and out of misty billowing fjords, overflying snowy benches, and tucking under menacing overhangs.

Exhilarating! The lift is eerily smooth, definitely wave. I try out all my tricks to maximize the ascent occasionally tracking straight west, as a new wisp forms ahead of the main cu; then circling; then beating back and forth, north and south, along a mile long wall of white. Our shadow darts back and forth, flitting along the wall contours, surrounded by a dazzling, completely circular rainbow. The lift peaks between 8 and 10 knots! FJ and I are climbing in a fabulous valley formed by the growing cu to the east and west of me. Ground features are getting smaller as the clear window appears to close in below. Strangely, there is no evidence of any characteristic lenticular formations at cloud top, only the solid, ripe cauliflower-like appearance of a mature cumulus. At 45 knots into wind, we appear to remain stationary above ground references.

By now I'm really wondering where the other guys are. The flight line was growing during my initial climb. Several sailplanes launched as I topped out the first thermal. Now I'm alone, but fully expected to be joined by the others while stooging in and out of these woolly nooks and crannies. A working radio in this machine would be nice!

At just over 12,000, still well below cloud top, the urge to explore further west overcomes me. I push the nose over, accelerate to cruise at zero sink, and aim to the southwest for the next large cu. Several seconds later, the needle bottoms out on the vario. The base of the cu ahead, which was well below me as I left the lift, now appears to be rising at a phenomenal rate. Wow! We're losing bags of altitude in a hell of a hurry! And it's suddenly becoming very turbulent too. I slow FJ down within the green arc, snug up the harness several times, retighten my grip on the stick, and hang on for the ride. After several minutes of

rolling and pitching through some extreme attitudes — weightless one moment, breathless from the kick of sudden G's the next — we penetrate the rotor into solid lift again. We lost over 4000 feet in less than 5 miles. Our location is just south of the Turner Valley Ranch airstrip (!?), and staring up at cloudbase rushing at us at 10+ knots.

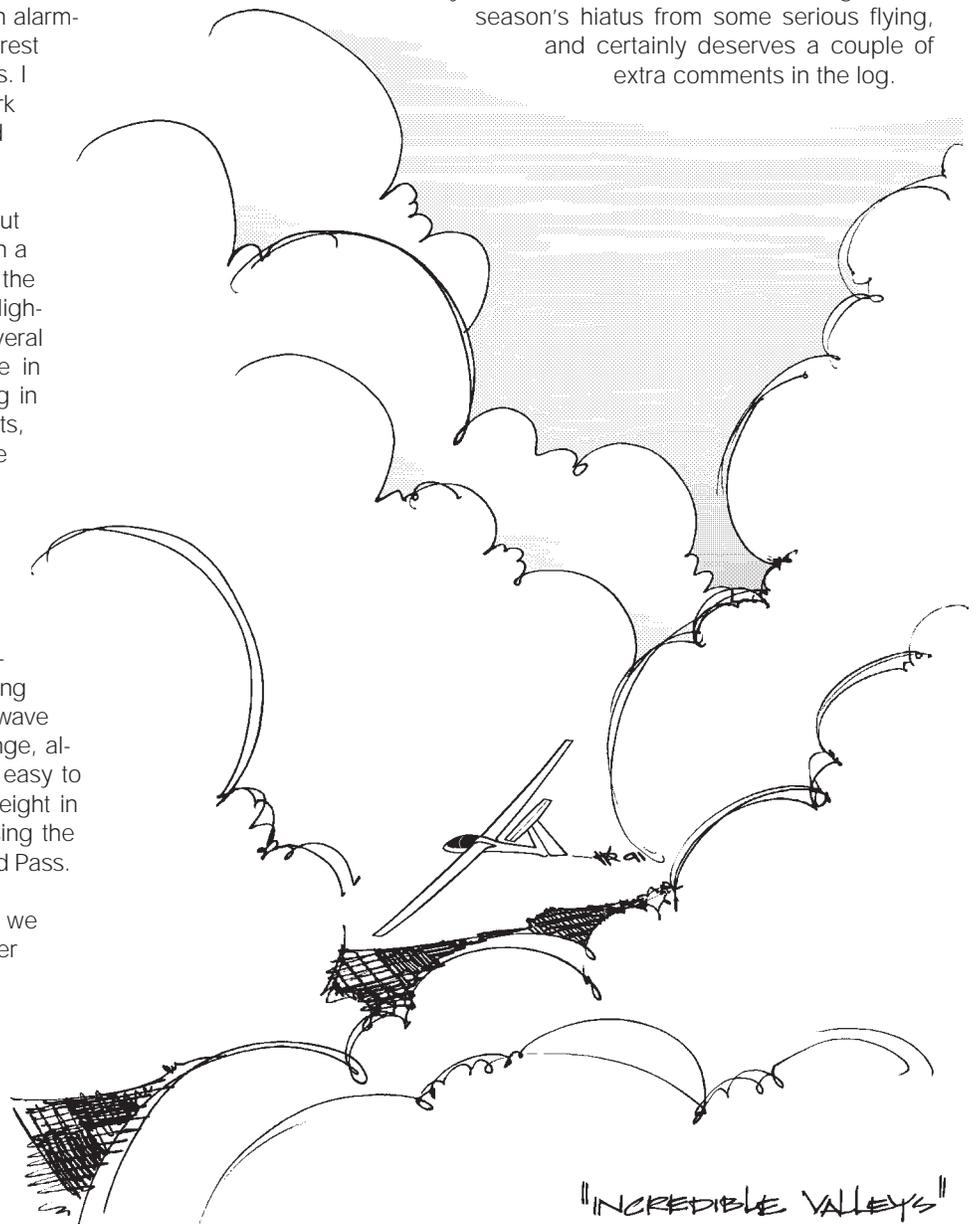
Same scene again. Climb straight ahead, circle a few times as the core under the cu surges, explore the approaching cloudbase, push for the southwest edge, and burst into the sunshine ahead of the cloud, into diminished but continuous lift. Cloudbase has been rising as we work our way west. Here it's at 11.5. It looks even higher further west. I push on. Again smooth lift transitions into serious sink, followed by an even more savage roller coaster. Again solid lift resumes under the blackest part of the overhead cu. I'm intrigued by the wisps forming upwind of the cloud, and continue west. Definitely rotor! Hmmm. This could be a bad move as the altimeter unwinds at an alarming rate. Below me is a carpet of forest and the last foothills before the rocks. I give myself an 8000 foot benchmark for escape altitude to the east and landable fields.

At 8500 FJ and I rattle into strong but broken lift over the ranger station on a mountain spur, half way between the Sheep River to the north and the Highwood Pass to the south. After several wasted maneuvers trying to centre in the maelstrom, we're back climbing in solid, smooth wave, first at 4 knots, then 8, and finally off the top of the 10 knot scale. Now we're positioned smack over the first spine of the Rockies, on a 300 degree heading, slowing beating north along the range. It's hard to abort the climb before the cu tops. I convert my altitude into speed, pushing further west, skirting around clouds during the descent back to cloudbase. The wave activity has quit west of the first range, although consistent convective lift is easy to find under those cu. Finally, with height in hand, FJ and I turn back after crossing the Kananaskis highway in the Highwood Pass.

Dolphining east under the clouds, we re-encounter the primary wave over the spine, top up to cloudbase before running the gauntlet back toward Sandy MacNabb Park and then on to Turner Valley. I notice that the cloudbase is lowering steadily as I continue. We are well above the 11,000 foot base of a cu hovering close to Cu Nim. Only a few sailplanes

can be seen in the air. Where is everybody? At this point I'm endeavouring to return the glider to the club for the next lucky customer. Well clear of the cu, and after a thorough scan, I decide to lose the remaining altitude by refamiliarizing myself with the Jantar's envelope. Some slow flight leads to a few stalls, to some lazy eights, and finally fully developed spins in either direction. The last spin to the left is interrupted after only six turns due to the sudden onset of incredible banging! One of the gear doors must have sucked open and was slamming shut in rapid fire mode. Enough of this! With spoilers open, and 1500 feet later, we join downwind left hand circuit for 07. We roll to a stop 2 hours and 5 minutes after launch. It's hard to believe the incredible flight I've just had, and catch my breath in the cockpit before jumping out.

Not many soaring flights prove to be this exciting. It definitely rekindled the flame of this old dog after a season's hiatus from some serious flying, and certainly deserves a couple of extra comments in the log.



It was pretty generally conceded that it was

A DECENT FALL CAMP

Tony Burton
Cu Nim

Late September and early October had been very warm and the week prior to the camp had beautiful Indian Summer weather with lennies over the mountains most days. Could it hold out a little longer and could we avoid last year's Thanksgiving snow storms which closed down Cowley? Arrrgghhhh, we should have ended the Camp on Thanksgiving, not started it ...

Friday, 11 October The weather was predicted up to 30°C in Lethbridge and Pincher Creek. I left home in shorts and T-shirt with Echo Echo and a week's worth of gear and was a couple of clicks down the road when I realized that I hadn't packed any of my jackets or winter weather stuff (what else have I forgotten?). I arrived at Cowley to drop off the ASC gear at 3 and find that Bruce Anderson from Calgary has beaten me by a few minutes to be the first arrival on a lonely Friday afternoon airfield. I discover that I have forgotten the key to the Cowley shack and my shaving kit. With my advancing years I'm going to have to make checklists for everything! I call back home to Ursula who is going to arrive the next morning with the oxygen cart in any case.

A strong contingent arrives from Cold Lake in the evening, bringing XQL, their 1-26, on a just-in-time renovated trailer.

Saturday More people begin arriving, registering, and rigging in the morning. The forecast isn't great as there is supposed to be a cold front moving through in the afternoon with predicted winds gusting to 100 km/h out of the north. Just before 10 am the Cu Nim Scout appears overhead with Dr. Cosine (Iain Colquhoun). He has dropped Dave Fowlow and Susan Bucher in the Blanik north near the Gap and they found wave to 20,000 feet, so they claim the first climb of the camp.

There are three launches from Cowley but they are up and down. A lot of solid cloud is moving into the valley to the north from the front, so flying is shut down. Although the high winds do hit the prairies on the east side of the Porcupines, they miss the Cowley valley entirely. In a couple of hours a very convective looking sky is inviting but everyone had scattered, with a large contingent thoroughly grounding themselves at the Lundbreck Hotel and taking over the fusball and pool table for the afternoon. (*Gourmet*

alert — the cafe next to the hotel cooks up some truly outstanding french fries!)

Sunday There is wave today but it is high up and no one really connects. The surface wind stays out of the southeast all day while the upper winds move briskly out of the NNW. There are 32 flights though, as many new campers take area check rides. The Blanik is going to be in great demand since the Cold Lake Lark couldn't make it down due to trailer and oxygen system problems. Don Matheson from Campbell River, BC is happy to help out though by flying two up in his RHJ-8, which started becoming known as the "Guppy".

Gerhard Novotny finally shows up around 11 am with PCK, having been delayed overnight on the ferry flight down from Chipman by yesterday's front. He tells of his adventure with trying to sleep in an Okotoks hotel over a noisy band and then walking four miles back to the airport in the morning because the taxi wouldn't run 'til ten.

Another problem appeared when a towplane first tried to refuel and found that the gas pump had packed up (the diaphragm was split inside). There was a lot of scurrying around to see if a quick lash-up would keep us going over the weekend, until someone said, "Isn't there a spare pump in the shack?" Yes, there was — it had been sitting quietly in a box in the back corner for so long that it became invisible.

This evening a large group of pilots have an excellent Thanksgiving dinner laid on by the hostess at a becoming-popular bed-and-breakfast chalet in the nearby mountain hamlet of Beaver Mines.

Thanksgiving Monday The upper winds are strong but out of 330° which is a pretty thin angle to the Livingstone Range. Wave is present but spotty, the best area being the south half of the range. There are nice looking lennies over the Continental Divide but only a few bits of primary rotor cloud. The early flights will have the best luck at contacting as the bottom of the wave moves higher as the day progresses and this pattern will repeat for the next two days also. Nevertheless, lots of check flights are done and 28 launches made. Don Matheson got to 22,000 on his wave check with me, and Darwin Roberts had his first wave experience to 16,000 feet.

The ride Don and I had was memorable. The Guppy was a tad stuffed with both of us in extra clothing and chutes. Don had only one oxygen system installed so we had to buddy-breathe on one mask. On the descent, Don noted that the flaps seemed noisier than normal. I had the controls at about 6500 feet and flying only 65-70 knots when the ship suddenly vibrated quite violently for a second or two with no obvious source. My first thought and comment was flutter as I had experienced that before. Everything seemed normal after that incident but we finished the flight very conservatively. Then on final Don got a little slow on the last bit and dropped through the wind gradient and we had a hard and loud tail low landing.

As a result of the shake we got while airborne, Don immediately tied the ship down and began giving it a very careful inspection. At the same time I was telling Don Jessee about our incident, and he said that he also got a strong vibration in "Prime Minister" when he was coming down at about the same time. It was now apparent that it was some external turbulence which caused the vibration and not flutter. I have felt "cobblestone" turbulence in the wave, but this vibration had a quite different character, so I was relieved that it wasn't a control system problem... Or so I thought on going over to tell Don the good news, when he said, "Have a look at this," and showed me two places where his left flap was coming apart! He had it repaired by the next day with Jerry Vesely's help in Claresholm.

Even in the unpropitious wave conditions today, Rod Crutcher of Cu Nim in the ASW 20 (PM) and Neville Rob-inson of Winnipeg in his BG-12 both make Diamond climbs to 25,200 and 25,600 respectively. Great! It demonstrated that even when conditions don't look that promising, *always carry your barograph*. Rod actually got his climb in the wave off the Continental Divide. Pushing west after an initial climb, he didn't contact until he was down to 13,000 feet and just at the point of turning tail and fleeing back east while he had height to clear the Livingstones. His Diamond climb was at a slow 1-2 knots which took him over four hours and every breath of oxygen in his tank. Rod was quite awed by the scenery over there as it had been his first trip over to the "wrong" side of the range.

Paul Moquin received his landout baptism in the 1-26 under the primary behind Centre Peak after he lost the wave and got himself stuck in pegged out sink. A lot of the Calgary bunch now left the field to the lucky dozen that had a few days off midweek.

Tuesday Wave conditions improved in strong Chinook conditions with winds moving around to a more favourable 300°. Those camped out had a pleasant night as it was 15°C already by 8 am. Grant Humphrey of Cold Lake took over the towing duties, a job he was stuck with for the remainder of the camp. (He quickly discovered the unique requirements of wave towing and earned the thanks of the participants for being the indispensable man.)

The first flight off was the Cu Nim Blanik with Mike Glatiotis getting his wave check by Cold Lake CFI George Szukala. "Moose" is not well designed to fit into the back seat of AUK, but Mike is treated to his very first wave flight to 23,000 feet. Next off is the 1-26 with another young Cold Lake airman, Marc Brassard, and he lands out too! — about four miles short at 1130. I hardly have the heart to tell George when he lands, but somehow manage. He is not overjoyed because the 1-26 is a bit of a bear to go together. Remembering last year's vision of the Edmonton Blanik being walked down along the valley roads to Cowley

because they didn't have the trailer available, I suggest doing the same, which they did. A pleasant stroll through the Alberta foothills with the 1-26 gets it back home in a couple of hours — certainly less time than a cycle of derigging and rigging.

Less than a half hour after Marc's landout, Paul Moffat in the BG-12 called in that he was in trouble over the same area the 1-26 landed out the previous day. A couple of people on the field with binoculars pick him up at a low angle and watch a "Perils of Pauline" glide back towards Cowley — the tailwind sure helped though. At times sinking low, and then pulling up in the turbulent air, Paul sneaked (snuck?) back home. Soon everyone on the field could see his progress — and he squeaked in with a landing on 11, the crosswind runway.

What was happening was that the bottom of the wave was getting higher throughout the day so soon even a normal 4000 foot tow over to the range was too low. Pilots released in surges of rotor lift and mixed up air that was

a battle to stay up in even for the experienced. By midday the bottom of the wave was at the height of the few small rotor clouds forming at around 9500 feet in the secondary. This is not a common situation but does occur often enough to spoil an otherwise good wave at times.

Deirdre Duffy connected however, flying ESC's ASW-15, and climbed to a very respectable 29,200 for her Gold and Diamond altitude gain in her first solo wave flight. Novice Mike Wallace did well to fight for an hour with the

photo no longer
available

The hot and cold of it. Paul Moquin of Cold Lake poses prior to his wave checkflight, with a somewhat naked Mike Glatiotis on hand to help out.

secondary rotor to eventually contact the wave and reach 21,000 feet, and Ed Duggan of Cold Lake got his first wave orientation flight to 20,600 in the Blanik. Bruce Anderson took a three-ticket tow to assure himself of the primary and reached 31,000 feet. Seventeen flights were made and everyone was happy with the exciting events of the day — part of the excitement being an inordinately high number of weak link breaks until it was realized that the batch of new ASC weak links had been made from under-strength rope.

Wednesday and Thursday The synopsis continued to be interesting. At 9 am it was +15°C in Pincher Creek and around zero everywhere else in the province! The upper winds were finally from the right direction at 240° and strong at altitude (65 knots at 9000 feet), being driven from a low centred in southern BC. But, an Arctic front with snow showers was forecast for the evening (and Central Alberta was in the middle of the first major snowfall of the year some areas got over 30 cm). Surface winds were to be 20-30 knots in the morning increasing to 35-50 knots in the afternoon. By the time I had completed the briefing on the flight line at 9:30, it had become too gusty for a safe operation so we shut down before Grant tried to taxi PCK down from its tiedowns. The next couple of hours were spent derigging some ships, double-tying PCK, turning all the trailers into wind, and making sure everything was well nailed down. (This is when we appreciate those one inch steel tiedown cables.) Really strong winds of over 100 km/ h blew that night prior to the frontal passage, and we must thank Dave Morgan for moving his camper down to the gliders and baby-sitting them regularly.

Only a skiff of snow and -10°C was evident the next morning with the cloud moving out by the afternoon. The morning weather briefing was held around a roaring stove in the camp kitchen. Susan Bucher of Cu Nim orchestrated breakfast for anyone who dropped in hungry, and we all grounded ourselves with hot mugs full of an instant chocolate, coffee, and Irish Bailey Cream recipe and told lies for a couple of hours, then brushed snow off sailplanes before scattering to non-gliding interests for the day (me, I went home for a shower).

Friday The winds were back around to 300 again, but once more their strength aloft saved the wave. Paul Moquin was still looking for an honest-to-God wave flight as he was the only pilot in the Cold Lake group who had not yet connected. So properly bundled up in the front seat of the Blanik, off he went with George on the first flight of the day — and was promptly back on the ground again. He was beginning to think there was no such thing as a wave and was feeling a little blue. Next off was Don Mathe-son for a Diamond attempt, and he thought he blew it when he lost the primary making his notch and promptly began losing height at a ferocious rate. He was running east back home and down to 5700 over Highway 22 when he contacted the secondary and was on his way. He got a Diamond climb to 23,700 but sadly won't be able to claim it because the paper in his barograph jammed.

Dave Wallace of ESC was off just before noon for a 5 hour attempt and landed six hours later. Now that was an endurance feat since he had to stay high enough to keep the wave but not so high as to use up his limited oxygen supply. His feet were so frozen when he landed he couldn't put his heels on the ground for 20 minutes!

By 1500 there were fine looking lennies above. Both the primary and secondary were giving 10 knots off release south half of the Livingstone Range, which was a relief after the previous days of fighting to enter high waves from rotor. This strong lift tapered off quickly though, and was only a knot or two north of the peak climbing up past the airway — so it was a slow grind to 18,000 where one could move south once again. Deirdre Duffy, Paul Moffat, and Darwin Roberts all had flights to 18-19,000 feet. I got a climb to 21,000 from a 2000 foot tow to the secondary. Mike Glatiotis got to 20,000 in the Blanik with George. And FINALLY, on the last launch of the day at 5 pm, hard luck Paul got his wave flight to 21,200 feet. When he got back down he said, "You won't be able to get this grin off my face with a crowbar." The gusty 25 knot winds in the late afternoon landings were tricky for the newer pilots, and "Cowley Ground" was a helpful aid.

After sunset the top of the camp stove was cherry red and surrounded by tired pilots thrashed out from the activities of a windy and cool airfield but happily trading the events of the day. Susan again masterminded a potluck supper, and we all shared a meal of hamburgers, barbecued smoked salmon, baked potatoes, Taber corn, garlic bread, salad, etc, that caused us to wonder what the rich people could possibly be sitting at that night that would match it. Oh, we also had more chocolate coffee, this time laced with generous gobs of the genuine *Dr. McGillicuddy's Peach Schnapps*. Aaahhhhh!

Saturday The air was drier and the winds were out of 330 and lighter, killing any chance of wave.

Dave Fowlow and Dick Mamini flew NCO in from Cu Nim to ferry the Blanik back. Before that happened though, Dave gave Susan her last dual flight and then sent her off on her solo! Never have so many people gone out to help push a glider back after landing. Fred Guest presented a very happy Susan with a bouquet of dried weeds and Moose applied the bucket of water.

The only lift to be found was some plus zero ridge lift on the Porcupine slopes. The camp's last two flights were made by George Szukala getting his first flight by himself in the 1-26 and Grant Humphrey getting his sole glider ride of the camp — even though he did buy ten tickets.

As it was a no wave forecast for Sunday, everyone then derigged club ships and packed up for an early start home. Forty-one pilots had registered for the camp with sixteen gliders, and 96 launches made. Overall, it was pretty generally conceded that this camp had been a decent one.

ON GOING INTO THE MOUNTAINS

Following the Cowley summer camp, which featured some days on which a lot of pilots were flying over the rocks, Garnet Thomas wrote a letter to several on the practicality and advisability of some more formal training on mountain flying. Garnet's letter follows, along with two good responses from Dick Mamini and Al Stirling.

I've been wondering about a "protocol" regarding pilots flying out of the Livingstone Block and into "the Rocks", beyond and north and south. I would be the last one to discourage flying into and exploring new areas — and mountain flying is so dramatic compared to soaring over the prairies. What I sense though is that we need a "protocol" or suggested procedure for exploring these new areas. Perhaps the very experienced mountain flyers ... could play a mere active leadership role when conditions are suitable for long mountain flights by setting up certain guidelines for less experienced pilots; for example —

When I taught the instructor's course at Hope some years ago, we all had to memorize the names of certain mountains and minimum heights, and certain indirect routes to get back safely to the field before we could fly there. Perhaps the high time mountain pilots could advise on certain minimums at certain locations etc, so that new or relatively inexperienced mountain flyers could take it step by step, much

like a neophyte follows a mountain climbing guide.

I realize the experienced fellows might be reluctant to assume any responsibility for other pilots and I'm not suggesting hard and fast rules. We can't prevent someone from risking his own neck and his own ship if he decides to. What I would hope is that by having these experienced guides do a briefing each morning, or by coming on the radio to advise where or where not to fly as conditions develop, we will encourage a "protocol" of safer exploration of mountain flying by the less experienced pilots.

Well — what do you think? Is my old age starting to talk? Perhaps. But please phone or write to me about this so we are in better shape the next time. Anyway, I really enjoyed my couple of days of flying at the camp...

Good soaring!

Garnet Thomas
7 August 1991

from Dick Mamini

Dear Garnet,

Thank you for the very timely letter dated August 7, 1991 regarding mountain flying. Sorry that this letter sounds a bit like preaching but when I tried to edit it out there was nothing left so I more or less left it the way it was originally written.

I had intended to speak to one or two of the relatively low time Cu Nim pilots who were out in the Rocks recently on a day that I wouldn't have considered suitable for risk taking. However, your letter has given me an excuse to reach more pilots and hopefully to get people thinking about this topic without getting bent out of shape.

The following points list the criteria that are important for pilots considering an excursion into the mountains:

- *You should have proven to yourself, and to your fellow pilots, that you can find and centre thermals on the ugliest of days.*

This means practise staying up in weak and especially in broken and turbulent thermals. If you haven't mastered

this skill, stay out of the mountains no matter how good the conditions appear to be. Conditions can change very rapidly!

- *For years I have said the only time anyone should venture into the mountains is when the lift is predictable.*

The most predictable lift is on relatively stable days with relatively few thermals. The worst days are the super unstable days with 15 knots thermals that tear your wings off. All that air rushing up at breakneck speed, sometimes for only a few minutes, has to come down somewhere and Murphy's Law always has it coming down exactly where you are when you can least afford it.

Suppose you told some pilot incapable of thinking for himself that if he was at Tornado Mountain at 12,000 feet, he could always make it out through the Gap; or to Elk Valley Airport; or to the Crowsnest Pass. So there he is by some miracle at 12,000 feet at Tornado Mountain. Suddenly, that beautiful cloud with the solid 10 knot thermal quits and is replaced with a large area of 10 knot sink. This is quite likely on the type of day I am describing. So a bit of panic sets in because his glide point suddenly appears to

be at the base of Crowsnest Mountain! He is afraid to fly in that direction because he knows he can't make it out of the valley so he makes a circle looking for the lift that was there a minute ago. A minute ago! That's 1000 feet lost! By the time he decides to fly in some direction he has lost another minute and another 1000 feet. Ten thousand feet (that's about 5000 above Mother Earth, five minutes to go) and things have reached the full panic situation. He doesn't have the skills to find and centre the ragged thermals so he crashes near the base of Tornado Mountain.

The moral of this story is that he never should have been there in the first place. He should have over many hours of flying learned to evaluate the predictability of the day; to avoid sink streets and to get out of there if there was the slightest doubt about his ability to evaluate the lift ahead.

(In your letter you suggest altitude minimums and routes back to safety, etc. This may be of some use in very specific and limited situations such as Centre Peak to Cowley Airport but I personally think this is unwise and also potentially very dangerous for general mountain flying. The example above illustrates my points.)

- *Don't under any circumstances listen to what the so-called elite pilots are saying on the radio.*

To listen to the radio chatter at Cu Nim on September 2 you would think it was the best day anyone could imagine. I can't help but think that this BS encouraged some of the newer pilots to venture into the rocks. In fact the day was unpredictable to a degree seldom experienced by yours

truly in the forty or so years that I've been flying. The lift was extremely strong but was only rarely under the prevalent and good looking clouds. The best lift was in the blue while there was often strong and persistent sink along and under good looking streets. The lift was very patchy and influenced by incipient wave conditions and on several occasions large patches of cloud suddenly turned to virga and snow fell over large areas. Now does this sound like a day to be flying over unlandable terrain? I think not!

At the end of flying that day, it was only after I commented that this was one of the most difficult days I had ever experienced that the other pilots 'fessed up that they had found the lift very difficult to predict. It was a classic example of a day with strong but unpredictable thermals which can lead to risky cross country flying conditions.

- *The future*

Personally, I want to encourage our better pilots to get out there and mix it up in the rocks. However, I share your concern that some of our pilots are not sufficiently prepared to do so with minimal risks. There is always a risk!

The number of hours or length of time a person has been at this game doesn't appear to separate those who might try mountain flying from those who shouldn't. Thankfully most of us have the intelligence to know the reasons why we do or don't!

Yours truly,

Dick Mamini
11 September 1991

from Al Stirling

Dear Garnet,

... First, I must confess I'm not as experienced with mountain flying as you may think. I have a certain amount of confidence over the Livingstones and in and around the Frank Slide area but that's about all. As a matter of fact, this was the first year in many trips to Cowley that I actually ventured in any distance and that was just down the Pass towards the Crowsnest Lakes. However, even with my limited experience I have found that it is possible for conditions to change very quickly in there.

I feel that it isn't necessarily the mountains themselves that are the problem (although they quickly could become so if you needed to land in a hurry) but the way in which the weather and the mountains interact that create the potential for danger. With certain types of weather it is easier to predict areas of lift and sink. In these types of conditions I believe flying in the mountains can be done with a greater degree of safety. Now the question remains — what type of weather is this and how to predict it? Frequently it is just a matter of trial and error. One can venture in feeling out the magnitude of lift and sink and how it is distributed. If the lift

and sink patterns are reasonably predictable, then perhaps it is safe to venture in farther.

With this in mind, perhaps guidelines could be developed based on the pilot's individual skill at predicting sources of lift and being able to utilize it efficiently. I think that using certain altitudes at specific landmarks could potentially lead to problems. In certain conditions it doesn't take very long to lose a lot of altitude and being at a certain height at a certain place is no guarantee that a pilot is doing to be okay.

For example, last summer Andrew Jackson and I were south of the town of Sentinel over a magnificent cirque at approximately 12,000 feet. To get there we headed west from Turtle Mountain where we first met up. There was wave in the area plus thermals induced by wave and/or rotor. Also, there were large areas of very strong sink and bands of varying strengths of lift on our way west. For what ever reason, I managed to find some of this sink, while AJ appeared to stay in zero sink. It was quite disconcerting to be sinking at 8 knots while your neighbour is maintaining his own, especially since we were less than 1500 feet apart. I initially went over to where AJ was (or had been) only to discover by the time I got there I was too low to find

any of his lift. I was now down to less than 10,000 feet so I turned back towards Turtle Mountain. I turned back because I wasn't sure where I could find lift if I continued west. However, I stumbled into reasonably good lift and managed to climb back up before reaching Turtle Mountain and headed west again. This time I was successful and finally caught up with AJ who had waited for me.

Had I been in another 10 miles or so it wouldn't have likely been possible to make it back to the flatlands without finding some more lift. I'm not sure I would have been able to find the lift when I needed it — not necessarily because the lift wasn't there but because I was unable to predict where it was.

The point of this story is to show that conditions can change very quickly. Also, the lift indicators used on the prairies may not work the same in the mountains. Being at 12,000 feet isn't necessarily enough altitude to stay out of trouble unless one is confident where to find more.

I agree that it would be nice if some of the more experienced mountain pilots would share their knowledge with those less seasoned. Also, radio advisories are a good idea. However, from the radio chatter that typically occurs, this won't likely be a problem. It is important for the novice mountain pilot to be aware of the dangers that exist when flying there and any story or briefing that illustrates this fact is probably useful.

Well Garnet, these are some of my thoughts on the matter. Each year I hope to gain more experience at this sport, without learning the hard way. With winter arriving so early, next soaring season seems a long way off. However, this should give us ample time to reflect on the past season and anticipate the next. I hope you have a safe winter and look forward to seeing you next summer.

Regards,

Al Stirling
30 October 1991

Another First

Marek Wakulczyk
Cold Lake Gliding Club

As summer charged by, the desire to harness a cloudstreet for a badge flight slowly grew. Unfortunately the need for instructors at the airfield had also grown and Cold Lake instructors kept most of their personal flying to the local area. Instead of challenging myself with kilometres, I challenged myself to finding the first thermal of each flying day. Although such a challenge is not comparable to completing a fast triangle, it can still be satisfying — even when camouflaged into a student's flight for turn coordination practise.

A common question at the airfield is, "what if you cannot make it back?" Most of us have a ready answer like, "there is nothing particularly wrong with not making it back to the departure airfield, as long as it is safe and planned." Since my fellow Cold Lake pilots have heard me say that phrase too often, they ensured that I ate a little crow when I recently landed out 14 minutes after takeoff. It was my first landout — and it wasn't planned.

To be honest, the flight was not particularly eventful. It was mid-afternoon, the wind was gusting to 15 knots down the runway, and everyone was claiming 2-3 knots of lift. My passenger and I launched in the Bergfalke and released at 2000 feet. As luck would have it, the thermal I released in quickly turned into 2 knots of sink and I turned away from it and the airfield, still at 1900 agl. I increased speed through the sink and headed for a small cu that had re-

cently formed. I gave myself 400 vertical feet to find lift or else turn back to the circuit.

The expected lift was never found, and when I reached my turn-around altitude, that sink was beyond the scale of my vario. Instinctively I increased speed and turned towards the airfield. The air was extremely smooth, the VSI was pegged at the sink end, and I could actually see the air field climb in the canopy. In my mind I knew that even with the slightest lift I would make it home. But if the previous sink was still there I had little chance of crossing the forest, the town and the hangars. I elected to play it safe.

"We are not going to make the airfield," I told my passenger... He was not impressed... "But don't worry, there is another airport close to us and it's downwind," I continued. I could see him relax. I informed Cold Lake Tower of my intentions, and they gave me the airport's frequency. A minute later I informed the airport's traffic of my intentions and proceeded to enter the downwind leg. Fifteen minutes after a gentle landing on asphalt, our towplane came, and we eventually aerotowed back to the club.

I cannot confirm that I have learned any great lesson from this first landout, but I am glad that Serge Krieger, my instructor in 1981, told me to always have a "plan B" — and in this case it was the Regional airport. As all "firsts", I will remember this first outlanding. Coincidentally, it also forms the last entry in this logbook. To me it represents a reminder of my passion for the sport: to dare Mother Nature and meet a distance, time or altitude goal. Sometimes I win.

This time though, it was Mother Nature.

The Alberta Soaring Council

A short history based on a quarter century of executive minutes

Ursula Wiese, ASC Historian

"Following the huge effort by the Edmonton Soaring Club in 1965 under the leadership of their president, Gordon Prest, the Alberta Soaring Council was set up in 1966. During this period, F/O Jim Nelson was the Liaison Officer for the air cadets. Jim was highly supportive of the concept and got much cooperation from sponsoring bodies of Air Cadet Squadrons throughout the province... While the Edmonton club spearheaded the cadet glider program in Alberta, the Red Deer club promoted the informal Innisfail May Meet. I am very pleased to see this event coming back again as I feel it offers the best opportunity for fledgling pilots to experience competition and cross-country flying. I hope it will be well supported this year."

Kerry Bissell, 18 Feb 1991

The founding fathers: President, Gordon Prest, Edmonton; Vice-president, Kerry Bissell, Red Deer; Advisory Committee, John Urbas, Calgary and John Pomietlarz, Edmonton; Secretary-Treasurer, Graeme Proudfoot, Edmonton.

1966 Gordon Prest, President

It all began with the idea to help Air Cadets actually get into the air. On 22 January 1966, Air Cadet officers and interested glider pilots from Edmonton and Red Deer discussed the first Air Cadet summer camp to be held in July and August in Penhold: a total of 2240 cadets from north-western Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia were to participate in four camps of two weeks duration each. Familiarization flights received priority, while scholarships ranked second. The Alberta Soaring Council was to work out the programs, supply the equipment and personnel. Cec Sorensen headed this department and advertised nationwide the need for towpilots and glider pilots. A number of power pilots applied, complete with resume. The members of this new organization also realized they had to register under the Societies Act in order to legally sign contracts for aircraft and winches. Kerry Bissell was head of the ground school. However, taking the equipment away from clubs soon resulted in disenchantment of the club members, as their own flying was curtailed; damage to aircraft would ground their own opportunity to fly for some time; and money was in short supply anyway. The Alberta Soaring Council became completely responsible glider training, airfields, any damage to non-DND property or personnel.

1967 Kerry Bissell, President

The second year of the Cadet camps was to change the objective — glider pilot training was added to the summer camp program. *"During this year, Gordon and I were made ex-officio members of the Alberta Provincial Committee to advise in matters relating to gliding. The Committee were solidly behind the gliding program and took immediate steps to acquire gliders and train officers within their squadrons to run their own show."* Kerry Bissell 18 Feb 1991

Two summers of Air Cadet flying under the auspices of ASC kept its members busy. However, the clubs had been operating for at least 10 years prior to this, and their members were venturing into the mountains — as far as the Kootenay valley. In 1967 eight sailplanes from Edmonton, Calgary and Red Deer participated with 139 flights total ling 137 hours. Frank Holman reported, "It was a very successful meet. There was a good combination of facilities for both gliding and the families. Frank stated that he would like to see it go ahead. Red Deer had carried it this year, perhaps the Soaring Council should carry on", and a motion was carried that the Holiday Soaring Camp be put under the direction of ASC.

The 24th May in Innisfail had already become a tradition by the three clubs — a decade by now — and SAC was asked to sanction this fun meet. Also ASC proposed that the '69 Nationals be held at Penhold.

1968 Dick Mamini, President

There are no minutes on record for 1968.

1969 Frank Holman, President

The minutes report on extensive planning with the industry and the military for the National meet, with towing aircraft and funds in short supply.

George Dunbar was looking into the possibility of using computer facilities to do the calculations required to obtain the daily scores. It would be a remote terminal of the type used on the Canadian General Electric time-sharing computing system. They were asked if they would supply, free of charge, a terminal for our use during the contest period. This would include the cost of the terminal itself, the use of the computer (located in Seattle) and the tele-

phone toll charges to Vancouver, BC where connection was made automatically to the computer system. Printed results were shown, such as could be calculated by a preliminary computer program. Input to this simplified program were the times or miles flown in a triangular speed task, for each competitor. The printed results showed these data, along with the points calculated for each pilot, his total points to date in the contest, and his placing on both a daily and overall basis. It was further suggested that if appropriate latitude and longitude data were supplied to the computer, the machine could also calculate the distances flown, and thus eliminate the task of reading these from the map. Details of the requirements will be developed, but it was felt such a system would be feasible. This would be the first time this has been done on this continent and add a great deal of polish to the contest."

Clubs using Cowley airstrip were careless with their vehicles on the soft ground, especially the runways, and therefore created great conflict with the authorities. (This was detailed in "*Stalking the Mountain Wave*".)

1970 Frank Holman, President

There are no minutes on record for 1970.

1971-72 Garnet Thomas, President

A small group has little clout, especially when government support is wanted, and membership in the Alberta Aviation Council was suggested for increased representation and possible better funding. The SAC instructor schools, headed by Walter Piercy of Kingston, Ontario were successfully underway and funding at the time was supported by SAC. Garnet called for an ASC brochure and he started the newsletter *ASCent*. Klaus Stachow of Calgary pursued pilots' interests in the Cowley airstrip with the provincial government. Concurrently he thought of a provincial soaring centre and discussed using some Crown land other than Cowley. Dick Mamini competed for Canada at the World contest in Yugoslavia in 1972 with his new ASW-12.

1973-76 Bruce Hea, President

High altitude flying in the Crowsnest Pass area became normal and thoughts to reserve an appropriate airspace were pursued, requesting a ceiling to 30,000 feet. The Alberta Soaring Council has been in business 10 years now and many meets had become a tradition, such as the Easter Camp in the Kootenay valley, the Innisfail May Meet and the Cowley Summer Camp. The Livingstone Block was printed on the WAC charts as an Alert Area. Bruce suggested the acquisition of a towplane for ASC meets.

Voices of change to the new SAC national group insurance became loud, such as "to delete coverage for tow planes or privately owned aircraft, or increase the annual rates to \$35." *Free flight*, the national soaring journal, was at an all time low. Pilots demanded better service and that it be produced commercially if necessary.

Changes to the Nationals took place, with competitions every second year, east and west alternating, and Regionals on intervening years. A new class, the Standard class, was suggested. Dick Mamini was on the World team again in 1974, competing in Australia. The 1975 Nationals were in Claresholm, with Garnet Thomas the contest director. Clubs were asked to give an interest-free loan to ASC for the Nationals until grant money was received.

The ESC *Towline* newsletter had been strong for a long time and all ASC members were to be included in the mailing list, with ASC reimbursing the Edmonton club respectively. In the mid-70s, grants of \$3000 were received (from Rec, Parks & Wildlife) for administration costs and leadership. Any monies unspent by the end of the year would be distributed on a pro-rata basis for club projects. The Provincial Soaring Centre idea received more consideration — grants being sought for two soaring centres with permanent facilities, training seven days a week and for club use concentrated on weekends.

Thus far, Alberta clubs had nominated their SAC Zone Directors directly, but with the Council becoming one strong voice for all clubs, the selection or election of a SAC Zone Director through the Council was now the obvious choice. It became clear that the original objectives of the Council and therefore the bylaws had become outdated. A major revision for the new Council was spearheaded and approved in 1979. In 1975, SAC bylaws were changed to include towpilots as SAC associate members. There was some thought that the SAC Alberta Zone should include Saskatchewan, as our ties (especially with Regina) had been very close in the past. However, our relationship with SAC was weak and better communication was called for. SAC decided hang gliding was not to be considered an activity to be covered by the national association. History may decide this was a poor decision.

1977 Kerry Bissell, President

In 1977, the grant from RPW changed for the better, starting with \$5000, more in the following years, with a possible additional allowance for a full time manager or executive secretary.

Two clubs — SAGA, of Calgary, and Serene, of Lethbridge, were welcomed to the Council. ESC celebrated its 20th anniversary. Dave Puckrin emerged as the saviour of *Towline* with an improved format, but higher cost (paid for by ASC as the Alberta clubs were still on the mailing list). ESC held their Labour Day BBQ & Extravaganza.

With ASC now becoming a strong provincial organization for funding and programs, a request to become a SAC member club was made, but turned down by the SAC board. Kerry Bissell voiced his concern that SAC expenses for the World team had grown very large compared to support given to Canadian grass root operations. Perhaps because the SAC-ASC relationship had not received sympathetic ears by the SAC board, the Council members

decided that the SAC Alberta Zone Director automatically be an ASC Director and thus establish the much needed communication link between these two organizations.

1978–79 Ton Diening, President

The hopes for large federal government grants were high in SAC circles, the infamous Green Paper had received a favourable nod by the feds and perhaps a SAC office could be housed in the Sport Canada building in Ottawa.

Grant money of \$5000 was received by ASC in 1978, and grant matching by ASC was not necessary this year. But for the '79 two-year plan a grant matching was required. Thereafter, three or five year plans were to follow. ASC would use these funds to improve soaring via the grass roots — the clubs. A provincial coach was called for to keep up with the leadership development program. Garnet Thomas was our first provincial coach, a post he held until 1982. A new umbrella agency emerged — Sport Alberta — to lobby for provincial sport associations at the government level. They would provide benefits such as typing, printing and mailing services at cost. (Mike Apps was a Director and elected Vice-President of Sport Alberta in 1982.) Ton Diening was to work out the two-year plan for 1979-80. As a result, a gigantic package of ideas, facts and fiction — our first recreational master plan — emerged for which Ton received an ASC "Special recognition" plaque. Today's development programs and action plans were born at this time.

New Sports class competition rules were passed out by the SAC board. They were designed to remove the disparity between glass and older ships flying under Standard class tasking by issuing handicaps for the ships. A motion by ASC was passed that these handicaps for Alberta meets be accepted; that selection of a task by the pilot be allowed; selecting a triangle for the task be allowed; weather considerations be allowed for by the pilot in selecting a triangle for the task, and that the pilot task himself to his ability within time available to reduce outlandings. This early POST task concept was accepted in principle.

Cowley — George Dunbar was asked for a copy of his suggestions for the safe conduct of ASC flying operations. Finally in 1985, Kevin Bennett and Bruce Hea came forward with a draft for all ASC events and these guidelines have been updated since.

Also in 1979, Rick Matthews of Cu Nim reported that he had received a request from a US pilot to rent a glider for a 2000 mile attempt down the Rocky Mountain Trench. (In 1988, through OSTIV, Dr. Joachim Kuttner announced a prize for the first 2000 km straight distance in soaring flight; see *free flight*, 2/88 p10.)

In the late '70s, with federal sports funding high on SAC's mind, a new requirement to qualify for funding made six provincial associations mandatory — there were three — and SAC began wooing provincial associations.

1980–81 Keith Peters, President

1980 was Alberta's celebration of 75 years and ASC was to put soaring on the map. The '80 Nationals held at Claresholm by Cu Nim were a great success — including perfect weather; and ideas for an Alberta derby in 1981 had been voiced. ASC was growing with the new programs, calling for "department heads" in every field — safety and sport ing, closely followed by awards, coaching, official observer, equipment. A slate of chairmen were appointed and improvements showed everywhere. Camrose and Chinook Soaring (Claresholm) were welcomed as member clubs, but their operations were only of short duration.

On the national scene, a paid executive director was hired, and funding for the world team had ceased. ASC donated a one time \$1000 to be used for the Worlds in Paderborn, where Hal Werneburg competed. Another concern was national competitive awareness, since by government sport funding definitions, "to be viewed as a sport, we had to be competitive." Therefore SAC began work on a national seeding system and encouraged more provincial competitions. Bruce Hea took on the ad hoc task force to define provincial competitions from our point of view to provide an Alberta input to SAC. John Firth of Ottawa headed the first cross-country and competitive flying coaching committee on the national scene. Another try to achieve this goal was to have an Alberta contest coincide with the Alberta Provincial Games in 1982. By 1981, the SAC instructor schools were no longer funded by SAC, and ASC applied for funds each year to reimburse candidates.

The new provincial funding policy supported athletes only — leadership, programs, administration. Equipment or facility grants would be provided by Recreation, Parks & Wildlife Foundation through individual club application. To achieve maximum funding from the government, ASC divided the province into zones which were to be supported by the nearest club and increase public visibility. Tony Burton worked out the mapping and the bylaw amendment was carried soon after. The Secretary-Treasurer's work became a burden with the new grant requirements and money disbursements, so the position was divided.

The Cowley summer and fall camps grew and the far away clubs were asked to help out with their towplanes. To make it economically feasible for clubs to base their tow aircraft at Cowley, a higher reimbursement was to be paid. Out of province pilots would enjoy the same tow rates as ASC members. (In 1988 they became ASC members with registration for the duration of the specific event.) With high altitude flying at an all time high, and barographs out of calibration (Dick Mamini tired of doing this job), a provincial barograph calibration station was proposed. Bruce Hea did some investigation on the cost but finally concluded that a commercial company was by far the better choice, both in availability and cost.

Of special mention is the record climb to 34,400 feet by Bruce Hea in the Hallowe'en wave of October 1982.

The SAC insurance policy always posed questions, this time "whether or not the towplane (glider) was still covered by the underwriters if the glider (towplane) was not insured by the same company."

1982–84 Mike Apps, President

Mike pushed for a study on ASC equipment acquisition — a towplane and a sailplane. A committee was formed headed by Rick Matthews: towplane – Rick Matthews; sailplane – Willem Langelaan; motorglider – Hal Werneburg. Committee members offered extensive pros and cons with the consensus on a towplane followed by a high performance fibreglass two-seat sailplane being acquired. In 1984, ASC purchased the towplane, C-GPCK, which proved to be a blessing, not only for the events, but also to help out at clubs when their own towplanes were disabled. A \$15,000 grant came from the Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation.

Strong leadership by the Council prevailed throughout the many years of struggle and grant applications, peaked by the celebration of the 10th Cowley Summer Camp. It seemed that the whole of Alberta congregated at this event and Mother Nature offered one perfect day after the other during these ten days of festivities in the heart of Chinook Country. The book, *"The Story of Cowley"* by Ursula Wiese was a gift to all participants; the four "Cowley Chiefs" Julien Audette, Bruce Hea, Dick Mamini and Klaus Stachow were honoured at the great dinner party with politicians attending. Klaus offered a high altitude wave trophy to the Soaring Association of Canada. The designer of this exquisite trophy was Tony Burton. CBC Edmonton moved to Cowley in the fall for filming high altitude flight, which was aired 11 February 1983.

Despite ASC's strong show at events and programs, lack of communication amongst the clubs and the executive lingered. Pilots appreciated the flow of reimbursements, but where did the money really come from? Camp operations lost money for gas and oxygen, paid out of ASC general revenues, but clubs didn't seem to realize it. It would take constant publication, repetition, planning work shops to get the message across to at least some of the members. We now see the beginning of higher insurance liability; one million became an alarmingly high amount, mainly forced on by US pilots trying to sue everybody and their friends in their country. A new idea of a spring tune-up on cross-country competition in Camrose and/or Claresholm early in the season, say in April, was proposed by Dave Marsden and for two years this new event was quite popular for some pilots.

Transport Canada now moved into the soaring picture starting with complaints that not all accidents were being reported and implications of this failure were noted to the SAC president. Further investigation revealed that pilots took too long to make accident reports. Calgary ATC was to move to Edmonton. Not all radios had 720 channels, meetings with the controllers in Edmonton were necessary

to re-introduce our cause for flying the high skies and asking for cooperation. There was no problem. The military base in Namao made a high altitude indoctrination chamber available, which helped many a high soaring pilot to take the edge off the fear of hypoxia and to really enjoy the high flight.

A new crown corporation funded by lottery dollars, the Alberta Sport Council, became effective on 1 April 1983. Dissatisfaction with Sport Alberta, which had grown to a bureaucratic body with complicated and lengthy grant proposals, was aired by Mike Apps and Tony Burton, and presumably by other sport organizations, and which was in "competition" with the Sport Council, led to its eventual demise in 1986.

ESC celebrated its 25th anniversary; the book *"Edmonton Soaring Club — the first 25 years"* by Andrew Jackson was published. The new club in Medicine Hat emerged under the very able leadership of Bruno Schrein and earned them the ASC *"Club of the Year"* award in 1984. After some years apart, ASC became a member of the Alberta Aviation Council again.

Innisfail enjoyed great popularity on Victoria weekends for a long time, provincial contests were to be held here, and it was suggested to extend the Meet to two weekends or to make a four day event. 1983 saw the first split Nationals in the west — the 15 m class contest was organized by Cu Nim. Federal politics entered our sport — the government objected to pilots competing in a world competition where the South African team was allowed to fly; SAC would permanently be removed from funding if our pilots were sanctioned. This new course of action resulted in very hot debates nationwide, with a Canadian team going to the Hobbs, New Mexico championships without SAC's approval. Hal Werneburg was a member of this team.

In an attempt to bring Canada's soaring clubs closer, Ursula offered a new directory of all Canadian soaring clubs and sites with maps. It included all Canadian Diamond pilots and all Canadian records data gathered from incomplete FAI files (both files now complete since 1990).

Tony Burton designed a new ASC logo which has graced the letterhead and award plaques since. He passed all rights to ASC in 1991. Dave Puckrin had been a quiet voice, but a very busy donor of calling cards, posters, and bumper stickers for ASC and ESC for quite many years. Access to oxygen had been a problem since the advent of high altitude flight in Alberta so Jerry Vesely, an AME in Claresholm, decided to build an oxygen cart which was purchased by ASC in 1985. Another new idea was the Cowley pin, bronze for attendance and gold for a Gold or Diamond climb. Designed by Buzz Burwash, these pins enjoy great popularity.

Cowley saw some improvements by Alberta Transportation — new tiedowns, a gate on the east side, and the old wooden buildings well lived-in by mice and birds were

taken down. With pilots arriving at Cowley from all corners of the world, our towpilots were at a high risk of towing a pilot who might be unfamiliar with aerotow. A recent accident and some incidents forced the Council to employ the "dot system", whereby a towpilot could refuse any tow if a dot was not on his ticket. Therefore event registration with statement of pilot's skill and liability insurance became part of the safety system and is being improved since.

For years, the Council held one general meeting and the annual general meeting each year. The plans and activities were discussed here, but time proved insufficient. Mike offered two-day workshops and brainstorming sessions instead, thus laying the foundation for the future ASC annual planning meetings. Under great time pressure, Mike organized the data for the new large grant application and stored it all on his own small Radio Shack computer.

ESC have enjoyed their own gliderport in Chipman for some years now; the next project was a clubhouse. With funds in short supply, they got an interest-free loan from ASC, but later, an AGM meeting demanded repayment as there was no ASC policy to lend money to clubs and it was beyond the objectives of the ASC.

1985–86 Tony Burton, President

ASCent was revived under the able editorship of Marty Slater; with his new printer (connected to his own computer) he offered delightful reading on a quarterly basis. So far, our events had focused on flying, but with more families coming to the camps, especially in the summer, more emphasis on social activities was given — thus the two BBQs at the Cowley Summer Camp, and the mulled wine and cheese party and the Thanksgiving dinner at the Fall Camp. The May Meet had taken a bend towards stronger competition flying, thus discouraging the new cross-country pilot from participating. Edmonton began to remove equipment support from this event, and the weather began to move in — either with high winds, or cold, but also sunshine and enormous dust devils. Innisfail was looked at with divided emotions. Finally in 1986, a late spring blizzard just before the Meet prevented it from taking place. With divided interest by ESC and Cu Nim, it was decided in 1987 to cancel the Meet altogether.

The Treasurer's job mounted, with equipment moving back and forth from clubs to events, pilots criss-crossing the countryside, and the grant application requirements became excruciatingly demanding. A further load on the Treasurer was the filing of SAC membership dues and insurance premiums through the ASC books (for maximum funding). The increased typing became a headache. While the programs were embraced, the administration threatened to collapse. Delayed expense claims from clubs to the ASC treasurer made completion of the year end financial statements barely possible for the annual general meeting, usually held in February. To somehow get a handle on the two inch thick file of the grant application and action plans, a computer was sorely needed and George Dun-

bar's expertise was asked. An IBM clone and printer were purchased in 1986. The executive was now forced to find "staff" who had the time and ability to comply with the requirements of the grant application, especially to meet the deadline, as funding would not be received if the application was late, and it was becoming very difficult to entice anyone to volunteer for an ASC executive position. At this time, a new Sport Council program to support technical staff began.

An ASC sailplane became a much needed item. A \$10,000 Sport Council grant and ASC funds were set aside although the sailplane purchase was delayed for lack of a suitable prospect. One of the initial ideas of an ASC sailplane was to allow for aerobatic training but by now the cost of an aerobatic sailplane became overwhelming and it was decided to cut this goal. After much agonizing over type, a Grob 103, C-FAML, arrived in the fall of 1987.

John Firth was invited by Mike to hold the first national cross-country clinic in Chipman, which was very well attended in the first year. John's second clinic in 1986 produced three 500 km flights and more attempts, with John claiming a national speed record multiplace on a 500 km triangle for himself. A dramatic day for all, with Kerry Bissell beating Ursula Wiese by 0.5 km on their 607 km flights, which completed both their Diamond badges.

Safety moved to the front line. The new ASC tickets now carried a statement of liability by the P1. Tom Schollie of ESC was the first provincial chief towpilot with the mandate to draft operational instructions for briefing towpilots, tow ticket control and gas purchase. This was expanded and improved by all "chiefs", with a major manual available by Iain Colquhoun for 1991. Jay McVeigh of Calgary organized the first towpilot seminar, which escalated into a super-seminar the next year, with Ian Oldaker, SAC Chairman Flight Training & Safety Committee, chairing the event.

Cold Lake stopped their club operation for lack of new blood, and Namao has been uncertain for some time.

There were still some old green tow tickets unaccounted for from the '83 Nationals (No. 1901-1951, 2001-2050 and some had been used for tows. Karen Apps finished the immense task of sorting out used and missing tickets). Starting in 1986, the above tickets were no longer honoured (all other old tickets will be honoured at face value).

An old bus was available at Cold Lake. It was thought that ASC needed a focal point at its events to hold equipment and give some shade, and it was purchased for one dollar. However it demanded an overhaul to be roadworthy and John McGregor of Calgary spent most of his available time literally in the engine, installed new brakes with cylinders still leaking, barely coping with the beast. Finally in late '90 members of the Cold Lake club relieved ASC of the monster and recorded the return trip with, *"The blue bird's last cross-country"* [ASCent, Nov 1990].

At the Fall Camp in 1985 we all were confronted with the fatal accident by Jack Davies of Calgary over the Lundbreck foothills.

The constant search for the whereabouts of the Viking by Kerry Bissell led to an old barn near Olds. Finally in 1991 the Viking was restored by members of the Edmonton Soaring Club and honoured as a display piece in Canada's Sport Hall of Fame, with the grand opening in April of that year. Taildragger training was difficult to come by and the need for qualified towpilots was apparent. There was reluctance, shared by lack of instructors, but the members finally approved conversion training for licensed pilots for towing using the ASC towplane.

After years of prodding, pilots competing in Nationals or out-of-province competitions such as Ephrata would now receive funding from the grant money. This apparent policy change did not make pilots who had been denied funding in the past very happy.

In 1987 we finally found our Program Coordinator in Tony Burton, who then resigned as President. He would be paid for this position from a Sport Council program and take on many Treasurer and other onerous volunteer jobs besides staffing the large grant application process.

1987–88 Don Jessee, President

1988 was the year when an AD grounded all Scouts for cracked wing spars. C-GPCK finally received its C of A in Feb 1989, just when the Grob received an AD for cracks in the spar-end pins. The work was performed by a German expert team in Bayview, Washington. Tony modified the old Cu Nim Pilatus trailer for the Grob, with improvements forthcoming as necessary and possible. Because of the difficult nature to rigging/derigging and loading/unloading the sailplane, he also wrote a comprehensive "manual" in the hope that it be used. The new sailplane required use guidelines, and heated debate followed.

Although the Provincial Official Observer visited clubs in the early years, requests for his expertise dwindled. Tony kept busy updating the SAC guide to FAI badges and records. Ursula wrote the book *"Stalking the Mountain Wave"* (an expanded version of the earlier *"Story of Cowley"*). The response of pilots worldwide was overwhelming from 1988 to 1990, ASC sold books for \$5600, a \$1100 profit on sales after cost and interest.

After 10 years of drought, Cowley showed the strain of erosion and lack of new plant growth; immediate remedy was of utmost concern. A special recognition plaque was presented to the family of the late Alvie Cook at the 1988 Summer Camp in memory of his long support for soaring.

According to the bylaws it was necessary to have a new executive every year. For the good of the business, rotation now would be every two years so that a continuous and overlapping flow of management could be maintained.

Mike Apps competed on the Canadian team in Benalla, Australia in 1987, and the Nationals were held in Chipman by ESC that year under less than record soaring conditions. In 1988, the Western Interprovincial Contest tried POST task rules for the first time in Canadian competitions; the last day of the week-long event at Claresholm produced 400 and 500 km flights.

1989–90 Bruno Schrein, President

After years of dormancy, Cold Lake Soaring Club was revived in 1989 by a handful of ingenious members. They attracted over 30 new members that year, for which the club received the ASC "Special Recognition" plaque and the SAC Roden trophy. Grande Prairie remains small with a handful of very hard working individuals like Walter Muller; they flew out of Beaverlodge and operate with a winch.

Invermere or Fairmont attracted pilots from Alberta and British Columbia for many years. In 1988, Invermere became an official ASC event, subject to demand in any given year.

Members were unwilling to pay for the full flight costs of the Grob and the executive was forced to let it fly with low flight charges. ESC and Cold Lake supported it best. After a two-year study of pilot's acceptance of the Grob it was decided in 1991 to continue to fly it, still heavily subsidized (67% in 1990!) out of general revenues.

A new safety concern became the towropes and weak links. After observations by Tom Knauff, members demanded a 200 foot rope length and the availability of Tost weaklinks. After much trouble in obtaining them, Al Sunley introduced them at Cowley Summer Camp in 1990, but the metal links and cable were damaging to the C of G hook ups, and the old system of rope attached to the Tost ring continued. A warning sign for visitors at the northwest entrance was put up by Al Sunley in the fall of 1990.

Peaking in 1989, some club presidents questioned ASC as the umbrella organization, rhetorically asking, "What does ASC do for me?" A full Council meeting was called to re-evaluate ASC policies, structure and role. A major problem was perception of access to ASC funds. Sport Council funds were tied to specific programs, a fact some clubs could not understand, and some believed that our top pilots were the only ones benefiting. A break came for the 1990 season — the profile grant document was simplified and the grant money split into two pots, athlete and leadership development, rather than into specific programs.

Total government grants reached over \$47,000, and by the end of 1990, the Sportfund donations by ASC members was an all time high with about \$17,000 donated.

Now, in 1991, the Alberta Soaring Council celebrates its 25th anniversary. I hope these lines and this year's reports will give you some insight into ASC's history and growth. We have come a very long way indeed. ❖

SILVER CLOUD — 7 ALPHA

Dennis, a newcomer to cross-country soaring, writes a lovely story about going along for the ride in a two place at a Regional contest out of Fremont, California

Dennis Butler
from *West Wind*

In mid-July this year, the phone call I'd been secretly waiting for, and had hoped would transpire, arrived: "Dad, it's for you, it's Bob Klemmedson." Bob and I go way back to the early 1960s when I was a line boy for Les Arnold at Sky Sailing Airport in Fremont. Vietnam came along and, unfortunately for me, soaring went by the wayside. Bob and I met again by chance in 1984. That year he had asked if I would crew for him at the Nationals in Minden which I did. Being away from soaring for 17 years, I discovered there had been a dramatic change in this sport. I about fell over when I first laid eyes on a Nimbus 3. If I remember correctly, the hottest sailplane on the market when I left Sky Sailing was a Libelle.

In 1990, Bob called and asked if I would crew for him at the Air Sailing Sports Class Competition. Due to prior commitment, I could only manage a few days off work. Bob took his Cirrus. We had a good time and did fairly well, placing second in the contest. This year I had put aside a week's vacation in anticipation of Bob's call for me to crew. He called and to my surprise he said, "Dennis, I'm taking the two-place this year; so if you crew a day, then you can fly a day." Bob's two-place sailplane is an all metal side by side 1966 RHJ-7. I was packed five minutes later with two weeks to go before we left. All my previous soaring had been at Fremont and I had never flown cross-country before, let alone ever been over 12,300 feet. What a great learning experience this was going to be for me.

For those of you who have not yet experienced the thrill of cross country flight or competition, I took some notes. I still can't believe the fabulous soaring that took place. Every day we flew was a great adventure that wouldn't be topped until the next day. I would like to share my story with you and hope that you'll be soaring along with Bob and me...

July 28, Practise Day JJ calls a 100 mile scratch task. We got 7A (*Silver Cloud*) out of the trailer and put together, did the control checks, went out to the line, and put chutes on. Bob and I climbed in (well, okay, we squeezed in) and took off. Instant fear! All I heard was the metal sailplane creaking, cracking, snapping, popping and buckling. Bob saw the fright in my eyes and said, "Don't worry, this ship is very strong. It just

sounds like an old oil can, that's ail." Oil can, hell — it sounds like my old garbage can rolling down a steep hill! We have been on tow for 30 seconds now and I've had fun. Can we make this a circuit and call it a day? Are we high enough for the chutes to open? How come there is no ejection seat in this thing? I don't remember my hundreds of flights in a 1-26 sounding like this!

Okay, I can handle this, so what if my heart beat just increased tenfold! Being ground crew is an important job and maybe I should put forth my best effort into that direction. Any volunteers to ride with Bob? Where did everyone go? Now we have been up for 30 minutes, gone through the start gate, over the Godskins and are on our way to Sierraville. It's time for another heart check as the canopy starts to fly open on Bob's side. In making a great save, Bob slams the canopy down on my ball cap as it was on its way out to look for its own thermal. "Excuse me, Bob, hate to ask you this, but could you open the canopy far enough so that I can get my hat which at this very moment is 50% blowing in the breeze?"

We lost a little altitude in that episode, but fortunately we were at 9000 feet and no harm was done. We hit a 10 knot thermal, and climbed to 12,000 feet. Bob, knowing that we weren't going to do the task, cruised around checking out landing strips, thermal areas and the valley in general. Even though we didn't complete the task, we flew for three hours in preparation for tomorrow's start of Day One. When we returned to Air Sailing, we solved the canopy problem.

Contest Day 1 Having survived the practise day and being gluttons for punishment, we are ready. The task today is 160 miles. Bob and I retreat to his motorhome after the pilots' meeting for strategy time. As usual, we plot five to six primary tasks and three backup tasks. With today's weather, we decided our turnpoint would be Highway 50/Mine Road in Dayton Valley and then the Smith Valley airport and return. As we move 7A out to the line, I notice we are the only two-place sailplane competing. Not only that, most of the other sailplanes are fiberglass and look like they're doing 90 knots standing still. That's cool; we have a fiberglass sailplane also, we just forgot to bring it this time. Well, Bob said we were going to be conservative, not land out, and just have a fun time this week. Sounded like a valid excuse to me.

We cruise through the start gate at 9300 feet and head south to the area in the hills where this particular thermal always hangs around. How did we know the lift was there? Because Bob said it would be. No fooling; wham, bang, boom, we're doing 10 knots up and topping out at 15,000 feet. Come on now, this guy is BSing me, he just got lucky, that's all. Nonetheless, we are burning up the sky getting to the Dayton Valley. Turnpoint one now complete, we hit the Pinenut Mountains, climb to 16,500 feet and "pedal to the metal" to Smith Valley.

Turnpoint number two completed, we head north. "Say Bob, nice thunderstorm there off your left wingtip. This glider wouldn't happen to have overdrive, would it?" We won the race with the thunderstorm and climbed back up to 16,500 feet and did our final glide to Air Sailing.

Day 1 standing: 1 - BB, 2-6J, 3-NF, 4-7A
5 thru 22 - Everyone else!

Day 2 Today I get to pilot the motorhome since Bob's friend, Mark, has arrived to take his first ride in a sailplane. Drawing on my vast experience as a line boy years ago, the first order of business is to put an airsick bag in the side pocket of 7A. Mark had asked if we are packing a lunch for today's flight. No, Mark, no lunch, but I'm sure you're going to see your breakfast again (he did).

The Contest Task Committee thinks 200 miles would be a fun task to fly. Bob and I huddle up in the motorhome and put together numerous turnpoints that will get us our handicap mileage. Silver Springs and Sweetwater do the trick and bring us up in the overall standings. Mark's first flight is close to 200 miles and I don't think he really understood what he had just completed his first time out.

Day 2 overall standings: 1 - BB, 2 - 7A, 3 - WM, 4 - PZ
5 thru 22 - Everyone else.

After Day 2, we started to accumulate a small fan club. People like to root for the underdog. It's old metal against new fibreglass; old age against youth. It's having a crew get up at 0 dark thirty and wash 7A just so others will know we are serious and not to be taken lightly. Actually I wasn't washing, I was applying a coat of Grand Auto SUPER LIFT to the wings and fuselage. Code item: 10 knots+.

Day 3 We decided to push a little harder today. Our primary task is Truckee, Yerington, and return. We got off to a slow start and dropped down to 7500 feet at Nevada Flyers. We need to get well above 10,000 feet to cross the Reno ARSA. "Say, Bob, look at all those people in the 737 waving at us." We were outside of the ARSA when they flew by. This is definitely all the encouragement I need to get the hell out of here! We got the lift we needed and cruised over to the west side of Reno. As we rapidly descended to the magic 10,000 mark over the ARSA, Bob said there should be a thermal right over here. Right, what are they, colour coded? Wham, bang, we're at 10 knots up and out of there. How does this guy know right

where the thermal is? Slide Mountain, and Mt. Rose, here we come. We shot into Truckee, took our turnpoint photo and headed out toward the Washoe Valley. We picked up a small wave over Washoe Valley but the lift wasn't worth the stop. We headed into Dayton and got a real close view of the Dayton airport. Bob managed to find another one of those boomer thermals. One of his favourite sayings during most of our flights was, "I know it's got to be here", and as usual he was right, 10 knots up to 13,000 feet, but now we see Yerington is under siege from a thunderstorm.

Plan B time, west side of Pinenuts to Coleville. We've got to beat the storm to get the turnpoint. We hung around Topaz Lake waiting for an opening into Coleville. When there was a clearing, we shot into the turnpoint and got the photo. (If you check our film closely, you'll see BB talking to a farmer about the current market value of alfalfa.) Now we're cruising, got the leading edge of the thunderstorm, and lightning kicking us in the tail. Things are looking real good for a straight shot back to Air Sailing and a high speed for the day. Wait a second, who ordered the thunderstorm over Virginia City? What do you mean we have to go around? Okay, I get it, metal sailplanes and lightning don't go well together. I've got all day, go ahead, turn left, Carson City has always been a favourite town of mine.

On final approach, Norma, at the start/finish gate, wants 7A to land long. "Roger, 7A landing long." No spoilers, very gusty winds and... "Say, Bob, if you raise the right wing we may clear the, WOW, Bob nice ground loop, lots of dust; aren't we getting a little dramatic here?" S2 was right behind us, so we flew beyond the paved runway allowing him ample landing space. Landing long put us in the dirt with occasional clumps of sagebrush passing under our wingtip. We picked out an ugly sagebrush and proceeded to remove it gracefully with the right wingtip. That's our gardening tip of the day!

Day 3 overall standings: 1 - NF, 2 - 7A, 3 G5, 4 EP
5 thru 22 - Everyone else.

Day 4 My day to pilot the motorhome again. Another friend of Bob's has arrived shortly before grid time. Today's task is 190 miles. Easy day for me. 7A is back in a hurry and "What do you mean you flew 200 miles and you got a flat tire? Sure, Bob I'd love to learn how to remove the tire and wheel on this baby, but couldn't we call the AAA or somebody?" Glad I brought two tool boxes with me. It helps to have the right tools at the right time.

Day 4 overall standings: 1 - 7A, 2 - NF, 3 - EP, 4 - 00
5 thru 22 - Everyone else.

Now the questions were starting to pop up. "How did you guys get into first place?" "Dennis, what is it like flying with Klem?" "Where does he go?" Being a faithful crew member, I answered all their questions with great glittering generalities. One gentleman was so astonished that we (Bob) were doing so well that he asked Norma about Bob's techniques of soaring. Her answer was, "If Bob

could get a boxcar in the air he could make it fly." Great answer, but I'm not crewing that one!

Day 5 Boy, do we have this contest in the bag or what?
A 180 miles task is called by JJ. No problem, we will just continue with our "10 knots and go" theory.

We got off tow at 6300 feet, couldn't find any lift, and had to come in for a relight. This is going to be a long day. We got off tow for the second time. We need to gain some serious altitude here so we can head to Coleville or utilize Plan B, Susanville. Things are looking bad and we are down to 700 feet agl when we finally find some decent lift at the bottom of the Dogskins. We worked our way up high enough to get a good start through the gate. We planned to go south, but detoured to the northwest of Stead. Plan B, here we go. Just because everyone else is going south doesn't mean we have to. 14,000 feet and cruising to Susanville. No problem, now we are on a roll. We'll be back in a flash. Turned Susanville and Bob says, "Let's go back on the east side of Honey Lake. There is always lift in those hills." Sounds good to me and you aren't in first place for nothing, Bob. I turned 7A and headed to "them thar hills", you know, the ones with the beautiful clouds over them that were gone when you got there. "Say, Bob, think we better land at that big long paved runway out there in the middle of nowhere?" "Military strip, they will impound our glider if we land there," answered Bob. Okay, that's cool, any old farmer's field will do! Now we are down to about 1000 agl; the Army Ordinance Base is detonating large bombs about a mile away. I'm getting a little nervous here. I can feel the percussion from the bombs and I see big balls of fire and towering columns of smoke. Did I really volunteer for this?

400 feet and we have had a field picked out for quite a while now. I advised Bob of the powerline location and suggested a downwind landing to avoid the powerline scenario. Like I need to tell him how to land off-field! 300 feet, 250 feet, 200 feet, turning final approach, 2 knot lift. We're going for it. "What are you doing?" I ask. "We are getting out of here!" Sounds good to me. I prefer to fly home rather than spend the night in some farmer's field. Besides, it took me a whole roll of tape and several hours of taping to put this glider together in the first place. 1000 feet agl, 2000 feet, 3000 feet, and now we can make Herlong and get an aerotow back to Air Sailing.

Good looking strip at Herlong — after 5 1/2 hours in the air, any strip looks good. We are going for the downwind leg when wham, bang, boom, 8 knots up. We're going home. 11,500 feet is all we need to get back and that's all we got. Forty miles to home and we arrived at 11,300 feet minus one turnpoint and the lead. Well, at least I found out where all the lift was Star Peak to Air Sailing.

Day 5 overall standings:

- 1 thru 8 - Everyone that went south
- 9 - 7A Susanville Express with layover at Honey Lake
- 10 thru 22 - Everyone else that went south

Now you can understand how easy it is to drop from first place overall to ninth in just one flight. That day was a fight for survival, a "never say die" type of day. Bob's soaring abilities were absolutely phenomenal. I thought we were going to land out at least three times. Each time he pulled us off the deck and worked up to a respectable altitude. The decision to head north was good. The decision to fly east of Honey Lake is one that pilots have made or will make at some point. The clouds were popping. They looked good and the course was shorter, but the lift was elusive, weak, and at times almost non-existent. This was the only day that we worked a 2 knot lift. We spent 6 hours, 10 minutes in the air and officially flew 124 miles.

The best statement made that day came from Pat Sinclair. "Would you and Bob like to come over for dinner? We're having chicken enchiladas, salad and some white wine." "Hey, Bob, cancel my ham sandwich and Oreos!" Thank you, Pat, ya done good!

Day 6 Okay, so we had a bad day yesterday and we dropped from first to ninth. Now, if everybody ahead of us lands out today, we could win. The competitiveness is still there and we are going for broke today. The task is 160 miles.

Having gone through the gate for a second time, we now head south with G5. We split up around Nevada Flyers and go off on our own. We pick up some good lift around I-80 and cruise to Silver Springs; worked back up to 12,000 and took the Pinenuts toward Coleville. I took the controls and hit a 10 knot, non-colour coded thermal and picked up some insurance altitude. We lost most of the altitude on the run to Topaz Lake. "Okay, Bob, this is how the game is played; I lose the altitude and you get to try and gain it all back. If you win, I'll take you to the BBQ tonight. If you lose, we eat at the Casino at Topaz Lake on your credit card." We shot into Coleville and got our turnpoint. Later, we called our ground crew and advised that we were very low at Rabbit Dry Lake. Next I heard someone say, "12,000 at Rabbit Dry Lake". I looked up and there were four sailplanes way up above us. Alright, where's the thermal. Wham, bang, boom and 10 knots and we're going to 13,000 feet. Bob heads for Air Sailing. I took over the controls again 10 miles north of the Dayton Valley. I'm taking this puppy home and we are going to hit the gate below 1000 agl this time. Bob calls out the altitude that I need to be at when passing over certain points. 7000 feet agl and 100 knots at Air Sailing, 3, 2, 1, mark, good finish 7A. It was a great finish, third fastest time of the day.

We did not finish in the top five for the contest and I congratulate those that did. In fact, I don't know where we placed. I do know it wasn't too far down the line from fifth.

As I look back on that special week, I see every minute as a high point. I shall always have fond memories of every flight, but most of all, I enjoyed the hour Bob and I spent every night staring at the stars and talking about soaring, knowing that my companion is a legend. ❖

Club news and gossip

ESC hangar flying

- Bad mistakes are sometimes rewarded, as ESC will be able to replace our destroyed Blanik XVb with a new Puchacz. Three cheers for bad mistake insurance. The new ship is expected to be delivered in March. If it's successful as a trainer, a long term possibility is to sell the 2-33 and get a second Puchacz.
- ESC brand-newly purchased Super Cub is for sale! Is another Pawnee in the works? Ask Marty Slater. He chairs the new towplane acquisition committee.
- When last reported, the club was in very good financial slope (as of fall '91). How did that happen? Some would attribute it to our past President Dave Puckrin and his hard headed management. Andrew Jackson is our new president for 1992, and Dave Lacy is now organizing special events.
- Some of our financial success has to be as a result of the very successful two week summer training camps for the past three years. Approximately 20-25% of our flying (and revenue) is generated during that time. Could be a good thought for other clubs if you have the resource to manage it.
- PS. We have gained some excellent long term new members through the two week summer program. People trained this way seem to stay.
- ESC is trying to reduce training costs by introducing winching to our operation. Bugs need to be worked out yet (the present cable is too heavy for example), but progress continues.

Garnet Thomas

Cold Lake perseveres

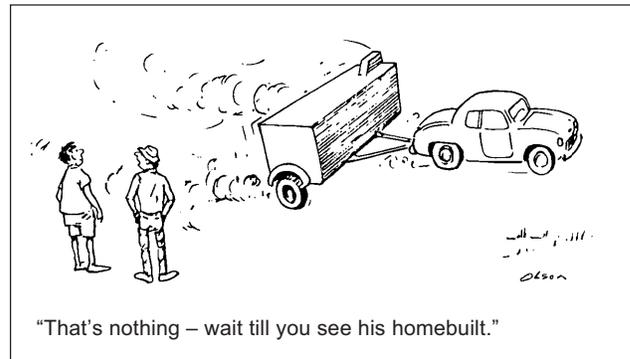
Although several individual members from Cold Lake have established personal records this year, the big story in my eyes is the many hours of work donated by our members.

As occasionally happens in clubs with a high military membership, nearly 50% of the members were transferred to other parts of the country since 1990. The result was an increased workload for the group of volunteers who already did most of the work. This dedicated and determined group did their best to compensate for the resulting strain on the communication network of the club and ensured that the club flew over 700 flights so far this year. It was also pleasant to see several new faces eager to help in the operation of the club.

Encouraged by a successful precedent of increasing membership through publicity and public relations, I am confident that membership can be returned to the 40 person level in 1992.

The purpose of the Cold Lake Soaring Club is to provide low cost glider flying and training to the community. We are an autonomous, self-sufficient soaring club operating from the airfield of Canadian Forces Base Cold Lake. Membership is open to both military and non-military personnel; club aircraft consist of a 1-26, a Bergfalke, a Lark and a Bellanca Scout. In keeping with the goal of keeping costs low (if not the lowest) we have made certain sacrifices: we have no centralized storage location, no hangar, no clubhouse, and the closest heated washrooms are nearly one kilometre away. The Cold Lake Soaring Club is purely about flying. All are welcome to come fly with us next time you are in the area.

Marek Wakulczyk, president



Cu Nim notes

Cu Nim celebrated its 40th anniversary on November 2 with a party at the RCAF Association in Calgary. Many of the early members of Cu Nim attended, some of whom hadn't seen each other for a time, so you can imagine the war stories and lies that were being told. Al Foster, a charter member, was present.

With 60 members, Cu Nim had an increase in flights from last year, from 1578 to 1695, mainly due to more private ship flights. The recent maximum was 2469 flights from 97 members in 1986—50% higher! Even though the club ships had slightly fewer flights, the average flight time was up. This may have been an indication of slightly better soaring conditions, or only reflect members being a little more selective in their launch time in order to make the most of a \$16 tow ticket.

The overall average was 28 per member, the highest since before 1984, but there is a very uneven distribution of flights per member, with a minority of the pilots doing the majority of the flying. Flight frequency peaked at 11 to 15 flights, with almost a quarter of the members in this range.

Work is well underway for the SAC AGM which is being hosted by Cu Nim. George Dunbar, as SAC Director-at-Large, and a few volunteers have the events blocked out. The AGM will be at the Palliser Hotel in conjunction with other aerospots through the Aero Club of Canada. Details will be mailed to clubs and appear in the next *free flight*. ❖

ASC News & Executive Meeting

Capital equipment There was considerable discussion on re-evaluating the use of the ASC sailplane and its present condition. Jerry Vesely will inspect it, especially the condition of the gelcoat and its possible life, ADs, and other necessary maintenance prior to the next season. The depreciation value of 15% was felt to be high and will be re-evaluated. John Broomhall is to draft a new sailplane use proposal which reflects current use and needs.

Aviation vs medical oxygen use Pilots should be aware that only aviators breathing oxygen should be used for high altitude flight. There was an incident of an aircraft having medical ("wet") oxygen on board at the Fall camp which could potentially cause the regulator to freeze up.

Tow heights Some grumbling has been heard over the years by pilots as the ASC ticket accommodates only increments of 2000 foot tow heights. The problem is particularly evident at the mountain soaring camp where a 3000 foot tow is the "standard". The Vancouver Soaring Association uses a sticker system for 1000 foot increments to a basic tow. ASC will inquire on the details of this sticker system with a view to using it at our events if it is feasible.

ASCent production for 1992 Dave Puckrin will charge ASC a fixed (and below cost) rate per issue for printing regardless of normal magazine size (16-28 pages). Present postage is about \$250 an issue. To cut these costs we will eliminate many past complimentary mailings and make bulk mailings to GPSS, CLSC and Red Deer. There will be three issues per year. Tony offered to take over as editor, mainly because he is in constant contact with clubs and has spent a lot of time on the layout anyway.

ASC PR brochure A planned ASC "What is Soaring" hand-out brochure for 1991 got strangled in a tangle of red tape in an effort to get a Tourism grant of \$800. It would cost about \$1600 for print of 5000. To save money, Tony offered to redesign the brochure so that it could be customized for individual clubs, then master copies can be sent to each club for local reproduction.

Grande Prairie Soaring Society The main problem in 1991 was student training. GPSS was encouraged to offer their students participation in the two week concentrated student training course offered at ESC in 1992, especially with winch training possible now. GPSS may then be able to continue the training of the joy of soaring for these members, and still have some fun flying themselves.

Central Alberta Gliding Club The club is flying their refurbished 2-22 and is active with the cadets. We hope that the ASC provincial contest to be held at Innisfail in 1992 will spark interest in soaring proper and that club members will migrate to other clubs and ASC events to learn more about the sport.

Blue Thermal Soaring Association The club is dormant now for lack of a class II instructor, and is no longer able to offer student training as the Blanik is being sold and Mike Kiss' Scheibe motorglider was purchased for private use. ASC will keep the remaining Blue Thermal pilots on the books for purposes of communication and in the hope that the club may redevelop in the future.

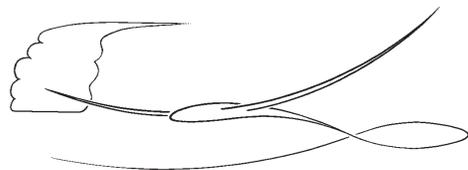
Cowley telephone Inquiry on high AGT telephone line charges revealed that ASC has to pay the business rate (about \$250/year) plus \$30 for holiday reconnect. It is now cheaper to disconnect the phone completely in the off-season and get a new line each summer for the two camps. There is a chance the phone number may change every year however. It was decided to disconnect the phone in the off-season. We will inquire whether a specific number can be requested on reinstallation (like 628-SOAR).

Why an event registration fee?

Some pilots have asked why ASC is levying a \$5 registration fee to participate at all events now. The reason is to garner additional income to offset the increasing fixed costs of events which had been absorbed by ASC general revenues in the past. There are many fixed costs associated with holding the major events such as Cowley, Invermere, and cross-country clinics. The Cowley camps alone incur over a \$1000 in incidental expenses. Some major costs are ferrying towplanes, the Cowley phone (on a per call basis it must be the most expensive telephone in the province — over \$200 a year for the line rental and it cost \$560 when it was converted from a party line!), "free" barbeques, etc. Even though Recreation & Parks and Sport Council grants support many of our activities, ongoing and increasing fixed costs for events were slowly nibbling into our ability to maintain the equity of the Council. It's appropriate and reasonable that participants begin directly supporting fixed event costs. Five dollars is a nominal amount to the individual but significantly assists ASC income.

1992 MAJOR EVENTS

ASC awards luncheon & AGM <i>see opposite page for details</i>	Nisku Inn	1 Feb
SAC AGM	Calgary	28 Feb - 1 Mar
Provincial soaring contest	Innisfail	16-18 May
Beginner's X-C Clinic	Chipman	19-24 May
Mountain soaring camp	Invermere	27 Jun - 5 Jul
National soaring contest	Hawkesbury, ON	?
US Sports class nationals <i>contact: Mike Delaney (206) 743-4020</i>	Ephrata, WA	28 Jun - 9 Jul
Summer camp	Cowley	25 Jul - 3 Aug
Wave camp	Cowley	3-12 Oct



Awards Luncheon & Annual General Meeting

1 February 1992

at the



(east off Edmonton Intern'l airport exit)

*Everyone welcome – come and spend
the day with friends from other clubs*

Planning meeting 1000
• Tying up the loose ends for 1992 activities

Awards luncheon 1200
• Luncheon ticket about \$8
- bring along your spouse
• Presentation of provincial honours

AGM 1330
• Minutes of the 1991 AGM
• Financial report
• Executive reports
• Committee reports
• Budget presentation
• New business
• Election of officers

First Solo, Licence, and FAI badges earned by Alberta pilots in 1991

FIRST SOLO

Susan Bucher	Cu Nim
Owen Cormich	ESC
Scott Prior	ESC
Harold Porter	EAC
Matthew Spratlin	ESC
Harold Weidemann	ESC
Chris Yager	Cold Lake

LICENCE

Michael Mullane	ESC
Daryl Neis	ESC
Peter Wlldgrube	ESC
Mike Crowe	Cu Nim
Gerald Ince	Cu Nim
Dave Morgan	Cu Nim
Darwin Roberts	Cu Nim

C BADGE

2255	Deirdre Duffy	ESC	1:34 h	Chipman
(1990; overlooked in ASCent 1/91)				
2280	Kurt Edwards	Cu Nim	1:41 h	Black Diamond
2285	Jay Poscente	Cu Nim	5:24 h	Invermere
2297	Gerald Ince	Cu Nim	1:02 h	Black Diamond
2304	Allan Wan	ESC	1:15 h	Chipman

SILVER BADGE

817	Jay Poscente	Cu Nim
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GOLD BADGE

256	Jay Poscente	Cu Nim	
?	Rod Crutcher	Cu Nim	(badge no. pending)

SILVER DURATION

Deirdre Dufly	ESC	5:29 h	Chipman
Jay Poscente	Cu Nim	5:24 h	Invermere
Sylvain Larue	CLSC	7:55 h	Cowley
Dave Wallace	ESC	5:57 h	Cowley

SILVER DISTANCE

Jay Poscente	Cu Nim	115.5 km	Invermere
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SILVER ALTITUDE

Jay Poscente	Cu Nim	2670 m	Invermere
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GOLD DISTANCE

Jay Poscente	Cu Nim	303 km	Invermere
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GOLD ALTITUDE

Jay Poscente	Cu Nim	6210 m	Cowley
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DIAMOND ALTITUDE

Jay Poscente	Cu Nim	6210 m	Cowley
Rod Crutcher	Cu Nim	5410 m	Cowley
Deirdre Duffy	ESC	6275 m	Cowley

Heartiest congratulations to everyone on this list for their soaring accomplishments in 1991. Commiseration to Bingo Larue who can't claim his Silver distance at the Summer Camp because some cretin cut his negative strip! Additional plaudits to Jay Poscente of Cu Nim who has roared onto the cross-country scene and is personally responsible for several centimetres of the above record. We are now looking for all the newly licenced pilots to start appearing a little further down the list in 1992.

Tony Burton

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