

AScent

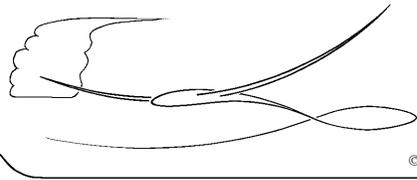
the journal of the Alberta Soaring Council



Summer 1993

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In this issue

- 3 from our president
- 4 the “boutique” provincials – Tony Burton
- 6 “real” landouts – Nick Pfeiffer
- 8 a very fine weekend – Tony Burton
- 10 contemplating competing – Jay Poscente
- 11 the Cowley gathering of '93 – “Nimbus”
- 12 great moments in soaring history – “Papa Mike”
- 14 mountain outlanding – George Szukala
- 18 odds & ends – Tony Burton
- 19 club news & gossip

editing and layout Tony Burton
typing and proofing Ursula Wiese
printing Dave Puckrin



Cover Strong wind and broken lift has shot down EE just north of Diefenbaker Lake, SK at the 1993 Nationals. Photo Tony Burton

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Editorial notes

Here's our summer issue, and a quite fine one it is too. Despite the soggy flying season, some interesting aviation occurred, and the accounts in this *ASCent* make great reading.

Three of the articles feature off-field landings: one, personal anecdotes on doing it for the first time on an actual farmer's field in which much was learned; one as a matter of course at the Innisfail provincials; and one is a hair-raising, I-promise-I'll-never-do-it-again outlanding on the “wrong” side of the Livingstones. My thanks to George for describing the event. A wayward thought struck me the other night, George; why would Cold Lake let two pilots called ‘Moose’ and ‘Bull’ fly together in the same glider anyway?

Keep flying as much as you can, you can only get better as a result — take it from me, good things happen when you set yourself goals which may appear to be outlandish at first blush. *(Tony, please don't say 'outlandish' to glider pilots, OK?)*



from the president . . .

This time of year I like to sit back and reflect how this season went for me. What things did I do to expand my flying skills? What things did I do that were examples of poor airmanship? What things should I be doing or practising?

Fundamentally it is just a process of looking back on some of the goals I set for myself and judging how I made out, and then setting some new ones for next year.

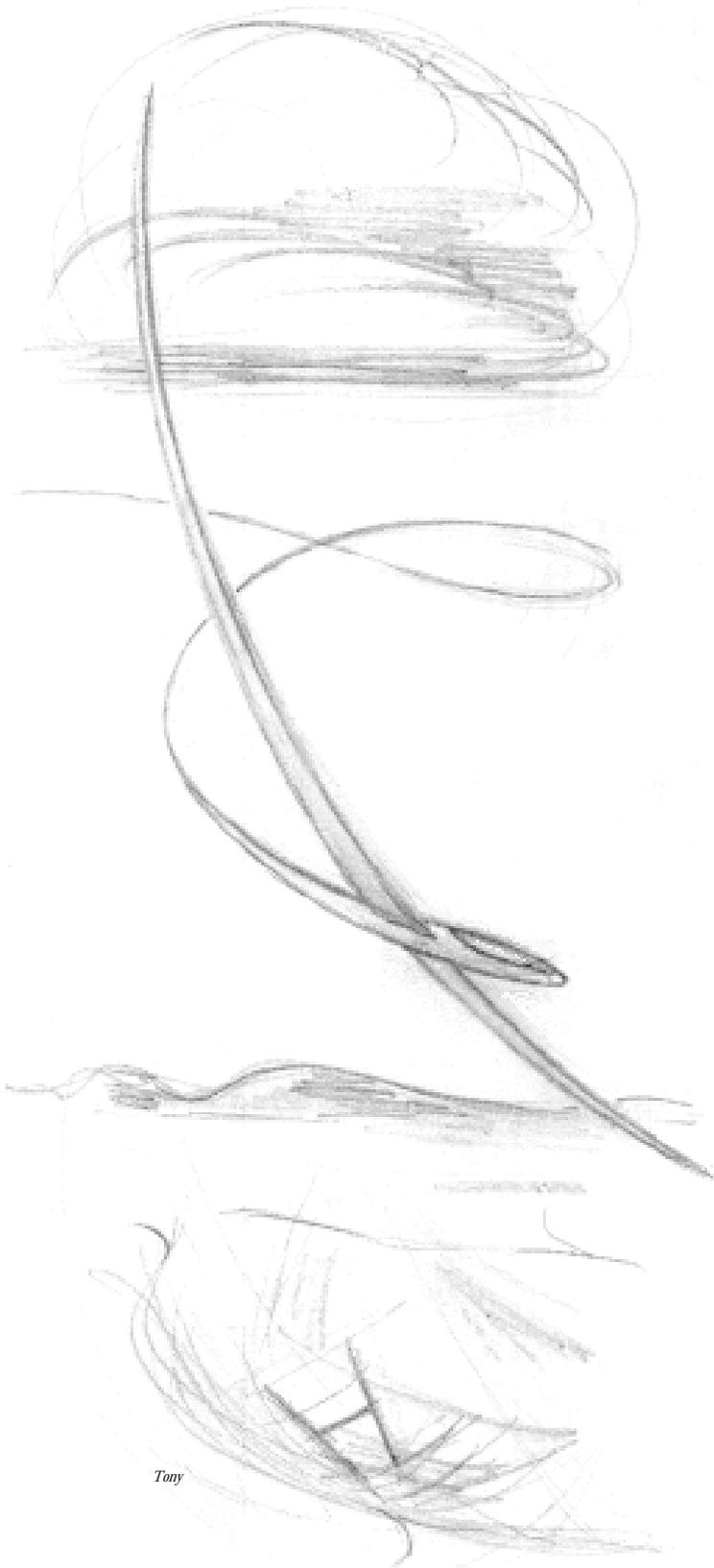
And this process doesn't just have to apply to your flying. What about your participation at the flying field — in social activities — in pro-motional activities for your club — in duties that you volunteered for? What about next year?

For me, this year has to rate as frustrating with some bright spots along the way. Frustrating because of the generally poor weather and frustrating because I vowed to spend less time in the towplane and more in gliders, but didn't. On the bright side enjoyable when I arrived at the Nationals and all the people at the airport, Flight Service Station, and others really pitched in to make the contest a success. Enjoyable assisting on retrieves and watching the expressions of the farm people when you take the glider apart. Enjoyable when you are able to tow someone back to the strong thermal and arrive at precisely the release height. Enjoyable sitting around the supper table after a retrieve hearing stories about how everyone's flight did or did not go.

But most enjoyable — just simply the memories and the people.

See you next year!

Marty.



Tony

THE “BOUTIQUE” PROVINCIALS

Tony Burton
Cu Nim Gliding Club

THE ALBERTA provincial contest was held over the Victoria Day weekend at Innisfail. It's a very tricky time to plan a contest; as many pilots know who have attended in the past, it can be 25°C or it can be snowing. Why “boutique”? Well, it was classy and small, that's why.

The forecast and a near failure of will almost made it a no-contest, but will and weather strengthened at the last instant and a good contest was had. It was unfortunate that only seven competitors flew this year. I think part of the reason so few showed up was that the forecast for Saturday was rain, with “unsettled” for the remainder of the weekend. When Ursula and I drove up from Claresholm on Friday afternoon with the contest equipment the weather was quite unstable and the car got a good wash traversing Calgary. On arriving at Innisfail, it was evident that a lot of rain had fallen there too during the afternoon.

On Saturday morning, Contest Director Al Sunley went over contest procedures and the new rules. Of special interest was the minimum flight time clause, written especially to block the infamous “Bennett/Coates Maneuver”, the short warp speed contest flight first performed by Kevin at the 1990 Provincials in Black Diamond, and perfected by Lee Coates in 1992 at Innisfail with his 28.9 kilometre, 148.2 km/h flight to Dixon Dam and back. (The maneuver subsequently received national notoriety when Fred Hunkeler demonstrated it at the Hawkesbury Nationals later that season.)

It was a no contest day with a pretty solid overcast. The only good thing was that it didn't rain around the field which helped to dry things out a little. It poured all day in Calgary, so I suppose a few Cu Nim pilots who otherwise would have come felt justified sitting at home watching the Indy time trials on TV.

Sunday morning saw a lot of altostratus and then early cu which tended to spread out, so it looked like

it was going to be another dud. The forecast called for a moist airmass and a 3000 cloudbase. The pilot's meeting was postponed 90 minutes to 11:30 to see if anything might develop, and just prior to that a flight in the towplane reported some bumps with bases at 2900 agl. It didn't look promising, and if this day was cancelled we would all go home since two days were needed for an official contest. Just before the meeting one of the pilots did pack up and head out — to earn a few brownie points with the family, he said.

The pilot's meeting opened with a lot of bad-mouthing of the day's lack of potential, so shall we pack it up? It looked like we might until a couple of keeners, Rod Crutcher and Jay Poscente, said no — we're all rigged and ready to fly so let's get out there and have a launch, at least a little local soaring might be possible. That put everyone in a more positive frame of mind, and we gridded for a 1300 takeoff and a 2.5 hour task. Amazingly, in the hour it took to get ready, the altostratus cleared off, the sun came out, and honest-to-God soarable looking cu started popping! By the time the sniffer reported useable lift, the task was backed off to 2 hours and we had a contest going. You gotta have faith!

I was supposed to be the first off, but discovered that my tow release was jammed when I tried to hook up to pull down to the grid. It was a fight to get the assembly disassembled and then put back together again, especially since when I first did it in 1975 it was on a workbench and then got epoxied into the nose. Now I needed three thin arms and eyes on stalks. With all the bits that needed to be lined up before the big bolt would slide in, either it would go right away or take all day. Luckily it went right away — sort of — but I was the last one to launch.

We all had good flights and got home. Paul Scott and Struan Vaughan both lost their cross-country virginity, and everyone congratulated them. I found decent soaring conditions to the southeast and completed 195 kilometres with turns at Olds, Three Hills, and

1993 Provincials Innisfail, Alberta				DAY 1				DAY 2				total score	notes
				day pos	km	km /h	pts	day pos	km	km/h	pts		
1	Tony Burton	RS-15	EE	1	153.2	76.6	800	1	209.8	83.9	1000	1800	
2	Buzz Burwash	ASW-20FP	AB	3	150.0	75.0	701	2	211.3	84.5	902	1603	
3	Rod Crutcher	Ventus	26	4	126.8	63.4	560	3	202.5	81.0	846	1406	a
4	Dick Mamini	ASW-12	RM	5	116.3	58.1	520	4	201.0	80.4	821	1341	b
5	Paul Scott	Pilatus	TA	6	77.9	38.9	507	5	105.3	42.1	626	1133	
6	Jay Poscente	Mini Nimbus	54	2	150.1	75.0	739	7	152.5	0.0	343	1082	
7	Struan Vaughan	Std Cirrus	4E	7	79.4	39.7	403	6	134.3	53.7	622	1025	

a 20 point penalty on Day 1
b low achieved speed on Day 1 due to flying for less than the daily minimum time specified.

Notes on the scoring system:

- Distance for scoring is the pilot's achieved speed times the minimum specified task time for flights having durations equal or greater than the minimum time, or the actual distance if the flight duration was less than the minimum task time.
- Speed for scoring is the achieved speed for flights having durations equal or greater than the minimum task time specified, or is the achieved distance divided by the minimum task time for flights whose durations are less than the minimum specified task time. (As there are twice as many speed points as distance points in the scoring, it is clearly inadvisable to fly less than the minimum time specified for the day!)
- Only the daily points have the sailplane handicap applied to them.

Didsbury, and finished shortly before showers moved over the field from the northwest. I was about twenty minutes overtime which reduced my scoring distance to 153. I think my rivals flew in areas which had been a little wetter and they didn't do quite so well. The two hour call was perfect and the whole day got used. It rained lightly all evening.

Victoria Day again turned out much better than the forecast. We gridded at 1100 and cu was developing everywhere but over the airport due to yesterday's rain. The three hour task was cut a half hour after we had been waiting on the line an hour, then Dick Mamini finally launched into the blue to see if there was any lift. There was and we went. It was scratchy over the field and I took two starts to get it right. The cloud development looked excellent to the east so that was the way I headed. With the northwest wind I could get to a downwind turnpoint easily and then hoped for good conditions later for the upwind leg.

It was great, the cloudbase went to almost 10,000 and the lift was 5-8 knots. I soon met Rod in the Ventus and we shared a lovely run to Stettler, 94 kilometres out. By now, the clouds were forming into short streets aligned northwest-southeast so I headed

westwards in the general direction of Red Deer to use any turnpoint that presented itself. It was possible to dolphin soar at about 75 knots average using two or three cumulus, hop westward to the next street, push northwest, etc. and I made very good progress into wind without losing a lot of altitude.

I was going to use Blackfalds just north of Red Deer as the next turnpoint but when I approached the area, it was between streets, but a lovely lineup headed right towards the Lacombe airport turnpoint instead, another 10 kilometres north. I got a good climb there to just over 10,000 then it was an 80 knot final glide the 49 kilometres southwest back home, and I arrived about five minutes late.

This was one of those satisfying flights where everything works right, and I can recall only a few turns that were better left undone. Buzz Burwash had an excellent flight also, going a little further and little faster than me, but I got him on the handicap and won the day again.

So to everyone who backed off coming to Innisfail and regret missing an enjoyable contest, don't believe a poor forecast next year. ❖

“Real” landouts

On visiting farmers for the first time.

Nick Pfeiffer

from *Vancouver Soaring Scene*

ON SATURDAY, MAY 22, 1993, after 14 years and 500 hours of soaring experience, I landed my Standard Cirrus sailplane in a farmer's field for the first time. The following day, I did so again. What surprised me was not the fact that I had to land off-field (I have a reputation for flying low), but the many differences between this kind of landing and a landing at another airport. What follows is, I hope, both entertaining and educational.

To start with, I will give you a little bit of background about me and my glider. I started seriously soaring when I joined the VSA in 1990. Since then, I have bought a Standard Cirrus sailplane and have started flying cross-country. This ship is kept at Ephrata airport in central Washington and is the area over which most of my cross-country flying has been done. I have flown approximately 7000 km cross-country over the past three seasons and have about 200 hours on type. I have landed off-field four times prior to the first farm field landout, always landing at airports (or at least a farmer's airstrip). Time on glider type this season was about 25 hours prior to May 22.

Since completing my 300 km Gold distance two seasons ago, I have been trying to fly a 500 km Diamond distance flight. While I have spent a great many hours flight planning a number of different routes, I always end up flying the same one: Ephrata – Davenport – Rocky Reach dam – Harrington – Ephrata. I tried once last season, but had to give up the task due to thundershowers. This season, my goal was to fly that 500 kilometre route.

Christine Gaunt (my excellent ground crew) and I arrived in Ephrata early on the Saturday and rigged the ship — Sierra Victor. The day looked promising, and I quickly wrote out a declaration for the 500 kilometre task. After coercing Norm Ellison into acting as Official Observer and taking the obligatory picture of the declaration (through the canopy with a grease mark per the new FAI Sporting Code), I was ready to go.

I was lucky and got an early tow. After struggling for quite a while, I was finally able to get away on course towards Davenport. Due to the 15 knot tailwind, I made excellent time to the turnpoint. However, heading directly into wind for the second turnpoint slowed me down incredibly. It was at this point that things started to go wrong. My cruising band dropped from 6–7000 feet asl to 4–6000 feet. This meant at least one low save from 3400 feet (1400 feet agl). But you know, once you start flying low and getting saved, you start to think that you can always do it. That was mistake number one. The next obvious (in hindsight) mistake was keeping my water ballast too long when I had such difficulty climbing. I kept it until 3000 feet when it was obvious that I was in trouble.

Now when I started flying cross-country, my aim was to stay high and not land out. Failing that, it was to land out at an airport (aero-retrieves being quicker than auto retrieves). This worked well for two seasons. However, at some point recently, my confidence level exceeded my skill level and I found myself flying much lower. I directly blame one club member for his advice: “If you land out, it should be on course. Don't deviate to stay near airports or you will never go anywhere.” Thanks, Rudy.

Anyway, I was getting low between Davenport and Rocky Reach Dam. Ephrata airport was about seven miles away but off to the left of my course. Following Rudy's good advice, I bypassed Ephrata and aimed for some cu about five miles away, to the north of Soap Lake. Getting there, I found no lift and started edging towards Ephrata. Soon it was obvious that with the headwind I was not going to make the airport, and I began looking for a dirt field.

Fortunately, about every third field in the Columbia Basin is fallow. The phrase, “land in dirt, you won't get hurt”, is very good advice in this area as most of the green fields with crops have irrigation pipes running through them. Landing in a ploughed, dirt field also has the advantage of softening the landing and slowing you down quickly.

I continued flying field-to-field towards Ephrata until I was so low that I thought that I should do something. At this point, I discovered a number of interesting things: four hundred feet does not leave you an adequate amount of time for a full circuit or for a proper SWAFTS check, power lines on the approach necessitate a very steep final, and starting your circuit from directly above your landing site makes it difficult to see. Fortunately, I had already dumped my water ballast and did remember to lower the gear. A vicious side slip with full spoiler got me over the power lines and then I was skimming a few feet above the field ready to land. At the last second, I decided that it would be better for the retrieve if I extended my glide to the far end of the field. I was quite surprised when, seconds later, a thirty foot gully at the far end became visible. Full spoiler ensured a sudden arrival with the ground and I came to a very abrupt stop just short of the gully.

The only way that I can describe the actual touchdown and post landing run is to say that it was like surfing. First, the main gear contacts the ground and gets grabbed by the dirt. Then, the nose pitches down and the glider rides on the nose in a cloud of dust. Finally, the ship comes to an abrupt stop and the tail hits the ground. It all happened so suddenly that I found myself starting to apply the brake after the glider had already stopped moving.

Once down, the fun begins. Everybody in the air at the time loves to come over and broadcast the fact that a glider had landed just seven miles from the airport. I heard "Sierra Victor is down in a dirt field near Soap Lake" from many a circling glider, safe at 5000 feet.

I was lucky with this off-field landing, as the farmer was very friendly and the retrieve quite painless (my crew said that she enjoyed it — honest). Christine and I were able to push the glider right to the edge of the field, where we derigged on a gravel road next to the trailer. The drive back to the airport was short, and I was able to arrive back with plenty of time to analyze just what I had done.

First, I had selected a good field (but with a bad approach). I had noted the telephone poles from the air (you can't see the actual power lines), but had not considered the ramifications. I had noticed a slight dip at the far end that turned out to be a thirty foot gully (it is very difficult to see contours from the air). I had released my water ballast late, but before I considered landing. Had I kept it until I started to land, I would have been in real trouble, as it takes about three minutes to properly empty. I did put down my landing gear (sometime in the descending turn to final), but I did not perform a SWAFTS check. Had my spoilers not worked I wouldn't have been able to make the steep final approach that was required. I changed my plan at the last minute and tried to extend my glide for convenience of the retrieve. From the ground I couldn't see the gully until I was almost at the edge of it.

The first consideration in my next landout would not be the ease of the retrieve, but the safety of the pilot and glider. I decided that my next landout would be a more properly thought out affair.

As luck would have it, I was able to try again the very next day. Sunday turned out to be a much better soaring day than Saturday, and after washing the ship, I once again prepared to fly a 500 kilometre task. It was no trouble finding an OO this time, as Harry Peters knew that it was unlikely that he would ever have to complete any actual paperwork. He was right.

Launching late and after flying two complete legs of the task (in what must be a record for the slowest speed ever), I found myself back near Ephrata heading towards Harrington. It was 5 pm. I thought about cancelling the task and landing at Ephrata, but Rudy's advice and my crew's recent enthusiasm spurred me on. Again, in hindsight, trying to fly 200 kilometres starting at 5 pm is not a good idea, but I wanted to complete that task. Well, between the headwind and the waning lift I did just make Harrington, but was unable to complete the final leg back to Ephrata. I landed in a dirt field 7.5 miles east of Harrington.

This time, I had advance warning that I would be landing out (no cu, a setting sun, etc.) and I planned my approach a little more carefully. I picked a large, ploughed field with a farmhouse at the far end. With no obstacles on the approach, I was able to make a standard circuit with a nice shallow approach. Remembering the SWAFTS check this time I ensured that my landing gear was down and that my spoilers functioned. Later, I would regret not checking that the side window was shut and the air vent closed.

I tried to hold off on the landing until I was sure that I was near the end of the field, but from two feet above the ground it became very difficult to tell exactly when the field ended. Finally, when the farmhouse suddenly started becoming much bigger in the canopy, I touched down. Short. By 400 feet. In very soft dirt. After the now expected rapid deceleration and nose over, the ship came to a complete stop. Once I had stopped coughing from the sudden clouds of dust that filled the cockpit (did I mention that the side window and vent were fully open?) I released the straps and got out to check for damage.

What I found was that the dirt was so soft and fine that the landing gear and gear doors were not even visible. The dirtline came up four inches above the belly of the fuselage. Luckily, I had managed to miss hitting any large rocks, although the field had plenty of four inch diameter ones. While deciding just how many people it was going to take to haul Sierra Victor out of that field, I was met by the owner. As before, he was very friendly and soon had

A VERY FINE WEEKEND

Tony Burton
Cu Nim Gliding Club

THE WEEKEND OF 5-6 JUNE was a dandy. Thursday and Friday was sunny and clear with Friday showing the odd very high cu in the afternoon, so thermals were cooking up there. In what seems to be a rarer and rarer event, the public forecast continued fine right into the weekend, so Ursula and I headed off to the club early Saturday and arrived at 9:30 to find very little activity on a promising morning! Dick Mamini had his fuselage out, and I was mostly rigged by 10 when Jay Poscente raced in to get himself ready too.

We were already missing part of the day as the cu were building nicely over the mountains, which is a signpost of things to come on the flat, and very soon the first cumulus popped to the east. Dick was thinking of an FAI 500 kilometre triangle with Vauxhall and Hanna airport as turnpoints. At first I was going to try the same, but the weather looked like it was developing nicely to the south-east, so I told Ursula that I would try a 500 out and return to Milk River. While climbing in the first thermal after release, I realized that the task would not give me 500, I had been thinking of the Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park turnpoint east of Milk River. With some fast map reading, I reckoned that adding Milo as a second turnpoint would easily add the required extra 38 kilometres to make up the shortfall, and I radioed the new task down to Ursula before getting my start timed at 11:13.

I was slow the first hour, but the day developed beautifully with 10,000 foot cloudbases and no need to stop except to feed on 5-7 knot thermals. However, Dick and Jay somehow found a couple of big blue holes on their courseline which was more to the northeast than mine, and the radio conversations moaned about being low and what do you think we should do now, etc.

I was around the railroad bridge at Milk River just before 2 pm and had a no-sweat run up to Milo, arriving at 3:46. There I met Dick who was coming home from Brooks. There were great cu on track for the 94 kilometres back to Black Diamond and it was a hoot dolphining along with no cares — we only stopped to circle once in a thermal that was so good it would have been a sin to pass up.

I finished the flight in 5:12 hours at 1625, completing one of the fastest flights I have made in Echo Echo (well up into the 90s), and the sky still looked good two hours

later. However, after all the congratulations on the field, I did a careful measurement of the task length and found out I had only gone 493.3! There was lots of hilarity over that. For you youngsters out there, this is a perfect example of what happens if you are not properly ready in the morning and rush your flight preparations.

I was somewhat annoyed about my screw-up and planned a for-sure good one on Sunday as the forecast was holding. I had a few options depending on the weather and lots of time in the morning to get organized as EE was tied down and I stayed at the field. I considered a 605 kilometre Medicine Hat/Warner triangle — if the day died early on me on the way back I could cut short by landing at Claresholm and still have 520 made. Then Ursula remarked that if you are going to attempt that course and distance, why not try and break the Out and Return record (currently 615 kilometres). OK, but Maple Creek is 685, that's overkill on the required 625 kilometres and the extra 60 may be two or three thermals more than what may be available at the end of the day. However Walsh, the next town west, was too close, so I had to look at a different course direction. Because the Suffield airspace closes off any long flights passing north of Medicine Hat, straight east was the next option, and Leader, SK was in the right range at about 650 km. So if the first cu popped early enough, I was going for the Canadian O&R record set jointly by Mike Apps and Dave Marsden in 1983.

I was all dressed up and ready to fly at 10, cumulus were popping on the mountains again, then the first cu to the east (probably the Carseland plant house thermal), Maurie reported the air getting active on some Blanik tows, then the cu appeared overhead at 10:30. I launched at 10:43 west of the airfield and found 4 knots to 9000 feet and was off for Leader, 326 kilometres straight east. I didn't bother to do a timed start since I didn't want to waste the height of the good climb achieved so quickly.

I made it around of course (or I wouldn't be writing this), but it sure was in considerable doubt for a long time. The flight took 8 hours and 5 minutes. The outbound trip to Leader was into a decent quartering headwind from the southeast caused by a low south of the border, so the time was slow. I kept the cruise speed up to 75-80 knots as much as possible to make progress into the wind, and pushed straight upwind south of track whenever a few cumulus lined up to present a little dolphin flying. Cloud-



base was about 10,000 feet most of the day, and once I got to almost 11,000 south of Empress.

Boy, the country is desolate when you get east of Bassano! This was new territory for me, just featureless scrubland and a solitary east-west gravel road passing through the occasional mostly-abandoned hamlets south of the dinosaur bone country of the Red Deer River badlands.

Half way out, I could see the southern sky was becoming blocked by cirrus which was drifting north. Other pilots had declared 500s with turnpoints to the southeast of Cu Nim and they had to break off their flights. A couple of times I considered abandoning the task but I couldn't resist pushing ahead in the present good conditions; anyway, I was determined to get 500 after yesterday's embarrassment. Soon I was so far out I thought, "to hell with it, I'll keep going just to see how much I can get done."

The cirrus didn't reach my course line until after I turned Leader (the outbound trip took 4:44 hours for 69 km/h). It was literally a pretty dim view looking homewards. By now, the cumulus west of Empress had also overdeveloped and spread out somewhat, giving even more shade to the ground, so I was convinced that all I was going to accomplish was shorten up a long retrieve for Ursula.

However, there were some thin spots in the cirrus and the cumulus did retain some definition, and there were occasional smooth 2–3 knotters to be found under all the clag. Right over Dinosaur Provincial Park, a 5 knot thermal came up from the old bones! Although the lift was softer, so was the sink, and that helped. I stayed high (6-8000 feet agl), flew at 60 knots, and loved every minute the tail-wind was helping me home. Ursula and I had driven east along the road underneath a few years back, so she knew the country too and was happy to get relayed reports of my westerly progress.

I had good radio reception with gliders back in home territory, and I was quite surprised to be able to talk to Rod Crutcher in "26" when we were 300 kilometres apart. Eventually, only Terry Southwood was airborne near the field, and I asked him to stay up as long as possible to relay my progress to the ground. After he had to land, I was out of contact over uncivilized country for a short while until I got to about Duchess, east of Bassano.

Off at the limit of visibility I could see the McGregor reservoir glinting in the west so I knew there must be some sunshine to come. Finally at Bassano, the cirrus began clearing right along track and soon I had a field of beautiful cu to soar home on. A solid cirrus shadow and dead sky stopped north of Milo, just south of my track.

Although the prospect of getting back was bleak for a long time, the return trip turned out to be faster (at 97 km/h), higher, and easier than the flight out. However, if my whole flight had been much faster, I would have beaten the sunshine to the ground. I couldn't have been more fortunate if I had prayed all the gliding prayers uttered through decades past. Terry, Ursula, and Dick were the only persons left at the field at 7 pm to welcome me home and it was good to have had them as my cheering section.



Dick Memini

It will remain a memorable flight for me (later, Dick called me "the Energizer", because I kept going, and going, and going ...). Persistence paid off. ❖

Contemplating Competing

Another small step in Jay's progression towards soaring fame and fortune.

Jay Poscente
Cu Nim Gliding Club

IT WAS THE FINAL DAY of the 1993 Alberta Soaring Championships and there were classic cross-country cumulus as far as the eye could see. I was in second place in the standings behind Tony Burton and having a great day flying for all I was worth. On the final leg the sun, wind and cloudstreets enticed me into taking a chance that, if successful, would surely produce excellent results. Naturally, I soon found myself at 1000 feet over a highway, bumping microthermals for fifteen miles, busily planning landing patterns to each approaching field.

At long last, I came across a dark, freshly seeded sun-drenched field with a tree line on the downwind side promising to trigger my rescue thermal. A big cloudstreet stretching directly downwind of the field buoyed my hopes that this field was *really* working. The hitch was that at 1000 feet it was a gamble. Should I proceed downwind along the highway in hopes of continued zero sink, or risk a certain outlanding if this "perfect thermal generator" wasn't generating?

Just in case this "perfect" field wasn't working, I approached it with a landing pattern in mind. I set my base leg up to take me over the tree line thermal trigger. If there was no lift, I would land northward into the prevailing wind.

Surprise, surprise — no lift, no hope of getting away, and a surface wind that was blowing 90 degrees to the prevailing northerly winds. I was now low and lined up for a major crosswind outlanding on a field surrounded by trees! Fortunately, there was still enough altitude to cut across the

field diagonally and carefully executed a low, fast and coordinated turn onto a very short upwind final. Funny how a routine landing can turn distinctly UNroutine in a fraction of a second. Isn't soaring great!

In a cloud of dust, my contest was over. Two days of the best cross-country flying I had ever pulled off and here I was parked in a field looking up at a sky scattered with obvious lift ... OOPS!

If Mini-Nimbus '54' had a face, I'm sure it would have had a look of disgust on it.

Consistency earned Tony Burton and Buzz Burwash first and second, and Rod Crutcher's growing comfort in his new Ventus rewarded him with third. Struan Vaughan and Paul Scott flew their first cross-country flights ever, and they too had beaten me in the points. Way to go guys. Just remember, there is no luck like beginner's luck ... same place, same time next year.

PS. The Innisfail May Meet is a must-attend for *everyone* in 1994. There are cheap hotels as well as camping at the field and a Cowley-like atmosphere both before and after flying. It's the perfect opportunity to explore cross-country flying. Every-one is willing (and expecting) to help outlanders and everything you hear about improving your soaring skills at contests is true. Even if you prefer to stick close to the field and fun fly, it is a great facility and area for soaring. As for weather concerns, consider this: the flying at Innisfail was way better than at Cowley this year, and nobody used up a single day of holiday time! ❖

The Cowley Gathering of '93

by "Nimbus"

THE 21ST COWLEY SUMMER CAMP was a resounding splash. Never in the flying history of Cowley have so many been so wet for so little flying, only half the amount of a normal summer camp. Although we had such a wet start, the flying faithful persevered and were rewarded.

During the three day wait for sun and throughout the rest of the slightly soggy week, the magic which has always been Cowley was discovered and rediscovered by many. A trip to Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump reminded us that a "gathering of the clans" has occurred in this valley for eight millennia. The campsites for these gatherings were arranged with the elders in the centre and the young warriors on the periphery. To this day, nothing has changed. Pilots came from Ontario, Regina, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Cold Lake, Calgary, and Edmonton. These people know, as we do, that Cowley is a special place.

In the tradition of Cowley, this camp was a series of firsts and lasts for celebrating. On the "last" note, this was the last Cowley for the core Cold Lake group, as all members are being posted elsewhere in Canada. The success of the last several summer and fall camps can be directly attributed to their undamped enthusiasm and energy. As a final farewell gesture, the Cold Lake crew did a three towplane formation takeoff, beat-up, break and landing.

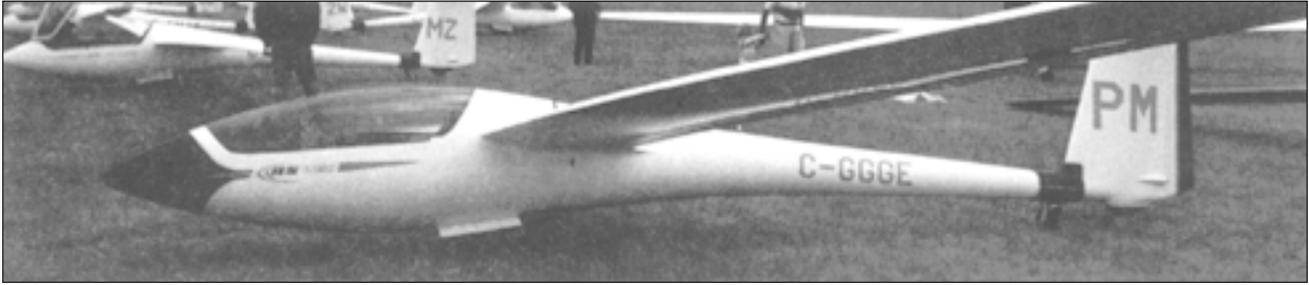
The firsts included introductions to wave, ridge, and mountain environment flying. The flying which took place was spectacular and varied, considering the climatic conditions. For two days the ridge was working and several new pilots were introduced to ridge running. There was wave for three days, yielding several flights over 20,000 feet and one declared Diamond

height. Although there were no solos, the students benefited from the immensely varying conditions.

The socializing was as popular as ever, and not dampened by the rain. The final Saturday night BBQ, organized by Sheila Hea and her gang of helpers was attended and enjoyed by all. Perversely, the BBQ was immediately followed by a watergun fight. Go figure. The camp was roused early (very early) the next morning by the now traditional 'coyote pilot' howls, announcing the impending pancake feast organized by the towing clan.

No Cowley would be complete, or successful, without the support of the unheralded heroes — the volunteers. The camp simply would not function without those who ferry equipment, prepare the field, run the line, tow and maintain the tow aircraft, liaise with the weather office and Transport Canada, clean out the loo's, and a hundred other jobs which are never acknowledged. One special function of late has been Michael Morgan's trumpet playing to announce the morning pilot's meeting. It's a special touch which is appreciated by many.

One incident in particular sums up the spirit of all Cowley camps. At five one morning a cold front blew through the camp. While over Centre Peak there was a spectacular double rainbow, at ground level the high winds threatened to destroy improperly secured aircraft. For the next two hours, an independent succession of concerned pilots, awakened by the storm, circulated throughout all of the tiedown areas, checking the safety of all of the equipment. Unaware that someone had already checked the equipment before them, these pilots took the initiative to ensure that all was well. May the tradition continue. ❖



GREAT MOMENTS IN SOARING HISTORY

by “Papa Mike”

ACTUALLY, this was the day that almost never was because my pilot crashed the day before.

Not with me, of course. I’d never let him do such a silly thing with me. No, it was his bicycle that almost did him in.

I’d brought him home in fifth place off a 256 kilometre triangle and he was so excited that he promptly crashed his bicycle. I saw it from my tie-downs, and I thought to myself, “Thank goodness we didn’t win or he’d have killed himself for sure.” At first I thought it was only his ego that was shattered, but he told me that this morning he was sure he had broken something structural. Fortunately he was camped next to the good doctor who told him he was merely bruised and battered, which made him feel better. I think the good doctor refrained from commenting on his mental state.

Judging by the way he gingerly lowered himself in, I suggested that we bump ourselves to the end of the line, since we were at the start of the grid and I was worried about his endurance. I needn’t have — in fact we should have declared a 500 km task since it turned out to be a diamond day. But that was far from our minds. We were happy just to go flying.

It was July 11 in the summer of ’93. Day 5 of the Swift Current Nationals, and it promised to be a great day except that it was supposed to blue out by

mid-afternoon. The task was a three hour PST triangle. A what? Well, the first turnpoint was fixed at Kincaid to the southeast, and we could photograph any others but only claim our best one to make it a triangle. I was intrigued.

Out on the flight line we decided that with the winds out of the northwest, we would plan on a long, skinny triangle back through Swift Current to take advantage of any cloud streeting. Depending on our progress, there were three turnpoints to choose from on the northwest side — Success, Cabri and Lemsford.

We took off with no problems and were easily at cloudbase when the start point opened. So far in the contest, we had been plagued with low cloud having bases between 2500 and 4000 feet above ground, but today would see an extra two thousand feet of workable height.

We waited in the weeds watching a stream of gliders begin their run to the start point like bombers on a mission. Then us. Click. 13:41.

We flew the first leg quickly but somewhat tentatively. Being the last to launch hadn’t allowed us much time to feel out the day, but the truth was that navigation to the southeast was tricky, and my pilot had got himself royally confused a few days earlier, and now did not want to chance overshooting the turnpoint.

Being properly concerned, we had no trouble of course, and 50 minutes into the flight had photographed Kincaid. Here we came across Alan Wood in his 1-35 "Agent Orange" and for a while enjoyed sharing a run with him. It was always fun to fly with other gliders; seeing what worked better and what didn't. I was secretly pleased with my performance at this contest, even though my pilot flew me dry the whole time. (I think he has a lazy streak.) I believe I opened his eyes as to my ability to climb with the best of them, and yesterday, when it was windy, I ran well against other ships who were wet to the gills.

Soon we were on our own again, running fast in that delicious dolphining rhythm that I love so much. In another fifty minutes we were back just south of the airport and as we topped up with a couple of turns in a nine knot thermal and a sky full of cumulus, we smiled to find our reliable weatherman happily wrong for once.

In short order we found ourselves up the road over Cabri having shared the sky with a flight of geese and little else since Kincaid.

And here's where we went wrong.

The problem was that we had 45 minutes left in the task. If we went home now our speed would be penalized by the three hour minimum. Rats! Lemsford wasn't that far up the road, and if we could maintain our speed there was really no penalty for being late. Besides, conditions were so good that neither of us really wanted to go home just yet.

So off we continued to Lemsford. The cumulus were more widely spaced, but the similarity in towns forced our concentration on navigating, and we didn't notice our slower progress until we were committed.

Finally, after an age, we were coming up on Lemsford. Not as high as we'd like, but we'll get the picture and

then climb with the wind. Wait a minute! Didn't they tell you that the phototarget at Lemsford was changed because the elevator was gone? This place has four of them. Double check the map. That must be Leader with the airstrip. One ... two towns. *Oh no, this is Sceptre!* We've overshoot by ten kilometres. Look back — that's Lemsford? — four outhouses, three kids and a dog?!

All of this, of course, has not transpired in lift. We trundle off back down the road ... low. Fortunately we encounter two knots of lift before the usual whining and pleading can begin. Two knots! We'd have scoffed at this a while ago. Slowly we grind back up and take the photo.

Muttering along, it is two hours before we are back at

Cabri. Arggh! Another contest day with a major tactical error. But the lift improves greatly, and with it our mood, and soon we are on final glide where there is time to contemplate my pilot's performance so far. Compared to our first Nationals together, I decided that he has improved considerably, and is making much more advanced mistakes now!

We cross the finish line after 4-1/2 hours, keeping the long-suffering Mr. Sunley in the company of mosquitoes for an extra hour and a half. Hope my pilot buys him a beer for that.

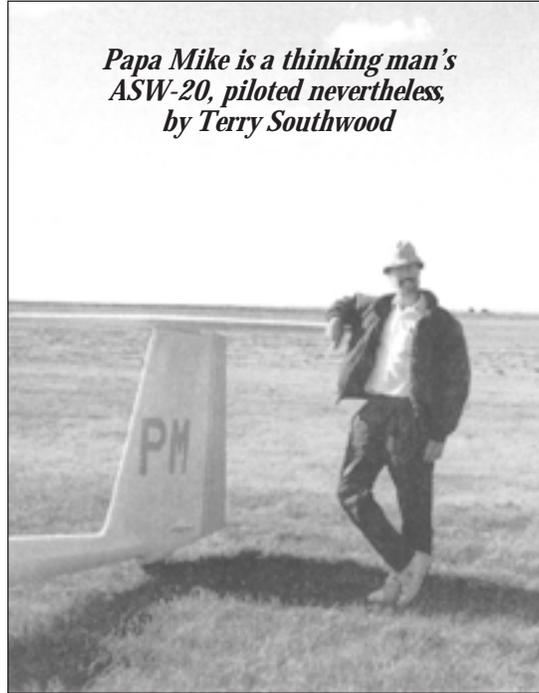
Snuggled in for the night, I watch my pilot and his crew wander off, babbling happily. There is lots of happy murmuring on the field this evening, as everyone got back for a change.

We blew it of course. Sacrificed a speed of 100 km/h over 300 kilometres, in exchange for a speed just under 90 and a distance prorated down to 269 kilometres. But hey, we really flew 425 kilometres — the longest of the day, and our third longest ever. And we got back. And we had fun.

Life is good.



*Papa Mike is a thinking man's
ASW-20, piloted nevertheless,
by Terry Southwood*



Mountain Outlanding!

George Szukala
Cold Lake Soaring Club

THERE COMES A TIME in every glider pilot's life to go forth boldly in search of new challenges. These challenges are taken for reasons that are self evident and to obtain something that most people believe to be valuable — experience.

Our final exam came on 29 July 1993, during the 21st Cowley summer camp. Myself and another instructor, "Bull" Ilcan, decided to ridge soar on the west side of the Livingstone Range, known to many glider pilots in Canada as a Mecca for tremendous soaring flights. The previous day, we had ridge soared the east with considerable success and much rejoicing after, but the wind shifted overnight 180 degrees and a decision was made to try the west side. As this was to be Bull's second ridge flight, a briefing and review of lessons learned from yesterday's flight were carried out. A briefing was also conducted with the towpilot to inform him of what was to take place and where we wanted to release.

With all necessary preparations completed, we proceeded to strap on our glider. Thanks to my many friends at Cowley, I shoe-horned myself into the back seat of the Lark and with water bottle in hand, we were rolling down the turf before one could say "BURNERS – BURNERS – GO".

A 4000 foot tow to the south end of the Livingstones put us over the smaller hills just north of Frank Slide. The winds were strong and gusty from the west, steady-ing at the surface around 20 knots, while the upper winds must have been gusting over 30 knots as the tow was particularly rough; so much so that I took over for awhile so my friend could rest his arm.

We released shortly after reaching 8000 feet (4000 agl) on the west side of the range in strong mechanical turbulence. After a few minutes we hit strong lift directly over the crest tracking north. Upper cloud cover forced us to stop our ascent at 10,500 as we passed over Centre Peak. We maintained a northerly tracking and an altitude of between 10,000 and 10,500 feet flying

directly over the crest until we reached the first gap in the range at the Oldman River. Deciding to press onward, we began to cross the gap and lose altitude, arriving on the other side at 7500, approximately 500 feet above the ridge. As we flew over the crest, the lift returned and after several laps along this ridge, we were back up to 9000 feet. Some discussion ensued and it was agreed that we would try to get back up to 10,000 feet or as close as possible before attempting to proceed south back over the gap.

Life, at times, has a peculiar way of allowing us to gain experience. We are often given the final exam before any formal classes have been taken.

Go get a coffee and hang on to your armrests, folks, 'cause it's all downhill from here — literally! Another 15 minutes on the ridge only yielded a 500 foot gain, so we turned around and headed south from

9500 feet. Progress was slow as we bucked a stiff headwind. Reaching the other side with 7300 feet, it quickly became apparent that this was going to be a battle. Flying 3–400 feet above the rocks, we joined the Livingstone Range at the arrow in the lower right corner of photo 1. Flying west over the crest we continued along the ridge towards the "star", at which point we hit strong mechanical turbulence in the lee of a westerly spur directly ahead of us. The turbulence was so strong that we ran out of altitude, airspeed and options in a heartbeat; a description which has been used by many a glider pilot, I dare say. At this point I said to my partner in crime, "I have control", placing the Lark into a steep descending right turn to regain airspeed and pull us away from the rocks which were getting far too familiar with my butt. Up till now, Bull had been flying the glider since release and I'd been backseat driving with verbal directions like, "don't hit that mountain."

It quickly became apparent that we were going to land out — when and where was the question. I don't know how Bull felt up front, but I suspect that he was somewhat relieved that I'd taken over flying duties. Panic never really set in though — as Mike Apps said, I had reached a heightened sense of situational awareness, or the ability to know where I, and every other molecule in the universe was at an instant.



So we found ourselves low on the west side of the Livingstone Range tracking southwest. A brief appraisal of the situation gave us the following conclusions:

- Can't fly east due to foothills approaching the main range and turbulence in that area (see photo above).
- Can't fly west because of densely forested hills, narrow roads which looked abandoned and no fields (unless you're in a helicopter — I wishing I had my trusty Jet Ranger at this point).
- Can't fly north because of hills, no roads or fields.

Flying in the only direction that seemed possible — south — I headed for the Crowsnest Pass, secretly knowing I'll never make it as the wind was being funnelled up the valley and right on the nose at 20–25 knots. We were down to 7000 feet (2000 agl), and by some small miracle, we hit pockets of lift in the turbulence as I set negative flaps and began to dolphin fly, gaining a 100 here and there. I thought to myself that I might make it to Coleman by tomorrow if I keep this up.

Bull is being very helpful throughout this phase, calling out potential fields, securing objects in the cockpit, calling checklist items and hanging on to the radio (a hand-held). No radio calls were attempted as we were below the ridge line from Cowley.

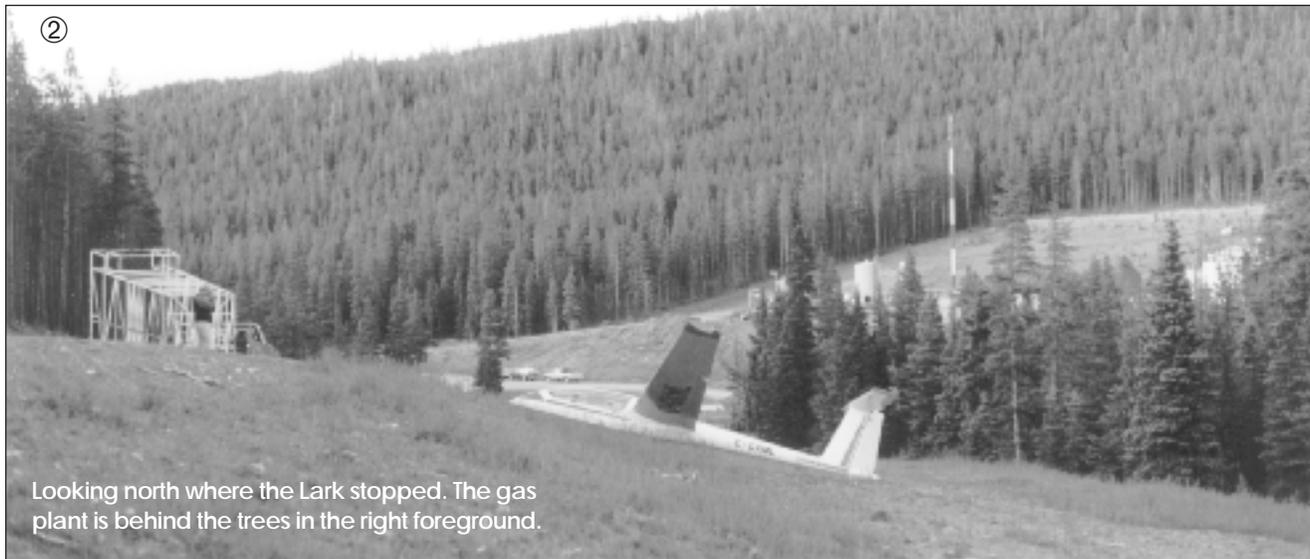
The dolphin flying had not been paying off, as a cut line in the trees came into view just off the nose and next to some kind of oil or gas facility. There would be no time or altitude to overfly the intended area, as it was still some distance away. Assessing the area from about four to five kilometres back, I could see it would be a straight-in approach to an uphill slope, with a useable surface 200 feet wide and about 500 feet long.

The 500 feet of useable upslope came at the end of a steep downhill descent, past some tall trees, a flare stack and a creek. The end of this field terminated in trees, a steep slope down and a wellhead in the centre which we didn't wish to hit. Not what you'd call your standard approach back at Cold Lake!

Photo 2 (*next page*) shows the approach from the north down over the trees, past the stack and other trees at the bottom. Photo 3 shows the approach as flown, with the glider in the final resting place. The road to the right in photo 3 was not seen on approach, as it was shadowed by the trees at right and the sun shining directly on the nose, making forward visibility difficult.

Touchdown was made, deliberately nose high, left wing low, with full spoiler, flaps, gear and 60–65 knots at the bottom of the slope. I applied heavy braking to slow the glider, snagging the left tip on some bushes/ground, recovering, then snagging the right tip on the upslope to the road, which resulted in a 90 degree groundloop to the right. During the groundloop, the glider became airborne briefly to a height of about two feet due to a wind gust. The glider then landed straight down, wings level, with no further movement.

With some brief verbal exchanges of, “are you OK? I'm OK”, the canopy was opened with great haste and Bull shot out of the cockpit like a race horse yelling something about no post-crash fire. I slowly unstrapped and got out to survey the damage, which on initial assessment didn't look too bad. I had effectively removed both fibreglass wingtip caps, wrinkled a few nose panels and the tail cone, and punched a small hole in the underside of the right wing which nicked the spare cap. At this point, a feeling of remorse came over me for

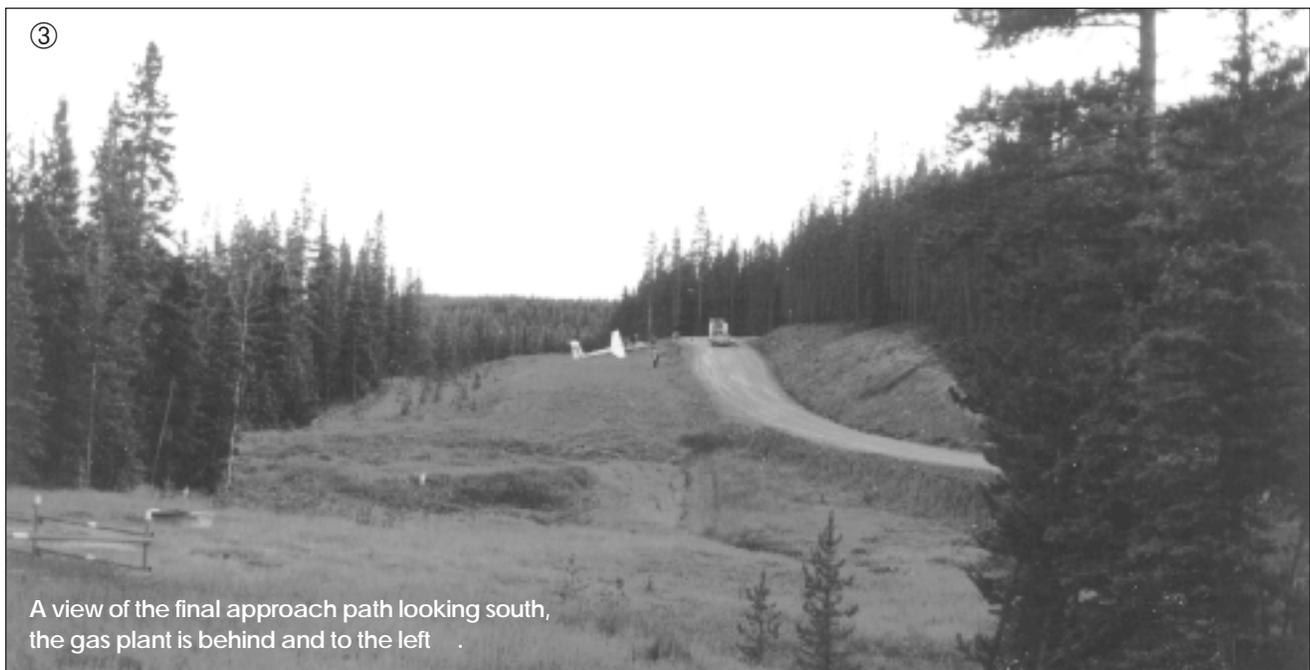


Looking north where the Lark stopped. The gas plant is behind the trees in the right foreground.

having damaged the glider. Although I was relieved at having landed on the spot I'd chosen, I couldn't get over how angry I was at damaging the Lark, no matter how minor it appeared.*

Bull ran over to give me a big hug because he felt he needed to. I asked Bull to put me back down and inquired again if he had any injuries, at which he said that his back hurt. Both my knees and right elbow began to ache as I sent Bull down to the gas plant to find a phone. Walking over to the cockpit, I pulled out the radio and tried to call Cowley — no luck. Dialling in 121.5, I tried two calls with similar success. Feeling a little abandoned by now, I switched off the radio and sat down beside the glider to rub my knees and wait for Bull.

Several minutes had passed by when I heard Bull yelling down the road that someone would be at the site in five minutes. He had found a two-way company radio which was linked to the main plant and, fortunately for us, it was in a building which wasn't locked. A grey pick-up soon pulled up to the gate and a rather tall chap got out. After exchanging pleasantries and explanations, Wendall agreed to give us a ride into town. He mentioned that we had landed on company property next to a natural gas dehydration plant about 12 miles north of Coleman. I said that we would be back later that day to pick up the Lark, so Wendall left the gate unlocked. Lady Luck was smiling on us a little because Wendall mentioned that if we had called a few minutes later, he would have left for the day.



A view of the final approach path looking south, the gas plant is behind and to the left

On being dropped off at the bakery in Blairmore, we bid Wendall farewell and offered to take him for a flight if he could make it out to Cowley. He smiled graciously and said he'd look at the work schedule, probably thinking that it would be a cold day in Hell before he got into a motorless aircraft with a couple of lunatics who just crashed in the mountains.

Entering the bakery, we asked if we could use their washroom and make a local phone call; in that order. By now I discovered that I didn't have one of those cute little info sheets that Ursula hands out to everyone at the beginning of the camp. No matter I thought, I'll just phone directory assistance for the airfield number and we'll be set. I started feeling more depressed as the nice lady at AGT said she had no listing for the Cowley airfield or the Alberta Sewing Council. "No, no, ma'am, that's Alberta Soaring Council." Well, she didn't have a listing for them either. At this point, I had visions of the boys sitting around the campfire with a bottle of Big Rock *Traditional* in one hand and a needle and thread in the other. Those sewing council guys really now how to live-it-up!

It's a good thing the military teaches us to be flexible, because we're on plan Tango at this point. We're out the door in a flash after getting directions to the local RCMP shop. Arriving at the town jail, we start off with a long explanation of who we are and what we've done; along the way asking for a ride to the airfield. The nice staff sergeant says that shift change is coming up, so she'll see what can be done in about 15 minutes. Bull and I settle back on the bench to watch the tail end of a domestic dispute with two women involved with a trucker ... and we think we've got troubles! Shortly after shift change, a constable comes up to the counter and says the free ride is ready. We hop in the car and are soon off for Cowley, discussing everything from capital punishment to radio relay procedures along the way. He drops us off and we bid him thanks, offering to take him flying later in the week. You know the rest of the story.

A crowd starts to move our way as we head for our tents to look for the other Cold Lake dudes. Once we've collected the boys and a few Cowley regulars for the retrieve party, we head off down the highway with my trusty Dodge in the lead, pulling the famous Cold Lake Scud missile launcher (AKA the Lark trailer).

* It turned out it wasn't minor at all. Later, a close inspection by the AME revealed that the ground loop and hard landing had also broken the fin spar, with probable cockpit keel damage, and pulled rivets and other signs of overstress in the wing roots and fuselage. Parts and labour would bring the repairs up to the value of the glider so it was a write-off!

It was getting quite dark and cool in the mountains when we arrived back at the site. I remember hearing Trevor Duff's jaw slam on the floor when he first saw the glider nestled on the hill. Everyone piled out of the vehicles and Bull starts to explain how we ended up here. After some photo work for posterity and documentation, the disassembly and loading started. All things went off without a hitch, with everyone contributing to the effort. Many thanks again! I remember that at one point during all this, standing off by myself and contemplating what had happened, Dave Fowlow walked over to me and started to rub my shoulders. I guess he thought I was some kind of giant good luck charm and some of it would rub off, but all I remember is looking at him sadly and mumbling something about hating to damage company aircraft. In hindsight, I consider my-self to be truly fortunate in having met so many wonderful folks throughout the Cowley camps.

The rest of the retrieve was uneventful, except driving around Crowsnest Pass until 11 pm looking for a place to eat. Thank goodness for Chinese restaurants. I think I still owe a few dinners.

The next day, Bull and I checked into the Pincher Creek hospital for a once-over. I'm happy to report that we only suffered some bruises and strained muscles (the ego damage was incalculable).

So, what are the lessons learned from this escapade? Well, if you lined up ten pilots who flew this same mission, you'd get ten different answers. The lessons, in fact, may be endless; however, here are a few:

- 1 Don't panic.
- 2 Become proficient in spot landings with different wind conditions and aircraft configurations.
- 3 Wear a hat and carry a water bottle when flying in hot weather. If you're dehydrated, you won't think clearly no matter how much adrenaline is pumping.
- 4 Know your limits and that of your aircraft.
- 5 Carry all necessary info when you fly away from the field and get a good briefing on any new area you wish to explore — we might not have flown where we did if we had.
- 6 Don't rely on your radio.
- 7 Be prepared to spend a night out.
- 8 Carry a first aid kit; however, if you get good at No. 2, you won't need it.
- 9 Good friends are priceless.
- 10 Believe in something. Believe in yourself and keep flying.

If, after reading this, you've managed to learn something, then I'm glad. If you didn't learn something, but at least I got you to smile, then I'm glad also, for I've fulfilled my purpose. ❖

Real landouts

continued from page 7

me on the telephone calling Ephrata with directions, a cookie in one hand and Coke in the other.

When I mentioned that I was worried about getting the ship out of the very soft dirt, he offered to tow it out with his tractor. Soon I was speeding (5 mph) across the field towards the glider, hanging on to the back of the tractor. After digging down through a foot of dirt, I found the tow hook and connected a chain link to a coupling to a rope that ran back to the tractor. It would have been simpler had I been carrying a proper weak link, but the arrangement seemed to work. On first try, the rope nearly snapped as the tractor tried to drag the ship forward. After excavating the main gear, progress was easier. I quickly found that it is much easier to move a glider through deep dirt if you keep the main gear in a tractor tire rut.

Once the glider was clear of the field and resting on the well-manicured lawn of the farmhouse, the remainder of the retrieve was easy. At one point while waiting, watching the final *Cheers* program on a wide screen TV, I felt vaguely guilty about my crew having to drive an hour and a half to come and get me. But only briefly.

We derigged just before dark (mostly) and returned to Ephrata. One way to avoid having to immediately provide your crew with a steak dinner is to arrive back in town so late that all of the restaurants are closed. Unfortu-

nately, I could not convince Christine that eating a submarine sandwich at the only fast food place still open should count as a steak dinner. The glider was washed the next morning (again) and the amount of dirt that came out of the wheel well amazed me. While trying the release when rigging the ship that morning, I had noticed that it seemed stiff. Checking it when washing, it was apparent that it was completely filled with dirt. Cleaning it out was easy, but it could have been a safety problem had it not been noticed. I will now always carefully check the release mechanism after landing off-field, as it is likely that something may be lodged in the release.

The last surprise from the previous off-field landing came in the middle of the afternoon while I was flying locally around Ephrata. The day had heated up as the afternoon progressed, and with my knack for flying low I found the cockpit getting a bit warm. No problem, I would just open the main vent. Instantly, clouds of dust and debris shot into my face and blinded me. It cleared after a few seconds or so, but I wouldn't have wanted to be thermaling in a gaggle at the time. One more thing to remember, always clean out the vent before flying.

While I didn't make my 500 kilometre flight that weekend, I did learn a great deal about cross-country soaring and off-field landings. Most importantly, I have adjusted my attitude to minimize some of these surprises on next attempts. I hope that on your first field landout, you won't be as caught by surprise as I was on mine. ❖

ODDS & ENDS

Nationals wrap-up The 1993 Canadian Nationals at Swift Current is history and it was an unqualified success — well OK — it would have been nice to see the cloudbase go over 8000 feet a little more often. It was, however, the best soaring conditions the prairies could offer in this summer of soggy fields so I wouldn't dare to be critical. We can especially give thanks to the off-the-cuff remark at a Cu Nim club meeting last winter which went, "Why not try a contest site a bit further east rather than Claresholm?" I think Hal Werneburg phoned the contest office about three times to find out how things were going and always finished off with, "If it had been in Claresholm, it would have been a complete washout!"

By now you will have read the blow-by-blow account in *free flight*. From an ASC perspective, I want to thank everyone from our clubs who supported the organizational effort, but the biggest single expense and operational headache was getting enough towplanes together. Denis Bergeron worked long and hard prior to the contest

in a tough juggling act getting towplanes scheduled in and out over the period. And both Denis and Marty Slater acted in turn as Chief Towpilots during the contest, keeping the tow act together and everything serviceable almost to the end. (PCK finally broke a tube above the tailwheel on the last day, and Chester's Super Cub filled in.)

Another plus was seeing a lot of novice contest pilots getting their feet wet in a big competition. It is a great adventure in soaring — Jay Poscente and Rod Crutcher took a long while to stop babbling about the astonishing flights they had. A contest invariably has you making flights you would not have thought possible because you have to go even if you'd druther be on the ground. Thanks to everyone who helped make it a success.

Tony

ASC flight trophies Now that the soaring season has come to an end, don't forget to send Dave McAsey your flight data if you think you may have earned an ASC trophy this year. A copy of the trophy form is on page 18 of the last issue of *ASCent*. Mail to Dave at 47 – 2300 Oakmoor Drive SW, Calgary T2V 4N7.

CLUB NEWS & GOSSIP

Cold Lake Soaring Club

With the loss of our Lark, we are now operating with one dual and one single seat sailplane; we surely miss our Lark. We did fly and instruct as normal, but are somewhat restricted with only one two-seater. We are planning to fly the Air Cadets in mid-October.

But we are progressing otherwise! Plans are submitted for site approval for a new hangar of 6000 square feet which will house office and storage for all aircraft — private and club. We hope to begin construction in October/November and are looking forward to a good start the next season.

Because CFB Lahr has been closed, we may be fortunate to inherit some fine sailplanes from them. A Grob 103 and a K-8 or K-7 are possibilities, and we are holding our breath to see if a container addressed to us shows up at the Montreal docks.

Randy Blackwell

Cu Nim Gliding Club

From a climatic standpoint the 1993 soaring season has been a disappointment — a weekend's worth of cloud and showers seemed to roll in every Friday afternoon as if on a timer. Nevertheless, as summer gives way to a memorable fall we now have an opportunity to reflect on the accomplishments of Cu Nim members this year.

Competitions seemed to give pilots the best opportunity for cross-country flights. Tony Burton won the provincials at Innisfail and Rod Crutcher was 3rd flying his Ventus. Five Cu Nim pilots flew in the Nationals: Terry Southwood, Jay Poscente, and Rod Crutcher were 8th, 11th, and 13th respectively in the 15 metre class; while Dick Mamini had the best showing as the winner of the Open Class, with Tony Burton 4th.

Terry Southwood took over the CFI duties from Dave Fowlow, who was suffering a bad case of burnout at the end of last season. Dave, who was approaching the 2000th entry in his log book, still had not registered an "official" Diamond climb. So, rather than wait for the fall camp at Cowley, Dave took advantage of a wave day during the summer camp to record a 25,000 foot climb in a Blanik. Dave also joined Kevin Bennett for a mountain soaring excursion to Golden on the Labour Day weekend. Thermals were strong, the scenery was spectacular, and the pucker factor was high! Dave highly recommends the experience to pilots comfortable with the demands of mountain flying and dealing with power traffic.

Membership was up to 71 from 59 due, in large part, to the effort of membership director Karin Michel. Karin's Friday night intro program introduced 100+ new people to the sport, generated significant revenues for the club, and added several students to the roster. Three student pilots achieved milestones of their own this summer as Scott Russell, Steve Hosier, and Rick Steedman all soloed at Black Diamond.

While the club fleet remained unchanged, several new pilots were seen to be flying private ships this year. Joining the ranks of private owners were Denis Bergeron in a PIK, Rod Crutcher in a Ventus, and Gerald Ince in a Mini-Nimbus. Keith Hay leased an ASW-20 for the season, and Struan Vaughan finally completed the Monerai he has been building.

Our Site Planning committee began the task of pulling together alternate plans for the development of our airfield. A new cross runway has been seeded and Lee Coates constructed a quaint, colourful, and welcome little neo-Bavarian single-holer at the east end of the runway.

All in all, 1993 has been a good year for Cu Nim — have turned around our membership decline and are building facilities for the future. Now if we could do something about the weather ...

Gerald Ince

Central Alberta Gliding Club

CAGC is starting their fall season September 18. The spring flying did see an increase of over hundred flights from last fall; summer flying is restricted with the Air Cadets filling the skies over central Alberta, and most of our members fly their power aircraft on holidays to different parts of the continent. Presently we are working on building a winch, and looking for a higher performer, something like a Schweizer 1-26.

Some members were disappointed that the Grob didn't show for the May weekend at Innisfail; a good opportunity to expose our members to a higher performer locally. However, it did show for the Innisfail fly-in breakfast, but without the knowledge of our members.

We are looking forward to a busy fall with new members and finishing licences for the soloing members. With lots of help soaring may not be too far in the future.

Jerry Mulder

return address
Box 1916, Claresholm, AB TOL 0T0