



All eyes are forward at the 1st VSA Winter Seminar Series held on Nov 17, 2007 at Williams Soaring Center. Bob Ireland, winner of the 2007 Oktoberfest Open Class, shares his intimate strategies with the audience as Kempton Izuno traces Bob's sailplane original route using the See You animated software. The next VSA Winter Seminar will be held on Saturday, Jan 26, 2008 at Williams Soaring Center. Photo by Tom Jue

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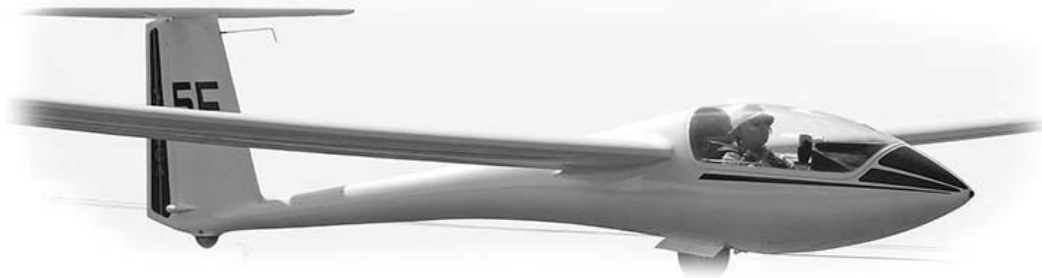
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



At the end of a long day, I sit down at my desk and transition from the frenzy of job related tasks to more pleasant thoughts of how I will spend my weekend. I bring the WSC Forum up on my computer screen. I look at what is happening in our local soaring world, and I am amazed and simultaneously rejuvenated.

The current thread of discussion is about the Regional Atmospheric Soaring Predictions (RASP) Model created by **Dr. Jack Glendening**. Dr. Jack, meteorologist, and creator of the now famous BLIPMAP soaring forecasts, has offered to revise the location of the wave prediction on the RASP per the request of local soaring pilots. The voices of experience here at WSC, **Peter Kelly** and **Bob Ireland** discuss what location should be selected for the cross section that will be depicted in the forecast. To clarify the location, **Jim Darke**, soaring pilot and cartographer by profession, creates and posts a map of the areas under consideration. The information continues to be discussed, refined, and then... There it is – Dr. Jack has posted a forecast model that is custom made through the knowledge and efforts of our local pilots. **Thank you Dr. Jack.**

We have an incredible group of pilots here at WSC. The active minds, curiosity, and collaboration of these pilots, seeking adventure and discovery, is inspirational. I browse through the enthusiastic postings on the Forum, and between the lines I read “Look what I’ve discovered – now what can we do with this knowledge?”

I think it will be an expansive winter at WSC. When the weather is not conducive to soaring, pilots are devoting their intellectual energy to challenging themselves and their fellow pilots to learn more about our local soaring potential. When the soaring calls us to the sky, we will be discovering what is “really up there” and how well we can apply our knowledge.

One of the strengths of this group is our location at the gliderport. Not just any gliderport, but one with a reputation of excellence spanning operations, maintenance, repairs, and instruction. This is fertile ground – a versatile environment where many talented pilots have chosen to base themselves, and grow and share their love of soaring.

There is a bit of “the child” in all of us that delights in pursuing our sense of wonder and discovery, then sharing these experiences, the laughter, and the camaraderie that evolves from their adventures. The setting where all of this evolves has the potential for unlimited creativity, and the creativity snowballs as it gets going. Amazing synergy!

I think this is where our VSA/WSC community is now. **A bunch of pilots with unlimited potential, discovering who they are and what kind of world they can build** – pretty heady stuff!

Ginny Farnsworth,
President

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 12-17th Closed for the SSA Convention in NM	March 1 VSA Dinner/Seminar #3
Race Day #1 March 15th	Race Day #2 March 29th
Race Day #3 April 12th	Race Day #4 April 26th
Race Day #5 May 3rd	Doc Mayes Memorial May 2-4th
Race Day #6 May 17th	Race Day #7 June 7th
Race Day #8 June 21st	WSC Closed for Nationals/Regionals at Montague June 27th-July 11th
Regionals at Montague June 30-July 5th Practice Day June 29th	Sports Class Nationals at Montague July 1-10 Practice Days June 29 & 30th
Race Day #9 July 19th	Race Day #10 August 2nd
Race Day #11 August 16th	Race Day #12 August 30th
Race Day #13 September 13th	Race Day #14 September 27th
Race Day #15 October 11th Also the Oktoberfest	

The Sports Class Nationals will be hosted by WSC. Stay tuned for more details. Details will be available in the next issue of Windsock and on the Williams Today Forum <http://www.soaringnet.com/forum/viewforum.php?f=1> as they become available.

June 29 to July 5	Region 11 Championships Open, 15M, Standard	Montague, CA	www.williamssoaring.com Noelle Mayes 530-473-5600 noelle@williamssoaring.com
July 1 to 10	USA Sports Class Nationals 1 Club Class pilot for 2010 WGC	Montague, CA	www.williamssoaring.com Noelle Mayes 530-473-5600 noelle@williamssoaring.com

Celebrating Soaring

The WSC field has turned into a busy place all year around this year. We have a very active flying community, learning community, and... nobody minds a good party once in a while! This newsletter is full of pilot's stories, accomplishments, insights. What an articulate group we are! (Let's have a pat on the back all around.)

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Rex, Noelle, Kenny, Pete, Todd, Janet, Lou, Mark, and all the rest of the WSC staff who keep us safely and happily soaring. (I could go on and on with all of the helpful and gracious people at WSC.)

A big thanks to all the VSA volunteers who keep our glider port active, interesting, and entertaining. Thanks for all you contribute. You are the best!

Your the Valley Soaring Association, Ginny Farnsworth, President

Evolving Perspective on Learning to Soar

by Tom Jue



Tom Jue landing from the South at Williams with Instructor Kenny Price. Nov 2004. Photo by Marvin McCormick.

This is a posting for the beginners, so the hard core flyers can skip this one. It'll just put you to sleep.

It was Friday, the day after Thanksgiving 2007. I was driving to Williams. If the winds are blowing too strong, hopefully I can still get a lesson with Kenny Price. I first started taking lessons 3 years ago in Sept 2004.

My first 2 years were a real roller coaster ride, not so much up and down, but mainly difficult when I think back about it. I was getting a heavy dosage of repetitive instruction from Kenny flight after flight, but to me, **little of it appeared to sink in**. It wasn't Kenny. He's the highest rated instructor in the country. **At age 50+**, I don't think I was catching on as quick as I use to.

He'd tell me how do the landing once, twice and thrice and thrice I would flub it. Well, sometimes I managed to squeak through a decent landing.

My Thoughts Before Flying:

I have not flown much last year. This Friday after Thanksgiving was only the 5th time I had flown in 2007. Thus, I had no illusions of flying solo, particularly since I would have to land to the North. Ahh yes, North landings bring back dreaded memories. This involved coming down on final, clearing the white fence, watching out for the big tree to the right and Kenny's mobile home to the left.

Okay, I am exaggerating, but staying in this hilarious context and allow me to continue. These are the challenges as I see it as I am flying on the base leg:

- Look at the windsock.
- Oh my gosh, that thing is vertical. Winds must be strong...do you think?
- Get the look! Get the look!
- When to pull half spoilers?
- Look back to downwind to see if anyone is coming from behind.
- Look ahead to the north landing to see if anyone might be landing out-of-pattern.
- Look above. Look below.
- Any sailplanes on the runway?
- Darn, too late now. I should have checked that earlier.
- Turn to final! Don't make the turn too wide!
- Watch the air speed!
- Poops, forgot about wind gradient.
- Nose down! Nose down! Re-gain air speed!
- Cleared the tree to the right. Don't relax yet!
- There's Kenny's mobile home to the left!
- Don't leave black tire marks on his white roof!
- Hey! Don't forget about where to land!
- Locate that tiny spot on the dirt Kenny said to land on. Where is it?
- Did someone rub it out? Must have been the kids or the dogs (...my pal Brutus).



Tom Jue tells Kenny Price: “Whew! Cleared the fence and trees.”

Photo by Marvin McCormick. Nov 2004

- Pull full spoilers!
- Nose up! Nose up!
- Wheels hit the ground.
- And I am not done yet.
- Rex might be looking, so don't stop in the middle of the runway, idiot!
- Keep the sucker...errr, I mean the wonderful sailplane rolling across the runway into the gravel area in front of the shop.
- Whew!
- No time to relax yet.
- I still need to listen to Kenny critique my landing for the third time.
- I can recite it by heart and why not?
- If one make the same mistakes three times, it should sound about the same on the third time.

Yes, what wonderful memories. Waking up from my reminiscing, it is time to drive to Williams. I'm a glutton for punishment!

I arrived at Williams at 1PM. **The winds were blowing about 15-22 mph from the North.**

I had no illusions of flying solo. It wasn't scheduled, but I was hoping Kenny would have time to take me for some North landings. As I said, I'm a glutton for punishment.

Post Flight Evaluation:

Kenny was able to fit me in his schedule and fly up with me. Wouldn't you know, none of the above exaggerations indecisions occurred. I was actually comfortable and confident.

I floated downwind at 55 knots. Checked the water below to see which way the wind was blowing. Checked elevation of 900 feet when I was parallel to the end of the north end of the runway. Kenny said,

“Turn short over the canal and keep it high.” Okay, no problem. I turned to base over the canal. I did a **sideslip on base to counter the wind**. Again, no problem, I've done this before.

Kenny said “don't turn too soon.” Again, no problem. Pull up half spoilers. I turned to final. Oops, slightly low. Close spoilers for 5 seconds. That's better. Half spoilers again.

I hit the spot in the dirt perfectly. I almost instinctively pulled up on the spoiler to hit the brakes, but hesitated. **Rex wasn't around, but why tempt fate?** I softened my pull on the brakes and allowed the beautiful ASK-21 to roll across the runway and into the gravel area in front of the shop. Kenny was all smiles.

This wonderful event happened twice. Then Kenny said, “Want to do it by yourself?” After all, I just did two good landings. It was effortless and I was confident. I retracted and said “Yes. I can do it.” The third landing was uneventful. Kenny was all smiles.

I am posting this experience for three reasons. **First**, I have no one else to tell this to. The wife thinks I'm nuts and the kids never pay attention. **Second**, I am hoping that this will offer encouragement to the new students. If you ever find you are struggling, I say to you, stick to it! Keep getting the reps'. It does eventually sink in. It did for me. **Third**, whenever I look back, I am overwhelmed with emotion, recalling the compassion and support my instructor gave me, lesson after lesson, year after year. He stuck by me.

Thank you for teaching me how to fly Kenny Price. This article is dedicated to you.

Tom Jue
Danville, CA

Flying The Regionals

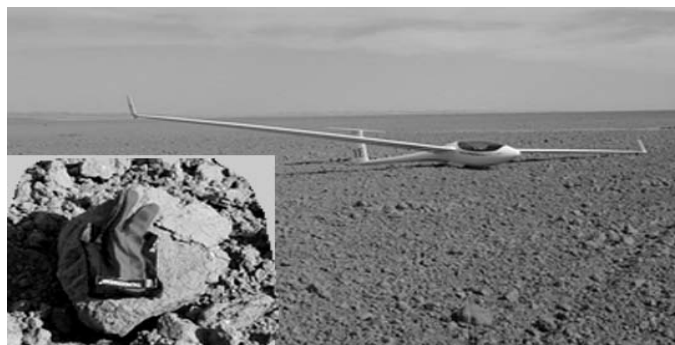
by Larry Roberts

Flying Cross Country

My goal is to learn how to fly cross country (XC). To me, XC flying is what soaring gliders is all about. However, I will start this story with the main lesson I learned – there is a MAJOR difference between free flight and contest flight. Some of my favorite cross XC flights were decided on after I was already in the air, saw the conditions and then made my plans. In a contest you are going to fly that day unless the day is really bad weather wise, and the choice of task is made by the contest director and the designated contest team – and it probably won't follow the cloud street that may have already set up, in fact, the decision is usually made before the day has warmed up.

Contest Background:

Prior to flying in the Regionals (Region 11) I had only flown in two Avenal Spring Contests. Avenal is one the best contests to fly for a new XC pilot. The contest is put on by the Central California Soaring Club, and they do a great job. You do not have to weigh in with your glider, and you do not have to have the other requirements needed to fly a sanctioned contest. The contest is usually set up with Turn Area Tasks (TAT) so that a new pilot can fly the shorter distances, and the experienced pilots can go for the long distances and higher points. I flew it in 2006 and 2007. I did not do well in the contests, but learned about TAT, MAT and other tasks, especially flying XC. I landed out at an airport in my ASW24 in 2006, and then in 2007 I landed my ASG29 in a field, 9 miles short of the Avenal finish. This was my first landout in my new glider. It was also my first landing in a plowed field – ouch! The books are correct, stay out of plowed fields. However, it was the safest choice at the time. The field was many miles square. Here is the photo. The inset is one of the dirt clods with my glove on it. There was white gel coat on many of the large clods.



9 miles short of the Avenal finish.

Hal Chouinard came to my rescue after he was retrieved from an airport landout. (Thanks Hal).

Region 11 Contest – June 2007

The Region 11 Contest was my first “Sanctioned” contest. It was also my first time flying out of Minden, NV. The contest had a low turnout for some reason. Although I would love to see an overwhelming response to all the SSA contests, I was personally glad it was small this time. I would not have been able to fly the contest if it were sold out.

David Greenhill wrote a great article about the 2007 Minden Regionals. See NOTE at bottom of this story.

I flew the contest because I really want to learn to fly XC, and learn to do it well. (See David Greenwell's article). I was thinking “How can I not learn” when flying with Ray Gimmey, David Greenhill, Sergio Colacevich, John Sinclair, Richard Van Grunsven, Rolf Peterson, and more. Talk about a humbling experience. How do they treat a “newbie”? Everyone at the contest was extremely helpful and willing to give me information. Just don't ask in front of their competitor, and ask when they are not busy.



Staged for take off at Minden – Region 11 Regionals

Flying Minden

I had flown in this area from out of Truckee, but I had not taken off or landed at Minden. Minden is a busy airport, probably busier than Truckee. Be prepared to stay alert. Learn the Reno area transponder rules and frequencies. The busy airport, transponders, Reno Approach, the fact that it is my first time at this airport, and my first Sanctioned Contest was a LOT of mental pressure - just flying the contest would have been enough. (That is why Avenal is a good place to start).

Practice day – Sunday – my first flying day and the day before the contest starts. It is a weak day. The task? I can't remember, but I landout in an Alfalfa field, in Smith Valley, that has just been cut. My previous flight was the landout at Avenal, so two flights, two landouts. HAL rescues me again (yes, I owe HAL several retrieves).



This is a picture of the Alfalfa field in Smith Valley.

During my flight I found that the contest turnpoint file only lists a small part of all the turnpoints that are in the Minden XC and Truckee turnpoints files. The mountain names are not listed – why should they be listed, all the other contestants know the area well. I was looking at the map a lot. That evening I took all my maps to the hotel room and spent more time studying the maps and turnpoint list. Man o' man did I wish that I knew the area better.

The Contest - flying the Sport Class.

Day 1 – The conditions are weak, they call a MAT for 2.5 hours. I have an OK start and make the first turn point. I get a nice thermal and feel that I am doing well. I turn Sweetwater and head to Dayton. I monitor Reno Approach and talk to them for my very first time. It went well, they saw me and tell the very visible Southwest jet at my altitude about 2 miles east about my little glider. I turn Dayton and tell Reno good day. I head to another turn point, think I am doing OK. Transponder is working, talked to Reno, heading south. All is fine. I make the next turnpoint and see on my iPAQ that I only have a couple minutes to get back. I put the nose down, pass the finish line and land. WHAT? I'm early? Oops. Set the time on the iPAQ at 2 hours and didn't remember my start time. OK, from now on I write my start time down. I flew 2:38, but only 2:03 of the task. Low score, but I am extremely happy to be back at the airport for my very first contest day, and first landing at Minden.

Day 2 -- Better conditions are expected and they send us to Bishop and Basalt. I am thinking Bishop? I have never flown south of Mt. Paterson. I fly south and the wind in the Bishop area is strong from the south. I sink out and the turbulence along the spines in the Whites is more than I want to take on. I land out again, into a 30 knot wind at Bishop. As I push YE off the runway I am thinking that I will tie down and get a motel room when I hear an airplane taxiing from the fuel pumps. It is a Pawnee - Bob Spielman (Air Sailing) is the pilot and says "I'm flying back to Reno, need a tow?" Can you believe this? Within 15 minutes of landing I am in the glider, hooked up and ready to go back to Minden. No wing

runner required, the wind is so strong I can "fly" the glider to keep the wings level. We are off the ground in 30 feet and on tow back to Minden. This was my longest tow, and the first part was one of my most turbulent tows. (Bob, your timing was Great!).



Photo of the White Mountains I am heading south - landed at Bishop.

Day 3 -- Conditions improve, the task is Independence. We are cautioned about increasing winds. I am somewhat bummed out about having two landouts. I get a start, but turn around early in the flight and return to Minden. No landout risk, no points either. Someone lands at Bishop. Once on the ground at Minden it was easier to think that I should have gone for it, but I am down and have time to study the area maps.

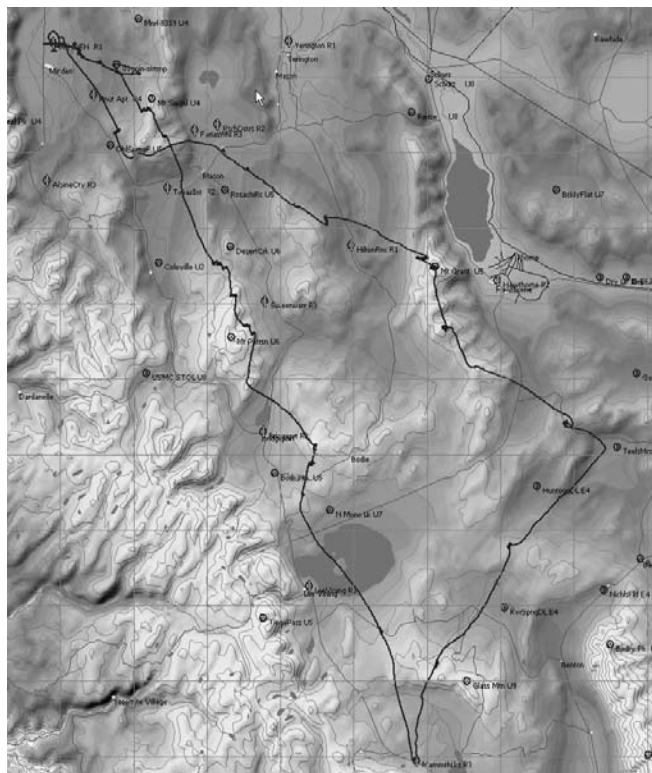
Day 4 -- Today I decide to go for it. I haven't landed out in two days so I figure the odds are in my favor. The course is a 20 mile TAT for Mammoth and Mina. I make a good start and head south. I make a bee line from Mt. Patterson directly over the island in the middle of Mono Lake to a big cu on the south side. As I approach it I see JJ ahead and above me. He marks the sweet spot and I come in below him and my 18 meter wings and no water allow me to climb right past him. It is the first time that I ever out climbed any of these champs (OK, the ASG29 out climbed him). I am elated BUT I am climbing fast and am now over 17K. The contest has penalties for being over 17,500. I leave the thermal, still climbing – I am flying 125 knots and just stay under 17,500 feet as I leave the thermal and head for Mammoth and fly into the TAT circle and turn directly over the Mammoth airport. I have been in the blue for awhile and head back to Glass Mt (11,120 ft) and at about 11,500 ft I find a nice thermal to 17,400 and head to Mina. I manage to find great lift (convergence line?) and get to the 20 mile TAT point at 15,000 feet (Teel Marsh area).

I notice that the sky to the north is looking pretty blue. I haven't yet decided the path I need to take and it is time to turn. If you haven't flown the desert, I can tell you that it is beautiful, but it also a VERY lonely, intimidating looking area. I make a note to myself that TWO camelbaks are NOT enough if you have to land in this area.

At 19 miles West of Mina I turn North toward Mt. Grant. Where are the clouds? Where is the lift? I have been warned by my mentors – DO NOT get low on the East side of Mt. Grant. I am sinking and I hear GW (Steve Koerner) say he is low in the same area. I get to Lucky Boy pass and am even with Corey Peak looking for lift. GW reports he has to land at Hawthorne. I say to myself that I can do this, I can make it home. I find a thermal at Corey, it takes 10 minutes to gain 3K; I head for Mt. Grant.

I am concerned. Time: 4:25 pm; 60 miles from home; in the blue. I lose 1500 feet getting to Mt. Grant. The lift is weak, I only gain 1200 feet and decide to head toward home. Hilton Ranch is in front of me and a possible landout. I decide to work the peaks.

I am flying WNW into a 14knot head wind and the going is slow. It was a slow trip back, but worked light thermals and had to fly around the south end of the Pine Nuts and follow 395 into the Minden area. I get back after 6PM, after almost 5 hours in the air, but was just very happy to make it back and not landout.



Day 5 -- Minden is having an air show on Saturday, so they make it a temporary Class D airport for Friday and Saturday to handle the practice and arriving aircraft. They close the airport in the morning for aerobatic practice. We get a great show, and then time to push out. The weather is calling for strong winds. The task is a MAT. I see winds in the mid 20 knots and higher. Wave is possible. The thermals are ratty and blown out, but it is possible to stay up and fly. I start, do a restart, then notice the winds increasing and decide to land. The landing is uneventful, but at last it is over. I am tired, and had a fantastic learning experience. Many, many thanks to all who put up with my questions all week and for the sage advice. Karol Hines was terrific. She encouraged me to fly the contest and I am really glad that she did.

What did I learn?

- Contest XC is much tougher than regular XC.
- No help on the radio – comp pilots are amazingly silent when in the air.
- On the ground, the comp pilots were friendly and helpful.
- Did you know that they weigh your glider?
- Study the maps and turnpoints MORE (memorize them!).
- Learn my GPS navigation system and software VERY well.
- Have TWO GPS nav systems (expensive, but really useful)
- Practice more XC with a course set before take off, stick by rules, fly faster.
- Learn to make in flight decisions – routes, altitudes to fly – well in advance – keep thinking further ahead and plan alternative routes early.
- Pack for overnight in glider with more water – just in case.
- Get lots of sleep every night to stay mentally alert.
- Oh, did I say study the maps? Well, go study them again.

Will I do it again? YES!

Hope to see you again in at the 2008 Regionals.

NOTE: David Greenhill's article: "2007 Region 11 Contest Minden, NV" – visit the PASCO web site at: <http://www.pacificsoaring.org/> - select the Newsletter tab, open the Sept 2007 WestWind