

A Christmas Surprise - by Chris Jones

Twas' Two Days after Christmas and all through the house, not a mailman was stirring, not even a mouse, The canopy was hung in the garage with care... with hopes that Mr. Mildew would not soon be there... Oh well, it's True old St. Nick (or Mr. Mildew) has come and gone and this article is a little late in coming, but I was compelled to share it with all of you. It's quite a cute story really and it was a Christmas surprise all right, one which I will not soon forget.

It all started in Jackson Hole, WY last summer on a bright, warm

summer morning on June 29, 2000. I was out in Yellowstone park visiting my brother who was working there counting Buffalo. His job was scheduled to end in two days time and our plan was to drive back to California. I brought along my wing of course, just in case. Actually, I had been in email and telephone contact with Scott Harris, an advanced instructor in Jackson, and the then president of the Jackson Hole paragliding Club, Cameron Eddy. These fine fellows instructed me to be at the base of the Ariel tram in

Teton village at 8am sharp, next to the clock tower, where I would meet them and they would "sponsor me" as a P-2 for some epic flights off Rendezvous peak. So, when the time was right I packed in my glider and drove two hours from the middle of Yellowstone Park to Teton Village ski area.

I couldn't ask for a more perfect day, not a cloud in the sky and it was very warm and sunny for 8am in the morning. Everyone began to

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No More Narnar 2001 - by Ann Sasaki

This is the SIXTH annual edition of the coastal narnar list. The narnar list hopes to point out a few things to remember when flying our coastal sites. (Narnar is derived from the word "gnarly" which can certainly apply to some of the conditions we see on the coast.)

Winter flying at the coast is exciting and exhilarating. While others are home watching TV and drinking beer, you're out there in the cold, dense, lifty air, soaring in the sunshine and feeling like you're blessed. However, one does need to proceed with caution because conditions can change rapidly. Most winter flying takes place between fronts so you need to watch the indicators carefully and know when to land. Also, the waves can be huge and at high tide there may be no beach

at Westlake. Additionally, your flying skills may be somewhat rusty if you haven't had many days recently.

For those of you who want to know what might be new to this narnar edition, items 15a and 31 are new this year. Other small adjustments have been made here and there but if you have all previous items memorized, you've got the gist of it.

Here is some conventional wisdom gathered over ten years of soaring the coast:

1. A site introduction is important to having safe and fun flights when you are new to a site. Local pilots who fly the site will have tips and cautions that will help you plan your flight and stay out of trouble. Don't launch at a new site without

getting a site intro.

If there is no one to talk to because they are all up there soaring, then at least watch people fly for a while to observe wind direction, where the lift is, where the traffic is, where pilots launch and land and so on. Also identify for yourself where rotors will be, given the current wind direction.

2. One of the most important things to do when approaching any unfamiliar site is to ask the locals what they think of the current conditions. This is how you learn to read the conditions for yourself.

If no one else is flying, it's

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Worth remembering :

- Next Club Meetings are Mar 7 and Apr 4 @ 7:00 P.M. Round Table Pizza, Oceana at Manor Drive in Pacifica – social hour starts at 6:00 P.M.
- Turkey Slide Show at Mar 7 BAPA meeting
- Jocky Sanderson SIV tape at Apr 4 BAPA meeting
- Your 2001 Dues are due !

Trips and Stuff - by Jerry Schimke

Lots of enthusiastic reports from those who spent time in January flying in Mexico. Certainly my trip to Valle de Bravo with Chris Santacroce and Jeff Farrell was a blast. Most of the folks on the trip came from Oregon with two from Alaska, one from Florida and Freitag Ewald and myself from California. Made for a very congenial group and the weather was great most of the time. I managed to get nearly 14 hours of flying in the eight good flying days. Made a couple of 8.8-mile cross-country flights from El Pinion back to town and enjoyed many little in flight experiences along the way (including some nice low saves). One particularly enjoyable flight from the 7500 foot El Pinion Launch is logged as follows: "Launch and thermal to 9K. Cross over to El Pinion - up to 10K. Across the mesa and down to 9.5K. Decide to go to Restaurant. Getting set to land at 7100 feet when a little thermal happened - climbing for fun. Got to near 10K. Crossed valley to East. Over ridge took thermals to near 12K- Marked waypoints and headed back to restaurant where after looking for and coring sink, I landed." My XC distance between waypoints was 13.4 miles. When I was over the ridge east of the restaurant, Freitag came in low and thermaled up to me and went on beyond me to land at a Christmas tree farm. As I headed back, Chris Santacroce flew into the area and wound up landing with Freitag. Funny thing about it. On this particular day I really had no agenda. I could have taken an extended sled ride and been satisfied. But what happened was a really wonderful, enjoyable, laid back flight that turned in my best XC distance.

Returning to the US, I read Mike Galvin's boasts about a great soaring weekend at Big Sur and regretted not being there to

share the air in that beautiful spot. Not to worry, though. Honza Rejmanek was coming to town and talking up another Big Sur weekend trip. I looked at the weather reports and satellite shots and figured it had to be blowing east for the weekend. But Honza talks a good line and the lure of Big Sur was too much so I joined the party down there. On Saturday at the 3300 foot Wild Cattle launch it was strong over the back, but we convinced ourselves that dropping down to the front launch might give us better conditions. It's a long downhill story (with full packs) that winds up at the 1550-foot launch over Harry's where we finally launched. My eight minute flight was pretty and all, but from a cost/benefit perspective, it came out a bit short. (My legs ached.) On Sunday we hiked up from Harry's to the same 1550-foot launch for a six-minute flight. (Now my legs really ached.) We headed home and got to the dunes at Seaside in time for the wind to stop blowing, and I had about a 20-30 second flight. The weekend was fun, but my body felt older than it really is (What a poor, beat up whining wimp!).

Honza was scheduled to head back to Idaho soon, and wanted to try Berryessa once more before he left. I couldn't make it Monday (my legs were too sore), but Tuesday was different. High winds were predicted but hadn't showed up in Davis yet. So off we went, still figuring to be blown out. When we got there it didn't look bad. Ripples on the lake, but nothing to worry about. Honza talked me into walking up the damn hill again, in spite of my resistance. And when we got to launch, cycles were coming right up the front. Perfect! Honza laid out and got into the air and I followed. A nice consistent thermal got us 2100 feet over launch where we enjoyed the beauti-

ful scenery and looked out over the lake to the northwest. What an amazing sight! Several miles up the lake there was a real discontinuity in color that we interpreted as an indication of strong wind. (Maybe the weather forecast was correct after all.) We headed for Winters and only got 3 miles before landing at a nice smooth, green fishing access field near Putah Creek. It was a great flight that boasted about at the BAPA meeting on the following night. Ginny Farnsworth could hardly believe that paragliders were in the air that day. She was flying a sailplane just one ridge over, on the west side of Lake Berryessa and experienced 70-knot winds at altitude, and landed in 30-knot winds. Amazing!

And Speaking of amazing, did you read Bob Clem's report of launching from Juniper on Mt. Diablo in **SIX INCHES OF SNOW?** What an adventure. And there was enough thermal activity to allow top landing. Gotta get up there and try that, soon.

Calendar Notes -- Be sure to attend the March 7 meeting, when "Flying in Turkey" a slide show by Jules Brenner will be presented. Come one, come all. Should be interesting.

There are some very good opportunities for skill improvement coming up in both February and March. Why not enroll in a maneuvers clinic at Lake Havasue with Enleau O'Connor, or Dixon White in February or March (see calendar). There are lots of options to choose from.

The March 10 First Aid/CPR course is fully subscribed. If you wish to attend, but are not on the list, contact Mark Boudoures to get your name on the waiting list in case

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Bay Area Wind and Weather

Wind Talkers

Ed Levin	408.946.9516
Fort Funston	415.333.0100
Mt. Diablo	925.838.9225
Mt. Tamalpais	415.381.9463
Stinson Beach	415.868.1922
Marina / Sand City	831.384.3184

Internet URL's

Funston Webcam -	www.sirius.com/~mlbco/webcamx.html
Bay Area Wind -	sfbay7.wr.usgs.gov/~jonathan/wind.html
Mission Webcam -	www.bigfoot.com/~missionlive
BAPA -	www.sfbapa.org

Accident Reporting Procedures

Paragliding is still evolving as a sport. Safety awareness and knowledge are vital components for avoiding accidents. If you sustain a paragliding injury, please help to raise the awareness of your fellow pilots by submitting an Accident Report to USHGA. If your accident occurs in the Bay Area, please also send a copy to :

BAPA Safety Director
P.O. Box 1809
Pacifica, CA 94044-9998

Contact the BAPA Safety Director to Obtain an Accident Report form. Forms are also available online at : www.ushga.org/emailacc.htm.

BAPA PARAGLIDING CALENDAR, 2001

Updated February 15, 2001 by Jerry Schimke



FEBRUARY

- 23-27 Skill Excellence Clinic. **Lake Havasu**. Airplay.
Contact Dixon White (520) 526-4579 or dixon@paraglide.com

MARCH

- 7 BAPA Meeting, 7:00 P.M. at Round Table Pizza in Pacifica -- Jules Brenner's slide show: Flying in Turkey
10 First Aid/CPR class. Fully subscribed.
To be put on the waiting list, contact Mark Boudoures: (415) 716-9317 or mboudoures@elanpharma.com.
16-18 Aerobatic & Maneuvers Clinic, **Lake Havasu** (includes ½ day ground school)
Contact Enleau O'Conner: (530) 472-1427
22-25 High Risin' Fly-In at **Sun Valley** -- Dave Bridges Mountain Race on the 24th (foot race to the top and fly down to spot landing. \$1,000 first prize) -- contact Chuck Smith at (208) 726-3332 or <http://flaysunvalley.com>
26-30 Skill Excellence Clinic. **Lake Havasu**. Airplay.
Contact Dixon White (520) 526-4579 or dixon@paraglide.com
3/31-4/1 Spring Fling at **Elk Mountain** (April 6,7 alternate rain date) -- Bring wood for the fire, music, food to share
Contact Al Baldini -- (650) 348-7971

APRIL

- 4 BAPA Meeting, 7:00 P.M. at Round Table Pizza in Pacifica .Video of Jockie Sanderson SIV clinic.
20-22 Informal fly-in at **Dunlap**.
Contact Dave Sondergeld for details: (650) 756-4530

MAY

- TBD **Anderson Flat** spring fly-in.
Contact Gene Pfeiffer -- (408) 436-8523
26-28 Starthistle Fly-In -- **Woodrat Mountain**, Ruch, Oregon
Contact Chris Wick -- (541) 899-3727 or wickz@uswest.net

JUNE

- TBA **Red Bull** Hang Gliding and Paragliding Event (Probably at **Ed Levin**) -- Racing, Precision Flying, Aerobatics
Contact Jodi Lucas
6/29-7/3 **Lakeview Fourth of July Fly-In**
Contact Jules Gilpatrick (541) 947-3330 or freeflite@transport.com

AUGUST

- 2-11 **Golden, B.C.** -- Join some of the BAPA visitors for long flights in the friendly "Out Back" of our Northern neighbor.
Contact Al Baldini -- (650) 348-7971
4-6 Fifth Annual **Hat Creek** Flying Festival -- Music, Vendors, Great Flying
Contact Pat Blackburn

OTHER CLUB MEETING INFORMATION

Wings of Rogallo meets every 3rd Tuesday of each month at the Omega Restaurant in Milpitas (corner of South Park Victoria and Calaveras Blvd.) Social hour @ 7:00 pm, meeting starts at 8:00 pm.

Sonoma Wings Hang Gliding Club meets every 3rd Monday of the month at the Round Table Pizza, Hwy 12 and Stonypoint Rd. in Santa Rosa at 7:00pm.

Marin County Hang Gliding Association meets on the last Thursday of the month at 7:30 pm at the Round Table Pizza in Corte Madera. (Come early to start on your pizza)

Bay Area Paragliding Club Resources and Contacts

On the web at -
www.sfbapa.org



BAPA Club Officers

President	Ann Sasaki	650.355.8888	ann_sasaki@forecross.com
V. President	Ken Davis	650.756.7560	paraken@aol.com
Secretary	Cheryl Cohen	650.593.7458	cheryl_ehm@msn.com
Treasurer	Pam Brenner	415.883.4332	jnpsf@mindspring.com
Site Director	Gene Pfeiffer	408.356.7782	genep10302@aol.com
Safety Dir	Mark Boudoures	650.355.1376	mboudoures@elanpharma.com
Activities Dir	Jerry Schimke	530.758.0582	jschimke@den.davis.ca.us
Past Pres	Chris Northcutt	415.584.5610	chrisn@oceanvista.com

S.F. Bay Area Site Administrators

Stables	Dave Sondergeld	650.756.4530	dave_sondergeld@gap.com
Mt Tam	Wally Anderson	415.456.3670	tipvortx@thegrid.net
Mt Diablo	Bob Clem	925.825.4979	bclem@earthlink.net
The Dump	Phil Neri	650.737.7926	
Ed Levin	Mission Soaring Ctr	408.262.1055	
Mission	Mission Soaring Ctr	408.262.1055	

Ridge Dancer

is published monthly to benefit the members of the Bay Area Paragliding Association (BAPA). BAPA is an organization of paragliding enthusiasts. The charter of the club is to promote and encourage the sport of paragliding. BAPA is a registered chapter of the United States Hang Gliding Association (PC006).

Neither BAPA nor its officers makes any warranties or representations and they assume no liability concerning the validity of any advice, opinion or recommendations expressed in this material. Readers are encouraged to report errors of fact to the Editor.

Material for publication should be sent to the Editor and may be edited for format or space considerations. Deadline for submissions is the 15th of each month. Submissions can be made via email to : spease@interserv.com. Classified advertisements are free for BAPA members. This newsletter is available on paper or in electronic (.PDF) formats. Send your request for email Ridge Dancer to Pam Brenner at jnpsf@mindspring.com.

BAPA Meeting Minutes of 7 Feb 2001 – submitted by Cheryl Cohen

The meeting opened with a video "The Perfect Mountain".

President Ann Sasaki called the meeting order at 7:30 pm. Nineteen members were present. Steve Rodriguez, the new president of Wings of Rogallo, was also present

Notable Flights

Cheryl reported on flying in Jalisco, Mexico. Jody and Jerry recently flew at Valle de Bravo in Mexico. Jerry also had a nice flight at the new site near Lake Berryessa. Gene had his longest flight at Big Sur.

Officer Reports

Treasurer

Pam reported that we currently have about \$5,000 in the bank.

Secretary

Cheryl sent out 325 membership solicitations to USHGA Region II members. A motion was passed to reimburse her \$110.50 for postage.

Site Director

Gene noted that Bob has reported no new problems at Diablo. There will be a hike up Montara mountain next weekend, weather permitting, to check out the site. No news about meetings for Mt. Baldy.

Dave reported that the grass is growing at the Stables and that he will be talking to the rangers about the renewal of the site permit.

Safety Director

Mark reported that there are a couple of spaces open for the first aid clinic next month.

President

Ann noted that Jules will be showing slides of flying in Turkey at the March meeting and that Jocky Sanderson's SIV video will be shown at the April meeting. She has given a letter about joining BAPA to local instructors to hand out to their students.

Activities

Jerry is updating the calendar. Check it for upcoming events.

Old Business

A motion was approved to accept the minutes of the last meeting.

Ginny brought in a catalog of first aid items. Jules is working on the T-shirts.

New Business

Steve Rodriguez reported that he is negotiating with park rangers to open the east side of Mission Peak for flying. It will be a walk up site.

Jody reported that Red Bull has offered to sponsor a flying event - tentatively for June at Ed Levin. Ideas/volunteers will be needed.

Steve Rodriguez initiated a discussion about improving relations between BAPA and Wings of Rogallo, and paraglider and hang glider pilots in general. The possibility of a joint fly-in was discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20.

No More Narnar 2001 - by Ann Sasaki

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best to find out why rather than decide they're all a bunch of wimps. And, if an experienced local pilot lands and recommends that you don't launch, find out what their reading of the conditions is because they may have recognized something you haven't.

3. Although flying is an individual rather than team sport, getting to know other pilots is enjoyable, educational, and probably increases your safety because people know who you are and what your skill level is and are concerned about your well-being.

4. Having flying mentors and friends who are experienced pilots can be very helpful. You can learn a lot by watching the senior pilots fly and asking them about techniques they use. My experience has been that people are glad to share information and tips that they have learned through many hours of flying.

5. When you fly, always take a good look at any wind indicators such as flags, waves on the water, whitecaps, clouds, fog, birds soaring by, hanggliders, other paragliders and so on. If you see something you don't understand, ask someone what they make of it. For example, if the wind seems very light at launch but there are hanggliders skying out and whitecaps on the water, what does that indicate?

6. Be aware that in the winter months the tide in many places along the coast comes ALL the way up to the bottom of the cliffs. Then there is NO beach. Do not launch and fly over the water when there is no place to land. An experienced pilot sank out from the top of Westlake and ended up in the water because he did not turn back toward landable terrain soon enough.

If you are flying for a long period of time, keep an eye on the tide and observe whether it is coming in or going out in case you have to land on the beach.

Before coming out to fly, check the newspaper or weather radio (162.40 on the VHF

band – most two-meter radios can receive this frequency) to find out what time high tide will be that day so you will know what to expect.

7. Do NOT go in the water. We have witnessed tragic evidence of how dangerous this can be. A pilot who landed in the water drowned after being dragged under by his wing, reserve and harness. The efforts of a number of people to save the pilot were unsuccessful. The tragedy was that he could have lived if he had unhooked from his equipment immediately.

If you end up in the water UNHOOK immediately, DUMP your harness, reserve and glider and live to regret the loss. Be sure your harness has quick-release connectors so you can get out quickly. It costs about \$80 to have old-style connectors replaced with quick-release ones. (However, note that if the quick-release buckles get sand in them, they will jam. In that case, your only option is to cut the harness straps with a knife.)

“..in the winter months the tide in many places along the coast comes ALL the way up to the bottom of the cliffs. Then there is NO beach.”

Remember that you can get dragged under by your wing and equipment and drown and also that the water is extremely cold so you will be subject to hypothermia unless you can get out within minutes of going in. Don't risk

drowning by trying to retrieve your equipment. Your life is worth more than a couple thousand dollars.

8. Carry a good knife in case you have to cut lines, risers, speed bar lines or harness straps. The Gerber River Shorty is a knife which will cut through risers and does not have a sharp point so you are less likely to stab yourself. Hook knives are good for cutting lines and even risers and provide the necessary bracing that you need to slice them cleanly. Make sure that any knife you carry is protected from rust and that the blade is sharp.

Also tie the knife itself (not just the sheath that it sits in) to your harness so that you don't lose the knife if you drop it. Some coastal pilots fly with two knives - one on their person (in a flightsuit pocket) in case they are on the ground and go to help someone and one on the harness in case they themselves go in the water

while flying.

Remember that no one PLANS to go in the water. You must make every effort not to go in the water, but if you do, you need to have safety equipment to assist you.

9. Test the conditions as you fly. Keep your eye on the water to see if whitecaps or wind lines are developing. Watch carefully for fog moving in and dropping lower. It can take only seconds for a white-out condition to develop so you should land before the fog is close to you.

10. Never fly into thick fog. Even if you can still make out the wings below you, they probably can't see you up in the fog. If you pop out unexpectedly, you can cause a midair collision because others don't know you are there. Plus, the chances of visibility dropping to zero are pretty high if you are already surrounded by fog.

One pilot launched on her first coastal soaring flight when the fog ceiling was low and proceeded to go up in the fog and get blown back over the top of Westlake. The pilot saw power lines below her as she went up over the edge and landed next to Skyline Drive. Needless to say, a better flight plan would have been not to launch at all if unfamiliar with flying the coast and staying below the fog. Although an experienced pilot advised her not to launch, this person ignored the advice.

Conditions change quickly at the coast! If the wind seems to be getting stronger, move out of the lift band and plan your landing. Don't expect the wind to drop off, because often it will keep building. Use your speedbar, adjust your trim, penetrate out, use Big Ears and come down immediately. If you are high and wait too long, you may get blown back over the top of Westlake. Even if that doesn't happen, you will have to face the problem of trying not to get dragged when you land.

12. If the wind has picked up while you were in the air, land at a low spot rather than trying to top land at launch where the wind is much stronger. At the Dump, the middle road is a good spot when it gets really strong. In the winter, avoid the beach as there is often not much beach.

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A Christmas Surprise - by Chris Jones

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arrive around 8:15 or so and I mean everyone! By the time we were boarding the tram, there were probably 30 pilots. Anyway, I bought my one-way ticket of 15\$, handed my glider to the guy who was loading the top of the tram and boarded for the 9 minute trip to the top. Reports from the top indicated a light wind blowing from the east...Perfect! On the way up, I was briefed about the typical flight plan from Scott Harris, who pointed out where the house thermals are, what to do and, more importantly, what not to do and where not to go.

Actually, there are not many hazards as far as trees and rotors, but you gotta stay high and out and not get too low. For any of you who have not been to Jackson Hole, the Grand Tetons are a spectacular, awe-inspiring mountain range running North and South on the West of the Snake river valley, which makes up Jackson Hole. This whole valley region is home to some very big air. Rendezvous Peak borders the valley on the Northwestern side, Phillips Ridge on the Southwestern side and Snow King Mountain ski area on the Southeastern side. These are the main flying sites, with probably a dozen or more additional mountain launches scattered about.

The main point is that no matter which direction the wind is blowing on any given day, one should be able to fly somewhere in the valley as long as it's not too strong. The main launch sits on the summit at 10,450', the vertical distance to the LZ is approximately 4,139' and it's really steep. The

launch is basically on the slope of the glacial bowl. There's only about two trees in the whole bowl, so there's plenty of room for a half dozen gliders to be laid out simultaneously. The LZ is easy! Although you should definitely try to land in the designated area, which is probably one half square mile, you can literally land anywhere in the valley as it is all green fields.

Back on the tram, one fellow was very interested in what we were going to use our backpacks for. He really had no idea that we were paraglider pilots. I explained to him what we were planning to do. As it turns out, he was a photographer riding up to photograph the valley. He asked for my name and address and promised that if he got some good pictures, he would send them to me. I thanked him and never saw him again.

I laid out my glider, careful not to sever any of my risers on the sharp limestone shale, which made up the terrain on the bowl. After watching a few successful launches, I waited for a small cycle and pulled my wing gently in a small 5 mph breeze, turned and ran like hell. At such high altitudes the air is very thin and you really gotta run! In an instant, I was off, the ground disappearing beneath my feet. Being an early morning launch (approximately 9:15), there was not much thermal activity. I headed out towards the valley as the mountain dropped away sharply below me. Soon, I was at least a thousand feet over the mid-mountain knob and house thermal. Started going up, pulled down a little right brake pressure and got going back up in a mild thermal. There were

several more of these on the way down. As I got lower, I began to plan my approach pattern. The LZ is in a huge field next to the ski resort parking lot and one cannot help but fly over Teton village on their approach.

This was truly an amazing flight, lasting nearly 28 minutes. And this was considered a sled ride by Jackson Hold standards. I went back up again for another. My 11am flight was equally amazing, although quite a bit more scary as the thermals were more developed and much stronger. The entire flight lasting 48 minutes. Quite an unbelievable day in the mountains! Two days later, I went on to fly Philips ridge and then we headed out to Lakeview, Oregon for the 4th of July Fly In.

I continued to tell the tale of my flight at Rendezvous Peak since that day last summer, but I had been really bummed cause' I didn't have any pictures from those flights and therefore no proof of my flights. Who would ever believe that I really did it? Many were skeptical. Then one day on December 27, 2000, I opened my mailbox to discover a Christmas card from Jackson Hole addressed to me with no return address.

I opened the card from Bob Wilkins and his wife Carol wishing me season's greetings and this is what fell out....



Chris' Christmas Surprise(s)

- photos submitted by C. Jones

Site Views - by Gene Pfeiffer

This month Dave Sondergeld has written about the Stables. I can remember my first paragliding lesson with Scott Amy in 1992 at the Funston Bowl. I talked my son and brother-in-law into joining me for my first lesson. We all had some good short flights to the large beach except for one flight by my brother-in-law. He came down short and immediately was dragged for about 100 yards through the iceplant. My son was lying on the beach laughing. Scott said that is what we call "para-plowing." Only my brother-in-law's pride was bruised. To this day he is still not interested in trying paragliding again. That was my only lesson in 1992.

Several months ago, Dave S., Mark, Wally, and I hiked over to the Funston Bowl to see if it would be usable for training. It was determined that too much erosion and overgrowth has taken place to make it worthwhile.

Heads up at the Dumps as Phil reported that soil (trash) samples are being taken to determine the depth of the landfill deposits. Several poles are sticking up in the area. The latest word is that the construction crews have halted their work until the soil dries out more for their equipment to operate.

At the February BAPA meeting I invited Steve Rodrigues (the new president-elect of the Wings of Rogallo) to attend our meeting, as he wants to develop a closer relationship with

the paragliding community. He is also the chairman for the Mission Peak Committee. He is submitting to the Parks department a proposal for launching off the backside of Mission Peak. As it will only be a walk-up launch site, it will mainly be used by paragliders. Jody and John W. will be assisting him on launch selection.

Bob Clem reported no additional problems at Mt. Diablo since pilots are not now leaving their cars at the Juniper campground. He is going to be in communication soon with the supervising ranger for our annual renewal of the site insurance policy.

Site Reviews - by Dave Sondergeld

Ann asked me to write an article about the stables and prepped me with a few questions that would be good to discuss. I'll answer each of the questions and throw some history into the article as well. Ann's first item was "Describe a perfect moment at the stables." I'm not sure how many of you know that I live across the street from launch. A perfect moment for me is probably not unlike any of yours, when I walk across the street and am heading down to launch the combination of anticipation, the feel of the westerly wind hitting my face, seeing the ocean and the gray streaks of wind sweeping across the water, every time is a perfect moment for me.

Enough mush, so what is there to know about the stables? Paraglider pilots have been flying the stables since 1989, (I joined the small group in 1990). Our use of the coast was first frowned upon by the Parks department due to pilots and instructors teaching classes all along the cliffs from the Funston bowl south to Westlake, while trampling the ice plant and eroding land wherever launches were set up. With the Parks strong suggestion, we set up one main launch where the site is today. At the time the cliff was the property of the Olympic golf course that officially did not sanction our flying but unofficially allowed us to do so. Once the Olympic Club gave an easement to the GGNRA for management of the Bay Ridge trail, the launch fell under a park law stating "All powerless flight must have a permit for launching and landing". With this change we applied for a permit and a year later and politics left for a longer article we had a site permit. Our permit

was, as requested by the Parks a mirror of the rules established for the hang gliders. In net an abbreviated version of our regulations are as follows:

All pilots need to have a site sticker or be sponsored

An intermediate rating is needed to obtain a sticker

Novices may be sponsored by a BAPA appointed sponsor

No Tandem flying is permitted(aarg!)

Westlake sticker is needed to fly the Westlake cliffs

Site boundary is open to the south and our north boundary is the small ridge at the south end of the Funston bowl.

This is a perfect time for more of Ann's questions. "What is the launch altitude and what does the terrain look like in general?" The launch is located on the lower cliffs just north of the horse stable parking lot. This is approximately a third of a mile south of Fort Funston. The best access down is on the horse trail, which starts on the western side of the stables and heads down and north. The launch area is somewhere around 40-50 feet wide and runs 100 feet in length back from the cliff's edge and sits on a lot of sand. We grow grass in the winter to help solidify the ground and slow down erosion. The launch is a sheer cliff launch eighty feet above the beach and generally faces WSW. Best winds are 10 - 18 mph and can be flown SW to NW but is tricky as the wind gets more cross. In the summer months the wind more often than not is out of the west

and late fall to early spring we wait an fly on either 1.6 or post frontal conditions when storms are rolling through. An interesting comparison is on these westerly summer days it very often is southwest at the dumps. The more northern location as with Funston which is closer to the bay and the Golden Gate has more west wind due to the funnel effect of the bay. The cliffs that run south from launch are all around the 80 - 100' vertical until you get to Westlake. There are no hazards per se to the site except for the normal cliff conditions you should always be aware of such as the mighty rotor. There have been numerous articles about safe coastal flying published in this newsletter but here are a few suggestions when flying the site:

Always fly in front of the cliff

In cross wind conditions do not hug close to the cliff and watch out for side ridge rotor conditions. When landing, land on the front half of launch. The rotor has dropped many a pilot flying in on a deep approach.

Generally do not fly when white caps are present.

Be aware of wind shear conditions. (details to be in a separate article)

Have fun!

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No More Narnar 2001 - by Ann Sasaki

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13. Practice dropping your wing quickly so you don't get dragged when you land. Some pilots swear by using B risers which takes a fair amount of force and others prefer Cs which requires less strength. Using the brake lines tends to lift you off the ground and then slam you back down when the wing deflates. You are also more likely to get dragged trying to drop the wing with brake lines because it takes longer to deflate.

In high winds the difference between being dragged into something or not can be the speed with which you are able to drop your wing upon landing. You may have had a fine flight but get injured upon landing because you can't deflate your wing quickly enough when you land.

14. Check the wind direction - sometimes it switches and if you fail to realize this you can sink out, risk being rotated by hugging the wrong face of the cliff or have a downwind landing. Check the streamers and other indicators as you fly. Do not fly by formula, each day the conditions may be different.

15. Watch out for shears. Often the wind at ground level is from the SW but the clouds up high are scudding by from the NW. This means that there is a shear and there will be turbulence where the two air masses meet. Pilots should be cautious about shear turbulence and also not try to get up in the upper air mass unless they really know what they are doing.

Hanggliders often ride the shears at the coast but they have superior penetration and glide. Paragliders may have trouble getting down or penetrating forward if they decide to try to get out of the shear.

15a. Another shear-related item is the fact that the wind and lift can cut out abruptly when there is a shear. Just a few days ago we launched into good conditions which picked up quickly and howled for about one hour and then died abruptly. It went from too strong to launch to not strong enough to kite in the matter of less than five

minutes. Think about what will happen if you are in the middle of Westlake with very strong winds (so you are staying well below the top of the cliff) and then the wind just cuts out. On a straight glide, you may not make it back to the Dump if you weren't very high to begin with. This is yet another reason not to fly too far from the Dump if there is no beach. You will have no landing options (unless you can make it to the big gap but then you'll have to wait there until the tide recedes before walking back).

My rule of thumb is that I won't get further than an easy straight glide from the Dump if the beach is limited. I have had a shear completely back off on me twice when I was just at cliff

"One of the most important things to do when approaching any unfamiliar site is to ask the locals what they think of the current conditions."

level and was able to glide back to the Dump. Other pilots did not make it but there was a beach so they landed there. Do not underestimate the speed at which a shear can move in and out.

16. Don't go to any huge cliff like Westlake until you have considerable experience flying the coast. Before you go, be familiar with staying on the outer edge of the lift band and increasing your penetration if necessary. Go the first time escorted by your flying mentor or a friend who is experienced and conservative, preferably in radio contact with them. Stay below the top and out away from the cliff. The lift and blow-back potential are incredible on a 500' sheer cliff on a strong day. Do not discover this by getting sucked up on top and having to avoid deadly power lines and major roads with lots of traffic!

17. Until you are extremely familiar with coastal flying and the specific site, don't fly above the top of a large cliff like Westlake because the wind gradient can make it much windier at the top. Stay low (like halfway down at road level at Westlake) and out if the winds are strong. If the wind is light, stay halfway between the road and the top of the cliff, but not above the top, also staying well out in front of the cliff. Make sure there is a beach in case it gets light and you sink out and need to land.

18. Stay out of deep bowls because the wind will be even stronger there due to the air funneling into the bowl. Once you have gone to back of the bowl, you may not be able to pene-

trate back out. The bowl at the upper cliff level to the south of Walker Ridge is particularly hard to get out of. Do not go back there along the cliffs on a strong day.

This also applies to large gaps in a ridge. Don't get sucked in and stuck. Move away from the ridge as you cross a large gap so you don't suffer from gap suck.

19. Watch out for rotors at the corners of a gap or bowl if the wind is cross. Don't cut way in to a deep bowl or gap. Many people have felt turbulence in the first gap just north of the Dump where there is a big slide. Pilots sometimes carve deep into the gap to catch lift. If they are not cautious about the wind direction and rotors, as well as the fact that the air sort of swirls around in this gap, they can experience severe turbulence. At least two pilots have landed on the slide because of misjudging the turbulence.

20. Watch out for rotors, such as the Muskel Rock rotor on days when the wind is WSW and the point rotor at Westlake when the wind is WNW. A rotor can easily collapse part of your wing which is dangerous if you are close to the ground or the cliff. Do not go into the shadow of a cliff when the wind is coming from the opposite direction and do not land in the path of a rotor. Adjust your flight path and landing area.

21. A mudslide at Last Chance bowl has diminished the lift in the bowl and the point at the south end of Westlake has been cut back so it no longer sticks out as abruptly. However, don't be fooled - there is still a rotor at the point on NW days so give the point plenty of clearance as you go around it. Be sure to turn back soon enough if you are not going to make it unless there is a big beach and you plan to land there.

22. Be careful where you land these days. The new slides and cliff edges may be unstable and what looks like solid ground may not be.

23. Remember that if the wind is cross and you are having trouble penetrating, you can turn downwind. So for example, on a SW day, you turn NW and due to less wind resistance can then penetrate out of the lift band and come down for a landing. Turning straight into the wind may cause you to be

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No More Narnar 2001 - by Ann Sasaki

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blown backwards if the wind has become very strong.

Also, remember that you can't exactly run downwind if the wind is straight in from the West. If you turn downwind and you are at Westlake, you will either hit the cliff or go over the top and end up trying to avoid the power lines, roads, houses and other obstacles. So don't count on going downwind as a bail out if the wind is straight in.

24. Know the performance characteristics of your wing with you on it. Remember that the same wing in the same size, performs differently under different loads. If you are light on your wing, be more cautious about speed and penetration, blow-back and getting-dragged potential. You need to fly differently and land sooner than someone who loads the wing more heavily and has good penetration.

25. When you call the windtaker and get the Fort Funston readings, it's probably wise to add a few miles per hour to the wind speed if it's coming straight in from the West because the windtaker is located pretty far back from the cliff. Also, be aware that the conditions can be quite different at Fort Funston than they are a few miles to the south.

There are many days when one coastal site is soarable but another only a few miles away is not. Therefore, when you arrive at a site, evaluate the current conditions rather than assuming anything.

26. Don't scratch really close to the cliff unless you have lots of experience. Pilots who are unfamiliar with a site and its conditions often end up hitting the cliff when they try to scratch too close. In one case a very new pilot watched very old pilots scratching at Walker Ridge in light conditions and then tried to duplicate this and ended up hitting hard and breaking an ankle. Be realistic about your skills and experience. It isn't worth it to rush into things.

27. Always carefully clear your turns and follow ridge rules. Pass to the right when meeting an oncoming glider. If overtaking a glider going in the same direction, you must pass on the inside of the ridge or turn back. Do not pass the glider on the outside because if the glider turns you will have a

midair. The pilot in front and the pilot below have right of way.

28. Watch out for gliders that travel at different speeds from you. A small person who is light on their glider is going a LOT slower than a big person heavy on their wing.

In case you wonder how the heck you would know whether a person is light or heavy on their glider, or even if they are a big or small person, this is part of getting to know who is flying the site regularly and what kind of wings they fly. Being aware of who is in the air is important! When you get to know the various pilots, you start picking up all sorts of information just by looking in the sky and seeing who is doing what. For example, if the old timers are all low and outside, it's strong. If they are all staying inside the Dump and not going north, it's probably very South.

When you know the pilots, you'll also know what kind of wing they fly and how they load the wing through your various conversations and observation. This will allow you to know that it's a bad idea to launch right in back of someone who is really light on their wing because you will immediately overtake them and have to turn back. You need to give this person more room because they're going to be traveling much slower than you will be. By the same token, the light person will be careful not to turn in front of a heavy person and then block their path.

29. Watch out for traffic in the air. Especially at the Dump, the launches and airspace can be crowded. Pilots should not block the launch if there are others waiting. They should set up and launch within a reasonable amount of time. Once launched, pilots should not hover right in front of the launch if there are others about to launch. Also, on light WSW days, when everyone is using Walker Ridge to bench up, pilots should get up and move away to Westlake or elsewhere. They should not endlessly go back and forth at cliff level at Walker Ridge because this makes it impossible for others to bench up.

30. Do not wake other pilots. Remember that if you fly lower and outside (upwind) another pilot you will wake them. This is especially true if you pendulum back and forth, are heavy on your wing or are deep in the brakes. Pass by

other pilots with plenty of room - wakes often cause the other pilot to drop several feet due to the turbulence. This is not good if they are close to the ridge.

Pilots who don't often fly the coast seem to be unaware of wakes. Entering a spiral dive when there is another pilot in between you and the cliff is inconsiderate (as well as dangerous if you track back toward the cliff). The pilot caught between you and the cliff is going to get severely waked as you spiral down by them.

31. Practice your skills often. Ground handling is one of the keys to success in flying, particularly flying at the coast. Learn to seamlessly inflate, kite, walk around with and launch your wing. Practice touch n' gos so you can land precisely and handle your wing upon landing. Move from the air to the ground and back again with the smoothest transitions. Stay current so your muscle memory is right there and you feel like the wing is part of your body.

32. Fly with a radio and talk to your flying friends while in the air. This can be a good way to discuss any changes in conditions or things that other pilots have spotted.

33. Know how to get emergency help. Unfortunately if you use a cell phone to dial 911, your call will go to the CHP in Richmond before it gets to local resources. You need to specify the location of the Dump which is

at the end of Palmetto Road coming from Pacifica. The official name of the Dump is the Mussel Rock Transfer Station. When you call 911 it is best to use this name as they won't know

where "the Dump" is. There is also a direct number to call the Coast Guard which is (415) 331-8427.

34. Carry a copy of the Coastal Site Advisory and the Dump Checklist so that you can give these to new or visiting pilots who ask you for information on flying the coast. (These will be published in an upcoming Ridge Dancer.)

The coast is enchanting and enriching. Its many moods and conditions are worth some study. Fly often and fly safely!

"Its many moods and conditions are worth some study."

Recently, our Site Director had a conversation with a pilot at Ed Levin on the way up to launch. The pilot described a water landing that he experienced as a P1 pilot in about 3 feet of water. He didn't believe that there was much danger because he got himself between the glider and the waves and was able to pull his wing in without unhooking. He said that as a windsurfer and swimming instructor, he was comfortable in the water.

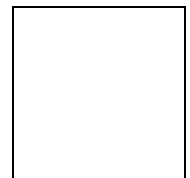
I'm writing about this because this misinformation could cause injury or worse. The dangers of being in the water and attached to a paraglider, even three feet of water, cannot be overstated. When a paraglider is in the water, it will fill in a matter of seconds. When this occurs, the wing that floated in the air minutes before becomes a liquid mass weighing thousands of pounds that will move with the currents and under-

“He didn't believe that there was much danger because he got himself between the glider and the waves and was able to pull his wing in without unhooking”

USHGA Region 2 Resources

Observers

On the web at -
www.ushga.org



Examiners

Jack Hodges	650.728.0938	
Ed Stein	650.367.9707	
Kathy Wilde	650.556.1320	wildblu@aol.com
Scott Gasparian	650.218.3984	gaspo@igi.org

Unsafe Landings - by Mark Boudoures

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and after flying downwind, could not penetrate back and flew into a rotor. The second pilot tried to bench up in light conditions when there was no bail-out landing area. A notable difference between these two incidents is that the second pilot knew to get out of her harness immediately and this was the difference between living and dying.

One of the first rules of landing

should be that landing in the water is never an option. If conditions are such that sinking out is at all possible, stay in an area where there is a safe place to land if necessary. If you end up in the water due to a bad decision or series of bad decisions, getting out of your harness is your first and highest priority. Quick release buckles on your harness are a must and a good knife that can cut risers and lines is essential. Survival is first, saving your gear shouldn't even be a consideration. As my

instructor once wrote, "You can always fly tomorrow if you didn't kill yourself today". I hope that anyone who hears another pilot speak lightly of "Water Landings" will relay these incidents.

Fly safely and keep learning.

Site Reviews - by Dave Sondergeld

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Ann also asks about how many pilots regularly fly at the stables. I'd have to say the numbers dramatically dropped off years ago when the site was closed down for a year and we all started flying from the dumps. Once the site was reopened the numbers have not come back. On average there are a handful of regulars and the occasional out of town visitor. I fly on average four days a week in the summer months, which has the more consistent westerly wind. I'd say that I launch alone about 25% of the time, I have maybe 1 or 2 companions

say 70 % of the time and on the rare occasion we have a few more. In other words it is not crowded.

I'll close with one of Ann's last items - "Describe one of your most memorable flights". Like my starting statement of a memorable moment, they happen daily. What I'll do instead is describe many of the experiences you can have while flying the coast. Like, the rare occasion when you can soar above the fog and watch it forming below you, marine life sightings including; dolphin, whales, seal lions, otters, sharks, pelicans, or how about soaring with the locals (Red tail hawks, as well as fel-

low pilots), watching sunset from 800 feet, the view itself of the pacific ocean stretching south from Devils Slide and North to Point Reyes and I'll end with the pure peaceful feeling of flying back to launch from Westlake on a glassy day, when it is so perfectly smooth you can barely feel the wind in your wing as you glide across the sky...cheers, Dave Sondergeld. With hopes of sharing the air with many of you soon!

Trips and Stuff - by Jerry Schimke

(Continued from page 2)

there are any dropouts.

The High Risin'Fly-In at Sun Valley, Idaho takes place from March 22-25. The second annual Dave Bridges Mountain Race is scheduled for the 24th. This is a contest that combines foot racing and speed paragliding with spot landing. First Prize is \$1,000. The race starts at 6,000 feet at the base of the chairlift, goes to 9,000 feet at the top of the lift where launch takes place and ends with a spot in the landing zone at 6,000 feet. Great contest! But you don't have to participate in the race to have a great time. I was flying there last year and my flights ranged from 32 minutes to one hour and 20 minutes. So you see, thermalling is a definite possibility, and you can always ski if you get blown out.

Al Baldini has set the last weekend in March (March 31/April 1) as the date for the Spring Fling at Elk Mountain. Rain date is April 6/7. As usual, bring lots of wood for the fire, food to share, music makers and other

goodies to eat and drink.

On the weekend of April 20-22, a group of BAPA members is planning to congregate at Dunlap for an informal fly-in. You need to be P-3 or better to fly at Dunlap and there is a \$10/day fee to land at the flight park. Also, there is a \$15 fee per campsite in the flight park. Contact Dave Sondergeld at (650) 756-4530 for more details.

Starthistle Fly-In at Woodrat Mt. in Ruch, Oregon is scheduled for Memorial Day weekend, May 26-28. I'm told that both the mid-launch and the main top launch have been completely rebuilt and expanded as a result of gravel mining in the area. Chris Wick (541) 899-7327, wickz@uswest.net claims the launches now rival European launches in size and contour. The Rogue Valley Hang Gliding Association always does their best to make Starthistle a great party, and the flying can be really good.

There is preliminary talk with Red Bull about a big foot-launched flying event in June. Probably at Ed Levin, the event would include speed rac-

ing, acrobatics, precision flying, the works. Jody Lucas (650) 424-9704 has more information on the development of this event. Should it come about, many opportunities for volunteer work will present themselves.

Farther out, there's always Lakeview for July 4 (actually June 29-July 3, this year). And in August, Al Baldini is talking up a trip to Golden, British Columbia. He relates stories about the great cross-country opportunities there. Also in August we'll see the Fifth Annual Hat Creek Flying Festival, scheduled for the 4-6th. Pat Blackburn says there will be vendors, bands, etc. in addition to the traditionally great Hat Creek glassoff.

If you have future flying events scheduled, or if you desire to have specific events put on the calendar, please let me know.

And meanwhile, enjoy the holidays!

Have Fun. Fly Safely.

