



The President's Corner

Nothing to report for August.

Notes from the Board

There was no Board meeting in August.

Safety

The following is a safety tip—before fastening your seatbelt, check to see that it is properly fastened to the glider at the other end of the straps. Be sure to read below under *Preflight Inspection and Briefings*.

Instructor Talk

Preflight Inspection and Briefings:

As a student or rated pilot, you are required to be familiar with the Federal Aviation Regulations (FARs). I would like to point out two such regulations with which you all should be well familiar, 91.7 and 91.103. Paragraph 91.7 states:

§91.7 Civil aircraft airworthiness.

(a) No person may operate a civil aircraft unless it is in an airworthy condition.

(b) The pilot in command of a civil aircraft is responsible for determining whether that aircraft is in condition for safe flight. The pilot in command shall discontinue the flight when unairworthy mechanical, electrical or structural conditions occur.

In essence, this regulation requires that the pilot-in-command (PIC) perform a preflight inspection of the aircraft prior to every flight. Arguably for gliders, there are elements of a complete preflight inspection that can be omitted under the condition that the PIC is satisfied that a complete and satisfactory preflight inspection has been performed the same day as the proposed flight and that the aircraft has not, subsequent to this inspection, been exposed to any condition or event that could alter its airworthiness condition. That said, there remain preflight items that require inspection prior to every flight. Some of these items are covered by the preflight checklist. Others are not. I suggest that, as a minimum, the following items should be checked prior to every flight unless the same PIC flew the previous flight:

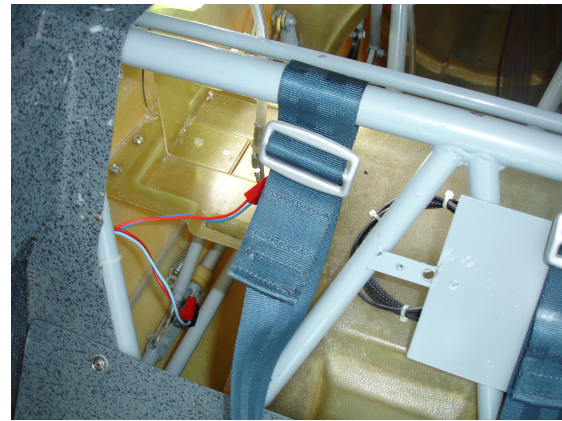
- Verify that all required documents are on board the glider.

- Especially in a K-21, check under the front seat cushion and under the seat pan to be sure there are no unwanted ballast weights in the glider.
- Check for loose items in the cockpit, assure that all loose objects are secured.
- Check seatbelts to assure that they are securely in place, particularly to see that the harnesses are secure at their connection points to the glider. There should be at least one inch of loose tab (see the figure) at the attachment end of every strap.
- If you are flying solo in the K-21, you must be sure that everything is secure in the rear seat and that the rear canopy is securely latched.
- If you are flying with a passenger, you must brief the passenger on ingress and egress and use of seatbelts.



Again, I emphasize that I am inspired by recently having seen all of the above check items neglected by seated pilots preparing for a launch. I suggest that you add these items to your preflight—or rather pre-ingress—checklist. Anyone pushing or hooking up a glider should also double-check these items as much as possible and inform the PIC of anything that has been overlooked.

The figure below shows a shoulder harness strap properly installed with a minimally adequate tab after I adjusted it. This is safe. The next figure shows a shoulder strap as I found it in the Discus while preparing the glider for its annual condition inspection. This strap is essentially unattached.



Notice that there is no tab showing at all. It is not safe. The next figure shows the lap belts



equally disconnected. A few good bounces, maybe in rotor chasing wave while on tow, and you become FOD (foreign object debris) in the cockpit. Do you really think that the canopy will keep you in the glider in the event of a $-2g$ bump? The



Discus is flown only by rated pilots, reminding all of us that we need to be thorough in our preflight inspections. The condition inspection on both of the gliders showed **all eight connection points** were essentially unconnected! Embarrassingly, all connection points are fully visible before entering the glider. Our eyes are wonderful things, but they

have to be open to be useful.

FAR 91.103 states in part:

§91.103 Preflight action.

Each pilot in command shall, before beginning a flight, become familiar with all available information concerning that flight. This information must include—

(a) For a flight under IFR or a flight not in the vicinity of an airport, weather reports and forecasts, ...

This regulation requires that you have weather information relative to your planned flight and that you are aware of any other relevant information such as temporary flight restrictions (TFRs), which can pop up at any time. It is strongly suggested that you obtain the forecast weather for the period of your flight and check for TFRs that could affect your planned activities. For example, if you plan a cross-country flight to W73 (Mid Atlantic Soaring), you must check the status of P-40 and R-4009. You should leave a paper trail regarding your pursuit of this information, which can be accomplished either by calling Flight Service at 800wxbrief or logging into 1800wxbrief.com. You will need your aircraft N-number (e.g., N341KS). Remember, for PIC flights at KFRR, you must have completed the FAA online Special Awareness Training Course (ALC-405).

I would add here that whoever is in the front seat (K-21) needs to be aware that the gas strut cannot be counted on to hold the canopy open, particularly when the towplane taxis in front of the glider. If the canopy is open during taxi or hook-up, it must be hand held to prevent slamming down.

FAR 91.107 also presents some preflight requirements if you are flying with a passenger:

§91.107 Use of safety belts, shoulder harnesses, and child restraint systems.

(a) Unless otherwise authorized by the Administrator—

(1) No pilot may take off a U.S.-registered civil aircraft... unless the pilot in command of that aircraft ensures that each person on board is briefed on how to fasten and unfasten that person's safety belt and, if installed, shoulder harness.

(2) No pilot may cause to be moved on the surface, take off, or land a U.S.-registered civil aircraft... unless the pilot in command of that aircraft ensures that each person on board has been notified to fasten his or her safety belt and, if installed, his or her shoulder harness.

This FAR makes clear that a glider may not be moved on the ground with a person or persons in it unless those persons have their seatbelts fastened, and that the PIC is responsible for briefing the passenger on the use of their seatbelt. In addition, to prevent damage to the canopy, it is imperative that a passenger be briefed on proper handling of the canopy, especially how to open and close it and that it should not be touched otherwise.

I feel compelled to harp on one final point. It's time that we take responsibility for caring for our equipment. Parachutes should not be left in the gliders. The hangar attracts vermin, and vermin like to set up home in a glider, particularly a glider that is not flown regularly. And vermin like to chew on soft things like parachute material. The parachutes should be hung on the wall as shown here in order to prevent easy access to vermin. Never put the parachute or its carry bag on the ground or the floor of the hangar even for a moment (this can allow insects, spiders, etc. access to the parachute), never get the parachute wet (if you do, it must be repacked as soon as possible—that would be your responsibility) and be sure that it is properly folded into the carry bag and hung on the wall back where it was at the start of the day.

If you won't have time to put the equipment away properly when you are done using it, please consider not using it.

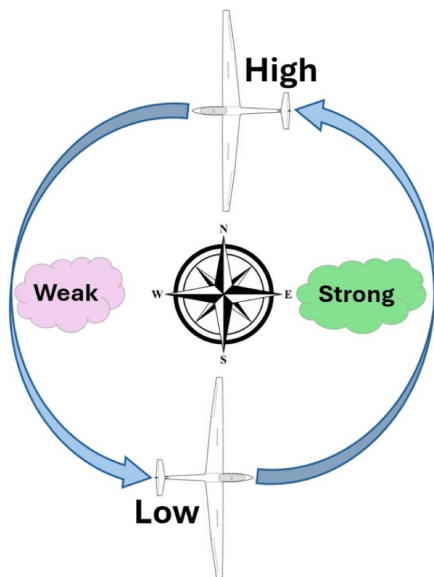
[George Hazelrigg]



Food for Thought—Centering and Sharing a Thermal:

[John Noss, Chief Instructor]

When we find ourselves sharing a thermal with another glider (or many gliders), we sometimes see ourselves higher on one side, and lower on the other side, relative to the other gliders, because we are not perfectly centered in the thermal. Our instinct is to proclaim the ‘high’ side as the direction to move the circle in order to center the thermal, but that is a trap. When you are on the high side, it means that you have just finished flying through the strongest half of the thermal, and are about to fly through the weakest half. So the actual strongest side of the thermal was really about a quarter of a turn behind you!



That said, remember that when sharing the airspace with other gliders in close proximity, you do not have the only vote on how to center the thermal. Normal gagging safety and etiquette rules still apply:

- Fly your own glider first, do not fixate exclusively on others.
- Don't hit anybody.
- Don't go belly up or lose sight of anybody who could be a threat.
- Don't rely on somebody else to alter course to avoid you.
- Don't do anything that would force somebody else to avoid you.
- Understand the geometry of lead, pure, and lag pursuit.

- Look out for other pilots who may not be flying safely or with situation awareness.
- If it is beyond your comfort level, exit.
- Never exit abruptly or unpredictably.
- If entering an established gaggle, aim initially for the side where the other gliders' tails are pointed at you, be prepared to lag the turn (go wide) or change altitude to deconflict if necessary.

Meet the Chiefs

As noted in the previous Skylines, the Skyline Soaring Club has roughly 100 active members some 30 of whom volunteer extra time beyond their regularly scheduled duties (DO, ADO, towpilot, DI). This month, I will introduce you to our “Chiefs.” [Editor]

John Noss — Chief Instructor: The duties of the chief flight instructor are laid out broadly in the ops manual—basically oversight of our instructor cadre, student load and progress, and the syllabus. We are extremely fortunate to have so many highly qualified and experienced instructors in a club of our size, roughly one out of six members are instructors! Well over half of all club flights are with an instructor on board in a two-seater, so we stay busy. The club takes on as many student members as we can fairly handle, and I read every student progress report (as do most instructors). I also subscribe to every feed I can find for relevant updates on regulations, soaring community issues, safety, training, and technology. I'm thankful for the amazing set of online tools that Piet Barber has developed over the years, which make it possible for us to do so much instruction while maintaining continuity and consistency. This is not my first job with the club, I've been the safety officer, a board member, and president. But every day I fly I am reminded how much the club depends on all the volunteers who come together to make everything work safely.



Mike Ash — Chief

Duty Roster: As duty roster chief, I manage the schedule for the club's regular weekend ops, putting together the regular bi-monthly duty roster updates and occasionally tackling issues that come up in between. Originally, I wrote and maintained a custom scheduling program that took in everyone's availability, attempted to balance various factors like fairness, and tried to generate a good schedule. These days, that part is handled by a module in the club's new web site, which has almost entirely automated the process. Those emails requesting blackout dates are still 100% human, though.



Carlos Troncoso — Chief Duty Officer: As Chief Duty Officer, I oversee Skyline's Duty Officer program by training and mentoring new Duty Officers and Assistant Duty Officers. I develop procedures and training materials, work with the Membership Officer to identify future candidates, and appoint new DOs and ADOs once they complete the training.

I joined Skyline Soaring Club in 2010 and earned my Private Glider certificate here. I later earned my Commercial Glider rating at Bermuda High Soaring in 2015. I currently serve on Skyline's Board of Directors. Outside the club, I work in information technology for the Organization of American States in Washington, D.C.

I've learned a tremendous amount from Skyline members over the years, both in the air and on the ground. Their willingness to share their time, experience, and knowledge is one of the things that makes Skyline such a special place. Serving as Chief Duty Officer is one small way I can give something back to a club that has given me so much.

Shane Neitzey — Chief Towpilot

The Student's Desk

John Noss provided the following, which I believe should be of interest, especially to students who are beginning their solo flights and to the instructors who are endorsing their badge achievements.

I had a couple of phone conversations with Debbie Montes at the SSA office today, thought I should pass on a few obscure rules about A/B/C and bronze badge paperwork. If you read the fine print on the white instructor checklist side of the badge application card, it says that the ABC program must be completed before awarding a bronze badge. In the past, if you wanted to just get a C badge or Bronze badge, they didn't care if you had not done the earlier stages. Now it is required. So if you want to award a C badge, they have to be awarded an A and B badge, either before or at the same time (you can circle A and B and C and send in one card). You cannot award a bronze badge unless A and B and C are also awarded, either before or at the same time. Debbie is the person who processes A, B, C, and bronze badges at SSA, Rollin Hasness still does the higher awards. For the A, B, C badges they will accept a scanned image of both sides of the signed (by SSA instructor and recipient) white card via email (to dmontes@ssa.org).

Operations

A note to all persons intending to use the Front Royal–Warren County Airport (KFRR): Repaving of the runway and taxiway for this airport could begin as early as mid-September (see the note from John Bert below). Very little advance notice of commencement of these activities will likely be provided. Thus, all potential users should be prepared for closure of the airport for a period of up to two months, possibly more depending on the weather. During this closure, the Skyline Soaring Club will likely move operations to Burner field (VG55) in Woodstock or Grant County (W99) in Petersburg, WV.

The following is a special notice to pilots operating from fields other than KFRR in the event that you plan to fly into our home airport.

- Note that gliders use right-hand traffic in order to remain unconflicted with airplane traffic, which uses left-hand traffic. All gliders flying with the Skyline Soaring Club have radios and announce takeoffs and landings on 123.00. Expect that gliders will be using runway 28 unless winds dictate the use of runway 10. Also,

gliders are approved for use of the grass area to the north of the runway for landing.

- Be aware that skydiving operations may be conducted concurrent with SSC operations depending on the weather. Operations are announced on 123.00 beginning about five minutes prior to jump time and at *jumpers away*. Please avoid the area directly over the airport and to a radius of one mile until all jumpers are clearly in sight. Jumpers typically land in the grass areas directly adjacent to the taxiway on both north and south sides. Gliders can safely fly a normal approach to runway 28 while jumpers are in the air, but should stay north of the tree line on downwind leg. Jumpers will strive to remain clear of the grass area where gliders land.
- Airport Access (from John Bert): We will be finalizing the new gate access system within the next two weeks. With that update, we will be issuing new access cards that are preprogrammed, based on the list of those who currently have access fobs. The new system should be live very soon. Until the switch occurs, continue using your fobs to access the restricted area of the airport.

In the meantime, we will be distributing the new cards beginning June 19th. Just stop by the terminal and see either Jake or me to sign for and get your card. Keep your fob until the switch-over, then kindly return the fob once it is no longer functional. Once we have a firm date for the switch-over, we will send another message.

- You will notice that there is new signage at the entrance to runway 28 and on the taxiway asking pilots not to run up in an area that could affect our operations. These signs will afford us some protection from aircraft that would otherwise perform the run-up blasting their prop-wash (and associated debris) at staging gliders (see the figures below). The additional figures provide information regarding parachute operations and parking areas on the ramp.

The following is an update from John Bert on runway and taxiway repaving.

This is an update to the upcoming Runway

Rehabilitation Project planned for the Front Royal–Warren County Airport and we hope it will answer some questions you may have concerning the project that will temporarily affect operations at our airport.

All applications for grants have been submitted and are currently working their way through the process. This is through both the FAA and DOAV. Once these grants have been officially approved, they will then need to be presented to the Warren County Board of Supervisors for their approval since the county will also be contributing public funds to the project. Once these three are completed, the contractor will be contacted and a schedule put in place. What does this mean concerning the project timeline? In short, since we are dealing with grants as well as public funds, it means we are at the mercy of various approval meetings as well as Mother Nature. With that in mind, here is some information for all of you. Nothing is set in stone.

- As of this morning [August 12], we hope to receive final grant approval within the next two weeks. If this occurs, we will then place it on the Agenda for September 1st meeting of the Warren County Board of Supervisors. If time does not permit the ability to add it to this meeting, it will be added to the agenda for their next meeting, September 15th. Once approved, the contractor can be contacted and scheduled to begin. This could take as little as two weeks following approval. If you start seeing large paving equipment arrive and park at the airfield, we are within those two weeks.
- Right now, we feel confident that airport businesses can continue as normal until mid-September. Anything after that should be penciled in. Keep in mind that if we do get approval on September 1st and the contractor is available at that time, the project could begin right away and the dates could move back.
- If you are planning to relocate your aircraft to be able to fly while the runway is closed, you should start looking into alternatives now. This includes our friends in the Skyline Soaring Club. We know there are ramp tie-downs available at both OKV and LUA. If interested, please contact them directly.

- **Medi-vac operations by PHI will not be affected by this closure as only the runway will be closed by NOTAM.**
- Weather is key! It will be the driving force during this work. The contractor is planning on a 9-week closure, but weather can delay—or move up—that schedule. Please plan to be flexible.

We will start giving regular updates as September approaches. Until then, if you have any questions, feel free to reach out.

Upcoming Events

- There's a small group of aviation oriented folk (and their partners) who convene monthly for lunch at the Sweet Rice Thai restaurant on Rt. 7 just east of I-66. The next luncheon is scheduled for Wednesday, September 23, at noon. The group is moderated by Lucinda Vavoudis. Come join us! [*Jim Kellett*]

This is a monthly event. Please contact Jim Kellett for information on the next luncheon.

Notice: Help Wanted

Club Treasurer: The Treasurer position with Skyline Soaring will be transitioning to another member in 2027. Who that member will be remains to be identified. I have had the pleasure of undertaking that role for several years and am ready to turn the job over to someone else. The job is not as daunting as you may think. The books are kept online using QuickBooks Online. I have worked with QB a lot and am ready to hand off the knowledge that I have learned from the years of using QB Online.

Now is the time to for someone to step forward and volunteer to take over this essential role with Skyline Soaring. I will be the primary user for the balance of the year, giving someone ample time to learn how to use the system to manage the club's financial records. You won't be left hanging without the proper knowledge to run the system. I will be available full-time to teach, assist and work on the system in parallel with you this year.

If you would like to have a test run to view the system and see if it is something that you can and would like to do, that would work out also. Please

let me know as soon as possible, the end of the year is quickly approaching.

You can contact me, Ralph Vawter, at my email address as listed on the Club Roster page. I look forward to hearing from you.

For Sale

This section is to allow SSC members to post items (preferably, but not limited to, aircraft-related stuff) that are offered for sale or as freebies.

Rolladen-Schneider LS1-f, N6108J, 1974, based at Warren County Front Royal airport (KFRR). Contest number 6E. 2863 hours TT, fresh July 2026 annual. Borgelt and Winter varios, Dittel VHF radio, one-man rigger & Mountain High O2 system. 1995 Anschau KOMET trailer. Trailer and glider in good condition. Buyer has first right to the Front Royal hangar it's currently stored in. Reduced price to SSC members at \$16,000. For information, call: Evan Dosik (703-338-4688) or Tim Moran (202-247-8820). See photo below.



This Rolladen-Schneider LS1-f is a joy to fly. The controls are well balanced, and the glider responds beautifully to a light touch. It thermals well, holding its bank angle with only minor corrections. The spoilers are effective and predictable, and the glider is straightforward to land. These qualities make it an excellent choice for a pilot transitioning from a two-seat trainer to a single-place glider.

The LS1-f was previously owned for 16 years by a SSC club instructor in Front Royal. Before that, it belonged to a German pilot who brought the glider with him when he moved to Winchester, Virginia.

Assembly is straightforward. A one-man wing rigger is included, and the wing spars, lift pins, and spar pins all go together easily. The Komet

trailer tows well and is equipped with integrated surge brakes.

A previous owner refinished the upper surfaces of the wings as well as the fuselage. During our ownership, we made many upgrades, including:

- Mountain High EDS O2D1 oxygen system
- IMI One-man wing rigger
- New CG Tost hook
- New gas spring for the landing gear lever
- New gas damper for the landing gear
- New gas spring for the canopy

This glider has been a pleasure to own and has given us many memorable flights, ranging from enjoyable local soaring to a five-hour duration flight and a Gold-altitude wave flight using the included Mountain High oxygen system.

We hope its next owner will enjoy it as much as we have.

Want to Fly the Pawnee? Start Here.

By now, you've probably flown behind the Piper Pawnee countless times. But have you ever thought I'd like to do that — but I lack a tailwheel endorsement and 10-hours tailwheel PIC to begin training as an SSC tow pilot? Well there now exists a clear path to get there—and a local resource that can help you take the first steps. Virginia Tailwheel Academy, based at Warrenton-Fauquier Airport (KHWY), offers dedicated tailwheel instruction in a fleet of well-equipped Cessna 140s—electric start, ADS-B out, and AV30 PFDs. Most pilots earn their endorsement in 7 to 12 hours. Once endorsed, you can continue building the required PIC time through dual or solo rental of the Cessna 140—making it a practical one-stop path from zero tailwheel experience to SSC tow pilot candidacy. You'll receive dual ground and flight instruction from SSC's own Robb Hohmann: commercial pilot, airplane and glider CFI with over 600 hours PIC in tailwheel aircraft.

For the full picture of what's required, the SSC operations manual states: *"To begin training as an SSC Tow Pilot, a pilot must have logged at least 200 total hours flight time in airplanes and have a tail-wheel endorsement. Additionally, the pilot must have logged at least 10 hours of pilot in command time in tail wheel airplanes after receiving a tail-wheel endorsement."*

To make the investment manageable, the academy offers discounted block time: 10-hour

blocks at 6% off, and 20-hour blocks at 12% off. Given the endorsement training plus the 10 hours of solo PIC time you'll need, a 20-hour block is worth considering from the start. If you're ready to start working toward the endorsement, Virginia Tailwheel Academy is ready to help. info@vatailwheelacademy.com, 540-783-7FLY.

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Editor: George Hazelrigg
ghazelrigg@verizon.net

