

# EDSF Bulletin – Jul 12, 07

--- Editor's Notes --- Tom Shinsato



## No club meetings for the summer.

There are no club meetings scheduled for the summer months (July to September) since the Emerson School auditorium is not available for use during this period. Meetings will resume in October.

## Corrections to e-mail addresses

I did a mass e-mailing to club members last month where I stated that you would have the option of receiving the newsletter e-mailed to you the same instant that I send it to Clay Hollingsworth for printing. It turned out that there were a number of e-mail addresses in my distribution list that were incorrect. I received a status message from my ISP notifying me that my e-mail had not been transmitted since it had detected an invalid e-mail address. I removed the incorrect address from my distribution list and tried again. I may have repeated this for each incorrect address. Clay Hollingsworth informed me that this action resulted in multiple copies of the same message being transmitted to everyone else with valid e-mail addresses. I apologize to everyone for any inconvenience I may have caused. However, to update my e-mail distribution list, I need to get the correct e-mail address from the following members:

Jerry Applegate  
Marc P. Baley  
Joe Ballasch

Mark Browning  
Frank Lock  
Tom O'Connor

Jerry S. Millett  
Jim Sneed  
Marvin Stober

Andy Thonet,  
Richard Vader  
Mick Zullo

If you wish to be put on my e-mail distribution list, please notify me via e-mail at [edsfeditor@aol.com](mailto:edsfeditor@aol.com).

## Have something to say?

I'm thinking about including an editorial section in the newsletter for members to voice their opinions about the club, officers, website, newsletter and functions. If you have any thoughts you wish to express, good or bad, send them to me at my e-mail address, [edsfeditor@aol.com](mailto:edsfeditor@aol.com). Please limit the size of your input to ½ page. Because of limited space in the newsletter, I will select those which I think may be of greater significance or interest to the readers. If you wish to remain anonymous, indicate it as such and your request will be honored.

## Is there an artist in the house?

On some occasions there may be a need to have graphic illustrations (drawings) in the newsletter articles. Anyone with artistic skills who is able to do freehand illustrations (or electronically) and would like to help, please let me know who you are.

## More on the runway

Maybe this is beating an old horse to death but those of you who have been using the runway may have noticed that conditions have been improving and I think we're starting to get an edge over those gophers. The war is not over and it is a continuing battle. Nothing worse than having your landing gear ripped off the fuselage when hitting a hole or having the nose of your plane plowing into a mound and having to clean the dirt out of your outrunner motor. The runway crew is busy on a weekly basis leveling off the runway and piloting area and keeping the grass mowed in these areas. One day we even had a crew of five. Bill Pollard, Gerry Markgraf, Bob and myself were busy working on the runway. Ralph Chamberlin came over to lend a hand but all available tools were being used so he became the self appointed crew supervisor. Ralph was so impressed with the hard working and efficient crew that he is now contemplating submitting a low ball bid to the city of Long Beach to secure a contract for filling potholes.

Thanks to all of you who have pitched in to help. I think that shows the true spirit of an EDSF member. Club members and everyone else who use the runway appreciate your effort. Bill Tackett has a pickup truck and will be bringing the mower out for the next four weeks. So if you're around and would like to help, just let him know you're available.

### Crash & Burn – Lessons Learned

This has been an unfortunate month for the guys in glider community, having two high performance planes nose in within a week apart. Myrle Holloway lost his glider two weeks ago and Mark Child lost his a week later. Clay Hollingsworth was in the area and noticed the flap fluttering on Myrle's glider as it was being winched on the launch. Myrle managed to get a clean release from tow but soon found the plane difficult to control. The glider veered to the west and entered into a steep spiral spin, but he was able to steer the glider away from the people and cars in the parking area. The glider finally impacted close to the police academy fence. His glider sustained extensive damage but the receiver and most of the servos still seemed to work ok except for the right flap servo.

Mark's glider on the other hand seemed to have problems immediately on the launch. The glider rose to fifty or sixty feet, went into a fast, arcing left yaw after being pulled to full speed as the stretched tow line retracted. The glider released from the tow and lawn darted in. Mark seemed to have no control at all in spite of his efforts to steer the plane. Upon inspection it was determined that the cause of Mark's crash was programming error. He had copied a model to a blank model on his radio, and then accidentally made changes to the original model when he was setting up a new sailplane with the copied settings. When he attempted to fly his Pike Superior, the elevator was reversed. Although he did a range check, he didn't look at the control throws up close before doing the range check, or he might have discovered the problem.

Mechanical or human error, it can happen to the best. A careful preflight check would more than likely have prevented these types of accidents. That was a costly loss of both gliders but fortunately, there were no injuries.

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### 30 Years of Flying at the Field (Part II) – Gerry Markgraf

The latter years of the '80s were good times for the club. Contests were held often and were well attended. Each contest was split, generally into 3 groups according to the flier's expertise. Winning in a class generally promoted a flier into the next higher class where competition was more skillful and intense. Tasks were generally time and spot landings with small buttons, pins or other rewards for win and place. It was a good time, but change was in the air.

*This is the second of a three part article. Anyone who has missed part I, check the EDSF website on the club History page. Each released segment of Gerry's article will be appended to the previous segment and posted on the website. A collection of club photos from the past are also available for viewing on the website. – Tom Shinsato*

The sport of sailplane flying changed rapidly as we moved into the late '80s and early '90s. Competitive fliers found that the 2-channel polyhedral "floater" design or "gasbags" as they came to be known were less desirable than fast maneuverable sailplanes. "Floaters" were fine in a thermal when they found one, but the fast airplanes could search more efficiently for thermals, maneuver better to stay in one and were easier to fly back to a landing in a specific spot and place. Earlier designs like the "Gnome" gave way to aircraft like the Airtronics "Sigitta" and others. Around 1990, the Airtronics "Legend" appeared; a full house design (rudder, elevator, ailerons and flaps) with a fiberglass fuselage and almost no dihedral. The Legend was set up to take full advantage of the new computer radios that were just appearing such as the Airtronics Infinity and Vision radios. Even the



Gerry Markgraf

Legend was an early victim of progress as its built-up wood wing with modest dihedral was quickly made obsolete by highly efficient foam, composite and fiberglass wings with modern airfoil sections and little or no dihedral. Purchase of one of these new models as well as the required computer radio quickly reached well over a thousand dollars. Mastery of the airplane and equipment took many hours of practice to produce a competitive flier and the sport of competitive sailplane flying became the province of the most dedicated sailplane fliers.



**Joe Ballasch during his Porterfield period.**



**Gerry Markgraf with his Oly II. Mark Child with his Gnome & unknown flyer in the early 1980's.**



**Pat Stoker (standing) and Geoff Drought.**



**About 1978. Gas storage tank in the background.**



**Walt Lewis, one of our pioneer members with his "Scooter".**



**Joe Richert striking a heroic pose with his sailplane.**

Another technology that had a profound influence on the field was the appearance of electric powered aircraft. We were fortunate here in Southern California that we have had 2 pioneering manufacturers located right here in the area. I speak of Bob and Roland Boucher. Bob is owner and founder of Astro while Roland was the owner of Leisure. Both produced motors and some fine kits and they sponsored some early electric flying events here in Southern California. My first electric was a Leisure Wasp, powered by a Leisure ferrite 05 motor. I used a small electronic on/off device sold by Hi-Sky to switch the motor and a 6 cell 1200 Mah Nicad battery. I was utterly astonished when the Wasp flew and flew well. It seemed much too heavy to fly. Gradually, electric powered designs began to proliferate at the field, flown mostly by the sport fliers while the sailplane fliers concentrated on improving their skills in soaring. There was certainly a lot of cross-over flying for many years as I and others often took a mix of sailplanes and electrics to the field. Also, most of the early electrics were primarily sailplanes that used the motor to get to altitude in lieu of a winch or high start. When the airplane reached altitude, it became a sailplane and usually, there was enough power for an average of 3 climbs to about 400 feet. Sport designs like the Wasp pushed the envelope of the technology of the time and many were less than successful. More successful were the Davy Systems Curtiss Robin (I made hundreds of flights on mine) and the Leisure Amptique that was a popular flyer at the field. Old Timers made good electric designs and Leisure produced the Playboy and Lanzo Bomber. Astro made a great old timer kit with the

Viking. The Goldberg Mirage was a good performing beginner's sport design of the time with landing gear that could (mostly) handle the gopher holes in the field.

A big shock to the electric flyers at the time was the banning of powered flight at the field, including electrics. For approximately a year, we were back to gliders. It seems a 1940's law banned all propeller-driven model airplane flight in the city of Long Beach. A long and delicate negotiation with the city and park ensued. Every week at the field or at the monthly meetings, Bob Peters or Mark Child would report on progress (or lack of progress) as the negotiations drug on. Finally, after a successful demonstration to prove the safety and goodness of our intentions, we were allowed to resume flying electrics. Oh the joy! For a time, we had to curtail electric flying after 11:00 AM (I don't know why), but gradually we were able to demonstrate that our flying was safe and the powers that be came to tolerate electric flying at all times.

Another change that affected all of us at the field was the change to "1991" standards for our radios. The good news was we were going to be given many new frequencies, each of which would be in a very narrow band of the radio spectrum compared to our old radios. The bad news was that many of our old radios would soon be obsolete and would require either scrapping or a costly modification requiring new receivers and modified transmitters. However, we made it through that trial, not without cost to our pocketbooks. For many years afterward, we would occasionally see some beginner arrive at the field with a newly purchased "used" radio that still had the old red/white, green/white, orange/white style flags on the antenna.

After spending a small fortune buying on/off motor control devices from Hi Sky, I observed that proportional motor controls were beginning to become available at a reasonable size and price. I had an Astro controller that was about 1/2 the size of a brick, but one of the fliers at the field, a retired electrical engineer, was making and selling a very nice little speed control at a very reasonable price. The first ones did look a bit home made, but they worked well (I still have mine) and his products improved rapidly. That's how I first met Joe Ballasch and Joe's influence on me and just about every other electric flier in Southern California has been profound. Joe was able to supply the most needed and obscure electrical components back in the day when they simply were not available from any other source (still does). More importantly, Joe was able to help the novice electric flier through the mysteries of electric motors, batteries, motor controls and other components that were (and still are) borderline black magic to most. It's difficult to imagine what the electric participation at the field would look like today had Joe not been there to help.

EDSF sailplane fliers were beginning to spread the fame of our club throughout the Southern California area in the mid '90s. Fliers like Jim Skinner, Pat Stoker, Dan Wilson, Bill Duncan, John Bickle, Kevin Joyce and Mike Carrico were scoring well at the SC2 (Southern California Soaring Contest) meets throughout the area. Indeed, the club has hosted several SC2 contests right up until the present. These regional contests required a great deal of planning and organization within the club. As many as 50 fliers were known to attend from around the area. Indeed, many of the club sailplane fliers and other members had to volunteer their entire time during the contest and were unable to fly due to the enormity of the task. Family



Dennis Jenkins & "Treas".



Early days - 100" woody. Unidentified pilot.

*The last segment of Gerry's article, Part III, will be presented in the Aug Newsletter.*

members and non-sailplane fliers were also called in to help with the task. EDSF sailplane fliers improved their skills and were beginning to be seen as high scorers at contests at the state-wide level. Hand-launch gliders were also popular in some areas beginning in the early '90s. A few were seen at the field, but they never seemed to gain much popularity. More would be seen later with the advent of the Discus launch gliders.

**--- Soaring News ---** -- Clay Hollingsworth ---



That first summer month has passed very quickly, as did our annual SC2 contest on June 24th that we put on this year at the SWSA flying site in Duarte. This event was originally scheduled to be flown in Riverside at the ISS site, which is a great place to fly because it's made up of all soccer fields (very nice grass to land on). But last minute word of a soccer event to be held at the field put us into a mad scramble to find an alternative site less than 24 hours before the contest was to begin.

With the help of Mike Lee, Gene Hayes and Mark Child, the SWSA site was secured and we were back on track. One remaining issue was to get a hold of all the pilots and let them know that the site had been changed. Some email blasts and notice on the SC2 website got the new info to most of the pilots, although a few unfortunately drove

to Riverside before getting the news.

Although we brought all of the EDSF equipment needed to run a contest, the crew from SWSA set up their own winches, set up the pilots' registration, set up the landing zone and brought coolers of drinks and chips for all. Man, all we had to do was show up and get to work manning our stations – and show up we did! Nine club members showed up to help run the contest – no double duty here – none of them flew in the contest. This allowed all the other participants to focus on flying and having a nice day with their buddies.

Most of the day ran like clockwork. Andy Shearon manned the registration table, Jared Stalls the scoring input and Steve Butters in the radio impound. These smart guys were in shade all day, something I'll be looking into next year. Chris Myers and I ran the winches most of the day. Tom Shimsato, Bill Sorensen and Steve Underwood ran the landing area, which could get very busy handling the 60 flights each hour.

Although most of the day went smoothly, there were a few notable happenings. The area surrounding the flying field is mostly very heavy tall brush and even swamp-like in certain areas. This usually means that if you land your plane off field, that there's a pretty good chance you won't get it back. Several planes did end up short and I believe one plane was never found.

But the most amazing flight of the day had to have been completed by Edgar Vera. On Edgar's 3<sup>rd</sup> round launch in



EDSF Crew -- Tom Shinsato, Mark Child, Andy Shearon, Clay Hollingsworth, Chris Myers, Bill Sorensen, Steve Butters, Jared Stalls, Steve Underwood. A bunch of happy and well fed guys.



Edgar Vera piloting his Ava with missing wing tip panel.

the RES class his Ava lost half of his outer wing panel. This left his 118 inch wing short about 20 inches on one side. Amazingly the plane stabilized quickly and Edgar realized that the plane actually handled ok with the shortened wing. Almost immediately the Ava started going up, a site that thrilled the crowd. We all watched as the bird continued to fly as if nothing ever happened throughout the 7-minute flight. On his landing approach the plane started to show the effects of the unbalanced wing and as it slowed for touchdown the plane fell off to the heavy side of the wing just a couple of feet off the ground, just missing his landing points. This flight was a true sight to see and attests to Edgar's flying skills.



George Gomez, who was competing in the sportsman class, had the highest total score for the contest, beating

