

The Ridge Runner

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May Edition

Message from the Flight Deck:

The weather so far this year has been absolutely wonderful for soaring. I think this is going to be the summer for doing your badge work if you have not done that yet since we have a Blanik that will be airworthy this summer at Ridge Gliderport. If you fly it, please remember to sign the aircraft logbook; it only takes a few seconds to fill out and it is located right behind the rear seat on the hat shelf.

Aircraft:

As many of you know, N99952 went to Williamsport, at Penn Tech College, for maintenance - most of the major maintenance items were done while there. There are several things that need to be looked after yet, but the aircraft is back in an airworthy condition.

It was decided at the last meeting of the semester that N99968 should be moved and have a mechanic work on the remaining work on the aircraft. If anyone can help with this project, please let me know.

Past Event Report:

May 13-14 there was the second annual Soaring History Symposium held at that National Soaring Museum in Elmira, NY that one of the PSSC members attended.

The report is as follows.

The symposium was very good again this year. Here is the order in which the topics were given and a brief description of what was talked about.

“Chemung County and the Soaring Community – A 75 Year Partnership” by J. Arthur Kieffer – Chemung County Historian

Soaring started with primary gliders in this area and how they had six different soaring sites around the local area that when they launched that they were launched into the wind. Then after a period of time, the county got involved and helped out to make one airport known as Harris Hill. The county is still actively involved with the airport to this day.

“The Philadelphia Glider Council, Inc.” by Lew Hull

Mr. Hull talked about how and where PGC was formed.

“Finding and Restoring Vintage Sailplanes” by Bob Gaines

This talk was about how to acquire sailplanes, either domestically or internationally. Then once you bought the aircraft – how do you get it registered in your name to make it legal and also keeping the FAA happy. Then the talk got into the restoration of gliders and what you can and cannot do when working on these gliders, what materials you can use...

“The Life and Times of a TG-2” by Jeff Byard

He started the lecture off by saying how you can cross reference military numbers, serial numbers and N numbers all on the same aircraft and not be too confused. Then the lecture leads into where most of the TG-2's went after they left the Schweizer factory. Some of the aircraft either went for personal use since it was the high performance machine / trainer of that time period or the military bought the others for trainers. After he was done saying where most of the TG-2's went – Mr. Byard concentrated on how he acquired his TG-2 and then he told about us about its past and present life it lives.

“The Historical Researcher: Sources, Tools & Craft” by Raul Blacksten

Mr. Blacksten told us that anyone can research anything about any aircraft manufacturer all the way right down to one particular aircraft. He told us where to look, how to look information up and even people who to talk to. Then he got into once you have this information – what do you do with this information now and how to put it into a format that other people can use eventually one day so they do now have to reproduce your efforts.

“Paul Schweizer’s Last Article: The Story of the Albatross I” by Peter Smith

Before Paul Schweizer passed away, he was working on the history of the Albatross I which hangs in the National Soaring Museum (NSM), Elmira, NY which

can be seen as soon as you walk in the front doors. This aircraft has a very impressive history. The history goes into where it was obtained from storage, who all flew the aircraft back when the aircraft was still flying and some of the records the aircraft set.

There were questions fielded from the audience on the article so it could be finished/finalized and published in the near future.

Up Coming Events:

There are several very worth while events coming up in the very near future that you might want to think about:

*Vintage Sailplane Assn. (VSA) Regatta
May 28 – 30, 2005

Manning, South Carolina

There is going to be all kinds of vintage sailplanes at this regatta. Supposedly there is going to be two or more surprise gliders there that the VSA members have not seen yet.

(MODERN GLIDERS ARE NOT WELCOME AT THIS MEET!!!)

*There are several other X-C Camps in the United States throughout the summer. Contact Mike Robison if you are interested in them at all. Do not delay at contacting him because they fill up fast!

*International Vintage Sailplane Meet

August 20-27, 2005

Harris Hill airport

Elmira. NY

Please contact me for more information regarding this event.

Attached is some information on the Blanik that I wanted to remind everyone on.

That's all I have from the flight deck at this time and happy landings,

Nathan Kramer

PSSC President

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TO: Owners / Operators of Blanik L-13, L-13AC, and L-23 Gliders

SUBJECT: Additional Pre-flight Inspection and Ground Handling Actions

Sailplanes L-13, L-13AC and L-23 Blanik

Preflight

It is recommended that during the pre-flight inspection the following procedures are added to the visual inspection of the tail surfaces:

- **Horizontal Stabilizer:** At the outer tip, gently move the stabilizer up and down to feel the amount of play. The play should not allow more than 4 mm (1/6 inch) of up and down movement.

- **Vertical Stabilizer:** Gently pull from side to side at the top of the vertical stabilizer, then gently push the leading edge of the vertical stabilizer towards the rudder. The vertical stabilizer should have a solid feel, indicating it is firmly attached and show no fore and aft rocking or side to side movement.

Ground Handling

It is recommended that clubs and commercial operators instruct users of L-13, L13AC and L23 Blanik aircraft in the proper ground handling of these types of sailplanes.

These gliders should **NOT** be pushed backwards (tail first) because forces on the tail undercarriage are exerted in the opposite direction than for which it was designed - i.e. take off and landing. This is especially important at airports with uneven, rutty terrain. Also, users should be instructed to **NEVER** move the glider, especially backwards, by pushing on the leading edge of the vertical stabilizer.

GLIDER CRITICAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURES

I. Introduction:

This **SAFETY ADVISORY** presents suggested procedures for ensuring proper assembly without specific detail that is available in Pilot Operating Handbooks and other checklists developed by the manufacturer. Other knowledgeable individuals have also presented methods to confirm proper assembly as well as emergency procedures for flying the aircraft should any control not function properly due to improper assembly. The latter may or may not be approved by the manufacturer of the glider or sailplane, and thus will not be discussed herein.

II. History:

During the period prior to 1960, most gliders required significant effort to assemble. Many had containers of bicycle chains, bolts, nuts, washers, retaining pins, and other pieces that had to be assembled in sequence. A glider not properly assembled would not pass a simple control check. The horizontal tail assembly (including elevator) may not have been detached during disassembly, thus the control cables for the rudder and elevator were never disconnected nor did they require assembly later. Later, manufacturers developed quicker and easier methods for assembling gliders and sailplanes. This made it possible to install both wings by simply inserting the wing root into the fuselage and using a pin to secure the attachment. Horizontal stabilizers and elevators were removed during disassembly and reassembled with as little as one simple attach bolt or pin. The Soaring Society of America (SSA) and the Soaring Safety Foundation (SSF) encouraged all manufacturers to go even further and provide “automatic hook-ups” for ailerons, flaps, glide path control devices, and elevators, anticipating a reduction in the potential to attempt flight without the controls properly attached. Many of the

gliders and sailplanes today have these “automatic attachments.”

Though the number of reported incidents and accidents resulting from failure to attach these controls decreased, a continuing disturbing number of incidents and accidents required further investigation into the cause and the development of procedures that would reduce even further such incidents and accidents.

The SSF recognized four factors that frequently appeared when investigation of such accidents were made:

- 1) Distractions from other people while assembling,
- 2) Failure to follow manufacturer recommended assembly procedures,
- 3) Failure to do a positive control check, and
- 4) Rushing the procedure to get into the air.

III. Ensuring airworthiness:

The pilot in command (PIC) is directly responsible and the final authority for operation of the aircraft in accordance with Federal Aviation Regulation (FAR) 91.3. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the PIC to determine if the aircraft is in condition for safe flight (FAR 91.7). During assembly of the glider or sailplane, the PIC assumes that responsibility. During the assembly procedure, **NO** outside interference should be allowed. It is difficult to keep observers from attempting to converse or ask questions, but such action has frequently been the cause of incomplete and inaccurate assembly. The crew person or assistant can be of great assistance by immediately deflecting this unintentional interference. To ensure the glider is properly assembled, the manufacturer’s checklist should be followed, and positive control check performed.

The assembly should proceed in a relaxed and thorough manner and never be hurried. Rushing to “squeeze in” between landings or to be Number One on the grid has resulted in improperly assembled sailplanes and subsequent accidents.

To enhance the checking of the assembly process, it is suggested that the PIC ask another person to assist by examining critical items to ensure proper installation. This person does not necessarily need to be familiar with a specific aircraft or manufacturer, but should have a basic understanding of how to assemble a glider or sailplane. If such a person is not available, the PIC may benefit from explaining to an assistant how each part is installed and attached, thus in effect, checking the pilot's own work.

IV. Critical items:

The following list, though not totally inclusive, offers items that should be checked prior to flight. Failure to have these items correctly assembled may result in difficult or impossible flight characteristics. The check by the PIC and an assistant can usually be performed by simply walking around the aircraft, starting and ending at the cockpit area.

CRITICAL ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

With the help of an assistant, check each of the following items as appropriate to the aircraft being flown for proper installation and security.

After check of these items is complete, a **POSITIVE CONTROL CHECK** should be conducted.

Main wing pin(s)

Drag spar pin(s)

Control rods attached

Ailerons, drag devices, flaps

Hotellier connectors

Spring-loaded connectors

Locking collars

Safety pins installed

Safety collars installed

Outer wing panels installed

Control rods attached and properly secured

Horizontal tail properly installed

Elevator control rod attached

Safety pin installed

Rudder cables attached

V. The SSA and the Soaring Safety Foundation (SSF) feel that adherence to this **SAFETY ADVISORY** will prevent accidents that occur as a result of improperly assembled gliders. The SSF strongly encourages each Pilot In Command to develop a list of "Critical Items" for each glider being flown to assist in ensuring that critical items are properly installed and secured during the assembly process.