

TPG climbs to new heights with '97 IHLGF

By Steve Condon, IHLGF CD

The 1997 IHLGF was a resounding success thanks to the great TPG volunteers and some fine cooperation from Mother Nature. The members of the IHLGF Committee would like to personally thank all those volunteers who took time out of their weekend schedules, for some the entire weekend, to do all the things that must be done to put on a contest of this size. It was their hard work and efficient manner that made the 1997 IHLGF the most successful hand launch glider festival ever.

Without the help of the folks mentioned above, comments like this one from Tim Cone (in response to a post-contest e-mail from Ron Scharck) would not have been possible:

"I would like you to know that in my opinion the '97 IHLGF met or exceeded each and every goal as set forth in your E-mail. A better mission statement has probably never been expressed, nor so fully accomplished. I am profoundly grateful to you personally for convincing me to enter the contest. You may rest assured that I will be a regular contestant at all of your HLG contests. The contest was so

much fun, the people so friendly and helpful that there will probably be two Cones' at the next one."

Not only did Tim think enough of the contest to send this personal message, but he also copied it to all 8,000 Internet subscribers to the RC Soaring

The real heroes of the IHLGF, the volunteers who made it work flawlessly

Dave Condon	Assistant CD
Jo Joy	Registrn / Scoring
Jairo "Hidel" Alzate	Raffle Committee
Michael Blott	Raffle Committee
Lee Burke	Impound
Rich Mazak	Impound
Jason Gibson	Impound
Steve Pack	Impound
Cathy Jennings	Scoring
Steve Neu	Field Judge
Ed Whyte	Field Judge
Joey Chess	Field Judge
Greg Cameron	Field Judge
Bob Hays	Field Judge
Laurie Condon	Registration
Walter Gorecki	Assistant
Emily Clarkson	Food and Beverage

Exchange, throughout the world. So thanks again to everyone that came out to help.

Contest blessed with full spectrum of conditions

Mother nature was also a big help for the weekend. We had the true "mixed bag" of conditions that make for a very challenging and competitive HLG contest.

On Saturday morning, conditions were so "flat" that even some of the best pilots had the heartbreak of missing a target time by one second. The first round task of increasing flights had Joe Wurts missing the one minute flight by only hundredths of a second . . . twice!

As the day progressed, thermals were around but ever allusive. The bubbles were small in diameter and the bottom's closed-up quite quickly. You could circle your plane 10 feet below another one that was in lift and get nothing. On Saturday, nobody really "specked-out" because the lift just wasn't that strong. However, on occasion there would be lift good enough to allow a gaggle of planes to max out.

('97 IHLGF on page 7)

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(*'97 IHLGF, from page 5*)

On one of those occasions, a spectator commented to me that he couldn't believe on a day so grey that anyone could catch a thermal, let alone twelve guys at the same time!

On Sunday, the conditions were more typical of the Poway field: calm in the morning with light lift graduating into windy conditions with strong thermals (and strong sink) in the afternoon. A few big 'dust devils' came through during heats which provided for some scary moments for pilots and a lot of laughs for the spectators.

Multiple planes desirable

The fact that pilots can use as many planes as they want during the contest made it desirable to have several different models on hand for the variety of weather conditions during the day. Other circumstances, such as midair collisions, fuselages or wings collapsing under the pressure of extremely hard throws or landings, require a back-up plane — quick!

The Top Five — How they finished and what they flew

One question you may be asking is: "What planes were the top five pilots flying?" I'm glad you asked.

And the winner is

The winner of this year's contest was Daryl Perkins. He was flying two differ-



IHLGF Champion, Daryl Perkins

ent versions of a new plane called the Maple Leaf designed and built by Don Peters of Northern California. The Poly version weighed a mere 9 ounces and the RG-15 aileron version weighed 11 oz.

These planes are unique in that they feature all-Kevlar construction in the bagged wings and molded fuselage. The tails are beautifully crafted from light balsa with a spruce trailing edge then bagged with a thin layer of fiberglass.

According to Daryl, "the poly model is so light and efficient, flying it is like cheating." The RG-15 can handle all kinds of wind either at 11 oz. or with up to two ounces of balast, which Daryl occasionally carried.

The airplanes certainly worked well for Daryl, but it was his world-class piloting skills and the ability to effectively read the air (and his opponents airplanes) and react accordingly that give him this win.

"Second Place Sucks!"

Or so were the words uttered by two-time IHLGF Champion, Joe Wurts as he was picking-up his second place award. He did have a smile on his face when he said it, but it's gotta hurt a little to be second place two years in a row to your good friend and number-one rival in the soaring community.

It is, however, this level of competitive spirit that pushes us all to develop our soaring skills to a higher level. I think it is safe to say that every participant in this year's contest learned something new — even Joe and Daryl.

Joe was flying the Epsilon designed by Fred Mallett of AirWorks in Corpus Christi, Texas. The Epsilon is a super-light all-bagged airplane with Fred's own proprietary airfoil. The Epsilon's generally weighs between 10.5 and 11.5 ounces for a four-servo aileron ship and can sense the lightest of lift and climb incredibly with its bagged cleanliness and light weight. Joe has always been known for his "gun" of an arm when it comes to HLG, and this year was no exception—his Epsilon was usually at the top of the stack right after launch!

Jennings takes third

Our third place finisher this year is no stranger to the top five at hand launch

contests. Gordon Jennings was out there gruntin' and sweatin' and generally flying his heart out for the whole contest.

Gordon's plane of choice was also the Epsilon. He had at least two or three of them, and on one particular flight that ended in an off-field landing (not too far away) he was heard to tell one of his assistants "leave it!" as he proceeded to grab another plane and launch within seconds of the other model landing. This is competition! This is preparation! Some might say "this is lunacy!" But, any way you slice it, "this is fun!!"

Larry Keeps Flingin'

Coming in fourth was yet another well known F3b pilot, Larry Jolly. Larry was flying models of his own design made-up of his Vagabond fuselage and tails with the wings from the Airtronics Gem. Larry had a poly version with the 4083 airfoil and an aileron version with the RG-15 section. The models worked very well for Larry and combined with his determination saw him to the fourth place finish.

Larry's 12 year old son Chris was also flying in the contest and managed to win the Junior (15 and under) Championship flying his own Vagabond. We better watch out for this kid! I timed for him once and I was very impressed with his skills and determination.

(See IHLGF '97 on page 20)



Tom Clarkson studies Fred Mallett's classic hand launch form

Score Board

(IHLGF '97, continued from page 7)

From deep in the heart of TX

In fifth place, all the way from Corpus Christi, Texas, was Fred Mallett. Not surprisingly, Fred was flying a couple of Epsilons. One was much like the "poly/flaperon" version that George Joy is flying with inboard flaperons and a few degrees of dihedral at the tips. Fred said that the handling of this plane made it ideal for low-level light lift. His other model was the standard aileron Epsilon at 11.3 ounces.

Last year Fred got everyone's attention by having the guts to launch and fly back to the hill in the afternoon winds, make his time and then make the field. On one flight this year, he attempted the same thing and depth perception and some unkind wind shifts on Mother Nature's part got the better of him and he was suddenly parked on the face of the hill. As they say, "No guts -- No Glory!"

Rounding out the Top Ten

Making the top ten in this contest is quite an achievement. It didn't take many mistakes to keep one out of the top ten, and everyone that made it deserves to be acknowledged. Rounding out the "Top Ten", were -- in order of finish: George Joy; Paul Naton; Steve Cameron; Ben Clerx; and, Jim Pearson.

Another great aspect of this contest was the innovation that went into the models everyone was flying. All kinds of great stuff! One design that gained particular notoriety was the Tactical ERR flown by Phil and Jim Pearson from Washington State. If you were there, you were surprised to see someone casually holding his model by the wingtip and then flinging it up like a frisbee to an incredible height! I was told that these planes only weighed six ounces! The span was only in the low 40" range, but wow, six ounces--THAT'S LIGHT!

Having participated in all four of the International Hand Launch Glider Festivals, I have to say that I have noticed that every year the competition has gotten tougher and tougher.

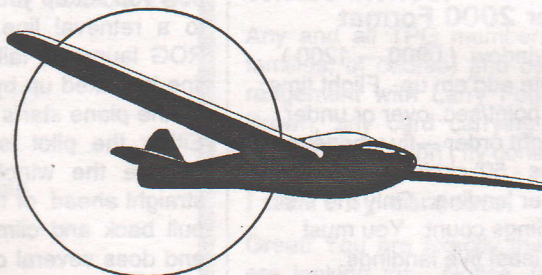
Again, I want to thank all the volunteers for helping make this event happen and I'd like to thank the other members of this year's committee: Don Richmond, Tom Clarkson, George Joy and especially Ron Scharck for all their hard work.

I hope you will join us next year on June 6-7 for IHLGF '98. ✈

IHLGF '97 Final Results

Pilot	Score	Plane
1. Daryl Perkins	12805.08	Maple Leaf
2. Joe Wurts	12679.82	Epsilon (Aileron)
3. Gordon Jennings	12181.68	Epsilon (Aileron)
4. Larry Jolly	12174.30	Flinger (Poly - OD)
5. Fred Mallett	12164.20	Epsilon (Aileron)
6. George Joy	12074.08	Epsilon / Climmax PF
7. Paul Naton	11994.65	Climmax PF
8. Steve Cameron	11852.14	Orbiter '95 (Mod.)
9. Ben Clerx	11596.49	Russian FF Design
10. Jim Pearson	11072.28	Sunspot (Poly - OD)
11. Joe Hahn	9089.66	Wizard
12. Steve Condon	9084.04	Gem (Aileron)
13. Don Van Gundy	9036.72	Wizard
14. Mark Navarre	8996.21	Own Design / Wizard
15. Arthur Markiewicz	8986.34	Own Design
16. Phil Pearson	8957.40	Sunspot / Tactical ERR
17. John Roe	8892.16	Wizard / Epsilon
18. Greg Norsworthy	8765.40	Epsilon
19. Paul Siegel	8593.86	Wizard
20. Charlie Richardson	8585.28	Climmax PF
21. Tom Clarkson	8580.82	Climmax Poly / PF
26. Patrick Dionisio	8449.80	Wizard
27. Paul Anderson	8311.38	Own Design
30. Bill West	7963.65	Climmax PF

Note: The top ten scores reflect 13 rounds.



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