

Sports Page II

Tossin' it around

Tom Clarkson

Lessons from the IHLGF

I thought that I would devote this column to things that I learned from participating in the IHLGF. Some of these lessons involve preparing the planes themselves, practice, strategy, and attitude during the contest.

Know your plane(s)

The first lesson learned was to prepare your plane(s) well ahead of the contest. Give yourself lots of time to practice with them. Don't finish a plane a week before the contest and expect to do well with it. I got an off field landing once due to not having a good feel for the glide path and penetration capability of a new light plane that I had built. Others had problems with good smooth turns.

You need to have everything ready to go at least a month ahead. I also found it helpful to be at the field a day or so ahead of the contest to get into the groove. I hope to do this every year as I think it was very helpful. Besides that, we had a great fun fly on Friday with a bunch of great guys.

More is better

I learned that it is essential to have two or three planes that are optimized for different conditions. I noticed that quite a few people placed poorly in the very light lift on Saturday morning due to planes that would not float well. Many people placed poorly in the afternoon rounds on both days as they did not have planes that penetrated well in the wind. I have come to believe that HL planes are much like golf clubs. You need to have one for all conditions and be proficient with each one.

Strength vs. Weight

I learned that I need to contest toughen my planes. I have discovered that you can build too light. Saving a few grams of weight by not properly

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Scale Renderings

Gary Fogel

Scale Thermal Soaring and the ROG Launch

Our club bears the name of one of the most historic gliderports in America and one of America's best slope sites. It certainly is a joy to be able to toss any sailplane off the slope and enjoy the lift that so many other aviators have over its 67 year history.

Think about it. We really are spoiled. So many others in the U.S. rely on winching or aerotowing to get their scale models in the air ... we do it only as a morning diversion to our afternoon activities at the cliff.

Living in San Diego and flying at Torrey also comes with it's share of disadvantages, some derived from the fact that slope flying is so easy. It's a crutch. Sure it's a great way to learn, a great time to test to new modifications or designs, or even a great time to just relax and not worry about lift. But over the years, each pilot will realize that thermal soaring has its own set of new challenges. So what should the scale aficionado do?

Clearly, we shouldn't be afraid to launch our scale ships on the winch or via aerotow. A safe launch by either method can lead to flights that can easily equal competition ships. A testament to this is Dennis Brandt of the ISSA who consistently enters his 1/4 scale ASW-24 in SC2 contests and does quite well.

So, there comes a time when the scale modeler has to make the "jump" from the slope to the flatland flying that so many others enjoy. How do you make this leap? It's easier than you think.

If you read the magazines, then you already know that aerotowing is becoming quite fashionable in the U.S. It has been a standard mode of takeoff in Europe for many years. In southern California, members of the ISSA are

(See SCALE on page 19)

SC² Report

Keith Finkenbiner

Everything you ever wanted to know about the TPG/SC² BEFORE it happened!

By the time you read this, and I hope you have read the rest of the newsletter first, the TPG/SC2 contest will be history to you. Unfortunately, it isn't history to me as I write this column for Ron ... and trust me, the only reason there is anything in this space is because of Ron. As anyone who knows me will verify, I do not speak, much less write, unless I have something to say. This is for you, Ron.

TPG has comfortable lead

After three SC2 contests, TPG has a comfortable leads in the the Team standings. We lead Harbor Soaring Society (HSS) by 823 points, Soaring Union of LA (SULA) by 1,100 points and Pasadena Soaring Society (PSS) by 1,450 points. There is a significant drop-off after that.

One reason for this lead is the TPG's outstanding participation in the SC2 circuit. We average 14 pilots at a meet where the average attendance at the contests is just shy of 53. This means that TPG pilots represent 26% of the contestants. There are 9 clubs that comprise the SC2 circuit. The club with the next best representation (8.7 pilots per contest) is HSS.

With the June contest being here at the TPG field, our figures are sure to expand.

July ISS contest rescheduled for October

Due to a conflict in schedules with the AMA/LSF NATS in Muncie, Indiana, the ISS SC2 contest that was scheduled for July 27 has been rescheduled for the end of October. So there will be no SC2 in July.

I hope we all had fun at the TPG/SC2 contest! ✈

(TOSSIN³, from page 11)

reinforcing the wing joints, for example, cost me dearly. I broke two wings, at the joints, on hard contest landings when I ballooned up and had to hit the ground hard not to be over time. This really hurt me in one round (and in the final standings) as the time it took me to switch to a new plane buried me.

Never give up

That round also taught me something about the mental game of HL. After the disaster round I kind of felt like giving up which caused me to fly poorly in the next round. In retrospect, I know it was attitude. Fortunately it was the last round on Saturday. I now have experienced the power of positive thinking by getting my act together on Sunday.

I was in the last heat of the last round on Sunday. The wind was blowing very hard which is where I usually fly poorly. My scores put me on the second page and I wanted to move up very badly. I went out with an attitude that I was going to win. I placed well in the heat and moved up. I now firmly believe in what Fred Sage had said about positive thinking in one of his Sage Advice columns. It works.

He who makes the least mistakes — wins!

I had time to watch the best HL flyers in the world do their thing. I studied them to try and determine what they were doing that made them winners and me something less. Last year I thought that it was there superior ability to read thermals. That is part of it, but most importantly, they don't make mistakes. No mistakes in strategy. No mistakes in flying.

In strategy, they don't take unwarranted chances and always follow a conservative strategy to make sure that they always finish in the top three in the heat. When flying they fly efficiently and smoothly. Their thermal turns are perfect every time out-climbing the others and always using the air to its maximum advantage. They seem to rarely have mid-air's which can cost many points in a round.

Have the right equipment

It is important to have a competitive plane. Lightness and design counts.

The other thing that was apparent was that virtually all of the HL planes today are competitive. The most important point here is to find a plane that fits your ability and flying style. How comfortable you are with your plane will, to a greater degree than not, determine how well you fly. The more high performance the plane, the more talented you must be as a pilot to fly it. Just because Joe Wurts or Daryl Perkins flies a particular plane does not necessarily make it the the best choice for you.

On a side note, just before the contest, there was question as to how the new small S-80 servos would perform. Many of the pilots at the IHLGF were using these, and other similar sub-micro servos throughout the contest and did not seem to have any trouble. One explanation that I had heard was that the low price of the servo's is due to little quality assurance checking and burn in time. If this is true then it seems that if the servo's don't fail on you early then you are going to be ok with them. I also heard that one of the failure modes happens when they become too hot from being in a car in the

sun. So, if flying those servos, you may want to keep them in the shade.

Do your homework

Working on the throw is also very important. It was brought home to me as one of the new flyers at the IHLGF was video taping everyone's throw for study. He was taking this very seriously and I wasn't. Food for thought.

Continuous HL contest flying also seemed to help. I noticed that the people that had been flying regularly and in the ISS contest tended to do better than others who had not. A practice session can't help you prepare for the intensity. Only contest flying can do that.

As they say in athletics, Just wait until next year! For me I learned that I better get nerves of steel, a consistently winning attitude, planes that don't break, a better throw, and become absolutely smooth in my flying.

Speaking of next year, mark your calendars for June 6-7. These are the dates for the Fifth Annual IHLGF. Sure hope to see you there. ✈

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take you to the next level . . .

The Pelikan

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