

# Airworthy

The Official Journal of the Black Forest Soaring Society

24566 David C. Johnson Loop  
Elbert, CO 80106



Volume 35 Number 9

September 2023

Club Web Page: [SoarBFSS.org](http://SoarBFSS.org)

Airworthy Archive: [SoarBFSS.org/Airworthy](http://SoarBFSS.org/Airworthy)

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## FROM THE EDITOR

We have a big issue this month. There's lots going on. 9BA, our Blanik L-23, was reassembled on 8/25. Lots of little details left, but she should be back on the line soon!

**John Gillis** reports on the state of our OGN network. **John** and **Bill Patrick** report that a 2-33 can be a cross country machine—if you remember to bring seat cushions. **Raul Boerner**, **Bill Gerblich**, and **Jeff Maki** each give their perspective on their epic “Alpha Team.” Then there's **Krantzpalozza!** And **Brian Price** reflects on why we fly.

The last potluck of the year will be Saturday, September 16. Put it on your calendar and brings something delicious!

Mark Palmer, Editor



*Jon Stark on final for 17 in his Phoebus, ONE  
8/19/2023*

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Becky Kinder

Seasons change, sometimes abruptly. After a static shift into summer, the sudden shift of conditions shouldn't be a surprise. We often have really good soaring in late summer and autumn, so things are still happening at BFSS.

The Hangar Door Research/Replacement continues to morph as our engineers compare designs and investigate resources. We're nearing conclusion and have some input from **Steve Niehus** of Overhead Doors.

Seeing the volunteer turnout to reattach wings to 9BA was a terrific boost to my morale. The plane really is close to a return to service, which will mean a farewell to N422BA as it returns home to Meadow Lake.

Looking ahead to the off season, I'd personally like to see some trailer driving competitions, maybe a splicing seminar, Condor, and the Winter Party. I really hope we can begin our spring soaring season with **Dave Rolley's** Cross Country classes in '24.

Lift & blessings!  
Becky

## CALENDAR

### Board of Directors Meetings

**September 12, 2023 6:30 – 9:00**

At Clubhouse

**October 10, 2023 6:30 – 9:00**

Via Zoom

### Women's Cross Country Camp

**September 3 – 8, 2023**

Moriarty, NM

### BFSS Saturday Potluck Barbeque

September 16, 2023 (after flying)

### 1-26 Championships

**July 31 – August 8, 2024**

Waller, TX

### SSA Convention

**October 29 – November 3, 2024**

Knoxville, TN

## FLEET UPDATE

**ASK-21 (77)** – Nothing to report

**2-33 (840)** – Nose skid reinforced; new TRIG radio to be installed soon

**Blanik L-23 (9BA)** – Major reassembly complete. Almost ready for action!

**Blanik L-13AC (2BA)** – Tailwheel replaced

**PW-5 (1GM)** – Wings retaped; new dolly guide prototype tested

**ASW-19 (Z3)** – Nothing to report

**Pawnee (76S)** – Annual inspection; new battery and rebuilt alternator

**Pawnee (41Y)** – Rebuild continues

#### FRIENDLY REMINDER

Please, DO NOT DRIVE the golf carts on the grass! Driving on the grass could result in deep ruts and a lot of headaches for the club and airpark users. Also, please be careful of the runway shoulders while the new grass is taking hold.

## OPS DUTY CALENDAR

Here is the Ops Duty schedule for September and early October. *[Note: If you have swapped duty dates with someone, please send a note to the editor so we can publish more accurate information. –Ed.]*

Kinder, Julie	09/01/2023
Krantz, L/Silberer, Z	09/02/2023
Krantz, T/Tomanek/Wood	09/03/2023
Kuhlke, L/Abbe, J	09/04/2023

Penkus, Bob	09/08/2023
Wood, H/Wade, J	09/09/2023
Kinder, M/Boerrigter, B	09/10/2023

Price, Brian	09/15/2023
LaFollette, K/Buist, M	09/16/2023
Leonard, D/Cole, D	09/17/2023

Baker, Gary	09/22/2023
Lewis, L/Culbertson, R	09/23/2023
Maki, Jeff	09/24/2023

Boerner, Raul	09/29/2023
Morgan, David	09/30/2023
Nadein, Alex	10/01/2023

DeBacker, Frank	10/06/2023
McClain, Kip	10/07/2023
Palmer, Mark	10/08/2023

On weekends, the early GOD shift is 8:30 – 2:30 and the late shift 11:00 – 5:00. NOTE: Dual GOD shifts end September 24. Single shifts are all day, starting at 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

### PLEASE REVIEW THE LAUNCH PROCEDURES BEFORE YOUR DUTY DAY!

Every flying member (except tow pilots and instructors on a regular teaching schedule) is on the schedule for line duty. If you are either a pre-solo student or have never performed this duty, Joshua will pair you with someone who has experience. Please check this list carefully to see when you're on duty and if you're

working with someone. **Reach out to Joshua if you feel you need to be paired with someone for more training. Be sure to go to the calendar page on the website and put yourself down in the Line Volunteer column for the day you're assigned.**

Remember, if you can't make your duty assignment, you must find a replacement. Once that is done, contact [Joshua Abbe](#) and let him know so he is aware of the change. Include [Mark Palmer](#) so he can get it in *Airworthy!*

If you see **VOLUNTEER NEEDED** listed on the schedule, that indicates that no one is scheduled for that day and that volunteers are appreciated. Please contact Joshua if you are available.

#### **OPS SHEETS**

**Don't Forget:** After you have finished flying, be sure to submit your flight information within 24 hours to [Carrie Commerford](#) via the flight ops app. After you submit your flight, if you do not receive a confirmation email, follow up with Carrie to confirm her receipt of the information. **Remember, submitting flight information is your responsibility!** Not only does it help keep the club finances in order, but this is how we track flight time for each club aircraft.



*Things got a little interesting on Saturday afternoon, 8/5.*

## **WELCOME TODD HAHN AS NEW SAFETY OFFICER**

Please welcome **Todd Hahn** as the new club safety officer. Todd has accepted the position after **Mark Palmer** stepped down at the end of July. Congratulations, and thank you Todd!



*Todd Hahn works on removing the dry rot on the front window sills.*

## **SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT by Todd Hahn, Safety Officer**

We have an important safety announcement about a guideline that will go into effect immediately at BFSS.

Due to concerns about tow pilot fatigue during the day, especially on busy good soaring days, and after considerable discussion amongst tow pilots, the board of directors (BoD), instructors, and the outgoing and new safety officer, the BFSS BoD has unanimously adopted the following resolution during this week's BoD meeting.

**"The BFSS BOD strongly encourages our tow pilots to take a break from 11:30am to 12:00."**

We currently have a tow pilot shortage, and so currently it is difficult to schedule two tow pilots for each summer soaring day. Therefore, barring days where we have two tow pilots available, this resolution has been deemed necessary at this time by the leadership of BFSS.

I would ask for everyone's understanding and support of this guideline.

In addition, I also want to encourage tow pilots to take ANY rest breaks they deem necessary and to be conservative in their decision to continue towing operations. In other words, please err on the side of caution and take a break or cease operations altogether if you are getting too tired to 100% safely make a tow.

I encourage the membership to be mindful of (1) the exacting and tiring nature of towing gliders repeatedly and continuously, and (2) the pressure tow pilots feel to continue towing, especially when the line is long. Therefore, I ask the membership to be respectful of a tow pilot's decision to take a break or cease towing operations altogether at any time.

Going forward, the leadership of BFSS will review and revise this guideline as needed and as circumstances change.

## CONGRATULATIONS

**Bif Huss** and **Dave Leonard** who finished 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, respectively, at the 18-meter Nationals in Uvalde, TX. We look forward to hearing more about the contest in next month's *Airworthy!*



*Zulu Lima bedded down for the night in its "jammies," Uvalde, TX. Photo by Steve Leonard via Frank DeBacker*

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**Jon Stark** – WINGS phase and ASK-21 back seat check

**Doug Houston** – WINGS phase

**Mike Franzmann** – First solo and A Badge



*Mike Franzmann with instructor Brandon Kolk after Mike's first solo on 8/6/23*

**Brandon Kolk** – First student soloed as a CFG

**David Crabb** – First solo and A Badge earned (to be awarded soon)



*David Crabb nails it on his first solo, 8/20/23.*

**Julie Kinder** – Flight Review

**Lewie Lewis** – Flight Review

**Scott Dimick** and **Wojtek Tomanek** – Checked out on moving and servicing the Gerblick Launch Line Loo (GL<sup>3</sup>)!

**Levi Krantz** – Wing Runner Badge

**Wojtek Tomanek** – Passed his FAA Private Pilot written test with a 97%

## THANK YOU!

**Doug Curry, Bill Gerblich, Lewie Lewis, Kip McClain, Brandon Kolk, Becky Kinder, and Harold Wood** – For reassembling 9BA on a chilly and wet Saturday. Almost there!

**Frank DeBacker and Gary Baker** – For the wonderful work installing the new windows donated by **Rich Barclay**. Thank you Rich! And also to **John Gillis** for providing the mechanical lift to save backs!



*Wonderful new windows for the clubhouse!*

**Donald Hannon** – Who, in one day, filled eight 50-gallon trash bags with kochia pulled from the front of Hangar 3!

**Bill Gerblich** – For repairing and instructing members on how to use the GL<sup>3</sup>

**Doug Curry and Bill Gerblich** – For going above and beyond to get 76S annualized and back on line

**Doug Curry** – For towplane annual, 2-33 nose skid work, L-13 tailwheel replacement, and work to get the L-23 closer to flying

**Julie Kinder** – For weeding around the clubhouse

**Becky Kinder** – For spraying weeds around the clubhouse

**Harold Wood** – For weed whacking

**Harold Wood and Brandon Kolk** – For removing freon and door from the old refrigerator so it can be safely disposed of

**Alex Nadein** – For Hangar 3 door designs

**Jeanne and Dave Allen** – For bringing the yummy brownies over for our monthly BBQ as thanks for club members helping with weeds

**Todd Hahn and Donald Hannon** – For work on the front window sills (decades of dry rot!)



*Donald Hannon and Todd Hahn tackle window repair on the clubhouse.*

## SPECIAL WEEDING THANK YOU!

**Brian Price, John Gillis, Alice Palmer, Mark Palmer, Todd Hahn, Kip McClain, Quay Snyder, Mike Franzmann, Zsolt Silberer, Rick Culbertson, Chris Dunmall, Becky Kinder, Julie Kinder, Donald Hannon, Scott Dimick; and from the KAP Homeowner crew: Jamie Treat, Jim Norman, Cindy Norman, RJ Johnson, Gary Leake, Dave Allen, Jeanne Allen, Diane Thomas, and Lauri Hoover.** Whew! If we missed anyone, our apologies, and thank you!

**Bill Gerblich** – For mowing our lot

**Quay Snyder** – For vacuuming the clubhouse

**Alex Nadein, Levi Krantz, Gary Backer, Chris Dunmall, Alice Palmer, Mark Palmer, Lewie Lewis, Stan Bissell, Wojtek Tomanek, Quay Snyder** – For extra GOD duty

**Chris Dunmall** and **Dave Morgan** – For cleaning out the shop area in Hangar 3 and retaping the wings on the PW-5



*1 Golf Mike safely tucked away in a cleaned-out Hangar 3 shop, courtesy of Chris Dunmall and Dave Morgan. Photo by Chris Dunmall*

**John Gillis** – For developing a rail system to get the PW-5 in and out of Hangar 3 (more to follow on this soon!)

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Please welcome **Rutger Olsen**. Rutger is an ab initio student and started training with instructor **Stan Bissell** last weekend.



*Rutger Olsen*

## TREASURER'S CHEST by John Gillis

Members, we have an eCommerce site where members and guests can pay for services and make donations. Here's the link:

<https://blackforestsoaringsociety.square.site/>

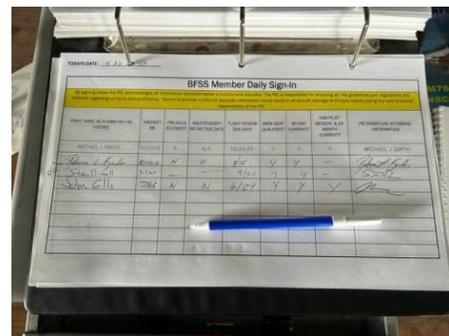
There is a 2.9% fee + \$0.30 per transaction, which will come out of the net applied to your account. The club also has a Square card reader, and all of our commercial ride pilots have the app and can assist in making a transaction at the clubhouse. **Carrie** gets a monthly report from Square on all activity so we can make sure it applies to the right account.

## UPDATE YOUR FLIGHT REVIEW STATUS by Mark Palmer

Just a reminder that if you have a flight review, complete a WINGS phase, or successfully complete a checkride, be sure to update your flight review status on the Member page. Sign in and edit your profile to make any changes.

## DON'T FORGET TO SIGN IN!

Don't forget that if you are flying at the club, whether in club ships or as a private owner, be sure to sign into the flight log before you fly. The log is in the battery room.



## 9BA ASSEMBLY – ON THE LAST LAP!

Friday, August 25, saw a group of club members gather at **Doug Curry's** hangar for a momentous event. After nearly two years of being grounded, 9BA was reassembled. As is normal,

a few more minor issues need to be solved, but our L-23 will be back in the air soon!



*Kip McClain, Brandon Kolk, Doug Curry, Harold Wood, and Lewie Lewis prepare to install 9BA's wings. Not shown: Bill Gerblick  
Photo by Becky Kinder*



*Kip McClain and Doug Curry after 9BA's assembly. Photo by Bill Gerblick*

## **KRANTZPALOOZA! by Alice Palmer**

We enjoyed a recent weekend when three generations of the Krantz family had a day of soaring together. **Levi Krantz** (age 17 and new-ish Private Glider Pilot), dad **Tim** (also new-ish Private Glider Pilot), mom **Chi**, and grandmother **Kathy Peterman** (a power transition pilot working on her Glider add-on), all got their feet off the ground.



*Krantz family – Kathy Peterman, Levi Krantz, Chi Krantz, Tim Krantz. Photo by Chris Dunmall*

Levi was PIC on flights with his mom, his grandmother, and his dad!



*Chi Krantz prepares for a flight as passenger with Levi. Photo by Tim Krantz*



*PIC Levi with his grandmother Kathy before their flight. Kathy started a family trend with her pilot's license some years ago!*

*Photo by Tim Krantz*

The longest and highest flight of the day was the last one with Levi flying and his dad as passenger. This selfie says it all:



*Best flight of the day—Levi takes his dad Tim for a great flight.*

Levi, Tim, Chi, and Kathy, we are so glad you are part of our BFSS soaring family!

### **WEEDING by Mark Palmer**

I know we're all weary of the subject, but we (the club and KAP) really need everyone's help with weed mitigation. This year's wet weather has made the weeds go crazy, especially the kochia. We've had weed parties and, while they are difficult for some club members to attend, we really appreciate those who have shown up.

Every little bit helps. If every club member would take just five minutes and pull a handful of weeds, it would be a help. So if you're waiting to tow to the line, waiting for a tow, or

just waiting, take a few minutes and keep KAP beautiful!

The next weeding party is Wednesday, September 6, from 0730 – 0930.

### **RAUL BOERNER, MASTER PILOT AWARD by Deonna Neal**

Dear BFSS Members,

I wanted to write to let you all know, since **Raul** is too modest to tell you himself, that Raul was awarded the **FAA Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award**.



*FAA Safety Team Manager Nelson Wolfmeier presents Raul Boerner his Master Pilot award.*

The Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award is the most prestigious award the FAA issues to pilots certified under Title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 61. This award is to "recognize individuals who have exhibited exemplary aviation expertise, distinguished professionalism, and steadfast commitment for at least 50 years of piloting experience or 50 or more years combined experience in both piloting and aircraft operations." Raul's name has now been added to a published "Roll of Honor."

To put this achievement in perspective: There are currently about 900,000 active licensed pilots in the USA. Only 7,000 have ever earned the award since its inception. In Colorado, there have only been about 200 pilots ever to earn the award.

I was very fortunate to train for both my Commercial and CFI-G certificates under Raul's tutelage. Working with him has made a lasting positive impact on my own journey in aviation. I am sorry that I am not in Colorado anymore, but I hope you all find a way to celebrate this remarkable achievement.

Writing fondly from Alabama,  
**Deonna Neal**  
BFSS Member 2011-2015.

### OGN RECEIVERS by John Gillis

We moved the receiver from Silver West to a remote camp south of La Veta Pass the last week in July. A co-worker/IT guy has some property at the top of a mountain with solar power and cell internet and agreed to install the receiver. It may be the first "off grid" OGN receiver. It's called LaVeta on the OGN and it picked up traffic out of Moriarty. We now have coverage along the Front Range, from Wyoming deep into New Mexico to Sante Fe.

There was a gap as you left the Sangre de Cristos and the Wets south or came north out of Taos. Now it's covered. LaVeta should also catch anyone coming down the Sangres or the Wets south of Canon City.

[https://ognrange.glidernet.org/#LaVeta,max,all,37.42800 - 105.32300,10,#80000040:#008000ff,](https://ognrange.glidernet.org/#LaVeta,max,all,37.42800-105.32300,10,#80000040:#008000ff)

Last year I agreed to be the focal for the SSA installation of OGN receivers in southern Colorado. That is now complete. Thanks to everyone who donated to the project. If you want to fund a receiver, it's about \$300 per receiver and SSA will arrange installation, or if you have contacts up the headwaters of the

Arkansas, be part of the solution! We need more receivers in the Colorado mountains!

BFSS has an amazing presence on OGN. Our CO15 receiver covers most of the Front Range all way to Wyoming and down to the face of Pikes Peak.

Pueblo West, hosted by **Wojtek Tomanek**, is equally as powerful, catching traffic deep into the mountains south and west of Pikes Peak. Canon City, hosted by **Tim Krantz**, picks up everyone on the back side of Pikes Peak. Salida, hosted by **Lewie Lewis**, is grabbing everyone west of South Park.

Now LaVeta will take us all the way to New Mexico.

**Romey Wade** donated funds to stand up another receiver. I think the best location will be somewhere on the upper Arkansas River valley, perhaps Leadville or Buena Vista. Does anyone know of a reliable host who would be willing to host it? It will need power, a clear view of the sky and internet.

For more info on the project:  
<https://www.glidernet.org/>



*Matt Rendos and Stan Bissell in 2BA chasing Dave Rolley in D2D, 8/19/23*

## WHY WE FLY by Brian Price

Some of us compete in sailplanes, some wander from point to point, some are happy to float around and take in the view. Our reasons for gliding are individual. However, I believe we all share a fascination with the challenge of interpreting and using the day's atmosphere to best advantage. Do you read *Sailplane & Gliding*, the journal of the British Gliding Association? The August-September issue presents an article by **Justin Wills**, son of the late **Phillip Wills**, in which he describes the challenge and the joy of exploiting the energy above us. He ends with this wonderful paragraph:

“Ultimately, the fascination of gliding lies in trying to understand and relate to the air itself and the energy it harbours. Pilots go about this using a curious mixture of technology, trial and error, experience, intellect and intuition. Seeking out lines of atmospheric energy is a never ending quest towards the perpetual motion achieved by the albatross. Encountering one vast convergence and two superstreets made 2022 a special year. More enquiry is required.”  
(©*Sailplane & Gliding*, Aug/Sept 2023, Vol. 74, No. 4)



Photo by Brian Price

## NEVER LET A SEAT GO UNFILLED.... by John Gillis

This is a call-out to our certificated members who are using our two place ships to stay current or just have some fun.

If you don't have a pax, find one. There are plenty of blokes and sheilas who would be willing to fill that empty seat.

Case in point: I'm lingering around the club and **Bill Patrick** is taking the 2-33 to just get some airtime. He asked me if I'd like to take the extra seat. I've never flown with Bill and, although the 2-33 is not my favorite ship, I said of course—you chose if I'm front or back. Since the back is more comfortable, he chose that. Bill has taken up paragliding so I was interested in his comparison to hard-wing flying.

A quick pax briefing and we agreed he was PIC and would handle takeoffs and landings. It was great fun. I was able to do some sightseeing I rarely can do if I'm towing or being towed. I fully trusted Bill in the back seat and he did a great job. We got off tow around 10K in a 7-knot thermal and quickly turned that into 12K. Bill really has the feel for the 2-33.

Then we decided to try the Racetrack and headed west into some pretty good sink. Over HWY 83, we needed a climb. My turn and we transferred controls. I was using some skills I learned from mentor **Bif** flying the Duo. Bump, wait....Bump....not yet....Bump and count to 3. Then turn. Bill was amazed we cored another 7-knoter in one turn. The 2-33 wasn't much different than thermalling in the Duo Discus. He said he was impressed by the patience to wait for the core.

We took it 12K again and headed for the Lake Gulch and HWY 83 start cylinder. I handed control back to Bill, started the task, and headed for Dutch Gardens. We were over an hour into the flight and our butts were getting sore. And we needed to return the 2-33 for a

student soon, so it was an easy call to return to the airpark. Bill did a great landing and the aircraft was unharmed and fully reusable. His approach was very high as he still had his paraglider face on. A hard slip and we put it in the grass like two guys who knew what they were doing. Great fun.

If you are certificated and have an empty seat, I'll fill it anytime.



*John and Bill rocking 840*

## ALPHA TEAM CROSS-COUNTRY TEAM FLYING by Raul Boerner

Not having good cross-country soaring weather was driving me crazy—fortunately, not the kind of crazy requiring a doctor's visit. I sent a message to a few of our members who could also use a good experience.

We became the weekend's ALPHA TEAM (A-Team) to:

- a) Improve cross-country skills;
- b) Step away from Kelly in safe comfort;
- c) Focus on caring for team members;
- d) Set reasonable goals (don't order more than you can chew);
- e) Base goals on time instead of mileage;
- f) Communicate with and without radio;
- g) Encourage club observers to try XC;

- h) Demonstrate eagerness to help;
- i) Have fun, fun, fun!

Early, we briefed the weather; each team member advocated their own assessment. We agreed that the task would be based on returning to Kelly around 1600. This meant setting up for final glide around 1500. We discussed team-flying tactics to keep the lower pilot comfortable. We discussed gaggle procedures and who calls the departures. We emphasized staying together, no matter how high the top glider is. The leader would likely change from thermal to thermal, based on our preset rules of engagement.

At the end of the briefing, we agreed on a task. Once airborne, we had to change it—we had already briefed this. We ended up flying CO15—Devil's Head—Pikes Peak—Simla—CO15. Enroute time: 3:45.

The planned first launch was for 1300 (Done) and the gaggle departure was planned for 1330 (Done). The rest is fun history. Fellow Alpha Team members have written their perspectives below.

## “ARE YOU INTERESTED IN DOING SOME TEAM FLYING?” by Bill Gerblich

**Quay Snyder** and I just finished deciding who was flying QS, which days, for the coming weekend. I was going to take Saturday now. Quay had gotten the question from **Raul Boerner** earlier and Raul had proposed Saturday. “I'll forward Raul's email to you since you are now flying Saturday,” Quay said, and that is how it started.

**Jeff Maki** said he was interested, and **Dave Rolley** was already proposing possible routes to consider in addition to an ambitious route Raul had already proposed. Two days out, I opened the [VFRmap.com](http://VFRmap.com) website and started looking at the proposed routes and then looking at all the

private and public airports anywhere near the routes. I was fairly certain that a Standard class ship (QS) trying to keep up with flapped ships, was probably going to land out before them. I then pulled up all the airports on Google maps and took a hard look: could I land my glider there? I was very interested in trying this “team flying” and emailed the group that I was in! (I noted to the recipients that I was hopeful they would not consider my Standard class ship too slow, considering they were all flying flapped ships.)

I arrived at the clubhouse early Saturday morning, only to find Raul and Jeff already there and well into a weather briefing for the day. I had noticed walking into the clubhouse that their cars and trailers were already hooked up and positioned for rigging. (Note to self: you can never arrive too early for a big day of flying.) Raul was using SkySight to brief Jeff on what the day might bring. Then Jeff started over and briefed me using SkySight and the two of us interpreted the forecast with Raul observing. A good exercise, and we found more information to add to the earlier briefing.

The day looked good but I remembered what several more-experienced pilots said to me all summer—the forecasts are overly optimistic this year as they are not able to take into account our unusually wet spring. We decided to scale back the day for several reasons, but being cautious about our first time out together, this seemed like the best reason, and this would give us a chance to work out the bugs.



*DM in flight*

I don't want to repeat what Jeff and Raul will go over in their articles, so let me just say what I liked best about this experience. A group briefing is far better than doing it alone. You get to bounce impressions off each other and learn something in the process. Pulling out together to the end of the runway was kind of a thrill. We were launching as a group, as best we could, and that added to the excitement.

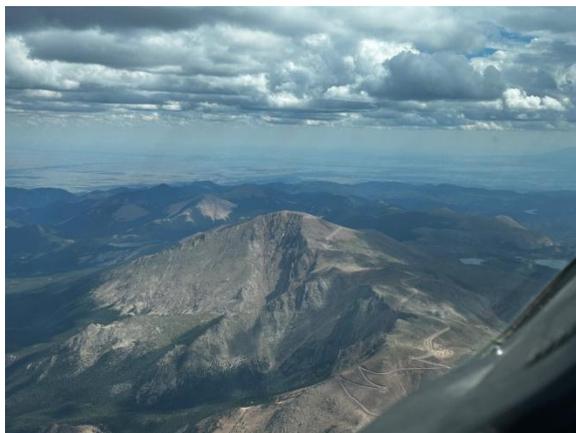
**Rick Culbertson** was our sniffer and his radio calls back were very informative, as he was first off tow in front of our group of four. Then Jeff radioed back what he was finding off tow, which informed Raul's tow, and Raul let me know what he was seeing. Raul got off the lowest of all and what he was seeing told me to take the second thermal and stay on a little longer. That was great feedback because it all helped make my tow almost effortless in getting high, right after getting off tow.

Just pushing to Perry Park was fun because we all found something different on the way there, and we were able to help each other out again. Jeff warned me about not pushing into the foothills just yet, and I was able to warn Raul about sink I found between Kelly and Perry Park.

Once we regrouped over Perry Park and headed out on course, the benefits of team flying in close proximity become obvious. You can see each other, in most cases, and when you lose sight, FLARM shows you where the others are and how they are doing. This kind of instant feedback only helps boost your confidence while flying on course. Passing over Pikes Peak at 16,000 feet following two other gliders is a real ego boost. We were in trail formation and I only hope a few folks at the observation point got a good picture.

Spreading out to three abreast from Pikes Peak to Simla was an eye opener. The differences in lift and sink, being only a few hundred yards apart really gives you a great three dimensional picture of what is going on around you. One

glider finding a big thermal and calling the others to join up is a real joy! Everyone benefits and you can just feel the stress dropping away.



*Turning Pikes Peak. Photo by Jeff Maki*

The run home from Simla to Kelly was a real kick. All our computers said we had Kelly made. Dave Rolley was finally back with us and we were just playing with MacCready settings and enjoying the fast run home. And then the landings—we arrived home at different altitudes and we sequenced ourselves effortlessly. Everyone came in, one right after the other, with large spacing so no one had to rush to clear the runway.

Quay was there to catch my wing, and after I pushed to the trailer, my watch reported we had flown 222 NM and over 3.3 hours. OLC scored my flight at a 241K triangle and an average speed of 74 knots. The best part—we beat our goal of keeping our thermaling below 50%. OLC said we averaged 40%. Not bad.

More than once during the flight, I radioed the team, “I really like this team flying!” I can’t say enough about how much fun I had, how low stress the experience was, and the excitement I had discussing the day with Jeff, Raul, and Dave at the BBQ afterwards. Doing things together is often more fun than doing it alone. I highly recommend you try “team flying” whenever possible. I can hardly wait for the next time I can hook up with a group again.

P.S. If your vehicle and trailer are prepped [*i.e.*, “combat ready”], you are far less likely to land out, because it is one less thing you are thinking about. “Will folks know how to prep my vehicle and trailer, to come get me?” That nagging thought is now gone!

## TEAM ALPHA FLIGHT AUGUST 19, 2023 – “21” PERSPECTIVE by Jeff Maki

I got the email from **Raul** (DM) a couple days earlier, and to paraphrase – “Saturday has potential...how about a team of 4 flight (Raul in DM, me in 21, **Bill Gerblick** in QS, and **Dave Rolley** in D2D), with my initial thought Kelly—Mt. Lincoln—Salida—Kelly for approximately 400K. Of course we will need to reassess on the morning of.” I have flown with DM before, and found it to be not only fun, but highly educational and much less stressful. So count me in! Never been that far back into mountains, so I study those charts and look up landout fields. Trade my wife my electric car for her SUV in case I need a long retrieve (be combat ready!). I arrive at Kelly early Saturday morning, pulling in just before DM.

First thing—look at weather—in depth! Raul and I ponder Skysight from every possible angle, trying to figure out the best route for the conditions. I liked south to the Wets (easy to fall into Canon City); he favored west back into the mountains, but it looked like precipitation might move in not too much after 4 PM. So we worked backwards: be back on the ground by 4, probably can’t get on course until 1. That gives us 3 hours. Optimistically, if the day is good we can average 100 km/hr, so we decide on a 300K flight—exact route still TBD.

Now in comes Bill (QS). In true master instructor form Raul volunteers me to walk Bill through the weather and planning strategy we have just discussed “from my perspective.” It’s a learning opportunity as we work our way again through

the forecast, winds, convergence, shower areas, etc.

It's now 11:30. "Well, what is our route?" We decide on Bailey, Wilkerson Pass, Pikes Peak, Simla, for 300K. We figure we can adjust up or down as necessary, and the final part of route gets us back over the plains in case rain moves in. Now we talk about altitudes. I've never been into the South Park area. There are Lux and Antelope as landout spots. We talk conservative glide ratios and decide on a minimum 15,500 ft altitude to get safely into and out of Bailey – we are hoping for a lot more. A little discussion on team flying tactics—radio calls, lowest person in thermal calls when to leave, don't leave the group even if "it looks so good I just need to go." **Dave Rolley** says he and D2D will join us at some point. Almost noon—yikes—let's go assemble.



*View from Jeff's cockpit*

Assembled and pushed out. **Rick Culbertson** in FG has launched, got off tow too low, and landed for a relight as I push into line behind him. He has agreed to be our forward scout, but those 18-meter wings don't want to wait around for us mere 15-meter mortals. He's gone. A couple of tows later I am off. Great thermal just north of field and I quickly climb to 15,500.

As I'm climbing I hear DM off tow low and struggling, but this is DM and he makes it up. Bill follows in QS. I am high—I call that I am

going to fly out under the cloud shelf that has formed between Kelly and Perry Park and assess the conditions in the Ramparts. I pass Perry and go back into the Ramparts. Not much happening—too much cloud cover? QS reports he is flying through rain at the antenna farm!

He and DM meet up low over Perry, and I scamper back there at 11,500 (nice to not be worried about landing out—if I do, I do) and they have managed to find a nice one. Fun to see your team on FLARM and read that they are climbing at 7 knots! I am in lift, but not 7 knots. "21, move a little further northwest," I hear. There it is. Back up to 15,500, with DM and QS patiently waiting above me. I follow the rules, and as low man call "heading west." As we have eaten up considerable time and I have not found good lift in the Ramparts, we downshift the flight plan. We are just not high enough to get into and out of Bailey comfortably (man it looks scary in that direction—maybe next time!). DM reads my mind and calls "Alpha Team, how about we make it Devil's Head, Pikes, Simla, and home?" All agree.



*DM and QS from 21, over the Ramparts, 8/19/23. Photo by Jeff Maki*

I charge out (it's fun being in front), turn Devil's first but at least 1000 feet below the team. Heading south I find something decent and back up to 15,500 I go. The team congregates around me, and we are all now at similar altitude. Couple more stops where lift seemed decent trying to get comfortable altitude to cross Woodland Park and get to the summit of Pikes.

Sometimes I am higher, sometimes lower, out front, behind...but always staying close. Keep your head on a swivel...where are those guys, keep them in site and use them to help center the thermals. Works really well.

Now we are side by side, maybe half mile apart, heading the last 12 NM south to Pikes at 15,000 or so. "Team, I am in good lift, should we circle?" I ask. "Why?" says QS, "I have been in solid lift for the last several minutes." Good point I think.

Very unusual, 12 NM flying straight toward Pikes at a MacCready 3 and not really losing altitude—must be convergence—love it! I make the peak first just shy of 16,000 feet, make some pretty circles in case any tourists are looking, snap a few pics of QS and DM, then eastbound we go as a flight of 3.

21 seems to like to go fast, and I am ahead again, although as usual a bit lower. The clouds ahead look good, and I stop and circle at a couple, but they don't pan out (I should probably invest in that HAWK vario option to stop getting fooled by gusts). Now we are up to a 25-NM glide without finding decent lift, just below 11,000. Have Kelly if need be, but where is that lift? Then QS calls he has 10 knots, a mile or two back. Yay Bill, best thermal of the day! I must have missed flying through it by just a smidge. You have to love three gliders probing the air instead of just you! Back I go, DM meets us there, and back up to 15,000 the team goes.

We push on to Calhan, where the clouds look good, but don't really yield much. DM to team: "Head back to Kelly or push to Simla?" "Simla" I say, where I thought we might be able to pick up a cloud street, and we continue moving east. We make it to Simla just over 12,000. QS and I are scratching around in light lift trying to figure where it is actually going up. Computers say we have Kelly, but not by a comfortable margin. DM says "another thousand feet and the final glide will be much more fun." He follows this up by finding us our "get home" thermal just north

of Simla, getting us back to 14,000. And what do I now see on my FLARM—Rolley and D2D a bit below us. Better late than never, Dave!

25 NM out and almost 2000 feet over pattern at MacCready 3—this is fun. I fly MacCready 3, not giving up altitude. Let's go to 4, still plenty. Oh what the heck, let's go to full negative flaps and just fly 100 knots IAS. I still make the airport 1000 feet over pattern. A sporty 15 gusting to 20 knots from the south for landing—that's fine.

A nice rollout onto the high speed where **Mark Palmer** helps me push off. Disassemble, debrief with DM and QS, and a lovely BFSS Saturday Potluck. Great day, great team, great teamwork, great ops, great tow, great BFSS people overall. OLC says about 250K at 72 km/hr, and less than 50% circling (my goal). Not any great new record, but I learned a lot, and hope we can do this again soon.



*Raul at Pikes Peak  
Photo by Jeff Maki*

## SHIPS FOR SALE

Have a ship you want to sell? Looking for a partnership? We can list it in *Airworthy*.

**FOR SALE:** 1/3 share in ASW-26E motorglider D2D. Based at CO15. If interested, contact [Gerald Peaslee](#).



**PHOTOS**



*That's a lot of weed! Jamie Treat drives the tractor loaded with just some of the 40 bags of weeds pulled on 8/5/23.*



*Where's Rocky?  
Photo by Clay Thomas (Rocky's dad)*



*This is what happens when you leave your 1-26 trailer in a bad part of town.*



*The result of Todd's and Donald's hard work on the window sills after filling and sanding. Just needs priming and painting. Volunteers anyone?*



*Mike Franzmann celebrates his first solo (and having his shirt tail cut) with instructor Brandon Kolk and towpilot Bill Gerblick.*