

U S U A FLYING CLUB 1 NEWSLETTER

June 1987

FROM THE LEFT SEAT

by Steve Osten

Personal experience is always the best teacher. It happens to you or it happens to someone you know. In either case, you really remember. Well, this one's from me. I was on a long round-robin cross-country. Warrenton-Fauquier to Whitman Strip to Orange County to Shannon back to Warrenton-Fauquier. Between Orange County and Shannon, I began to hear the strangest sound, as if something was wrong with the engine. I seemed to be using slightly more power than usual but otherwise, nothing abnormal. On landing at Shannon, inspection revealed a gaping hole in my muffler. Except for the momentary "heart-in-the-throat" syndrome, I was in no immediate difficulty. I got home O.K. and suffered neither danger nor damage to the airplane.

Lesson? I guess what I came away with is the need in our sport for constant vigilance, constant attention to our machines, regular inspection and regular maintenance. The muffler may have seemed perfectly sound and suddenly blown a hole or it may have been indicating its readiness to blow for some time. I don't know and that's the lesson. I should have known and it could have been something a lot more threatening than a noisy and inefficient muffler. Check everything and, at least once a year, check all the things you don't check every time you fly.

Fly Safely!

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ADVISORIES

Please welcome new member Chandler Cavin. Chandler has an MXL II which he has been flying at Windstar. He is from Arlington, Va. and hopes to find a place closer to home for his activities.

Club members who were at the May meeting got a chance to listen to USUA's John Ballantyne present us with more food for thought. He is on the point of presenting the FAA with his Petition for Change to FAR 103 and he is pleading for support from anyone who agrees with the substance of his proposals. Now is the time to make your voice heard. Enclosed with this issue of the NEWSLETTER is a form letter supporting John's petition. If you support the petition, separate it from the staple, sign it and

include your address, stick it in an envelope addressed to the FAA at the address shown in the letter and let twenty-two cents do its stuff.

At the June meeting, Program Chairman Paul McClung will present a tape which shows ultralighting and kayaking in the Himalayas. Those of you who did not see this program when it was aired on TV will be astounded at the altitudes at which ultralight operations were conducted.

WHITMAN STRIP FLY-IN

On June 27th/28th, the first Club fly-in of 1987 will be held at Whitman Strip. The second day of the weekend is also part of EAA 186's annual schedule, so there should be a considerable flying

(WHITMAN FLY-IN, cont.)

crowd there, particularly Sunday. If you're flying, the temptations are pretty much self-evident. If you're not flying right now, it promises to be the best Club fly-in ever, with plenty of planes flying, camping, hangar chat, hot-dogs and stuff, tires to kick and generally just good interesting airport life.

The Club will be supplying a couple of grills for cooking on both days; bring your own food and drink. There is an ample supply of bean-bags at the field. There will probably be an impromptu bomb drop competition set up for those who wish to play. Those who come to camp out, things are never too organized but there will probably be a bonfire Saturday night and there is always a lot of camaraderie among the campers. Come for Friday night, too, if you wish. Hangar construction is an ongoing affair at the field. If you want to have something to do Saturday morning besides fly and shoot the bull, bring along a hammer and help nail up some siding.

If you are planning to fly in and haven't flown at Whitman Strip before, please be aware that the farms southwest of the intersection of Rt. 611 and the power lines should be avoided at any altitude. The pattern is left hand whether you land on the main 2400' north-south runway or the shorter east-west runway/taxiway. Ultralight pattern altitude is 500'.

If you want to help with the loan of a grill or with ground support activities, such as aircraft/car parking, give Paul McClung a call, (703)860-2919. Whether you're flying, helping, eating or gawking, remember: do everything you can to make the weekend enjoyable and, above all, safe.

HANGAR FLYING

by Tom Simmons

My first solo flight in an ultralight took place on July 2, 1983,

at which time I knew only four other ultralight pilots, three of whom were as inexperienced as I was. The fourth was our instructor and, as one might imagine, our conversations went more or less one way.

During that first summer, I got between 30 and 40 hours of solo time in the air. But what was at least as important as my flying time was the "experience" I got from the other pilots I met, most of whom were more experienced than me. Through their stories, I learned about flight situations and conditions that I had not yet experienced on my own. And, as I inevitably began to learn a little from the egregious errors that I was constantly making myself, I was able to pass along some hopefully profitable confessions of my own.

Then, in 1986, I found and promptly joined USUA #1. And I have gotten much more for my dues than just fun flying and companionable drinking (although I have happily indulged in quantities of both).

Without any question, the most significant benefit that USUA #1 offers to each of its members is the rest of its membership. Our club is more than just large in numbers; its ranks are filled with active pilots at all levels of experience and proficiency. The opportunity for members to talk about their individual flying experiences - to hangar fly - has the potential to be equally as important as the actual flying we do together.

On any given weekend, Whitman Strip is populated by pilots with well over 100 hours of solo time and pilots with less than 10. The club has ultralights using 2-axis controls and ultralights flying with 3-axis controls. Many of our members have, or are working toward, their private pilot's license. Some own conventional aircraft as well as ultralights. We've got ultralight pilots who fly with Nav and CB radios and conven-

(HANGAR FLYING, cont.)

tional pilots who fly without shoes. USUA #1 members have flown across Chesapeake Bay and members who have landed in the front yards of state policemen. In short, there is as much experience as there is diversity.

Generally, hangar flying is prompted by conditions. You talk because the wind is too strong, or the rain hasn't stopped yet, or someone in the group is still topping off or taking a leak. But a less serendipitous approach to hangar flying would probably be as valuable to our more experienced pilots as it is to newcomers.

I do not propose anything formal. Just that members should get to know other members. Check out their airplanes. Make chat. If you see some instrumentation you are not familiar with, ask about it. If an aircraft has been modified, find out how well it performs. If someone has flown somewhere you haven't been, learn about the route characteristics.

The beauty of this method is that it simply cannot fail to produce a stimulating exchange of ideas. I have yet to meet a USUA #1 member who won't talk for hours under even the slightest provocation.

CROSS-COUNTRY REPORT

Well, we tried cramming a lot of Club activity into a pretty short time. Apparently, we were too hyperactive and God frowned. April 25th was to have been the first Club event, a cross-country to Orange County Airport. Well, April 25th was one of the soggiest days of a cold and soggy spring, so no one went mud-wading at Whitman Strip that day. Through brilliant foresight and planning, Sunday, April 26th, was reserved as the rain-date. Blowout! With winds out of the northeast (never a healthy direction) whistling in at fifteen mph, gusting to "I'm not flying!",

the opportunity for an Orange County cross-country sank slowly in the west. We could have gotten down there in record time but we would have been a week getting back. People had to settle for local stuff over the field with side trips to Warrenton-Fauquier Airport and Warrenton. It was a pretty good fly-in and a new hangar was started (barely) but as a cross-country, it was a bust.

The second Club event followed close on its heels the next weekend, May 2nd and 3rd, namely, the annual EAA 186 Spring Fly-in at Winchester Municipal Airport. Finally, a Club Event which actually happened. Saturday morning provided a lot of ambiguity. Rick Matson and Steve Roth, starting early from Warrenton-Fauquier, had clear sailing all the way to Winchester. Rob Brooke, George McClung, Andy Schaffer, Tom Simmons and guest Bill Straw set out from Whitman Strip at 10:00am, only to be greeted by rain at the Blue Ridge. George put down at Upper-ville Airport and everyone else at Harris field. After a tempting break, the Harris bunch were again thwarted by rain and returned to Whitman Strip. Doughty George McClung pressed on through the gap to arrive damply at Winchester. The "Fastidious Four" arrived at Whitman in sunshine and warmth. Rob Brooke and Tom Simmons agreed to have another go at it and departed after lunch, arriving at Winchester about 2:00pm after a cool but uneventful flight.

The Fly-in was its usual enjoyable self, though somewhat under-attended, compared to years previous. Still, there were plenty of interesting aircraft, T-Shirts to buy, hangar flying and cruising the Winchester countryside with the apple blossoms in full bloom.

Bill Fore, in his usual courtly tradition, played host to the entire ultralight community with an opulent buffet luncheon. Spread out in his (carpeted) hangar were viands to gladden the heart of a

(CROSS-COUNTRY, cont.)

weary flier, along with an entertaining assortment of disconnected Weedhopper parts along the back wall.

Camping out Saturday night were: selfless Paul McClung (the ground-support grunt), Rob Brooke, Rick Matson, Steve Roth and Tom Simmons. Remarkably, no one had really made any camping preparations except for Paul. Nevertheless, in the best spirit of "loaves and fishes", somehow tents were scrounged and everyone slept comfortably.

More tire kicking on Sunday, followed by a four-plane Ultralight Fly-by led up to a general ultralight exodus around noon. Visibility was acceptable but very hazy for the flight back. The route led the "gaggle" past Warrenton to Warrenton-Fauquier Airport. There was enough turbulence to make the flight uncomfortable, on occasion, but the return trip was otherwise uneventful. Words of regret were spoken for all the people who couldn't make the event and all who went have added the weekend to a growing mural of flight experiences.

MANNERS

by Rob Brooke

Whitman Strip is getting active. Last year, only three planes were flying with any regularity, so you could count on maybe two on any given weekend. Now, things are "hotting up". Even back in mid-spring (and a cold miserable one at that), every weekend at Whitman Strip was like a fly-in. The people who keep their planes at Whitman Strip are flying a whole lot and other people are flying in from other places to be part of the action. The onset of warmer weather promises to increase the level of activity.

Maybe we've been spoiled. We're used to flying at Whitman Strip with one, maybe two other planes and we haven't really taken things

too seriously. Pattern? Why bother? Old Joe, there, in the other plane knows exactly where I am. No sweat. Restricted area (southwest of the power lines, for instance)? What the heck, I'll stay away and Joe knows what he's doing, too.

Well, fellows, it's time to shape up. I'm seeing guys doing straight in landings with the sky full of planes in the pattern. I'm seeing guest pilots who've never flown at Whitman before flying in every direction with never a care for our neighboring "danger zones". I'm seeing hordes of ultralights in low-level flight all over the place around the field.

Get serious. All we need is a pattern accident to give the whole sport one Hell of a black eye. We have neighbors bordering the field who have already proved their willingness to make a major stink if we annoy them overmuch by our flying behavior. They are predisposed to annoyance by our very presence. If we do not constantly strive to be inconspicuous, we will sooner or later jeopardize a very good thing.

So listen up. Whitman Strip has some rules. If you aren't alone at the field, you are expected to fly a left-hand pattern - downwind, base and final, pattern altitude 500' AGL. You are expected to stay away from the houses of our neighbors, particularly the farms southwest of the power lines along Rt 611. The rules permit low level flying but please use some common sense. If there are a lot of planes in the air, it is probably dangerous to traffic. And if everyone's down on the deck, it will probably drive our neighbors **CRAZY**. It's sort of like being attacked by a swarm of unbelievably noisy 400 lb. bumblebees.

Now that I've got your behavior straightened out, please, be responsible for the flying behavior of your guests. If you give them a few tips, it'll be a lot less embarrassing than having me ask

(MANNERS, cont.)

them why they're breaking our rules.

I can tell you that there are plenty of folks who still worry about the permanence of that good thing called Whitman Strip and who do not want it jeopardized by thoughtless flying. If you offend, sooner or later, someone will speak to you about it. Don't be angry-try to understand why he's doing it. He had to screw up his courage to do it, for it's never pleasant. If I offend by my flying, please, speak to me about it. I'll be embarrassed, but I'll listen and take you seriously.

Straight Arrow, you say? Well, if Straight Arrow will help keep Whitman Strip in continued healthy operation, then so be it. If you want to keep flying at Whitman Strip, take it seriously and protect it. Speaking for myself, I don't have a runway and a hangar in my backyard. With airports all around shutting down, if Whitman Strip were to close, I'd be grounded. The current Whitman Strip rules are usually posted at Whitman Strip. Read 'em and follow 'em.

AIRWORTHINESS ALERT

Anyone who's been down to Whitman Strip lately has doubtless seen the fabulous weightless Maxair Drifter. It hovers in the air, two feet off the ground without power or landing gear. Miraculous!

Well, not really. It's hanging from a rope from the rafters. It's doing that because the landing gear wiped out on a rough emergency off-field landing. The off-field landing was, you guessed it, occasioned by an engine failure. The engine failure was occasioned by a spark plug cap parting company with its associated spark plug.

Whoa! Who ever heard of such a thing? Everyone who flies and talks to other pilots or who reads any of the ultralight press at all, that's

who. This thing happens all the time and there's no excuse for it happening to you. It is too easy to remedy and now that you are reading this, ignorance is no excuse.

The problem is most often encountered on ultralights with inverted engine installations (spark plugs down), but you folks with right-side-up engines may not be immune. So, despite the fact that you've never had a problem and you always give the plug caps a little push during the pre-flight, you should safety-wire those plug caps.

Mike Cannon has documented a very easy and secure method of safety-wiring your spark plug caps. If you will refer to the accompanying sketches, you will see a double strand of safety wire twisted around a spark plug just below the hex section where the plug wrench grabs (#1). The twisted pig-tail ends are long enough on both sides to reach up (#2) and be, themselves, twisted over the plug cap, keeping it firmly attached to the plug (#3).

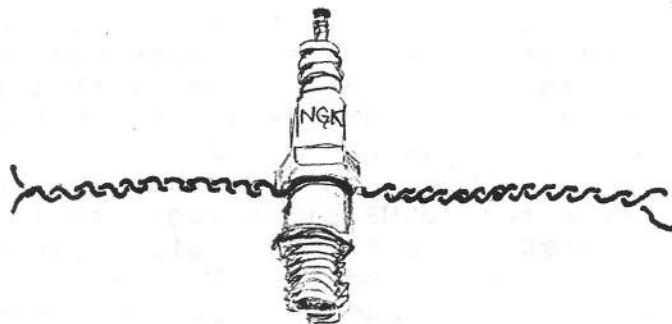


Figure 1

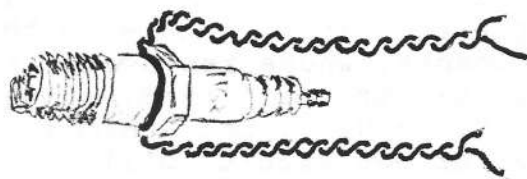


Figure #2

(AIRWORTHINESS ALERT, cont.)

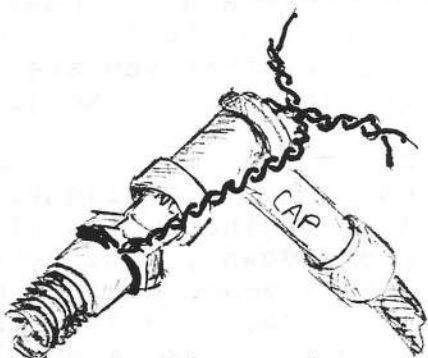


Figure 3

This form of safety wire does not interfere with the installation or removal of the plug. It can also be reused on new plugs, if treated with reasonable care. Untwist the pig-tails holding the cap on, remove the cap and the plug, slide the safety wire off the old plug and onto the new, install the new plug and cap and, finally, retwist the pig-tails over the cap. Done. Safe. No weightless, miraculously floating ultralight for you, nosiree.

USUF REGISTRATION

by Rob Brooke

The first of USUA #1's monthly "Registration Days" occurred on Saturday, May 9 and met with fair success. I spent the day at Whitman Strip and was gratified to be able to help three club pilots take the tests for USUF pilot registration. Congratulations to Gil Ayotte, David Hiers and Ted Wachtmeister, all of whom successfully completed the tests. Steve McClung, whose registration had expired, got his renewal form signed off, so four club pilots have (I hope) joined the USUF registration rolls.

I said "I hope", because I sent the completed forms home with the applicants, whose responsibility it will be to mail them, along with \$10.00, to USUF. Get them sent in, guys, or our efforts will have been wasted.

As you can see from "Flight Plan", the next Registration Day is scheduled for Saturday, June 6. If

you are flying and are still not a registered pilot or if your registration has expired (it's good for two years), why not take advantage of the opportunity? If you don't keep your plane at Whitman Strip, it'll be a nice cross-country for you. Bring your checkbook and expect to give me a check made out to USUF for ten bucks. From now on, I'll take care of mailing in the forms.

FLIGHT PLAN

May 31 - EAA 186 Luncheon Flight.
Arrive Sky Bryce, 12:30pm.

June 4 - Club Meeting.

June 6 - USUF Pilot Registration,
Whitman Strip, 9:00am to 4:00pm

June 27/28 - Whitman Strip Campout
and Fly-in.

CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE - '84 Eipper MXL. 120 honest hours, 20 hours since engine overhaul. Steerable nosewheel, altimeter, ASI, compass, tach/CHT, wheel pants, flex-drive shaft, always hangared. Great performance, great economy, \$4500. Call Rob Brooke, days 301/640-5231, eve. 301/279-2816

FOR SALE - '84 Quicksilver MX, Rotax 377, steerable nosewheel, disc brakes, Ultrameter tach/CHT, ballistic chute, 80 hrs TT, always hangared, new condition, \$3500. Call Steve Roth, H - 703/860-1883
W - 703/893-3315

FOR SALE - Ultra-Pro Intercom
Helmet set. Call Bill Fore,
H - 703/662-1173, W - 703/662-5581

Federal Aviation Administration
Ultralight Regulation AFS-820
800 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20591

Dear Sirs:

I regret using this impersonal form-letter in making my personal views known to you. The letter was generated by the newsletter editor of United States Ultralight Association's Flying Club #1 and, so far as I know, has only been made available to ultralight enthusiasts. I say this to distinguish my use of it from mass appeals originating in shopping malls, fleshed out by anyone willing to stop long enough to sign something. I am an ultralight enthusiast, I read and signed this letter, I agree with what it says in my name and it's my stamp on the envelope.

I'm taking the trouble of mailing it to you because I want you to know that I agree with the proposals for change to FAR 103 that John Ballantyne is making as Director of the United States Ultralight Association. I believe that a regulation along the lines he suggests more accurately deals with the sport as it is being practiced today. I believe that the self-regulation aspects of the proposal have already been well proven by the United States Hang Glider Association. The changes proposed will result in an acceptable and dependable level of pilot competence and provide the latitude and incentives necessary for the design of airworthy and durable craft.

In sum, I believe that acceptance of the USUA's Petition for Change to FAR 103 will result in 1) an improvement in public and pilot safety, 2) an enhancement of the sport of recreational aviation and 3) a lessening of any pressure for additional regulatory effort by the FAA.

Please give this Petition for Change serious consideration. Should you wish to question me more as to my reasons for supporting the Petition, my name and address are supplied below.

Sincerely,

* * * GENERAL INFORMATION * * *

The United States Ultralight Association's Flying Club #1 is a non-profit, educational club dedicated to the sport of recreational ultralight flying.

Meetings are held at 7:30 P.M. on the first Thursday of each month in the auditorium of the Springfield Operations Center of the Washington Gas Light Company, unless stated otherwise in the newsletter. To reach the WGL Center, take the Edsall Road West exit from I-395; turn left at the second light (Industrial Road); continue until the "Y" in the road; bear right and continue until you reach the WGL Center at 6801 Industrial Road on the left.

1987 CHAPTER OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	Steve Osten	703/860-2919
VICE PRESIDENT	Jim Kelly	301/855-4046
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TREASURER	Dave Maitland	703/792-2924
PROGRAM CHAIRMAN	Paul McClung	703/430-0216
SAFETY OFFICER	Tom Simmons	703/548-7420
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Rob Brooke	301/279-2816

* * * * *

*** Members are encouraged to submit items for inclusion in this newsletter. Articles and non-commercial classified ads will be run, space available, free of charge for current members. Commercial ad rates are: full page - \$20.00; 1/2 page - \$10.00; 1/4 page - \$5.50; business card - \$3.00.

* * * * *

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION Mail to: Rob Brooke USUA Flying Club 1
Dues: \$15.00 1809 McAuliffe Drive, Rockville, Md 20851

NAME: _____ DUES INCLUDED: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE H: (____)____-____ W: (____)____-____

UL'S OWNED: _____ USUF#: _____

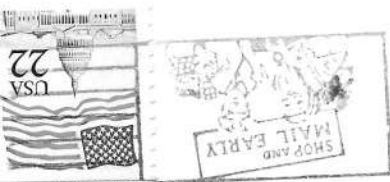
USUA#: _____ EXAMINER? __ 2-PL?__ EAA#: _____ AOPA#: _____

FAA RATING: _____ DEALER: _____

INTERESTS: _____

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THE NEWSLETTER

USUA
FLYING CLUB
#1

