

July 1987

FROM THE LEFT SEAT

by Steve Osten

Over the past couple of years, it seems to me that the one activity which has drawn the most interest and action has been cross-country flights. Instead of just "flying around the patch", more and more pilots are taking off for Orange County, T.I. Martin Airport, Shannon Airport, Luray Caverns Airport, Winchester Municipal Airport, etc., etc., etc. We are starting to spread out in larger and larger numbers.

Since more of us are starting to impinge upon the preserves of general aviation, I think it important that we do so knowledgeably and with care for how ultralights are perceived by the "regular" flying community. It behooves us to behave acceptably when we travel to GA airports, whether they are busy or deserted.

For instance, do you know how to overfly an airport and interpret the windsock/tetrahedron/segmented circle which might be displayed there? Are you carrying a VHF radio to listen in on the traffic communications from other aircraft in the pattern? Do you know whether the pattern is right- or left-hand? Are you flying the pattern expected by the airport or are you zapping in short and low?

If you're flying from one ultralight-oriented strip to another, it doesn't make so much difference, but if you're heading into airports with a lot of conventional aircraft activity, it will pay you and our sport to know what is expected of you. Notice what I am saying; not what is the smart or intelligent or safe thing to do but what is expected of you. There are a whole slug of GA pilots out there who will not notice that by landing on the grass completely away from the pattern, you have stayed entirely out of the way of any corporate jet which may have been blasting straight in on a ten mile final. They'll only notice that you didn't enter the pattern at 1000' AGL and that you landed in a pretty weird place. You are expected to do it by the book, no matter how inappropriate the book.

One of my goals over the next few months is to put together a booklet of guidelines for ultralight "cruising" in the Northern Virginia area. I'd like for this Guide Michelin of the Air to describe the neighboring airports (and how they treat ultralights), to deal with airport protocol, in general, and to provide the beginning cross-country aerial nomad with some tools to pursue his quest with a little knowledge.

I urge those of you who have been visiting the airports around Whitman Strip to provide me with some feedback on your experiences. If there's an airport out there which really doesn't welcome ultralights, well, we ought to stay away from it for everybody's mutual good. Likewise, if an airport is hospitable to our kind, it will be useful to make that known.

So give me some "pireps" from your experience and I'll add what I can of mine. It should help all of us go farther, better, easier.

Fly Safely!

* * * * *

ADVISORIES

Please welcome new members Darius Stout and Bill Straw. Darius is from Reston, VA and Bill, whom many of us have met at Whitman, lives just over the way at Hartwood, VA. Both Darius and Bill have Spitfire ultralights.

Saturday, June 6th, saw another group of pilots passing their USUF pilot registration tests. Congratulations to our own Tom Simmons and to USUA #4's Chuck Popenoe (Jr.), son Chuck Popenoe, III and Bob Warriner. All three were guests at Whitman Strip for flying fun and to take the tests. Wanna see "minimum controllable airspeed"? Watch a Kasperwing in low gear!

THE ALTAR OF CHOICE

by Tom Simmons

The unfortunate truth is that this article comes too late for much of our membership. And yet, because it deals with a danger of such immense proportions, I feel that it must be offered for those who still have the time to benefit from its warning.

There are few hazards present in ultralight flying as potentially catastrophic as the one which threatens man's pursuit of the sport itself. I refer, of course, to marriage.

Now I realize that on the face of it, it seems harmless enough and, often, almost natural. But calm water may hide treacherous shoals. The fact is that one precious rite conspicuously not sanctified by marriage is the **status quo**. It gets no ring, no readings praise its virtue and it is almost the first duty of marriage to obliterate it from all but memory.

As with most other flight emergencies, the best time to handle this

one effectively is before it happens; a meticulous pre-flight check of your intended will help to ensure many hours of trouble-free flying in the years to come. But unlike other pre-flight checks, this one must not rely solely on visual inspection. (Behind even the most beguiling smile and voluptuous figure could lurk the sentiment, "Oh, but Honey, that was when you were **single...**", a dreadful preface, always followed by the end of life as you know it.)

The best method for pre-flighting a bridal aspirant is philosophical. For instance, tell her you feel a Pitts Special would add more to the family's quality of life than a college education for the kids. Cancel a couple of dinners out because you're saving up for a NAV radio. Tell her about your last engine-out, the one that happened when you were right next to the high-tension wires. Or agree to go on a cross-country flight on her birthday. Better yet, organize one! Just a few of these little tests ought to provide a wealth of constructive input.

It is possible that some of you feel this warning is unnecessary. Many probably consider themselves to be hardened bachelors, immune to the lures of matrimony. Or, worse yet, masters of their own destinies. But I hasten to point out that ultralight pilots, by definition, have already demonstrated a distinct predilection for spending time in a place for which they were poorly endowed by nature. And so you must ask yourself, given that predisposition, how far away is other irrational behavior?

Naturally, as Safety Officer for USUA #1, I would not presume to counsel others to a course of action I would not follow myself. And so, when I walk to the altar on the fourth Sunday of this July, you may be sure it is only after a whopping dose of my own advice.

USUA #1 FLY-IN

Yessir, it's almost on us, the June 27/28 USUA #1 Whitman Strip Fly-in. Come one, come all, for flying, swimming, camping, cooking out, competing, campfiring and telling tall tales.

Grills will be available for cooking but bring your own food and drink. The pool is being cleaned and will be ready to receive your pampered bodies to cool and refresh them. Camping on the airport grounds Saturday evening will be accompanied by a campfire. Hot dogs and marshmallows should profit from that. And, wonder of wonders, there will be a Porta-John! No looking in vain for a suitable size bush or somebody else's hangar.

In addition to the above, some informal fun-filled competitions are planned on the order of: bomb drops, precision power-off landings and pylon races (against the clock).

Sunday, the 28th, we will welcome whatever members of EAA 186 show up. They have scheduled Whitman Strip as their June Luncheon Flight. If some of them fly or drive in, we will be treating them to a picnic lunch. It is hoped that as many of them as can manage a 2400' grass strip will make it.

This will be a great weekend, so say whatever prayers are appropriate for good weather. Those of you who are planning to spend some time at Whitman, remember Whitman's rules and help our guests to know what to do. There will likely be more than the usual amount of traffic so fly the pattern properly. Above all, have a good, safe time.

MINIMUM

On Sunday, June 14, Whitman Strip was host to Hans Josef Frings and the MINIMUM ultralight. Those of you who get Light Plane World will

remember having seen the write-up on his performance in the January 1987 issue and his readiness to go anywhere, anytime to demonstrate the bird. Well, June 14th was our turn. The MINIMUM, for those of you who didn't make it to Whitman to see it in action, is a Saphir hang glider wing with landing gear on the control bar and a tail wheel in the vicinity of the pilot's feet. The pilot flies in the prone position common to hang gliders and there is a 16HP engine aft to provide get-up-and-go. The performance is "slow and easy" but no leaping off cliffs is required to achieve soaring heights. Takeoffs and landings are made on the landing gear.

Twenty to twenty-five people were on hand to talk to Hans Josef and to watch his demonstrations. A couple of folks had travelled from as far away as Vermont and Florida for the demo. Hans Josef is trying to make a go of importing the MINIMUM (from Germany) and selling it in this country. For those of you who are hang glider pilots at heart but bummed out by the hassle of getting to good sites or who want to get off the ground at minimum cost, the MINIMUM is an ultralight to consider.

SUPERFLIGHT

by Rob Brooke

Sky Bryce. The whole idea appealed to me: a sport resort (skiing, tennis, golf, etc.) with an attached airstrip; a restaurant within easy walking distance; eighteen miles west of Luray Caverns airport; interesting scenery. I'd been once to Luray, so crossing the Blue Ridge mountains was no big deal—just a little higher than crossing to get to Winchester. There was the Massanutten Range between Luray and Sky Bryce but, what the heck, another mountain.

So May 31st beckoned. EAA 186 had scheduled its monthly luncheon flight for Sky Bryce and, weather

(SUPERFLIGHT, cont.)

permitting, I intended to be there. The day was to be hot, hazy-humid with scattered afternoon thunderstorms predicted. The prediction was accurate, for a change.

I got away from Whitman Strip at 9:15 a.m. while the temperature was still comfortable but it was pretty hazy. I had enough visibility for VFR but the sight-seeing has been better. I cranked in a little too much correction for the SW wind and got south of my course but was able to see my error when I reached Rt. 29. Revising my correction, I stayed on course for the rest of the trip. It was a eerie, seeing the mountains slowly materialize out of the haze, but fun, too, to find expected landmarks also materializing right on target.

I have to say that, although I enjoy nothing more than squadron flights with other club members, I get a deep sense of satisfaction in doing long cross-country flights entirely alone. It forces me to rely upon my own navigational skills. There is a little added edge to the excitement to find myself suspended alone above mountain wilderness at 5000' MSL, shaking a little with the chill air but knowing exactly where I am, confident that I'll get where I'm going.

I made Luray in an hour and thirty-five minutes. I topped up the tank (no gas at Sky Bryce), had a Coke and was off, straight over the Massanutten mountains. I had to climb pretty hard, for Luray is tucked right up next to the ridges I had to cross. 4500' MSL got me to a safe crossing height. There were four or five ridges in the range, all at about the same elevation. As soon as I crossed the ridgeline of the last, I could see Mt. Jackson, VA and Routes 11 and I-81. I throttled back, settled to 1500' above the valley floor and headed on to Sky Bryce ten minutes away.

I was greeted upon landing (a little before noon) by USUA #1 club

member Lance Zellers and his wife Deane. Lance was also the sole representative of EAA 186 so, it turns out, USUA #1 had twice the number of attendees at the fly-in luncheon as did EAA 186 - USUA #1, me and Lance; EAA 186, just Lance. Two other fellows, having heard about the luncheon, flew up from Richmond in a beautifully made Glasair. The five of us hiked over to the restaurant for a nice lunch in pleasant surroundings.

Lunch done, I got underway for home immediately, since the weather was showing signs of building some thunderstorm cells. The wind had shifted more to the west and was now giving me a boost. Another stop in Luray to top up the tank and again I was off to the east. Once across the Blue Ridge, I could see some pretty tall cumulus build-up south of my course but it was far enough away that there appeared no danger of its affecting me. Sure enough, I slowly worked my way past it without its getting noticeably nearer my course line. The way ahead was hazy but free of alarming weather. I landed at Whitman Strip to discover that a storm had passed through earlier, leaving mud puddles and a wet hangar floor. I put my trusty MXL to bed as the sky above cleared to almost cloudless blue.

It was a great flight both ways. Sky Bryce is a worthy and scenic cross-country goal with a good refueling opportunity at Luray. The people I enjoyed lunch with were awe-struck at the immensity of my flight (we pilots love to cause "awe-struck"). Lance muttered, "Well, dammit, if you made it from Whitman Strip here in an ultra-light, my guys in EAA 186 have no excuse!"

Made my day.

FLIGHT PLAN

July 2 - Club Meeting.

July 11 - USUA Club #1 Tour of the Garber Facility, 9:45am.

July 19 - EAA 186 Luncheon flight, Scheeler Airport, Chestertown, MD. Seafood Festival Lunch, 12:30pm.

July 25 - USUF Pilot Registration, Whitman Strip, 9:00am to 4:00pm.

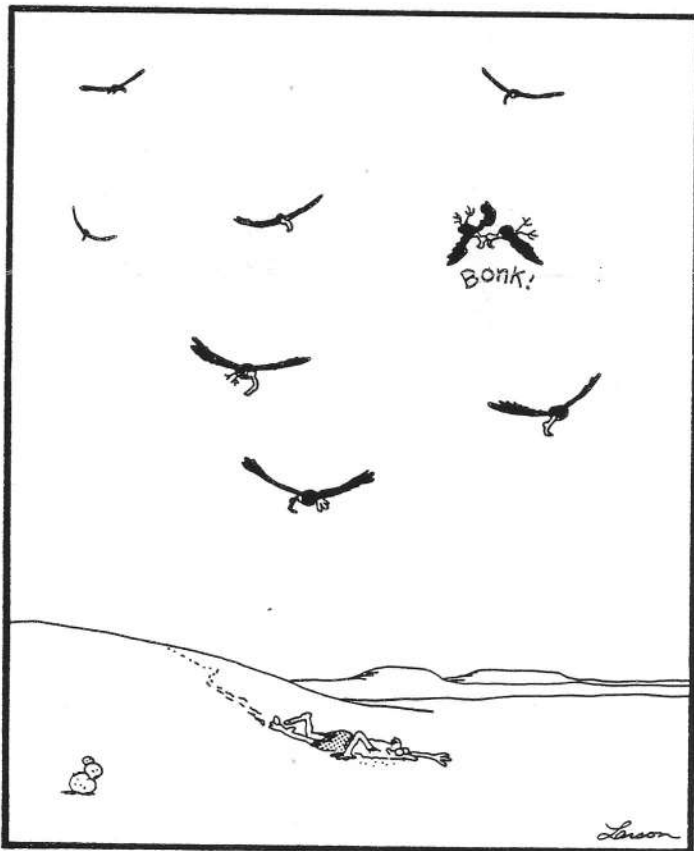
CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE - Ultra-Pro Intercom Helmet set. Take a look at the new Chinook. Fore Aviation, Inc., Winchester, VA. 703/662-5581

FOR SALE - '80 Vector 600, as is. (Just took a bath in Lake Anna!) \$1500. Soggy ASI, altimeter. Call Steve Reynolds, 703/569-5915.

FOR SALE - '84 Quicksilver MX, fairing, brakes, CHT, ASI, altimeter, compass, tach, wheel pants, always hangared, 170 hrs TT. \$3500 or \$4000 with ballistic chute. Uncovered trailer available. Call George, Paul or Steve McClung, 703/620-3318

FOR SALE - Covered ultralight trailer suitable for Quicksilver MXL. \$900 or best reasonable offer. 6 gal Quicksilver-type gas tank with fittings, brand new, \$40. Hall ASI with long mount, brand new, \$15. Call Rob Brooke days 301/640-5231, eves 301/279-2816



The perils of improper circling

* * * 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

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Rob Brooke	301/279-2816

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*** 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.

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

NAME: _____ DUES INCLUDED: _____

ADDRESS: _____

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THE NEWSLETTER

USUA
FLYING CLUB
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