January 2004

DOWNWIND

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTREAL SOARING COUNCIL

From the Editor

By Dave Clark

Happy New Year to all our members! Last season wasn't the greatest but we live in hope for better things this year. Something to cheer us up is the decision to purchase two used L-33s for the benefit of our early solo pilots. I have no doubt that many of the more experienced flyers will also want to strap themselves into the new gliders when they arrive. Hicham Hobeika has written a detailed report about the L-33 that he flew at Pendleton last year. His report is included in this issue.

Thanks also to Terry Beasley and John Bisscheroux for their very interesting contributions to this issue of Downwind.

IN THIS ISSUE

A Surprising Find In Arizona

By Terry Beasley

Every year one of my first jobs on arriving at Yuma for the winter is to get the air-conditioning system on my old Toyota 4-runner checked out as the rubber hoses get a bit porous with age and leak out some of the freon. This year while waiting to get an appointment I noticed an interesting photograph pinned on the notice board. The photograph was not an original but looked like a Xerox or a scan and the quality was not very good. A scan of the picture is presented below.

The handwritten caption on the original reads: - "Al Quiche with homebuilt glider 1938 Verdun, Quebec, CAN: I was 20 years old."

I asked the garage proprietor how he got the photo and he told me that he had been helpful to a Phoenix motorist who had car trouble earlier this year. He received the photo in the mail with a brief note of thanks, unfortunately with no return address.

On my next trip to Phoenix I will check the phone book to see if I can find a Quiche. The glider looks like an RRG Zogling variant with some strange looking fairing around the 'A' frame. It will be interesting to see if I can dig up some more pre MSC history.

Three old pilots are walking on the ramp.
First one says, "Windy, isn't it?"
Second says, "No, its Thursday!"
Third one says, "So am I. Let's go get a beer."

Congratulations to Robert Cadieux, who passed his Transport Canada glider pilot's exam at the end of the 2003 season. Well done Robert!

A Proposal to the Soaring Association of Canada

This proposal, by John Bisscheroux and George Eckschmiedt, is for the acceptance of several commercial, off-the-shelf GPSs and associated equipment, as GNSS flight recorders for earning of FAI recognized Silver (D), Gold (E), and Diamond (F) badges.

I could not do justice to this report by trying to give a brief synopsis. I recommend that you click on the following link to read the complete proposal. It is well worth reading – click here.
FAI badges.pdf

Basic Flying Rules:

1. Try to stay in the middle of the air.
2. Do not go near the edges of it.
3. The edges of the air can be recognized by the appearance of ground, buildings, sea, trees and interstellar space. It is much more difficult to fly there.

Hawkesbury Ground: India Tango Delta, do you have problems?

Pilot: I think I have lost my compass.

Hawkesbury Ground: Judging the way you are flying, you lost the whole instrument panel!

A Letter From Canada

(Taken from a letter by John Bisscheroux to old gliding colleagues in Holland.)

Now that the hangar doors are closed again for another season, I am having a nice glass of warmth and will write a few notes about my connection with your gliding club and subsequent happenings.

I am writing this in the English language because I have not spoken, or thought, in Dutch since a great many years ago when I came to Canada and married Cynthia, a native born (English Canadian) girl. I hope that all members are sufficiently knowledgeable.

Twenthe AFB

I was stationed in Twenthe AFB during 1955 and 1956, first with the Jachtvliegschool and then with 326 (Meteors Mk8) Squadron. I was one of the privileged holders of the hangar key since, living on the base, I and my fellow sergeants were the first ones to arrive in the morning to schlep the winch and sundry, with the use of a broken-down jeep donated by the Transport Services, to the take-off area by the side of the runway. I remember loosing control when the winch started to decide on taking a different direction than that of the jeep (low tire pressure of winch wheels), but fortunately, a little angel rode on my shoulders that day as it happened on the runway, so I had plenty of space to recover!! I took my first flights in training at Woensdrecht AFB under the tutelage of Piet de Jager (Sgt instructor S11) and a civilian instructor with the initial J.v.O (I forgot his last name). We flew these flights in a Govier PH-208 and 182 on the winch. First solo was fine in a Prefect PH-197, but the second solo did not convince my illustrious instructor that I had sufficient self-assuredness and he relegated me back to the Govier, much to my disappointment! I can say, though, that the relationship with the instructor was not very "chummy", to say the least! Solo again after a further 14 winch starts (total now 40 starts) and, from here on in, I began a most enjoyable experience in my life. My first flight in Twenthe was on 13 August 1955 in a Govier PH-211 behind a Tiger Moth and the instructor's initial were A.B.-140. The week after I soloed Baby PH-151, I reached the stratospheric height of 320 m.

Solo

My first solo soaring flight took place at Twenthe on 22 April 1956 and I climbed from 500 m to 950 m in all of 21 minutes! (flight #70). This produced the coveted 'C' brevet. This was followed by the 5 50x50m goal landings in Baby PH-151 and 3 (successively-acceptable) goal landings 100x30 m in Baby PH-154 to prepare me for the license standards. On 28 July, 1956 in Terlet, I managed to successfully complete the theoretical requirements for the license. Now I became the "bete noir" because thermals and soaring became my Gods and on 23 June 1956 I made the first real soaring flight to 1350 m taking 3 hours and 20 minutes and, upon landing, I got the height of sh...t from our instructor (A.B) for my (selfishly) keeping the aircraft from use by the other members present. I was colder than hell and my brain was frozen in the open cockpit of Baby PH-154, so that his caustic comments were not registered until now!! I have a picture of PH-154 in my logbook. I remember that one of our members had a misfortunate winching accident in Terlet when, following a cable break, he ended up hitting the runway

rather hard. I have forgotten his name, but it left an indelible mark on my memory, for sure. Perhaps Jaap Loek, who remembers me from those days, can remember more details about this.

Tiger Moth

Returning from Terlet, we had to transfer the Tiger Moth and I was the lucky one to help the pilot fly the beast from the back seat. Unfortunately, the (mechanical) trim broke one of its springs and the Moth wanted to reach God with a fanatic desire, requiring a forceful forward stick force.

We spent alternating pushing against that stick all the way back to Twenthe AFB, to the point where my hands and arms were rendered useless!! This was after we almost ran out of take-off area when departing from Terlet in front of the (then) clubhouse area. We cleared some bushes narrowly that time. The reason was that the pilot had not asked me to release the slats for take off. Remember, I was the back seat guy, because his lordship the pilot wanted to have the panoramic front seat! On the second try, the flipping spring on the elevator trim gave way and we ended up working our way back, instead of enjoying the Dutch landscape!! Logbook #2 started at Twenthe and shows me doing a lot of 5-8 minute hops in Babies PH-154 and 86 and this continued to the time of my leaving Twenthe AFB for Woendrecht AFB, where my squadron was going to wake up the neighborhood with its twin Rolls-Royce Derwent 8 power plants!! Here I was introduced to passenger carrying in their Rhonlerche two-seater and a new dimension opened up in my career. Not much soaring was recorded in the period since my last 5-hour attempt when I got the height of hell! Holland, in those days, was as wet as its legendary past (and present) and soaring connections were very hard to come by from the low release heights. Now we go to Canada - a land climate in the Ottawa-Montreal corridor conducive to soaring. Well, that is what you may think, but.....

My last flight

My last flight in Woensdrecht took place 3 June 1957 in Rhonlerge PH-215 with passenger Vaandrig Janssen a doctor in our sickbay. Now we travel to the other end of the Atlantic, seven days aboard the SS Waterman via a 'small' Atlantic storm. For three years I did not have the means to get back in gliding as I became involved with the pull of married life and a beautiful bride. Logbook #3 begins 25 May 1963 following a flight in a LK10 CF-ZEC on aerotow behind a Piper Tripacer from Ste Marie Airport west of St Jovite, a town north of Montreal, Quebec. After 5 check flights I soloed Schweitzer 2-22 CF-KAT and this started me on the exploration of soaring space. During this period I was involved in a passenger carrying operation and little, if any, soaring flights were experienced. I also did a great many car tows lasting from 1 to 3 minutes! What a barnstorming experience that was! The next photo in my logbook shows Elgie Meliunas, my first student to solo. He became a very good pilot, if I say so myself! This period in my flying life ended with a (literal) bang. Two crashes in two consecutive days wiped out our fleet and this was the end of barnstorming. I joined the Montreal Soaring Council in Hawkesbury, Ontario on 31 May 1964 where I stayed until today.

Cross-country

Instructing and passenger carrying build up hours rapidly and in August that year, I made my first cross-country flight in a Schweitzer 1-26, a 20-mile excursion. I still keep dried flowers from the landing field in my logbook. In those days, a Schweitzer 1-23 H was a high performance machine and I had fun flying this aircraft. I bought into a Skylark 2b in May 1965 and this began the road to obtaining my silver, gold and diamond 'C' brevets. On May 23, 1965 I flew the duration test in a flight of 5:16 hrs and remember being in agony, not with my bladder, but with a bolt head protruding from the right pedal into the sole of my foot, that was plain torture during the last couple of hours! My silver distance ended in Mt. St. Hillaire after 70 km and I was royally entertained by a Dr A. Campeau in his cottage. The beer tasted like an angel peed on my tongue!! Gold 'C' height was flown in Warren, Vermont, USA to 14,700 feet and a note in the logbook refers to "rougher than hell" below 1500 ft. The climb went past a lot of rotor and lenticular cloud and was quite a challenge.

Sisu 1A

During this time I once flew a Sisu 1A which, in those days, was a pretty hot machine and I was very impressed by it. Perhaps this led me to decide on, and eventually build, an HP-14 in 1974. September 7, 1968 produced diamond distance in a Skylark 2b from Hawkesbury to Beaumont, Quebec on the south shore of the St Laurence river past Quebec City. 195 km in 6:30! I had a rough time trying to fly through an area of overdeveloped clouds. A single cumulus cloud over a swamp area saved my day at 300 ft lifting me back to survival mode at 3 m/s!! Diamond altitude was obtained on 25 October 1969 in Lake Placid, New York State USA. I was lucky enough to contact a wave over the ski slopes of Whiteface Mountain and rode the wave to 22,000 ft. I was impressed by the darkness of the sky above me and I was anxious to observe the small window which would allow a visual descend after reaching my goal. My oxygen supply ran out just as I broke through 16000 ft on descent. Talking about luck!! This flight lasted 4:32 hrs.

HP-14

On October 4, 1975 I test flew my HP-14 and this opened the way of exploring cross-country flying in earnest. The aircraft was 95% completed and the remaining 5% took some four years following! In June of 1979 I was the first pilot to complete a 500 km O/R diamond distance flight between Hawkesbury and Madawaska, just on the east border of Algonquin Park in Ontario. This flight lasted over 9 hours and, had it not been for catching a lucky thermal at 19:15 hrs some 25 k from Hawkesbury, I would have gone "aux vaches". As it turns out, the second (of only two diamond distance flights from Hawkesbury) was completed the week after by Gunther Geyer Doersch, our fibreglass expert and Glaser Dirks representative in Canada.

Since that time I crashed the HP-14 into Whiteface Mountain. My notes about the crash refer to vortex type airflow 1000 ft over a high ridge. I lost complete

control and spin recovery control settings had no effect. Some years hence, I bought into partnership of a new DG202-17. This aircraft, obtained in 1984 has been my companion during some excellent cross-country flying and I have been spearheading exploration of flying north of our airport over the hills and mountains of the Laurentian shield. One day I flew as far north as I could go to turn at St Genevieve. Beyond this village is bush and lakes further north!

Longest flight

My longest flight was 605 km in 1991 from Hawkesbury to Barries Bay thence to Renfrew, Smith Falls, Brockville, Rigaud and landing back at Hawkesbury. This has been the pinnacle of my achievements to date, although, given the right conditions, 1000 km is my ultimate goal, but only when flown from Hawkesbury. I could 'buy' a ridge flight in Pennsylvania but that is not the same level of achievement as flying it in thermal conditions in eastern Canada at our latitude of 45 degrees. You are invited to the Montreal Soaring Council's facilities anytime you happen to be in the Montreal vicinity. We have 3 L-19 tow planes and 11 gliders from which to choose. You can reach us on our website which is listed in the Soaring Association of Canada' site. We are lucky enough to have had hard working members who continuously spend their efforts at maintaining all the convenience of a resort! This turned out to be a lengthy letter, but I had to cover over 40 years of soaring experience!! Take good care of yourself this coming winter and, God willing, we may even meet in person. May the Soaring Gods shine on your collective heads and, if you get too much of it, for God's sake, send some our way, will you?

John Bisscheroux, Montreal, Canada.

November 21, 1998

Krosno Canopy Ready For Next Season

Downwind Editor

Many thanks from all club members to the gallant pilots who braved the cold at the end of last year to repair the Krosno canopy. Not everyone would want to work in the hangar without heat and little light to do this job so, gentlemen, your efforts are greatly appreciated!

Roly, Otto and Alain inspect the finished repair

Two vultures decided to fly to Florida on an airline. They got on board carrying six dead raccoons, and the flight attendant said, "I'm sorry, but there's a limit of two carrion per passenger."

Blanik L-33 "Solo" Evaluation Report For MSC

Now that MSC has decided to invest in two L-33 early-solo gliders, here is a report prepared by Hicham Hobeika for the Fleet Planning Committee.

Date: October 13, 2003

Participants: Lussier, Marc (Director of Fleet Planning) and Hobeika, Hicham (CFI)

Location: Pendelton Airfield (Gatineau Gliding Club)

Glider Registration: C-GIES

Introduction

The Gatineau Gliding Club has two L-33s that are used for early solo flying and initial cross-country. The transition to the L-33 is done following a minimal experience level (? Hours) and few dual flights in the club's Puchacz. GGC's usage of the glider is similar to the intended usage by MSC.

The Gatineau Gliding Club is very pleased with it and it proved to be one of their most popular gliders even with more advanced pilots. One of the two gliders with its factory trailer was taken to the Lake Placid wave camp.

Construction

The glider (C-GIES) was 5 years old and appeared to be in excellent condition, both its interior and exterior. The construction is almost entirely of aluminum alloy and only the rudder is covered with fabric. The workmanship and finish were excellent and similar to the L-23 two-seater from the same manufacturer.

The wing tips are fitted with small skids (wing tip wheels are optional). The airbrakes extend from the upper wing surface. The glider is equipped with both the C.G. tow hook and the optional nose tow hook. The large size main wheel is mounted to a shock absorber and is equipped with an internal drum brake.

Assembly / Disassembly

No attempt was made to disassemble and assemble the glider. We were, however, told that the glider was easy to disassemble and relatively easy to assemble.

Controls connect automatically and no special tools are required except for a supplied small tool to install / uninstall the elevator. Aluminum wing spars join at the fuselage centerline behind the pilot by 2 longitudinal steel shear pins. A bracket forward of the left wing spar retains that wing during assembly / disassembly operations.

Cockpit

The L-33 cockpit is adequately large and comfortable. I found the instrument panel and stick to be positioned too far aft and that could inconvenience large and tall pilots by restricting stick movements in the aft direction. The canopy is side hinged and provides excellent visibility and access. All the control handles are easy to reach. The wheel brake is operated by a bicycle type lever mounted on the control stick. The seat back's position and angle are adjustable, although some settings could result in an uncomfortable protrusion at the bottom. Rudder pedals are also adjustable. Unlike the L-23 aerodynamic trim, the L-33 trim system consists of spring loading the control stick.

Flight Characteristics

A briefing by Ian Grant, CFI of GGC, and a brief look at the L-33 POH were followed by a 30 minute evaluation flight.

The takeoff ground roll was noticeably short. Surface wind was about 10 knots with a small crosswind

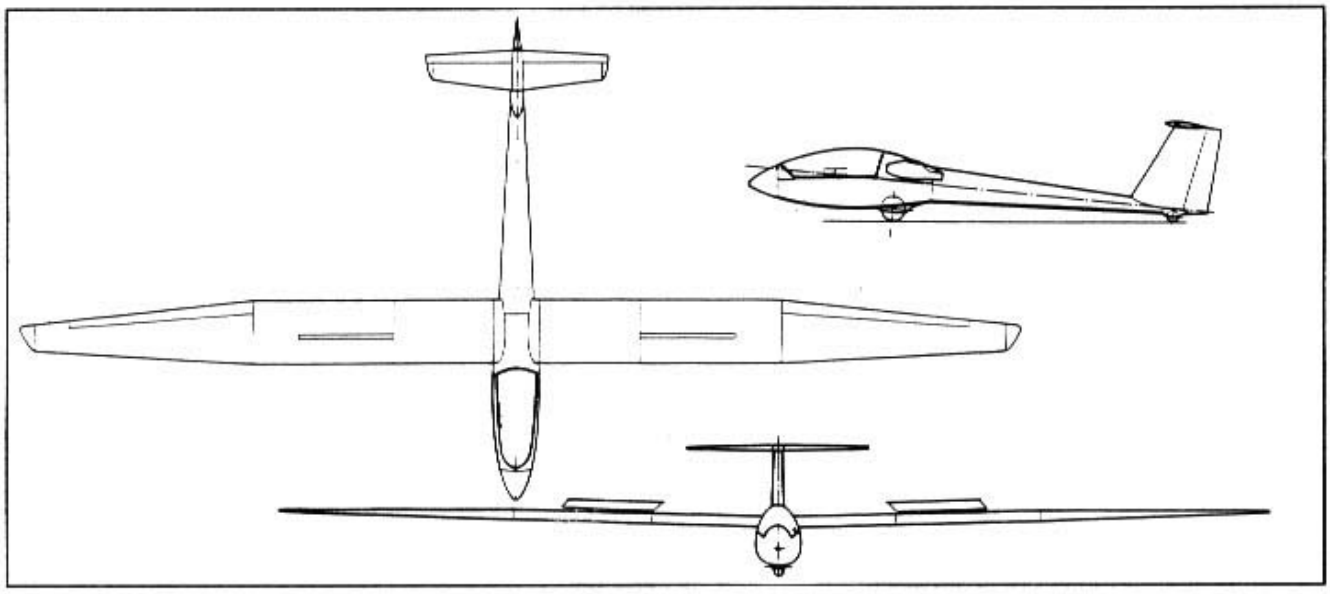
component. I went into minor PIOs trying to balance the main wheel on the ground. A better technique would have probably been to leave the stick in the neutral position and let the glider liftoff by itself. After liftoff, there was no tendency to kite up. Aero-towing was very easy and the glider was very stable on tow.

After release, I tried few stalls and the glider would always drop the left wing and pitch down sharply. With full airbrakes, when stalled, the glider becomes mushy with a nose up attitude and a high sink rate. Two spin entries were attempted, one from a flat turn and the recovery was immediate once initiated.

In normal flight, the controls were nicely harmonized and relatively light. The glider was relatively quiet with no “oil can” noise, typical of metal gliders. The roll rate wasn’t as high as the PW-5 but was good enough for easy thermal entry. No sideslip was attempted, but this maneuver shouldn’t be needed due to the powerful airbrakes.

The approach and landing were normal. The POH indicates an approach speed, at gross weight, of 49 knots with airbrakes retracted and 59 knots with airbrakes fully extended (a large difference!). The manual also indicates a 6 knots difference in level flight stall speed when airbrakes are fully extended which seems a bit high as well.

My selected approach speed was 55 knots and it was easy to maintain using the trim knob. The powerful and effective airbrakes allowed for good control of the approach angle. The two-point touchdown and ground roll were smooth due to the shock absorber mounted to the main wheel. The wheel brake was almost inoperative, as I didn’t feel any deceleration once fully applied. GGC was notified of this.



3 View drawing obtained from LET, Aeronautical Works publications

Conclusion

I was pleasantly surprised by the glider, its construction, finish quality and its flying characteristics. It is a very sturdy glider and would probably live up well to normal club's abuse. It should also appeal to advanced pilots when other gliders are not available.

Because of its stall characteristics, it is important that students transitioning to it receive good spin recovery training prior to flying it.

Assembling the glider following an out landing is probably a bit more difficult than the PW-5 but shouldn't be a big problem. I couldn't comment on the effectiveness of the wheel brake for short cross-country landings as it was inoperative, but I was told that it is normally very powerful even causing a nose over if heavily applied. The landing speed seems to be on the high side, as well.

For more information about the L-33, go to:

http://www.nwinternet.com/~blanikam/ba/prod02.htm

L33 s/n 020520 during the factory test flight