

2023 SOSA safety report:

Hello Everyone:

It was not a great soaring season to say the least. On the safety front we had no injuries and no fatalities but we do have areas of concern.

There were two insurance claims made this year, both due to off field landings. A Junior had cracks in the fuselage due to a forced ground loop into a short field. The second case was a member landing in a corn field. There was a third incident that was of concern, not just because of an unfavorable field but the actual decision to attempt to go cross country soaring on a questionable day. There was no damage to the glider in that case.

It has been discussed with various senior instructors and myself that a modified approach be taken to ensure our cross country pilots are properly trained before going cross country. There is also a concern of cross country recency.

The biggest threat were the multiple midair encounters with general aviation. We have done a lot of work this area. Gliders have Flarms, transponders, and we had an in depth meeting discussing hot spots in our area.

It is impossible to tell which accidents we have avoided by all this technology and awareness but I am fairly certain that we have saved lives by all the Flarms that have been activated, transponders alerting airliners, ADS-B alerts and just by a good look out. Our continuous efforts in collision avoidance training, communication with ATC and investment in technology is quite progressive. This unfortunately is not enough. We must continue to push forward.

We had two reported encounters with 737's going into CYHM. The Hamilton approach onto runway 12 was a greater threat than the Kitchener threat this year.

There were two reported Cessna vs towplane incidents right at the field. Two reported conflicts, away from Sosa, one in the corridor, another (and by far the closest) with a Piper Seminole just south of York Soaring. There is a lot of training going on in our area and its going to get busier.

Hanger rash seems to have improved in the club hanger. The small hanger had two nasty incidents, one unresolved.

Smoke was an issue this year. I recommend we discuss at what visibility we consider shutting down. There were no incidents but one member made some comments we should talk about.

Below is a summary of the nineteen Blue Book safety reports submitted:

- Two off field landings causing damage
- Six glider vs power plane conflicts
- One glider vs glider report
- Smoke from forest fires
- One inappropriate rope drop
- One runway incursion
- One Junior trim runaway report

- One weather approaching Sosa
- One SZD 55 wing drop on take off report
- One misunderstood low and over call
- One open spoiler report
- One open canopy in flight
- One hanger doors left open all night
- One un-reported hanger rash in small hanger.

Below are all reported incidents or safety concerns. I tried to de-identify them as best as possible, but some are pretty obvious. Please remember the objective of this report is to improve safety in our sport for everyone, not to point fingers. Below each report I have made comments and / or recommendations to try and reduce these occurrences. They are written in *italics*. I realize the report is a bit long (27 pages) but there some pictures.

I would like to thank everyone that submitted a report or talked to me in person or over the phone. Without your input, this would not be possible. Remember, we are all safety officers of our sport. Let's keep working hard to keep it as safe as we can.

Safety report #1: Questionable towrope

At the end of a soaring day a senior pilot looked at the tow rope and said he would have rejected that rope had he seen it.

There was a splice with no tape on it, and other problems.

My Question is, who in the morning inspected that rope?

The good news is that Pilot X fixed that rope, so there is no problem now

Safety Officer's Comments:

It seems there is not a real "minimum standard" as to when a rope is good enough or should be removed from service. It has been mentioned before the we need to run through a "minimum acceptable" tow rope briefing to all the tow pilots. Especially our new tow pilots in the spring or whenever a new tow pilot gets checked out.

Having said that, this year there were fewer if any tow rope failures at all (none were reported). This is a huge improvement over the previous years. I believe the biggest factors were the removal of the weak links, increasing the braided length and proper taping. The weak link is a good idea, but putting a brand new weak link in a rope is good for a few days or so. After any real amount of time the weak link becomes frayed and worn, and therefor weaker. Then the weak links become too weak and begins to create a larger risk of premature failure during a tow than saving the glider airframe if the towrope is too strong and doesn't break when it should.

Recommendation: *Create a less subjective and more definitive rope DI, including minimum braided length, tape quality and fraying. Show a failed vs acceptable tow rope during the briefing.*

Safety Report #2: Collision Avoidance and Towrope released at altitude

From the glider pilot in the front seat

At 15:42 I launched in XPY with instructor X in the back seat. Our intention was to take advantage of what remained of a strong day and we were approved for OT since there were more gliders than students at the time. I had put 2000 feet on the ticket, however just before getting into the glider I noticed conditions deteriorating immediately around the airfield, but still good to the north and east of the Safari. I mentioned to the instructor that I

would now like to go to three, and radioed XWI to advise 3000, which he confirmed.

We were approximately over the barns when I radioed XWI to go east towards what I thought was a decent CU. I could not fully make out his response, but after 30 seconds a turn had not been initiated, so I cancelled the request as the CU to the north were now closer.

Approximately 30 seconds later the instructor mentioned a Cessna nearby. About a second or two after

The instructor mentioned the Cessna, I noticed the rope dropping in front of us. I quickly ascertained that

we had been cut loose by the towplane at 2000 feet, and shortly after that released the rope over a field just to the north of the Safari.

I did not consider our position over the ground when I made the decision to release the rope – I based it on what I was repeatedly taught to do the event of a rope break: drop the nose, release the rope, and land. I was in a calm frame of mind when I made this decision. Based on my training I viewed it as the only correct option since I was concerned a rope dangling from the front could interfere with the control surfaces.

Just before I dropped the rope, I turned to the right as the instructor had mentioned the Cessna to the

left. I noted the tow plane also turned to the right to avoid the Cessna and was to our 11 o'clock and about 50 feet higher. My instructor mentioned he thought we had dropped the rope over the Safari

and suggested it would have been better to hang on to it to drop over SOSA.

A few hours later I got an e-mail from Rob Russel with the following comments: "The rope landed on someone's front lawn, and the rope landing was captured on his security camera. He says the rings embedded themselves so deep in the ground that he's convinced it could have killed one of his kids. He came by the club around 8pm and spoke to Tom, Mike and I. He was very upset about it but wasn't agitated and he maintained composure very well. He works for the Safari and has lived there his whole life, had an intro many years ago."

Our neighbors experience obviously has me very concerned!

I've given more thought as to what went into my decision-making process. I acted on information that had been repeatedly given to me early in my soaring career. I realize now that that information was based on a rope break or dumping event occurring close to the ground, since in that case it is important to immediately prepare the glider for landing, and a rope dangling on approach is an obvious hazard for both crew and the people on the ground.

An event like this at 2000 AGL could have been handled differently, but I acted on the training I received for a low altitude event. Despite the higher altitude, in my mind it was dangerous to fly with a rope dangling from the front of the glider. Based on what I know now, it is obvious that the risks to the glider when at sufficient altitude are more manageable than the risks to

people/animals on the ground. Next time under similar circumstances I would release the rope over SOSA or wooded area before joining the circuit.

From the instructor in the back seat:

Front seat pilot summary matches my recollection of the event. After notifying the student of the traffic I was about to radio the towplane to let him know about the potential conflict when we noticed that the towrope had been released by the towpilot. The Cessna approached us from above and behind. It was approximately 300 feet above and to the left. After passing us the Cessna initiated a turn to the right - towards us but still above us. In my opinion there was enough separation and simply continue flying straight ahead and level as this would have de-conflicted the situation. I completely understand why the towpilot felt he had to release after loosing site of the Cessna. In the glider I had much better visibility of the offending aircraft, unfortunately there was not enough time to communicate with the towpilot before he took evasive action.

Report from the Tow pilot:

XWI Blue Book Report for Glider Release at 2000 AGL

I was towing XPY to 3000 ft AGL. They had requested to be released at 3000 ft AGL just east of the Safari. My planning to release them there took us on an extended climbout for a right downwind alongside RWY 21, I predicted we would reach the west side of the Safari at 2000 ft AGL and would then fly around the northern border to release on the eastside at 3000 ft AGL. As I began climbing through 2000 ft AGL directly west of the Safari, I noticed a Cessna of brown/beige colour with what I believe to be a red stripe flying Northbound alongside us roughly 200 ft above our present altitude. Seeing the conflict I began a gentle right turn over the Safari, 2 seconds later the Cessna, likely unaware of our position began to turn to the east as well and uncomfortable with the closure rate and possibility that the Cessna did not have us in sight I elected to release the glider and enter a steep climbing turn to the right. This would mean that both myself and XPY would be free to make any evasive manoeuvres we would feel necessary to avoid the Cessna. Unlike the Citabria or the rest of our glider fleet, the Pawnee does not have a glass roof/canopy and makes spotting traffic directly above more difficult and I believe may have played a small role in the incident as I was unable to see the traffic until it had entered our bubble. Once released I flew east keeping an eye on the Cessna and XPY, I did a gentle 360 as XPY turned east as well just north of the Safari. The Cessna appeared to have then seen us, likely since my steep turn made a large airframe appear in his windscreen and levelled out on a heading north east, it then completed a 360 to the right over the Safari and continued on its journey northeast. I then descended on the upwind side of the field or on the right downwind to avoid traffic in the left circuit and XPY. I then entered a mid right downwind for RWY 21. I then radioed Rockton Ground that the tow rope was lost after conversing with XPY and asked if they could prepare a new one. Upon landing I shut down in the parking area beside the windsock and quickly helped to inspect the new rope before proceeding with my duties. I do not believe XPY landed before I towed the next glider in line. I only had a short moment to talk with the instructor in-between two tows Some things I could do to reduce such occurrences would be to improve lookout techniques, I may even tilt the aircraft every 1000 ft on a long straight leg of towing to spot any traffic above. Perhaps XWI is a riskier tow plane to use simply because white is more difficult to spot and BWY & KXJ are brightly coloured. Perhaps SOSA

could also develop some procedures in the case of rope releases at high altitudes and briefings on how to conduct traffic avoidance manoeuvres.

Safety Officer's Comments:

There are two events here:

Traffic:

I believe we have lots of discussions about traffic. Conflicting traffic is still our biggest threat. Airliners have TCAS and IF we are transponder equipped, they will see us on TCAS and can avoid us long before we see them. General Aviation which is the greatest in numbers is another story. They will not have TCAS, but may have a transponder or ADS-B, or they may have nothing. So, this means we have to assume they have nothing and we must rubber neck it always to keep from getting hit. This is not the greatest system, but this is VFR flying. That is why we really try and arm ourselves with every possible anti-collision device we can.

The problem is that the flying schools in Kitchener, Burlington or any other training facility in the area are pumping out students at an unprecedented rate. The airlines are short handed pilot wise. We are being squeezed. Kitchener alone has 150,000 movements a year, and this year will be more. Most of those are training aircraft.

Rope release:

The glider pilot states he was taught to release the rope for safety reasons. It is not that cut and dry. Was there a threat to the glider with a rope hanging off the nose? We can see at every single tow plane landing that the towrope end hangs about 50 feet below the towplane as he comes in to land. He is going about 70mph. In a glider it would be hanging even lower at glider approach speeds. Therefor a glider, after making a radio call, could easily come in for a normal landing, but 100 feet higher, then drop the rope over the threshold and land normally.

CAR's 602.23 states "no person shall create a hazard to persons or property on the surface by dropping an object from an aircraft in flight."

The owner of the house where the rope fell was not happy. There is video evidence of the rope crashing into his front lawn.

Recommendations: I recommend that we create or recreate a plan on how we deal with non standard rope drops at Sosa with all our members.

Safety Report #3 Smoke:

This report was not submitted as a Blue Book report, but I thought I was very applicable this year, and for future reference. We had many days of poor visibility due to smoke. Below is a letter submitted, and my response.

Merely as an FYI background on the day.

Last Saturday I decided not to go gliding in the murk.

I did power fly.

It was clearer to the north of the 401, so instead I flew into a friends airstrip for lunch.

I did probe afterwards southwards into the Erie conversion line, but decided thanks - but no thanks to being in that murk, and was glad with my choice.

I then drove to Sosa around 5 pm - to work around my trailer and found the club operation finished for the day.

Except. - There was an air retrieve needed, and tag, I was the only one rated.

- It was to south to the York strip around the Hamilton Control Zone.

The viz for the day steadily deteriorated as all the murk had moved northwards.

- The whole thing was done in deteriorating and "marginal" VFR, with a whole lot of eyeball swivel, and checking on apps.

(The Hamilton controller would have seen a constant sawtooth tracking correction for the drift - as the apps only draw things so fast. :-)

No mention of this poor viz day is made in your comments - but this is "clearly" a contributing factor in the incident we had.

The question we have to add to the questions is: When do we close down our towing operation?

Because yes, I ran all the way down to York; asking myself something very similar. :-)

-Pilot X was the glider pilot. - If it was any less experienced glider pilot - I likely would have pulled the plug on it. :-)

Letter from Safety Officer to the Blue Book reporter:

Thank you for your letter.

I did get a call from the tow pilot that day asking if he was allowed (qualified) to do that aero retrieve, I told him he was not, so thank you for the retrieve.

I have included a photo of CYKF weather reports starting at 13:00

It shows a consistent vis of 9 SM. This was an improvement from previous days.

The "murk" as you call it was better than days before. I believe this was still smoke from the fires. It was pretty bad that week. I flew on Thursday and it was bad enough that we shut down Acro flying in the afternoon.

You ask a valid question. VFR flying was marginal, not comfortable at all, but legal.

When to shut down operations? The PIC is responsible for staying legal and safe. Maybe as a club we need to address this to create guidelines

Safety Officer's Comments:

Smoke became a real issue this year. On this day visibility was reported at CYKF as 9 miles. It was worse at Sosa. I just so happened to be flying that day to do some acro training. After releasing at 5000AGL you could barely see the ground. We did our maneuvers in the mirk, very difficult with virtually no horizon. We landed and called it quits. If an aircraft came at us, I would not know how close they would be before I see him. This is a real judgement call. The

visibility was legally VFR, but it was still not safe. A white glider in a white sky, this is really not good. The other question one has to ask is what are the soaring conditions like? Not good for cross country, which is why this experienced guy landed out. Local flying could have been done.

Recommendations: *Discuss and create a plan for reduced visibility operations and shut down limits.*

Safety Report #4: Runway Incursion

During Tuesday evening student training this past week, I was flying the tow plane and we had been using Runway 10 for the day due to the winds. During the afternoon however winds started to become variable to where both 03 and 10 would have headwinds/crosswinds just depending on the exact wind during launch/landing. I made the decision to switch over to 03 due to the increased length, and informed the person grabbing the tow rope to let everyone know we would be switching to 03 (we were still on 10 at this moment). After completing that tow, I saw the glider I took up just prior going for 10, but I chose to go for 03 to again remind everyone that we would be switching (bad decision on my part). I was in the downwind when that glider landed, and they were beyond 03 but as I turned base I noticed a cart heading out to retrieve them. I continued in for the moment expecting the cart to stop, and it looked like it did temporarily stop at the edge of 03, so I continued for landing. As I was ~200-300 feet off the ground I saw the cart continue across the runway, so I went around and then completed an otherwise uneventful landing on 03. After returning to 10 to tow the last glider that was lined up there, I told everyone (including mentioning on frequency) that all operations would be moving to 03. I should have made that call over the radio from before the previous take-off to let everyone know, and also I should have had people start taking action to move the bus and other stuff over to 03. I later spoke with the individual who was driving the cart and they said they normally always will vigilantly check all around prior to crossing runways, so it looks like this one time that they didn't was the time where things could have gone wrong. I think this can serve as a lesson for everyone to never be complacent with crossing runways, especially during an active operation. For myself as the tow pilot, I learned that I should have been more assertive in having the runway change completed as soon as I made the decision, and that I also should have continued to use the "active" runway (marked by the bus's location) until it was fully changed.

Safety Officer's comments:

At Sosa we are in a bit of a "of one runway at a time" mind set. This has happened before. If we are using one runway, do we really look up and down the other runways before we cross it?

There seems to be a mind block when switching from one runway to another. We must realize that for a short time we are using two runways at the same time. This may seem a "no brainer" but does happen. A few years ago I told the duty instructor I will be launching off runway 36 (the active) with a student and will initiate a simulated rope break to perfectly set up for the student to land on runway 21.

"OK" he said. Two minutes later I pull the release at 400 feet at the extended centerline of runway 21. All the student had to do was control the A/C pick a runway and land. He wisely

decides runway 21 and turns final just as a glider lands on 36 and stops on the intersection. No one gets out and moves the aircraft, no golf cart, no one sees us. I tell the student to deal with it, so he plans to land short, which he successfully does. The Duty Instructors later tells me he forgot. Situational Awareness cannot be over emphasized

Safety Report #5: Close Encounters with A Boeing 737

From the 737 Captain

Incident City: CYHM

We were cleared direct APGOM for the ILS 12 approx. 10-15 miles north of TETOS. This allowed for an almost straight in the 12. Approximately 20 miles final we were made aware of an orbiting aircraft at 4000' which was also on TCAS. We maintained 5000' until we had visual passage of this aircraft, then proceeded to descend for the ILS. At 4800' ATC advised us of possible glider traffic at our 11 o'clock. I stopped the descent and started looking for this traffic. At about 15 miles final I spotted the glider slightly below and ahead of us. I maneuvered the aircraft into a slight climb back to 5000' and turned to the right to avoid. I observed them pass below and behind our aircraft. We joined the ILS at APGOM to landing. Our position when passing the glider was about 15 miles to the runway and approx 1 nm left of centreline

Glider Pilot Report:

Had a close call with a swoop max near St George. They had to maneuver to avoid me. I got an ADS-B warning from them at my 4 o'clock, turned a bit to look and there they were, pulling up a bit and turning.

They did a good job of see and avoid. I was looking as I was going, but they came from slightly behind in my blind spot.

It appears that the glider was FLARM equipped but not transponder equipped.

Safety Officer's Comments:

Once again this was spotted by the airline pilot and he made evasive maneuvers to avoid conflict. This is pretty much the same spot where last year's 767 incident occurred. A transponder would have helped to more accurately spot the target. Please be very aware of the "corridor" going south towards Lake Erie. It would really help if we all checked in with YHM tower and advised them of our intentions. They are not nearly as busy as YKF and seem happy to help, and will tell you where potential threats are.

Do not loiter on the extended center line of runway 12 at Hamilton. That is right on the approach where we are in conflict with the inbound traffic. Pass through it as quickly as you can while rubber necking it towards the northwest where the targets will be coming from.

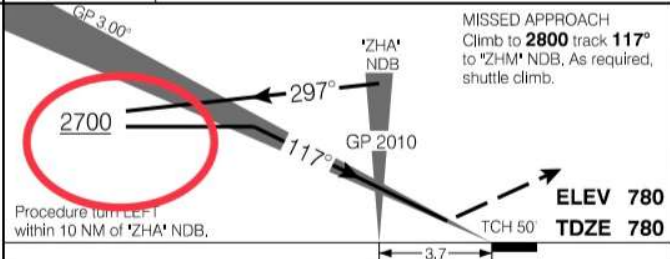
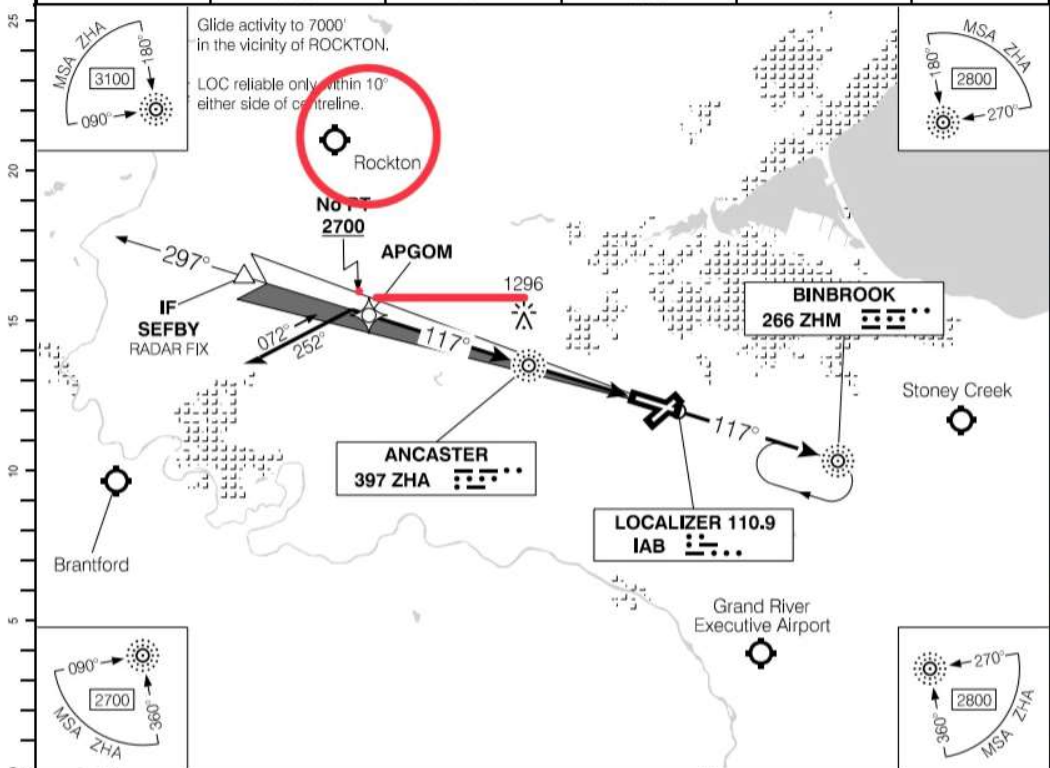
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CYHM-IAP-2B

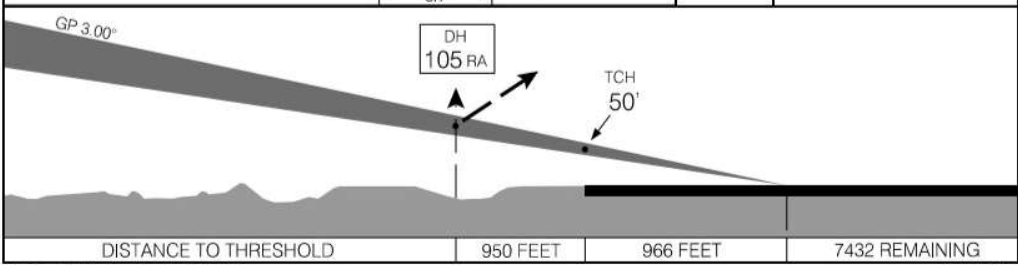
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CYHM

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| ATIS - 123.1 | CTR Toronto 113.7 | TWR - 125.0 | GND - 121.6 | TDZE |
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| PRIOR AUTH REQUIRED FROM TC | |
| CAT II | 876 (101) RVR 12 |
| CAT III A | NOT AUTHORIZED |
| CAT III B | NOT AUTHORIZED |
| CAT III C | NOT AUTHORIZED |



ILS CAT II RWY 12

CYHM

EFF 7 OCT 21

CYHM-IAP-2B

Canada Air Pilot
Effective 0901Z 20 APR 2023 to 0901Z 15 JUN 2023

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Safety report # 6: Boeing verses Glider:

June 2023

I was in the Puch, around 5000 feet around the town of Rockton, heading 170 degrees or so, in level flight.

A Swoop 737 is on a north west heading at our altitude on a left down wind or runway 12 into YHM about to turn base. He appears from behind my left wing at 9:30 position, maybe 1000 feet away. Small angle change, so knew it was going to be close. I took control from the student and made a fairly hard left turn to make sure of separation. We never got closer than 600 feet or so. No indication from the jet that they saw us. We saw a couple more jets that evening on similar flight paths.

Safety Officer's Comments:

Six hundred feet or so is way too close. This is one of those rare times the glider saw the airliner first, or probably the airline pilot never saw the glider at all. We really are playing Russian Roulette here. The evidence from these last two safety submissions would suggest if you are intending to go south into the arrival airspace for runway 12 in YHM you either have a functioning transponder or you call CYHM tower. If not, do not go there. This area is a higher risk regarding 737s than the YKF/YYZ corridor.

Safety Report # 7: SXN runaway trim

Last weekend I noticed SXN trim slammed fore and aft with full stick travel

- 1) It was not noted in the DI book.
- 2) I reported A/C maintenance by email report the next day
- 3) Maintenance aware of the issue
- 4) 50% of the junior pilot unaware of small sampling I took
- 5) Even knowing this, risk PIO/in attention on Take off and tow and landing
- 6) Many pilots agreed with this T/O challenge
- 7) Noted "Brakes Inop" but no "trim Inop" placard in cockpit.
- 8) Concerns: a) safety culture/tolerance drift.
 - b) newer students first flight on type distractions risk
 - c) not noted in DI and probably wont show up in forensic analysis

Safety Officer's Comments:

This is not a great situation. If I remember the conversation with our technical director, the "locking" mechanism for trim setting is worn out. The problem is getting parts. We are all aware of the weakness in the SZD secondary controls such as trim systems.

Recommendations: *Our aircraft are flown by many different pilots. Clear communications regarding snags is a must. Grounded aircraft seem to placarded or put on public notification reasonably well. If a glider or towplane is grounded, an email or click n glide is fairly effective.*

However non-ground-able snags, or “on going” maintenance communications could be improved. E mails are great, but all unserviceable items should be clearly placarded in the cockpit. There was an under-reading airspeed indicator on another Junior that was not snagged which did not help the pilot while landing out

Safety Report #8 Inbound Rain

At the end of the day yesterday, as I was sitting in my RV listening to the rain on the roof, I heard WI take-off and thought "why are they flying in the rain". Then 15-20 minutes later, I heard it again, stupid, I says, have we not learned from previous episodes that we should not be pushing the weather to get one last flight?

Later the towpilot knocks on my door to tell me he screwed up shutting down the towplane, causing the propeller to spin backwards and now the tow plane makes a loud squealing noise. I'm thinking this likely happened because he was rushing because of the rain.

Then I see Malcolm's email saying the hangar stacking was half-assed because of the rain and I says, have we not learned from previous episodes that we should not be pushing the weather to get one last flight?

We need to be much better at shutting down the operation for weather. We were fortunate yesterday that we did not do more damage, but as it is, WI is down and we now have 1 towplane for the cross-country week likely because we pushed the weather.

Safety Officer's comments:

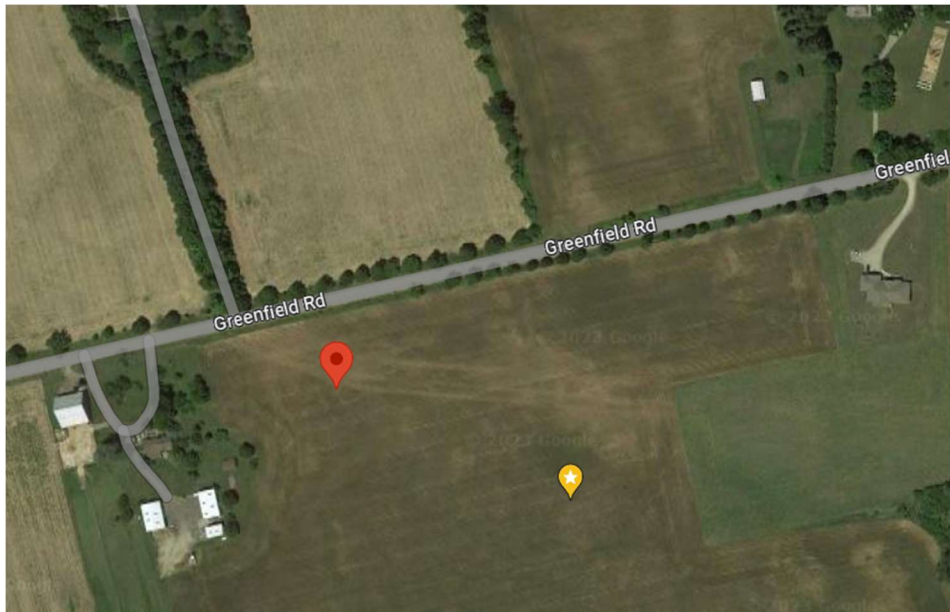
I am not sure the weather has anything to do with the aircraft damage. However that being said, we have repeatedly pushed the weather leading to aircraft being rushed into the hangers in pouring rain. Let's please learn the lesson from a few years ago when during a torrential down pour DK (Pawnee) was smashed into the hangar doors despite the people on that side of the aircraft screaming for the other side to stop pushing, but was not heard due to the intense thunderstorm happening around them. That same day a large branch fell on a Junior because it was left outside.

Generally speaking, the decision to halt operations should be discussed with the towpilot and the duty instructor. The towpilot has the best vantage point to see weather approaching and at what speed. This is not always easy. I myself was towing and estimated we had 15-20 minutes before the rain would arrive. Ten minutes later we were pushing gliders into the hanger during the rain. Give yourself a nice bit of margin.

Safety Report # 9: Off Field Ground Loop

Time of incident: ~16h20 EST

Location: 43.3132582247978, -80.37379793527678



- Injury: None
- Third Part Damage: None
- Aircraft Damage (visible): cracks / stress striations on tail boom
- Aircraft Flight State:
 - o Aircraft ASI was not indicating correctly for entire flight. Was indicating anywhere from 15-20 kts below suspected actual airspeed
 - o Aircraft wheel brake was not operational (known snag)
- Weather: 25C, beginning of overcast, cumulus dissipating
- Visibility: unimpeded
- Winds: from the West, estimate 5-8kt

Event Narrative:

- o Landed from East to West on field (into wind)
- o Terrain gradient was sloped downward going from East to West
- o After touchdown, aircraft continued downslope
- o Nearing end of field, pilot decided to put left wing to ground to initiate ground-loop in order to avoid collision with tree and/or property
- o Aircraft spun 180deg

Safety Officer's Report:

This is a relatively senior Sosa pilot. The day started out ok but then quickly died. It just so happens I was also flying cross country on this particular day and actually shared a weak thermal with this pilot just before the day got very soft. The fields in this area were not particularly great, and staying aloft was becoming a bit of a struggle.

Landing out is fact of cross country soaring and there may be times we have to stuff it into a small field. This requires a spot-on approach, over the fence at minimum speed and getting "it on the ground." A forced ground loop can avoid running into obstructions if required, if they are done correctly. The tail must be raised off the ground if at all possible (stick full forward) then drop the wing in the best direction.

Recommendations: This is my greatest "in house" concern this year. We are seeing a trend in "bad" off-field landings. The down hill sloping ground did not help the situation. At a certain point it is better to land up hill and take the tail wind. This sloping ground may be difficult to detect at altitude.

There are already plans under foot to increase training and better off-field awareness as the season changes. There will be further up dates on the cross-country training changes. This will include more ridged releasing pilots on weak days as well cross-country psychology.

Safety Report # 10: Way, Way too Close...again

Major Airprox Incident:

At 12:15 pm local on July 22nd C-GKXJ piloted by myself departed runway 36 at CPT3 with a glider in tow. I do not recall the glider in tow but I believe it may have been C-GJXA. During climb-out we climbed directly to the west of the African Lion Safari. Passing through roughly 1300 ft AGL and at the NW corner of the Safari. A Cessna model aircraft whose registration I can best guess to be C-GGFR, a C-152 owned and operated by WWFC passed roughly 100ft directly over the top of myself in the tow plane. I heard the roar of a second engine and was absolutely shocked to see the white Cessna with an unmistakable red stripe through the sunroof of the towplane in such close proximity. I myself was climbing on a heading of roughly 340M and the Cessna flying what I assume to be level at a heading of 280-260M. I am not aware if the Cessna had made any avoidance manoeuvres to avoid collision and perhaps the Cessna underestimated how quickly we were climbing. The Cessna Approaching from my 8 o'clock position from above was impossible to see from a high wing Citabria. The Cessna had not made any position reports on the frequency 122.725 which is in use in the Rockton area although it may have made radio calls on the common area frequency 122.925. The advisory NOTAM was also active as of 9am local time with a radius of 5 NM from the centre of CPT3 up to 6000 ft ASL. The Glider in tow remained in tow and no release was necessary from either the tow plane or glider to avoid further conflict. C-GBWY, the second tow plane operating, witnessed the incident approaching the airfield roughly 1.5 NM north west of the incident at 2000 ft AGL. Attempts were made on the ground to use Flight radar and

flight aware in order to determine the registration of the conflicting aircraft to no avail so one cannot say for certain the Cessna involved is the C-152 C-GGFR however its bearing from the Waterloo airport suggests this hypothesis. Both glider and tow plane landed safely at the Rockton aerodrome without further incident.

Please see flight book to retrieve IGC files

Safety Suggestions. As VFR traffic it's absolutely crucial that all pilots maintain a constant lookout for traffic especially in high density areas when the CPT3 NOTAM is active. Myself piloting an aircraft while towing has right of way over all powered aircraft however I am still responsible to avoid conflict whenever possible.

* Same report was filed through the WWFC SMS system.

Safety Officer's Comments:

Yes, C-GGFR does belong to the WWFC in Kitchener. Their practice areas are mostly to the north and west, but some work close to us. This is without a doubt our greatest threat. Make sure the NOTAM has been opened, transponder on, make all of your radio calls and keep your head on a swivel.

I talked to Rahelle Leger, a Nav Can Safety Liasson who is willing to go to SAC meeting in Ottawa and to the flying schools in the spring and talk about how we best be aware and avoid each other. Until we are all ADS-B, we need to use every technical device and look out the best we can.

Safety Report #11: SZD-55 Takeoff:

Pilot X, piloting his own personal glider, was the glider I was towing in C-GKXJ July XX, 2023. Similar to the incidents July XXth, while on the takeoff roll the glider's left wing dropped and dug into the ground. The nose of the glider began to follow this wing drop and due to my previous experiences towing this aircraft I decided to release and continue my takeoff roll and complete a short right hand circuit. The glider vacated runway 36 safely and I myself landed safely and towed the remaining gliders without incident. This incident is now the third time either myself or the pilot has pulled the release in 4 of the last tows and in the last week. I am beginning to become very concerned for myself and other tow pilots as a ground looping glider on tow produces a serious hazard for both glider and tow pilot. I think some discussion is required in order to determine why the glider's left wing drops and grips the grass in this way so often. Personally, if an incident such as this occurs once more without determining the cause I will refuse to tow this particular glider until resolved. I will be reaching out to the pilot privately in order to try and solve this issue, talk about solutions and what us tow pilots can do to prevent such occurrences. I know his piloting skills are fantastic and I have no doubt it is simply a glider issue.

Safety Officer's Comments:

It is not a shock to anyone that this glider type has a "challenging" few seconds of directional control during the first few seconds after the wing runner lets go and the pilot has aileron

control. It gets even more exciting with water in the wings. At one time there was a lot of SZD-55's on the field. It was one of the most promising fifteen meter gliders of its time. We had to learn how to deal with the characteristics of this glider. It was not too difficult to ascertain that if the glider is properly lined up on the runway and you have a properly briefed wing runner who holds the wing as long as he possibly can (a fast runner really helps). This combined with the proper take off technique will greatly reduce the chances of a failed launch. A Pawnee (more horsepower) pilot who brings up the power to at least 75% with the brakes on then releases the brakes while advancing to full power with minimum delay greatly increases acceleration. The wing runner must be prepared for this rapid take off, but if done properly it greatly reduces the "scary time" before the wing tip starts to fall. This more rapid acceleration gives the pilot a much greater chance to "catch" the wing drop.

I talked to the tow pilot about this and if I'm correct the situation improved.

We have new tow pilots joining our club every year. We must ensure they understand the uniqueness of some of our gliders. The "55" needs extra attention. Talk to the pilots. The juniors are very light, the Arcus is very heavy, be aware of which aircraft is behind you and adapt to what is required.

Safety Report #12: Low and Over

The last tow of July XX was the final incident of the day. I myself towing in C-GKXJ was towing "BP" and while hooking up for tow heard the glider pilot transmit on the radio that he was approaching from the south and would be conducting a low and over runway 21 and then a left downwind for the same runway. As there were no other gliders in the sky Rob Russel and myself cleared him to conduct the low and over. Interpreting his transmission of conducting a low and over I assumed he would fly overhead the field then conduct a low and over in the 210 direction and then enter a left downwind. I assumed due to that, that I would be clear of conflict for takeoff runway 21 as my wingrunner gave me the all out signal. However what the glider pilot had meant to say he would be conducting a low and over runway 03 and then a left downwind 21. Needless to say, thanks to my takeoff call that we were rolling R21 he knew that a low and over was no longer feasible and pulled up and to the right for a left downwind. This was conducted with time to spare with neither aircraft in extreme proximity but was still a unique incident. Both gliders and tow planes landed without incident. The glider pilot and I spoke afterwards and both agreed we could have improved our own radio communications. My safety suggestions are as follows; All tow pilots should halt all departures if a low and over is expected from a glider/plane regardless of the intended runway in use. This should also apply to all low level pipeline/power line inspections over the field. Glider Pilots: All low and overs conducted must be done safely and if no other conflicting traffic is landing or departing any runway. Visual confirmation should be made that no takeoff is being conducted and the final approach is clear in the case of a long/high landing. Finally, a low and over manoeuvre must be done on a day with good visibility and plenty of margin to conduct your own approach for landing.

Safety Officer's Comments:

The author of this report pretty much says it all. The glider pilot made a conflicting call. He said he was to the south and doing a low and over on runway 21. Off course this makes no sense and anyone hearing this would immediately ask for clarification. Glider pilots doing straight in low and overs will always choose the runway that is most in line with their final glide. So, if you are screaming in from the south the low and over would most likely be on 36 or 03, not 21.

As a matter of human interest, it is more likely that a pilot will get the runway backwards than where he is coming from. A cross country pilot has spent the entire day fully aware of his navigation, therefor will be less likely to misquote his direction from the field as opposed to the active runway he intends to fly over. This is compounded by the fact he may do his low and over down wind or into the wind requiring a full circuit or a tear drop circuit. It is imperative that the glider pilot call ahead, states his position, his intentions and his ETA. Sosa ground then needs to relay club traffic back to the glider pilot. This includes the active runway and traffic. The runway may very well have changed since the glider pilot has left. The glider should break off the low and over if there is conflict or whatever resolution he and the club operations agree to. Cross country pilots are usually our most experienced pilots and can adapt quickly to accommodate to the club operations.

Some of you may state low and overs are not necessary, that's correct, however from what I have seen in the last few years, most of these occur after the club operations have shut down or almost shut down, therefor of minimum risk.

Safety Report #13: Flarm Works, sort of

I went to the club early morning of July XX, 2023, to have my first XC flight on Discus2b. I have picked glider BP to fly the day. We took off RWY 21 in calm wind condition. Seems a good soaring day.

I have released in 2000'. I have found the beginning challenging due to the low cloud base. I have tried some cloud and decide to abort the initial decision of XC flight and fly locally and practice thermalling with the type. All went well until the overdevelopment in West/northwest of Cambridge. I change my track to East of the field where some gliders were thermalling 600-1000' above me. I changed my direction to west and cross the field at approx. 3000MSL. Then change the track to South of HWY 8. I was losing my height in the sinking air. Looked at my XC-Soar displaying ~1hr. 15 min of flight duration.

So, I decided to land and save my block time for another day. Flew to Southeast of high key RWY21.

Some turns there to bleed my altitude. At ~2300'MSL I turned to fly west bound to go to high-key area and meanwhile I opened my landing gear. Side note is in my past flight on BP I experienced some difficulty extending my landing gear, so I gave myself some margin just in case. Anyway, I have extended my landing gear without any considerable difficulty. Meanwhile I was almost in high-key. I finished my pre-landing checks there and I was about starting left turns to come to downwind alt. I have heard Flarm alarm when I was heading northwest/North for an approaching threat from 12 o'clock high. I start searching for that and after ~8 sec from Flarm alarm I spot a glider approaching from 12 o'clock and approx. 100' above me. As a natural reaction I pushed the stick forward while tracking his path. At the closest moment I recognize the type as Jantar and red nose painting. I joined the downwind slightly higher than normal height with a crack of spoiler to bleed the height and landed normally.

Safety Officer's Comments:

Flarm system seems to be working. The high key will be an area of higher risk. That is where we all fly to "get in line" to land. We do not have a mandatory call to join the circuit, we just have the downwind call "entering" or already "in" the downwind leg. Therefor eyes outside prior to and while joining the circuit. This Flarm warning may have saved a very, very bad situation

Safety Report #14: Unclaimed Hanger Rash

Dear fellow pilots who are moving gliders in a small hangar,

A gear door of my Discus (AD) has been damaged by somebody who moved it (happened during the last week of the contest). One hinge has been ripped off the door, and significantly bent. The door remained attached by just one hinge.

The worst part of this is that nobody has left any warning about the damage, which was hard to spot and could result in the door being detached during take-off or flight, or even prevent a gear to be extended during the landing.

So, I have two requests to make:

1. Don't ever use a dolly under the main wheel to move my glider, Discus AD, use the fork carrier, please. The glider gear is low and dolly will damage it unless you do it extremely careful and skillful, which you will probably will not.

In fact, in my opinion, I would not use it on other gliders as well, but at least don't use it on mine.

2. It would be great if a person who has done it reveal himself. There is no monetary penalty, as I have done the repairs myself, but it will an honest gesture and will improve your karma.

Thank you and let's treat other people's property as you would treat yours, especially when it concerns safety.

Safety Officer's Comments:

Every year we get some hanger rash. Lately it has been better, but it still happens. If it is in the club hanger there seem to be many witnesses and people come forward. The small hanger seems to be more guilty of culprits who damage and knowingly or unknowingly run away. Last year we had to make a public call for the person who damaged a glider. He did come forward and claimed responsibility partially unaware of what he did. This may be the case in the above scenario.

There was another nasty small crash between two private gliders this spring but it was immediately reported and the two parties worked it out successfully.

In the case above no one came forward, even after he posted it on line. It might be possible to do this damage without knowing it but I find it hard to believe a person could run into a gear door without knowing what he or she did. Please clear your conscience and come clean. When it happens to your glider you will appreciate the same.

The other option is that we all take a little more care and move gliders very very carefully and do not touch another aircraft. Those few minutes to get help or slow way down is much easier than having to tell a glider owner what you did.

Safety Report #14 Canopy Left Open

I saw a two seater glider with the Canopy left wide open outside the hanger today. No one was visible, unless going to get a cleaning cloth or something. There was no wind, so no problem, but how fast could you run back to the canopy if required?

Safety Officer's Comments:

Really? Do I need to state the obvious?

Safety Report #15: Glider vs General Aviation going into CYKF

From the Power Pilot:

Today I flew into CYKF around 12:30. I flew an approach into runway 26. Over Guelph, Toronto ATC warned me about a circling target at my altitude (3000') within a mile of the approach course. I was able to see it and ensure it didn't circle into me. Fortunately, I have ADS-B In, which picked up the call sign CGYOH, likely because it has FLARM and the new-ish CIFIB ADS-B In transmitters broadcast FLARM targets.

It was a disturbing experience for me and for several other aircraft before and after me who reported seeing the glider or had to be warned to be on the lookout. I don't think Flair or WestJet came in around that time, but the potential repercussions of an interaction with them is scary to think about.

I understand that glider pilots don't like it when other aircraft cruise through "their" space. (I avoid York and SOSA areas when VFR. Today, I was IFR so I gave an advisory call to York as I passed by.) I think that it would be mutually beneficial to avoid each others' busy areas. Even if legal, a busy airport approach path is not a good place for a glider to be circling in thermals. I do appreciate that this particular glider at least had on-board transmission of its location, but unless it's a 1090 MHz transponder, most other aircraft would not detect it, and it is not easy to see.

Safety Officer's Comments:

Power pilots and glider pilots perceive "close" as two very different things. Glider pilots could be in a gaggle under the cloud within a hundred meters of each other in a thermal, all circling in the same direction with pilots leaving and joining the thermal quite happily. No Flarms are going off, no one is excited, heads on a swivel, its what we do. The very idea of this is almost completely ridiculous in the power world. Yes, power pilots do fly in formation sometimes but this requires special training with a thorough pre flight briefing.

So when this power pilot flying under IFR rules sees a glider within a mile, he may/will be concerned. That is "close" especially on a IFR flight.

Having said all of that, this power pilot brings up an obvious point. We as glider pilots really need to avoid thermalling in these areas. Please keep your thermalling to an absolute minimum in the corridor.

I have flown through the corridor countless times. I find if I can get up to (or down to) 5500 feet at the 401 and the Hanlon expressway (just to the south of the corridor) tell YKF of my position and intentions while Squawking 1202, they will appreciate the advisory. For some reason most of the time there is a bit of a cloud street running slightly right of course (running north bound) over the western part of Guelph. This easily keeps you on the east side of the YKF zone and providing good lift to keep running north until you are out of the corridor. If you are on YKF tower they will most likely advise you of traffic. When clearing to the north advise them you are leaving the frequency (if they haven't already cleared you) and then you are out of the way. If they tell you to stay away when you first call them, do not get offended, they are busy. You have done your job and told them, now they know you are on the frequency in case there is traffic. That is still better than them seeing a possible glider target and not knowing who you are.

Safety report #16: Spoilers Open on Take Off

Hans, yesterday I took off in PNN and had the spoilers come open during the takeoff. The tow pilot waggled the rudder and called me by radio to let me know. I was busy dealing with a cross wind and noticed some different handling qualities. Once they were closed things got a lot better.

Safety Officer's Comments:

CISTRSC:

I believe spoilers is in the pre take off check list. I am not trying to be funny here. Its not so much a breakdown of discipline as it is distraction. I used to actually think, "how could anyone forget to check their spoilers" until it happened to me.....Do not be afraid to do your checklist over again if you got interrupted. I ask the students to say their checklist out loud, not just so I can hear it, but others milling around the cockpit can hear it. Then they sort of leave us alone for a minute. The subsequent actions taken by the tow pilot and the glider pilot were executed correctly. Know your drills, as you can see, it solved the problem.

With the spoiler incidents reoccurring and the canopy incident (below) I would recommend the wing-runner is also a verifying with the crew to ensure "spoilers and, canopy locked"

Safety Report #17: 14 Meters of Separation!

One of our private owners was up around York Soaring Juergensen field area and got very close to a Piper Seminole.

Glider Pilot report:

Rob put together me and the bogie in the link below. The bogie up by Arthur passed directly under me with about 60 ft of vertical separation while he was turning left into my path, then came back from my left to pass at about 350 ft directly above me. Kind of close. The registration was C-GPHK

<https://flyxc.app/?id=5074620152020992&id=5132775888257024>

Letter from Brampton Flying Club after my enquiry of their pilot's actions:

Good Morning Hans,

Thank you for your email. We have identified the PIC of the Seminole at the time of the incident. The PIC was obviously unaware of the glider traffic and has since been debriefed by our CFI.

Our instructors have been made aware previously of the glider traffic present in our practice area which spans from Orangeville-Shelburne-Luther Lake-Lake Belwood-Orangeville.

Most of the time, our aircraft are at an altitude of 4500FT practicing air work. They actively monitor 123.025MHz which is the CFA for that geographical area.

Thank you for your correspondence, and please let me know if you have any questions.

Kind Regards,

Turan Isikdogan
Company Aviation Safety Officer
Flight Instructor

My response to Turan Isikdogan:

Hi again Turan.

I am a wee bit worried your pilot did not see a glider that was within 14 meters of him.....

(see aircraft traces)

I will also admit that our pilot was probably not on 123.025, they are usually talking on glider frequency in that area 123.40. This is a bit of a problem that we will look into.

That area is full of glider activity in the summer, so if you don't mind getting students and instructors to be aware of that, that would be great.

VFR is a little scary and I can see if you are mid lesson not everyone has their eyes outside enough.

Thank you for your time in this matter.

Hans Juergensen SOSA Safety Officer.

Safety Officer's Comments:

You can see the first intercept at time 1:08:39 and then again at 1:10:31 just to the west of Belwood.

This is way past scary. Directly overhead fourteen meters apart, then less than 2 minutes later they meet again, again very close. I phoned and emailed the chief pilot of the flying school in Brampton. You can see in the reply below that the pilot was apparently unaware of the entire incident! Really?

The CFI does indicate their practice area. If you are cross country in this area, be advised.

As mentioned before, this is our greatest threat. There is also a blatant frequency problem.

Common Frequency Area is 123.025MHZ Glider Pilots are on 123.4, in a perfect world we would be monitoring both frequencies.

Student and Instructor were on second of two training flights. First training flight occurred without incident. Pre-flight for 2 flight was normal, student completed the walk around, nothing remarkable was found. Student and instructor climbed into aircraft and student completed pre-launch checks as normal. As tow plane taxied back student and instructor closed canopies and ready for take-off, instructor communicated to student that his canopy was closed and locked, student closed and locked his canopy and verbally confirmed same. Instructor visually inspected that both front canopy pins were properly extended confirming the front canopy was indeed latched. Instead of the tow plane pulling in front of the launch line, it pulled off to the side to make a tow pilot switch. Tow plane shut down for ten mins to complete the switch of tow pilots. Once tow plane started up with the afternoon tow pilot and taxied to the front the line to hook up the aircraft, the instructor opened his canopy to attempt to communicate to tow pilot that we intended to perform a "box the wake" exercise on tow above 1000' AGL. Once signaled the instructor re-closed and latched his canopy, again confirming via visual inspection that the front canopy pins were fully extended and the front canopy was secure. Glider hook-up was completed, and the take-off commenced. The student performed the take-off and the tow to 1000' AGL. The right wing did drop on take-off and graze the ground, but the student recovered, and the tow continued without major issues. At 1000' AGL instructor took over the tow to demonstrate the "box the wake" exercise. Halfway thru the exercise the tow plane turned sharply to the right, so the instructor abandoned the demonstration. The instructor returned the glider to the proper tow position, control was returned to student and the tow continued to release height at 2000' AGL. After release and as the conditions were favourable for thermal training the instructor ask the student to head to a set of clouds and thermalling exercises commenced. The thermalling conditions were challenging as there was an easterly wind and high buoyancy shear, however 600' of altitude was gained with the student performing much of the thermalling. As time was running out of the training flight the instructor asked the student to leave the convective area with 3000' ASL and perform some slips. The student executed two

slips successfully, one to each side. The instructor then asked the student to perform two additional slips with a more aggressive posture (use more rudder). The first slip was successfully performed with the nose pointed to the left and then the student recovered. As the student transition to slip the aircraft on the other side (nose pointed to the right) the front canopy fully opened. The canopy was fully extended, and the left side rail was above the mid-line of the glider. The instructor immediately took control of the glider and returned to straight and level flight. The instructor turned left into the wind and the pointed the nose slightly down. The canopy started to come back to the fuselage and the student reached up to catch it, closed it and re-latched it securely. The glider was now at 2400' ASL. The canopy was opened for 3-5 seconds. The instructor continued flying the glider to the high key area for runway 03. Once established in the high key area the instructor offered control back to the student to complete the landing, however the student declined as he said was too shaken by the incident. The instructor completed the landing without further incident. Once safely on the ground the canopy and the glider were thoroughly inspected for damage and normal operations with a senior club member and all was seen to be in good working order. The glider was taxied back to the flight line and proceeded with its next flight without incident.

Root cause analysis — I believe the front canopy latches became open during flight, although I can not be sure how, whether they both vibrated opened, the student inadvertently opened them, or a combination of both. Then at the time the 4th side slip was performed the canopy was opened with the force of the air movement on the side of the glider.

Safety Officer's Comments:

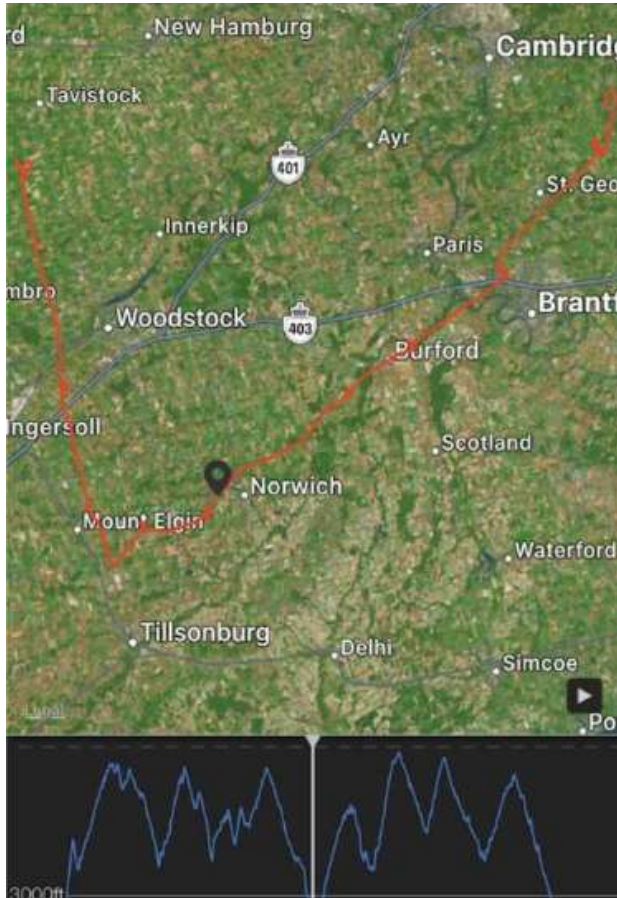
I went to the field a few days later and checked the canopy and talked to the instructor. The sequencing pins do not allow the front canopy to close without the rear being locked. There is nothing to prevent a take off with the front canopy unlocked except the obvious two white canopy latches being at right angles to their "stowed" position.

The weak spot in this story is that checks were complete, then the towplane switched pilots. Hmmm canopies were opened and closed again. Is it possible both pilots missed this? Is it possible the latches jiggled back far enough for the side slip to force the canopy to pop up? Unfortunately there is no absolute proof of either case. The only real take away from this is if you open your canopy after the checks are done is to BOTH verify canopy closed and locked again. The other second layer to this is what I mentioned above, the wing runner looks and verifies the locks are locked.

Safety Report #20: Poorly Planned Land-out:

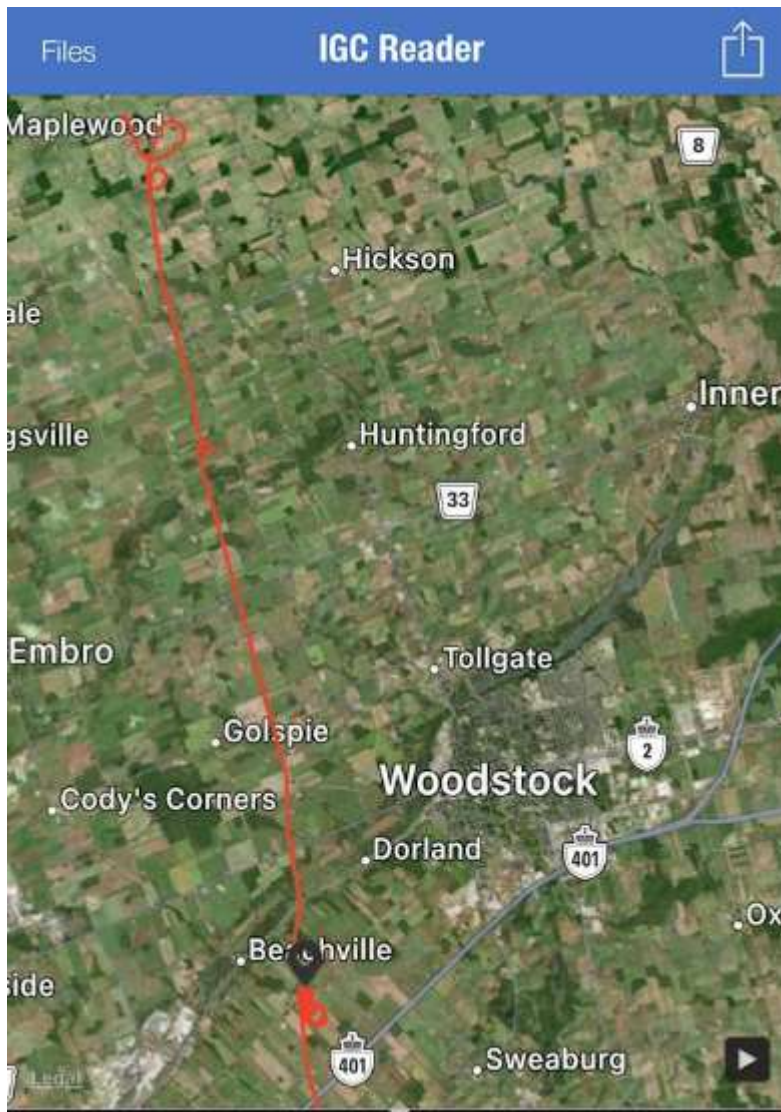
I launched in CDD at 13:07 with a planned task of Rockton>Tillsonburg>Stratford>Rockton. This would be my first significant cross-country flight in 2 years. In 2022 I had one attempt but turned back about halfway to Woodstock due to a thunderstorm ahead in the distance. Family and business obligations have made it more difficult to come out on the good days, which as you know were few and far between this season. Conditions for September 14th looked promising, and I was anxious to get a cross country flight in before the 2023 season ended. I was following the same task as Malcolm McLaren who had launched about 20 minutes ahead of me, and I radioed him for his position from time to time. The leg to Tillsonburg went

smoothly, and I reached the turn point in under an hour. Although I was rusty with XC flying, I was mindful of improving my speed. Please see screenshot below for overall route before I landed out.



Maximum Altitude reached during the flight was about 4800 feet ASL. Just north of the 401 and to the west of Woodstock I was at 4800 feet when I needed to decide how to traverse a blue hole which I estimated to be about 15 kilometers wide. The clouds on the other side looked well defined – in fact better than the clouds over Tillsonburg which were showing signs of over development.

I decided to go straight through the blue hole which would take me to around 3300 feet MSL on the other side. Going around the edge seemed too far, since the clouds on the left edge were even further away – about 20k. I normally fly more conservatively, and it is not typical for me to traverse a blue hole, but as I said I was mindful of improving my speed. In hindsight, I should have been focussing on staying up since this was my first XC flight in two years – please see screenshot below



As I was flying towards the Cu I took note of the terrain and noticed some tall power lines in front of me. I decided to get past those before choosing a field. Once I got to the other side of the blue hole, I positioned under a Cu at approximately 2800 feet (about 1900 AGL) and initiated a turn to the right in some weak lift.

This Cu did not produce much lift, and I decided to proceed further north to some Cu that looked more promising. I believe this was a mistake – at this point I was 1900 AGL and should have picked a field and kept working the very weak lift. There would have been more time and more field options. I traded a bird in the hand for 2 in the bush and gave up another 500 feet on route to the “better” cu, forgetting that even it was better, I risked dropping out of the working band.

Even though I was now under well defined Cu I was not able to connect. I kept going north while looking for fields in earnest, as I was now about 1400 AGL. I spotted a green field to my north that was large, flat, and did not have power lines on approach. Since I wanted to land to the North, I decided to pick this field and modify the circuit to a right base. In my mind there were not any better options as the other fields were lined up mostly east/west and were smallish. In hindsight it was a rushed decision since I was already at 1400 AGL and I also did not consider that green meant corn – in my mind it was a bean field.

As I kept flying north toward the field, I encountered a bubble and initiated a turn to the right. I got a bit of lift but decided to abort and land after 1 turn as I was concerned that I would drifting too far south of my chosen field. After leaving the weak lift I was now about 1000 feet AGL. Please see screenshot below.



I was easily able to reach my chosen field from 1000 feet with a right base modified circuit. The problem of course is that I had not been sufficiently close to the field when I picked it to determine the surface. From my vantage point it looked like a bean field, and at this point I did not have other options to consider. I should have picked a field that I was in position to fly over and inspect. As I was setting up for a right base, I had trouble locking the gear into place, as I was seated quite far back, and my hand was having trouble reaching the locking mechanism. After the third attempt, I was able to get it to lock. I continued with the right base and turned final. I did not realize it was a corn crop until I was a few feet above the field. At that point I remembered a conversation at the clubhouse discussing what to do when forced to land in a wooded area. I quickly decided this was a similar situation and to treat the top of the corn as the surface of the runway. I held off as long as I could and stalled the glider on top of the corn. I estimate I dropped 3 to 4 feet which startled me, but I was not hurt. I called Malcolm on the radio and advised of what happened and got out of the

glider.

Learnings:

1. As mentioned above, I should have picked a field at 2000AGL and flown over top of it before determining its suitability.
2. I evaluated slope, length, wind direction, and obstacles. I could not get close enough to the field to properly evaluate surface and assumed that green meant I could land on it.
3. I have not flown x-country for 2 years and lost the x-country "mindset". For example, I used to evaluate fields while driving around rural areas to determine whether they are suitable for a glider landing. I stopped doing that after only having local flights for a couple of years.
4. I felt some urgency to take an x-country flight since the season is near the end and "its now or never". I had built up a level of frustration at not being able to come on the few good days we have had this year.
5. It would have been beneficial to a short flight with an XC instructor to re-familiarize. Since no instructor was available a shorter run to Tillsonburg and back may have been a better idea given my rustiness.
6. I was overconfident when crossing the blue hole. It would have been prudent to fly around the edge of it.

I'm not going to go into details about the retrieve, but as you can imagine it was very difficult. I apologize to the club for some damage to CDD. This could have easily turned out much worse and is a sobering lesson for me. I will be reading Advanced Soaring Made Easy this winter and attending as many webinars as possible to improve my XC skills and knowledge

Safety Officer's Comments:

It is the surface we land on that ultimately will determine if the glider and / or pilot gets hurt. I am not taking away any of the other factors in selecting an off-field landing. Those hundred feet or so from first contact to the earth to a full stop is what really matters.

This pilot did not recognise corn. Green fields are not always good, green fields are MOSTLY good. A somewhat thorough understanding of the terrain you are going to fly over when going cross country is a must. There is a definite hierarchy in picking fields. In my humble opinion it is:

- 1) *Airports*
- 2) *Fresh cut hay field*
- 3) *Sod Farm*
- 4) *Hay field that is not too tall (dark green that waves in the wind is too tall)*
- 5) *Cut wheat field (late summer)*
- 6) *Any crop that is thin enough to see the soil through (young corn or beans (springtime))*
- 7) *Ploughed or tilled field*
- 8) *Eight foot corn is not on this list. A ploughed field would have been a better choice. I will not go into all the details of the above field selection process, that is for another time.*

The pilot once recognizing that the field was indeed corn did the correct action and brought the aircraft to minimum speed and stalled the aircraft just as it settled into the top of the corn. The retrieval was a bit of a chore and the aircraft did sustain enough damage that an insurance claim was filed.

We need to go over our cross-country procedures to evaluate who goes cross country and who needs a bit more training. Field selection hangar talks would be a really good idea in the spring. There are many senior pilots at the club who are “farmer” enough to help you pick a good field. I believe there is a committee putting this together.

Conclusion:

As stated above the instructor body will prioritize cross country training to fill in the obvious gaps that seem to be evident in our cross-country pilots.

A spring refresher meeting on all things collision avoidance and traffic hot spots needs to be held. This should include a refresher on Flarm and transponder use and getting comfortable talking to Hamilton or Kitchener ATC. If we are talking to each other, we can avoid each other. We already do this at Sosa when we call downwind and departing, this is just the next step if we are to venture close to control zones.

A little more clarity and training in the following areas could clear up some misconceptions.

- 1) Tow rope DI's show an “out of limits” rope, what to look for.
- 2) Dropping a tow rope after a break or towplane release procedure
- 3) Placard and brief all ongoing maintenance issues, ect no brakes, A/S under or over reads/no radio/no microphone
- 4) If canopy is opened after pre take off check list, both pilots must re confirm canopy closed and locked. This could be backed up by wing runner verification.
- 5) Last person leaving Sosa should look around, are all hanger and clubhouse and workshop doors locked. Always seems to be some else's problem.
- 6) How are we going to deal with smoke?

Have a great safe flying season in 2024!

Hans Juergensen