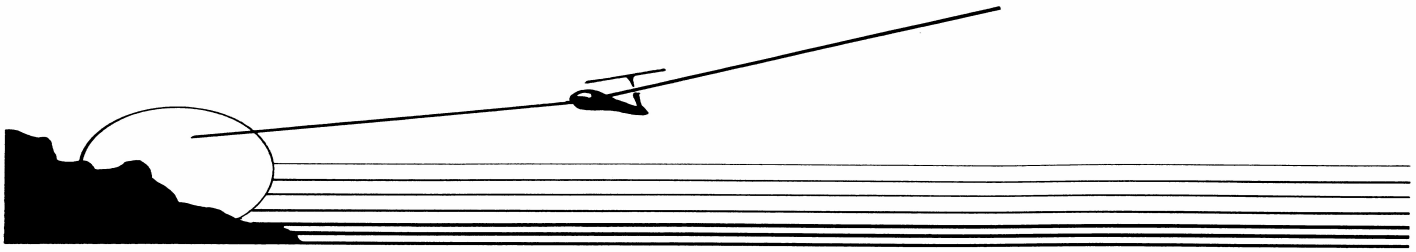

Las Vegas Valley Soaring Association

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October Thinking

As another soaring season comes to a close it is time to look back on the past summer and reflect. We've had a good summer, busy for some, not so busy for others. Soloing new students, qualifying new tow pilots, completing an aircraft upgrade checkout as newly rated pilots expand to bigger and higher performance gliders, and new gliders on the field. First cross country soaring for some and getting back into cross country for others. But also busy in our personal lives that may have kept us away from our flying.

Our club has grown and improved, we have a new maintenance trailer, newly delivered, and a new "glider tug" to relieve pressures on the FOO Mobile. Many thanks to Rob for setting up the trailer and to Jim and Keith for their efforts and generous donation to the club. This is how clubs grow and improve.

Our club is expanding and we now have a waiting list for new student members. With only 2 instructors available, one part time when not towing, and a 3rd ready for his check ride, all are kept very busy. We are looking to expand our training fleet with another 2-33, when one is found at a reasonable price, we'll go get it. For more on the current search, see you at the club meeting.

We've had some "incidents" with gliders, no one hurt, lessons learned, gliders can be repaired. Experiences are shared so others learn from what happened and hopefully not repeat it. That's how clubs share. Share experience, Share information, Share knowledge.

Now as we look to the winter "training months" there is still time to reach that goal set last Spring at the banquet. Advanced rating for some? Polish off some rust? Get in touch with your instructors, scrape that rust away, get proficient, find out what it takes to become an instructor. Do you know a good power pilot that would benefit from soaring and also maybe be a tow pilot? That's how clubs grow, share the enthusiasm. I know it's a double edge sword, we need new pilots to grow and assist with the day to day operations, and we have a waiting list for students. What can you do to help?

Those that have been on the Board in the past know what it takes to keep the club operational, functional, growing, ask them for advice. They'll gladly share. Do you know who they are? Take a look, http://www.lvvsa.org/History/History_main.html

We will face some challenges in the next 6-8 years and more. A new airport some where in Clark County and its impact, possible new rules for gliders in the face of growth and congestion in the National Airspace System, replacing old club aircraft with new. Are you up for the challenge? What can we do to help you be ready for the challenge?

Your leaders will move on, either from age, moving away or other commitments. What happens to the club then? What can you learn now by being on the board while they are still around so you can ask for help? Stand up and be among the counted. In the last 8 years there are 32 opportunities for elected positions but only 15 different names, and that does not include the appointed positions. You may just be the person with the new idea that moves the club forward.

Without goals, we are not in control, being blown about by the winds, never reaching a destination. What are your personal goals? What is your destination? What is your goal for the club? Only you can answer those questions. The club is here to help.

Bill

Landing Out

By Scott Graham

OK. So a giraffe, a nun, and a dwarf walk into a bar… Wait a minute. That's the article I'm writing for Dwarf Weekly.

This article is about my out landing on 9 September 2006 in the club's LS-4. What did I do right or wrong? What was useful from the books I read and what maybe wasn't so useful? What did I learn?

9 September 2006 was definitely not just an ordinary day for me. I was going to attempt my Silver badge distance on my first cross country glider flight. For you old glider geezers out there, a Silver distance run is probably as exciting as watching a humidifier and a dehumidifier battle it out, but for me it was special. I had spent a couple of hours the night before flight planning and had come in early to put the LS-4 together and get ready for my flight.

For the un-anointed ones reading this, the soaring community (internationally) has a unique way of recognizing soaring achievement. They issue Silver, Gold, and Diamond badges when certain milestones are met. To attain a Silver badge, a glider pilot has to gain 3,000 feet of altitude after coming off tow, remain airborne for five hours, and fly a distance of 50 kilometers (30 nautical miles); not all necessarily in the same flight. There are some other more subtle rules that apply as well. For example, for a Silver distance run, I need to increase my actual distance by a factor that is proportional geometrically to the potential theoretical distance if multiplied by pi; but only if flying on an odd, prime Zulu day based on the Julian date, except on Thursdays in the southern hemisphere. In the northern hemisphere, exceptions are based on the ancient Chinese calendar…Year of the Dog has exceptions for Jewish holidays while Year of the Ox bases its exceptions on whether or not one can actually see the waxing quarter moon at some random location within a 10,000 square mile area in the South Pacific. Because only about 1% of glider pilots who have PhD's in holistic, Maoist, philosophy can actually understand this rule, they call this the 1% rule. A semi-interesting side note: there is only one such glider pilot in this part of the galaxy, Venice Beach to be exact. Because he(?) is the only PhD in holistic, Maoist, etc. etc. in this spiral arm of the galaxy, the 1% rule would dictate that he(?) doesn't know the 1% rule all that well anyway. Though more Che Guevara than Mao, he(?) is as close as we're going to get and far too creepy for anyone to spend any significant amount of time with to explain any of this anyway. Did you get all that?

OK. Glider's put together. Positive control check, safety check, oxygen, parachute, barograph, electrical problem fixed, route discussion with a CFI-G, sunglasses…where are my sunglasses? I'm gonna be a hurtin' unit without my sunglasses.

"They're on your head," said Krys; not even trying to suppress the laughter. "You need to slow down," she said. Krys is the closest this the club has to a PhD in holistic, Maoist, etc. etc. and isn't at all creepy…no more than any of the rest of us anyway.

"Good advice. Glad I could improve the morale of the club" I thought. I actually was going considerably slower than I wanted to anyway. I get that way before I fly. I really want to get going. Over the years I have learned to slow down despite having the itch to get going. OK, I "lost" my sunglasses on my head. Who hasn't done that? At least that's what I like to tell myself. In retrospect, losing my sunglasses was not an indication that I was moving too quickly. Finding my glasses was just one of the many details I was methodically covering, but that shouldn't take away from the soundness of the advice.

As I settled into the glider and made ready for launch, my friend Robin asked me if I had any water. Water? Of course I had water. What kind of glider pilot would I be without water? I proudly showed her my 1 pint bottle of Arrowhead water. See, I had all the bases covered. No detail left unthought-of. I'd be back in a couple of hours and I didn't want to drink too much while flying anyway…I didn't have my diaper with me. Robin checked me for dehydration, took my pulse, did an eye exam, checked for proper neurological response, did a hearing test, blood pressure, urinalysis,

DNA sample, temperature, field sobriety test, word association, and did something with my security clearance I think. By the time she broke out the rubber gloves it was time to launch, and I already had both arms outside the glider, desperately trying to scoot myself onto the runway. Robin, thoughtful as she always is, determined that I needed another bottle of water, so ran and got me one before I took off. That was nice of her.

So, they roll me out on the runway; PRICE check complete, tail dolly off, before take off checklist complete, thumbs up, wings level, rudder wag, and away we go. An uneventful takeoff and tow to 3,000 feet AGL; just the way I like it. So, I spend the next 10 minutes or so scratching for some lift that in the end got me up to about 2,500 feet AGL. Beautiful. Great way to start a Silver Badge run! Just then, a chorus of angels eased into an awe-inspiring, lovely and blissful melody, making me feel as though all was right with the world. This religious, almost out of body experience, was interrupted when someone with an acute sense of sarcasm raked the proverbial needle across the record and stated over 122.9 for all the world, and any space aliens who might be monitoring our communications, to hear "Hey Tiz, look at that glider above us with his gear down." My left hand, as if trying to hide its intentions from the body to which it's attached, moved toward the gear lever to coax it rearward. I swear, Senor Wensas was whistling some unidentifiable little ditty while nonchalantly eyeing the altimeter and radio during this whole thing.

"OK. Gear's up. 'tsarite."

"'tsarite."

Moments later, it appeared that the angels were indeed smiling upon me. A six knot thermal found me and sent me up to 9,000 feet, at which time I proceeded to the climb window. As I flew southwest, there was plenty of lift along the way. I only lost about 500 feet when I found a thermal that sent me up to just above 10,000 feet.

"On a day like this," I thought, "Silver distance is going to be a piece of cake"

As I began to fly west-bound out of 10,000 feet I searched for Sky Ranch, my next potential landing area. At 3,000 feet or so above the minimum altitude required to make Sky Ranch I headed straight toward Hidden Hills, ever-conscious of my minimums, my current altitude, and proximity to the closest land-out area. As I made my way to Hidden Hills and descending below 8,500 feet; now out of range of Jean but well within glide distance to Sky Ranch, I found myself seeking lift. I flew toward a ridge hoping for some thermal activity there, but not expecting any ridge lift. At just below 8,000 feet I found some. Was it skill in thermal finding or just plain dumb luck? I don't know, and I certainly didn't care at the time. Whichever it was, it will be a data point for me to draw from in the future.

When I got to Hidden Hills at about 7,500 feet I found a little more lift that took me slightly more west of my course line than planned. That was OK. The lift was good and Hidden Hills Dry Lake was in easy gliding distance. I remained slightly west of my course line until reaching Calvada Meadows, noting where I found thermals for my return trip. I didn't have Calvada Meadows made until I was about 12 miles out and arrived at about 1,500 feet above traffic pattern altitude. I was always in gliding distance of Hidden Hills, Hidden Hills Dry Lake or Calvada Meadows.

OK. So I'm over Calvada Meadows at about 5,500 feet…I made it. Now I just have to get back. I made a call to Shad in 2NV who relayed my location to Glider Ops. 2NV told me that Glider Ops wanted to know my intentions. "My intentions? I intend to fly home. What other intentions would I have?" I thought to myself. That "I" that was thinking to myself was the power pilot in me. The huge, 3,500 hour, power pilot gorilla who had completely, but unintentionally over shadowed the tiny 50 hour, glider pilot mouse wasn't doing me any favors.

So, after a little radio relay dance, I managed to get my message to Glider Ops. Then I was told that if I wanted to get my Silver duration I had to be up until 6:58 p.m. and that the sun was setting at 7:00 p.m. I rodgered that. I guess they were trying to tell me that I didn't have any hope of getting Silver duration today. OK. Whatever. I was pretty busy clawing my way out of Calvada Meadows and was less concerned with Silver duration and more concerned about gaining enough altitude to make my next waypoint. I had visions of that scene in Silence of the Lambs; "It puts the lotion on its skin, or

else it gets the hose again…Put the lotion in the #$%&*#$ basket!!" Aaahhh! My eyes slammed open; cold sweat bucketing down my forehead. No wonder flying cross country gives me the heeby-geebies.

I got about 4 miles from Calvada Meadows and had to turn back…not high enough. I looked for lift up towards Mt. Charleston and found a couple of knots, then flew toward a ridge and found a little more. I finally made it up to about 7,500 feet and struck out for Hidden Hills again; not enough to make it but enough to move forward and look for more lift. As I flew toward Hidden Hills, I found little bits of lift…a couple of knots here and a couple of knots there, just enough to keep going. Soon I was out of range of Calvada Meadows on my way home.

I arrived over Hidden Hills at about 5,500 feet; almost 2,000 feet above pattern altitude. I struck out toward Sky Ranch; I could even see the dirt runway in the distance. I picked up 1 knot of lift then went searching for more. I found another 1 knot thermal, stayed in it for a bit then it petered out. I kept searching. I managed to get about 3 miles from Hidden Hills before having to move my search closer to the airstrip. Within a mile of the airstrip I searched some more. Nothing. I continued to search. Nothing. As I search for thermals, I simultaneously surveyed the airstrip. "Oh crap! That doesn't look good." I made a note to myself to add an "O" to the seven "S's" used to survey a land-out site.

I abandoned my search for lift and flew to a point where I could better survey the airstrip…4,500 feet. I had a discussion with Jay before I took off about which of the two airstrips to use here in the Hidden Hills area. He said to use the one that looks like an "X," not the one that looks like a "T." "OK. Let me run through my alphabet real quick. How did that song from Sesame Street go?"

This was definitely the "X." The "T" was about 2 miles to the north northeast. I really didn't like the look of this airstrip, but this is where Jay told me to land, so I'd hate to see the other one. Besides, I still have time to take a look at this one. I could make it to the "T" strip, but it would be a straight in approach and under the circumstances that didn't appeal to me either. Still at 1,300 feet AGL. I was committed to "X." Ready or not, here I come. After my first circle over the field it was plain to see that landing to the north, east, or west was not an option. Even from 1,300 feet you could see the big gopher mounds. Landing south was it, and there were gopher mounds there too. But, there was a small, short strip of earth that had not yet been infected. I circled once, twice, three times. Powerlines on approach. How far down the runway do I land? How will I know when I'm there? Looks like a couple of places might work. Which is best? Wonder how high those mounds are? I'll need to get this thing firmly on the ground, but I don't want the gear to collapse. There's a stake in the ground there. Wood, metal, or plastic? I better try to touchdown just beyond that line of bushes and keep the nose pointed that way so I don't hit those mounds over there. Slope? Doesn't matter. I can't land anyplace else. Try and get it on the ground right there and heavy braking. OK. Let's go.

It was time for Senor Wensas to earn his keep. Up until now all he had done was forget to put the gear up when he was supposed to, help out with some radio calls, and get me a drink of water. "Alright you lazy @#*%&, get up and go to work!"

"'tsarite."

Gear down. I checked that several times and cross checked it with wind noise and checking my airbrakes. OK, at least I wasn't going to screw that up. I circled the airstrip a couple more times to confirm my assessment of the landing area. At just over 1,000 feet AGL, I widened my left hand orbit slightly to enter a left downwind for the south "runway." Gear down. I left my spoilers in on downwind. I wanted to fly a little longer final approach to give myself an extra few seconds to assess the "runway" and adjust my approach as necessary. The winds were forecast to be from out of the west, and the way I flew my traffic pattern confirmed that. Penetration into a headwind was not going to be an issue. I flew over the highway that bordered the north end of the airstrip. I would have to touch down a couple of hundred feet south of this road. I spied the power poles on the approach end of the "runway." I could clearly see the wires on all the other power poles and the guide wires running to the ground from the poles closest to the airstrip. There were no wires obstructing the approach path.

As a helicopter pilot who has spent the majority of my 3,000 or so helicopter hours below 100 feet searching for wires, I felt comfortable with that assessment.

"One potato, two potato." I watched my altimeter indicate a slow decent. "Three potato, four potato." My vario indicated the same. "Five potato, six potato." Gear down. "Seven potato, eight potato." Airspeed 60. "Nine potato, ten potato." I noticed an annoying spot on my glasses. I began my turn to base. About half way through my turn, the "runway" slid into view. I checked my glide angle. High…good. I deployed my spoilers.

I checked for wires again. Airspeed 60. On glide path. I squared off my turn to base. I searched for my touchdown zone. There it is. It was subtle, but clear. A line of bushes marked my aim point; touchdown point was 50 or so feet beyond that. Mounds of dirt were haphazardly scattered about the "runway," but there was a path about 20 feet wide; more in some places, less in others, and a few hundred feet long. The actual "runway" was 2,000 – 3,000 feet long, but this few hundred foot stretch was the only useable bit there was to play with.

I turned final. 60 knots. On glide path. That was a bit faster than I wanted. With such a small space to land in, 60 was a little more than I wanted. I put the boards out a little more. On glide path. At about 50 feet I began pulling my nose up a bit, but my sink rate was not affected. I put some spoilers in to adjust my glide path. At about 10 feet, my landing attitude was established and I adjusted my sink rate with very small changes in spoilers. At about 1-2 feet off the ground I held it off. Apparently, there is an issue with the LS-4's gear collapsing. It had happened to one of our other pilots last year, and I didn't want that to happen to me. I slowly pulled back on the spoiler handle, and the glider settled onto the "runway." Both wheels hit simultaneously. Within the first fraction of a second of hitting the ground I thought to myself, "Crap!" Translated: "This is significantly rougher than I expected."

As I was thinking that, I deployed full spoilers and pulled back hard. "Crap!! Heel brakes!" For those of you that are unclean (power pilots) and other bottom dwellers (non-aviators), many gliders employ a wheel brake system activated by fully deploying your spoilers. Another, somewhat more ludicrous design requires the pilot to use their heels to employ the brakes.

I *hate* heel brakes. I stood on my heels, full spoilers, and had the stick in my lap. My right wing began dipping down. I righted it just before it passed over dirt mound. My nose pulled to the right. I stood ever-harder on my heel brakes and tried to coax my nose back left. Another dirt mound slowly approached my right wing. My nose was now 30 or so degrees right of my original touchdown heading and almost directly into the wind; I had the stick full left to keep the wings level. The glider came to a stop only inches beyond the dirt mound as the right wing settled gently to the ground. My jaw and face muscles relaxed. I relaxed. I need to work on better directional control with those heel brakes. I unbuckled my seatbelt, unlatched the canopy, and got out of the glider to take a look around. I was unscathed, and much to my amazement, so was the glider. I took my parachute off and placed it on the right wing tip to help secure the glider.

I was just a wee bit thirsty, so I polished off what was left of my 1 pint bottle. As the last few drops did slide down the back of my throat, the gods had bestowed upon me the greatest of miracles, for the angels did sing and the gods did feast upon the lambs and the sloths and the sage brush and the dust and the bunnies and the chipmunks and the rattlesnakes and the rocks. Indeed, the gods had begifted upon my wretched, sinning soul a full urn of water, and it had been beplaced in the place upon which I had beset myself for many hours in the past hours whilst living in the place that the gods themselves beplace themselves on days such as this when they, the gods of which I speak, picnic among the clouds of which there were none today, but had they, the clouds of which I speak, been so beplaced, the gods might very well have had such a feast and it would have rained down sandwiches and chips and soda of every variety and ants and potato salad and plastic forks and knives and fruits and that green jello that grandma used to make and …

OK. It was just the extra bottle of water that Robin gave me, but in the middle of the desert, it was somewhat of a biblical experience. In the next 30 minutes or so there were several phone calls back to

the club. For the sake of brevity, I will condense and limit this "transcript" to what is pertinent. If you had been with me, listening to me as I spoke, this is what you would have heard.

"Jay. This is Scott Graham."
"Yeah, I'm OK and the glider isn't damaged."
"I'm at Hidden Hills…the "X" not the "T."
"Because that's where you told me to land."
"You didn't?"
"I thought you said to land…"
"Hmmm. The "T" huh."
"Well, no wonder you didn't want me to land here. This place sucks!"
OK. So, here's the good part. Lessons learned; a little philosophy first though.

Philosophy

I'd rather be lucky than good any day: No matter how good you are, *sometimes* you just aren't going to make it without pure dumb luck.

You make your own luck: To a very large extent, you make your own luck (good or bad) by the decisions you make, the actions you take, how you plan a flight, how you execute that plan in flight, and how you train before the critical moment occurs. Pure dumb luck is great to have, but it almost never makes up for the luck you make for yourself.

Lessons Learned

Here are some lessons and advice for folks who care to read them. This is advice from someone who has done a grand total of one cross country flight in gliders, so take all that into account.

Don't be afraid of landing out: Landing out happens to everyone. Don't let your fear of landing out keep you from flying cross country. Make your plan, run it by someone who is experienced, refine it as necessary, then fly it. If you land out, it will cost you a little more time and a little more money, but that's part of the deal. The primary goal I had on this flight was to fly cross country and not land out. I didn't care how long it took, I just didn't want to land out. That mindset drove me to press back home, when in retrospect I should have landed at Calvada Meadows.

Always evaluate the conditions and adjust your plan accordingly: On my way out to Calvada Meadows, lift was fairly easy to find. When I got to Calvada Meadows, lift was nearly nonexistent. I eventually found some, but I had to scratch pretty hard just to get to Hidden Hills. With hindsight, I should have seen that the lift was dissipating and just land at Calvada Meadows. I always met my minimums, but it kept getting more and more difficult to do. That showed a trend I should have paid attention to, but didn't because of my mindset. Landing there would have made it much easier for everyone involved to get me back home.

Know what your goals are: I was working on a Silver badge. I thought I had to fly to Calvada Meadows and back for that, plus take a photo. I didn't have a camera, so I was going to try to get Silver altitude and practice a Silver distance run. Of course, I only had to make it to Calvada Meadows for my Silver distance run. Had I landed there and had the tow plane tow me out, that would have counted for Silver distance. That is what they were trying to tell me in that relay conversation about my intentions. Ooooooooo, noooww I get it. [***Ed note***: *We determined later that even if Scott had landed there, the 1% rule and 3k tow would have invalidated the Silver Distance.*]

Flight Planning: That whole thing about using half your best L/D for planning purposes…that works good. When I do it again I am going to incorporate planning for headwind components. I used no wind planning, which worked this time, but I need a better way to plan for headwinds. I think I'll try drawing my concentric circles on my map and annotating the no wind decision altitudes on my map. On a separate 3 x 5 note card I will jot down the headwind biases in hundreds of feet for certain quadrants of the map. Then, I know I have to add 300 feet to my decision altitude if I am coming from the Northeast quadrant, for example. McCready settings don't take headwinds into account; only whether the air is rising or sinking.

Flight Planning: I planned to be over each land out area at 1,500 feet AGL. That worked good too. I think 1,500 feet should be a minimum to arrive over a land out sight that you are not familiar with. Define "familiar with" as being able to enter a traffic pattern as soon as you arrive over a land out site; without conducting a survey, flying a pattern and landing, and being assured of a safe landing. If you can't do that, give yourself some time over the land out site to take a good look around. You may want to increase those minimums depending on how the environment presents itself as you fly.

Flight Planning: The information I put on my map, how I put it on the map, and how I folded the map all worked out very well. I tried to keep the map as decluttered as possible, yet provide me with necessary information. The more information you put on your map, the greater potential you have of masking information actually on the map. Folding your map so that you don't have to do a bunch of origami in flight makes your life a lot easier too.

McCready Setting: You set your McCready setting to what you think the next thermal is going to give you. If you think the next thermal is going to be 3 knots up; your McCready setting is three. Flying the proper McCready setting will yield the least altitude lost for a given distance in given sink conditions. Flying slower leaves you in sink for a longer period of time; flying faster gives you a higher that optimum sink rate. The average lift I had was 3 knots, so I just left my McCready setting at three and didn't mess around with it. That worked for me on this flight. Next time I think I'll adjust my McCready setting and be a little more aggressive with increased altitude and a little less aggressive as I get lower.

Useful Lift: When is it time to leave a thermal? According to the folks who build the Bronze Badge test, it's when the thermal has reached 75% of its original strength. If I used that criterion, I may not have made it out of the valley. I used lift until I was happy with my altitude or until the lift ran out whichever came first. Until the lift ran out, that worked pretty well, then…well, 75% of nothing is nothing.

Useful Lift: If you are at an altitude where you are expecting 3 knots of lift and you are only getting 1 knot; look around. That 3 knots is almost certainly somewhere close by.

Useful Lift: I did find a couple of "cloud" streets out there even though there weren't any clouds. Yes, they did generally line up with the winds aloft. It did help to get the winds aloft before flight.

Minimum Altitudes: The minimum altitudes I had on my map were definitely minimums. I never departed my decision point at minimums. I gained as much altitude as I could before moving forward.

Landing Out: Your survey of the landing sight before you land is critical. Don't be locked in to the approved book solution on survey patterns and traffic patterns. There was only about 15-20% of "X" that was useable for me…no point in spending time and altitude flying a big square pattern, surveying parts of the "airstrip" I couldn't use. I flew circles around the north end, spending as much time over

the landing area as possible, entered downwind directly from that orbit, and significantly north of mid-field. Do what works.

Landing Out: Yes, I used my altimeter. In this case it worked because my land out site had a fairly accurate field elevation attached to it. Landing out does not implicitly imply to *not* use your altimeter. Assess the situation and use what you can. Don't blindly trust your altimeter. Cross check it with your calibrated eyeball and do what makes sense.

Landing Out: Take plenty of water. You may be out there a while. You're not just taking water for your flight.

Landing Out: Eat something before you fly and take something to eat with you. I ate breakfast at 9:00 a.m. and didn't get a chance to eat again until about 10:30 p.m. If you can get a hold of them, get a couple of MRE's to stuff under your seat.

Landing Out: Bring a survival kit: knife, something to make fire with, 550 cord, something to make shade with, sunscreen, jacket, etc.

Landing Out: Bring a cell phone. That was the most useful thing I took with me.

Landing Out: It's great to have friends that will drive out to the middle of nowhere to pick you up and haul the glider back to Jean. Thanks Jay and Robin!

Training: Practice doesn't make perfect; perfect practice makes perfect. All that stuff you learned about spot landings and not letting your wingtips drag on the ground is basic, but critical…and perishable. Keep practicing and don't accept second best from yourself. You won't always achieve perfection, but you should always work towards it. The luck you make for yourself here could save you from injury or damage to your glider out there.

Listen to Robin: She's not a high time pilot, but she's been around the sport for quite some time. If she offers you advice, it's probably good advice…take it.

Recommendations

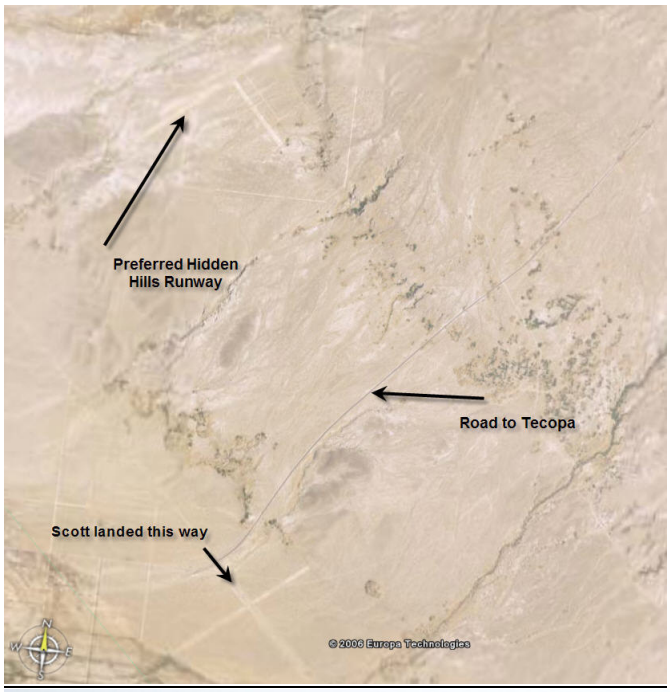
Land Out Survey Book: The club should have a binder, updated annually, with all the land out sites in the local area. Surveys should contain satellite or aerial photos, ground photos, runway conditions and directions, ability for aero tows, directions on how to drive there, any information on availability of food, water, shelter, communications, etc.

Bronze Badge: If you are new to soaring, like me, getting a Bronze Badge before you begin venturing beyond gliding distance from home is a good idea. There are lots of good cross country questions on the test. You can find a test bank at www.soaringsafety.org Some clubs won't let you go cross country unless you have a Bronze or Silver badge, so just get it out of the way now so when you get to that other club you can jump right in.

Stretching Your Wings: Want to get some cross country experience without the risk of waiting in the desert for hours? Get out your map and plan some "mini" cross country flights to five or ten miles south of Primm. You'll be outside of gliding distance to Jean but within gliding distance of Roach Dry Lake. There, you can test your abilities to find lift and get to know your glider's capabilities of getting

from one point to another. Landing out on Roach Lake is a no-brainer, you won't have to wait too long for a pick up, and you won't have to pay too much more than a regular tow fee to get back home.

When I found out I could have landed at Calvada Meadows and got my Silver distance, I felt like an idiot. However, I stopped beating myself up about it when I realized it all actually turned out for the best for me. I couldn't officially claim Silver distance, but I actually flew Silver distance and then some, I landed out and was unhurt with no damage to the aircraft, and I learned more from this than I could have otherwise. Even the two-and-a-half hour wait in the desert was relaxing, believe it or not. It was a great flight, and I'm glad it turned out the way it did. Thanks again to Jay and Robin for the pick-up.



LVVSA Tow / FOO Schedule

Updated: 10/6/06

Day	Date	Tow	FOO	Notes
Sat	30 Sep	Dvorchak	Lacroix	
Sun	1 Oct	Gough	Martens	
Sat	7 Oct	Brandt	Wynhoff	
Sun	8 Oct	Dvorchak	Gulewich	
Sat	14 Oct	Tisdale	Stave	**Monthly Business Meeting - 10am - Nominations !**
Sun	15 Oct	Gough	McDaniel, Robin	
Sat	21 Oct	Graham	Burns	
Sun	22 Oct	Brandt	Archer	
Sat	28 Oct	Tisdale	Lacroix	
Sun	29 Oct	Gough	Martens	

(To volunteer as FOO, Contact Jay)