

# TOWLINE

Fall 2008

A black and white photograph of a glider in flight. The glider is positioned in the center-right of the frame, flying from the lower right towards the upper left. It has long, slender wings and a small tail section. The background is a bright, overcast sky with some light clouds. Below the sky, a dark, flat landscape, possibly a field or a plain, stretches across the bottom of the image. The overall tone is serene and focused on the subject of gliding.

## Region 8 Contest Wrap-up

By Heinz Gehlhaar

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SGC one-year membership renewal (January-December) US \$35.

(SGC Membership is required for all tows behind an SGC towplane.)

SGC Family Membership (for 14 and older) US\$10 each.

Towline-only Subscription US \$25.

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**Tows** (at Ephrata): \$23.00 for first 1500' (minimum fee) + \$1.00 per 100' above 1500'

**Tows** (airport other than Ephrata): \$25.00 for first 1500' + \$1.10 per 100' above 1500'

**Aero Retrieve or Glider Ferry:** \$100 / tach hour

**Ephrata Pilot Use Fee:** \$66 for the season or \$11 per week (Sat-Fri)

(Note: maximum limit if pilot fee paid by the week is \$90)

**Trailer Parking:** \$175.00 per season, or \$27.00 per week (Sat-Fri)

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**On the Cover:**

Dave Harris sweeps the deck in his Caproni on a low pass at Ephrata. Jim Simmons photo.

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## Where strong lift is common.

Submitted by  
**Alan Kirlin**

For those of you who frequent Ephrata every year, strong lift is nothing new to you, you have experienced it. So you may want to skip this article. For those of you considering enduring the drive for the first time, let me tell you from my experience: It is worth every mile!

Being conservative and conscious about the outrageous price of gas, I check the local Ephrata weather frequently before departing. But when I do go, those observations pay off with World Class Soaring. How strong is the lift? Kind of like the price of gas, it keeps going up. Seriously, there are one or two days each season where scratching around town is the best I can do. But when it's strong, you have to be prepared to stay up and get out of town.

Thought of skipping this story because you know all about Ephrata? Well, I learn more and experience the most enjoyable soaring, every time I fly there. I just love the place. The thing I don't like is landing out in my sailplane, but it's bound to happen surly as the wind blows. For a low time pilot like myself, I find it cross-country soaring like being the big explorer: Pushing out for virgin cues of lift, reaching them with just in time, on the upwind side, hopefully connecting on the first pass, or at least after a few figure 8's. While building experience, I rely on a Cambridge computer to test my long legs. On those blue days, when dust devils are the only visual indication of lift, a missed thermal can get real interesting. Of course the view is better at a lower altitude but there's really no time to enjoy it. This is where training and rules get important.

On one of my early flights, with a field picked out and my gear already down, I spied two dust devils coming my way, I mean it was right off a cereal box, kind of like they had my name on them. That got me back up and I had Mansfield made; then, as lift increased at altitude the flight back to Ephrata was a breeze. Another time, in a strong wind, my final glide calculations went to pot ten miles out. Believe me, the gear was down and I was shaking like a leaf. Luckily I got out of there and made it back. (Picture 3 goes here somewhere)

But what I wanted to talk about is strong lift. Like 1350 fpm or better. On a flight to Omak, I was just outside of Mansfield, thermalling in 750 fpm. Being only a few miles from the airport, I thought I would just collect the Mansfield Turnpoint also. Lucky me. Suddenly just over the airport, the panel became alive. Both variometers pegged, and singing a tune only an engineer could understand. I banked sharply, but eased off as it really wasn't necessary and besides I didn't want to get dizzy. I got up to 11,000 in nothing flat. Traveling up to Omak became quite easy now, and of course the scenery was great.

But on the return to Mansfield the entire Plateau had overcasted. From Mansfield to Wenatchee, nothing but grey, and nothing over the Mansfield airport. To the north it was still sunny, so rather than land, I headed out about 8 miles off-course to the north to find lift, while still retaining the option to head back for a Mansfield-landing. At about 7 miles out and about to give up, the sunny freshly plowed fields proved the text books right. From that point, I had a glide to Steam Boat Rock, one of my favorite sites, turning at Steam boat and then a long relaxing 28 mile glide back to Ephrata.

This region is so fascinating, I just got to tell you, I can't wait to see more.



2008

# Region 8

## Soaring Championships



The Regional 8 Contest was held during the last week of June to avoid conflict with the Sport Class Nationals which was at Montague. The contest was conducted by Contest Manager Robert Wallach; CD Ron Bellamy; Chief Tow Pilot and Flight Line Manager Jim Simmons; and Weather Guesser Steve Northcraft. In addition to that we had countless support personnel. Of special mention must be Tom Newgard for hooking up every glider every morning; Erin Newgard, for keeping track of the entire launch sequence, and for collecting all the dollies and wing-wheels in the Golf-cart; the entire Tow Pilot Crew: Michael Moore, Gene Bornhold, Angus McKinnon, John Schaumburg, and backup pilot Bill Birney (who instead of towing did a lot of line running); and the various folks who ran the lines from the towplanes to Tom and who did the wing-running; and finally, the entire Newgard family: Becky, Mike Erin and Tom, for the fine food that they fixed and served.

Here are the details of the contest days:

### **Sunday, Practice day, 6/22**

*For all Classes: 2 hr MAT, Mansfield 26*

Lots of folks launched in a no-grid launch and then chased each other to the few thermals in an attempt to get altitude and get away. The later starters had the best chance.

### **Monday, Day 0, 6/23**

The morning dawned as a beautiful day, with bright sunshine, but a bit cool for Ephrata. And as the morning progressed, first high cirrus and then even lower cloudiness appeared. At the 9:54 pilots meeting we got the news: Weak conditions, worsening during the day. Tasks were set as follows.

*Sports Class: 2.5 hr MAT with Mansfield and Dry Falls as turn points*

*15-meter Class: 2.5 hr MAT with Niles Corner and Dry Falls as turn points*

*A back-up task for both classes was the same turn point but only 2 hrs for minimum time.*

Grid time was set at 12:00 while we were waiting for something resembling a trigger-temp. This in turn was delayed to 12:30, then 13:00; and finally cancelled because of weather: A dense overcast prevented the sun from getting the temperature to above 73 deg.

Various things were done by different people. The day was ended with a great evening feast put on by the Newgard family, Becky, Mike, Tom and Erin. They do serve good food, and lots of it.

### **Tuesday, Day 1, 6/24**

This morning started almost as a typical Ephrata day, just a little cooler. And the forecast was for great soaring in the basin. Trigger temp was 73 and max temp up to 81-82, with an inversion layer at about 9000 ft, with a low likelihood of clouds. Grid time was set at 12:00 and because of the more slowly developing soaring conditions, the backup task for both classes got called. Launches started at 12:30. At first we thought there would be no re-lights required. But no sooner had we launched the 2nd-last glider when they started coming in. One of them even required 3 re-lights, but they too finally got away. The consensus was that near the airport the low-level thermals were real ragged and hard to core. Folks who got out toward north onto the plateau fared much better. Tasks flown were as follows:

*Sports Class: 2.5 hr MAT with Wilbur as turn point.*

*15-meter Class 2.5 hr TAT with Anderson, Davenport and Chelan as turn point.*

*Tim Martin and Martin Dennis came in 1st & 2nd in Sports Class Stu Larimore, and Mike Thompson came in 1 & 2 in 15-meter Class*

In the evening Becky, Mike, Tom and Erin Newgard used the remains of last night's dinner, added some to it, and put on another super dinner for all of us. Some claimed this was even better than yesterdays, but of course it helped that we could fly and race. All of us ate a lot, socialized and partied until late into the night.

### **Wednesday, Day 2, 6/25**

Wednesday was interesting day. The conditions seemed just ideal and promised to be even better in the afternoon. Thus ambitious tasks were set, with backups that were promised not to be used. But as the morning went on, we found the temperature did not come up, but the wind sure did. Murphy was at work again. Grid time was 12:00 with launches stating somewhere before 13:00, but not before the main and the back-up tasks were scrubbed and the task was cased to:

*Sports Class: 2.0 hr MAT with Wilbur as a turn point.*

*15-meter class: 2.0 hr TAT with 10 mile radii around Wilbur and Odessa*

*Tim Martin and Dave Burgess came in 1st & 2nd in Sports Class Stu Larimore, and Steve Northcraft, came in 1 & 2 in 15-meter Class*

This evening we had a catered barbeque which was followed

by a talent show. Talent (or the lack of it) was displayed by man and beast. Rick & Rita Edris and their poodles showed their skills, up to and including a dance with Rick. Picture 2 goes here somewhere. Tom Dixon showed off his dog keeping a ball balance on his nose. Bob Wallach tried to get his dog to do tricks. Tim Martin, accompanied by his guitar, sang to us. A lot of fellowship flowed around and a good time was had by all. Sort of reminded me of the fun time I had as a youngster in the early 1950's with my dad in our German Soaring club on Doernberg.

### **Thursday Day 3, 6/26**

After the fun party on Wednesday evening, the day started early with conditions not too usual for Ephrata. It looked like good lift was to be had, but with an inversion layer at about 7.5k. And some wind along with potential wave conditions was promised.

At the pilot meeting CD Bellamy reviewed all our safety aspects that we are observing and we really need to observe. Kudos were extended to Mike Wren, the airport manager. He is the first port manager who has taken an active role in what we are doing and he has been really helpful to us. He has attended every pilot meeting, and is out on the launch line every day, lending a hand. We are so lucky and we feel really welcome here.

The contestants were given these tasks:

*Sports Class: 3.0 hr TAT with Niles Corner (15 mi), Creston (15 mi) and Mansfield (10 mi).*

*15-meter Class: 3.0 hr TAT with Niles Corner (15 mi) and Creston (15 mi), and Mansfield (10 mi).*

*Grid time was again 12:00, and launches proceeded, this time with no re-lights.*

*Tim Martin and Martin Dennis came in 1st & 2nd in Sports Class Stu Larimore, and Greg Mecklenberg, came in 1 & 2 in 15-meter Class*

This evening the contestants were on their own. Some used the fine Seattle Glider Council Foundation Clubhouse to fix dinner. Some took the opportunity to sample the local restaurants.

### **Friday Day 4, 6/27**

This morning dawned beautiful in true Ephrata fashion, bright sunshine, not a cloud in the sky, hardly any wind and nice and warm. Unfortunately the forecast showed a fairly strong inversion-layer at 7.5K but the forecast thermal strength made up for that. It was felt that some of the heating during the day might permit thermals up to 10k. Tasks for the day were set at:

*Sports Class: 3.0 hr TAT with Niles Corner (15 mi), Creston (15 mi) and US-2 (5 mi).*

*15-meter Class: AST with turn point at Waterville and 7Bays.*

*Tony Burton and JC Hauchecorne came in 1st & 2nd in Sports Class*

*Mike Thompson and Stu Larimore came in 1 & 2 in 15-meter Class*

This evening the contestants again were on their own to rest up for Saturday's Awards Banquet.

### **Saturday day 5, 6/28**

Here comes the real Ephrata weather! Bright sunshine and hot early in the morning. The only thing we need to do now, is to get rid of that persistent inversion layer at about 8k. It just won't wash away. Well, that makes the contest that much more challenging. Weather Guru Northcraft promised a trigger temp of 85 at about 12:30 and a maximum temp of 97 with 5-6 kt thermals, without cloud makers and low wind levels.

Tasks for the day were set at:

*Sports Class: 3 hr TAT with Waterville (20 mi), Creston (15 mi).*

*15-meter Class: 3 hr TAT with Chelan (15 mi), Davenport (15 mi)*

*At the 12:00 Grid time it already got so warm that there was no chance that the backup task would be used. After a brief wait for the reports from the sniffers, Helmut in Y3, Rita in K5 and John in SM, launch began and 49 minutes later both classes were off to the races, and everyone returned from their tasks in time for the 7:00 PM Award banquet.*

2008 England & Contest  
 Equator, Washington  
 Overall Primary  
 Sports Class Class

Cumulative Score		ID	SSAF	Name	Jan 26, 08		Jan 27, 08		Jan 28, 08		Jan 29, 08		Jan 30, 08		Jan 31, 08		Feb 01, 08		Feb 02, 08		Feb 03, 08		Feb 04, 08		Feb 05, 08		Feb 06, 08		Feb 07, 08		Feb 08, 08		Feb 09, 08		Feb 10, 08		Feb 11, 08			
Rank	Points				Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points		
1	4180	42	91063	Hartle, Tim	7	921	7	788	1	616	1	1000	1	1000	1	973	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944
2	4178	36	51028	Hauchecorne, JC	8	901	8	791	2	486	2	486	2	486	2	486	2	486	2	486	2	486	2	486	2	486	2	486	2	486	2	486	2	486	2	486	2	486	2	486
3	3996	32	13103	Bentley, Mark	4	949	4	861	3	490	3	490	3	490	3	490	3	490	3	490	3	490	3	490	3	490	3	490	3	490	3	490	3	490	3	490	3	490	3	490
4	3869	28	16710	McGregor, Tim	5	935	5	861	4	490	4	490	4	490	4	490	4	490	4	490	4	490	4	490	4	490	4	490	4	490	4	490	4	490	4	490	4	490	4	490
5	3893	22	596201	Burgess, Dave	5	922	3	977	5	221	5	221	5	221	5	221	5	221	5	221	5	221	5	221	5	221	5	221	5	221	5	221	5	221	5	221	5	221	5	221
6	3891	26	399039	Kirk/Wallich, C/S	6	922	6	817	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409
7	3848	22	97144	Burton, Tony	6	922	6	817	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409	6	409
8	3780	40	195111	Vreeman, Dorela	1	1000	1	1000	6	284	8	837	8	837	8	837	8	837	8	837	8	837	8	837	8	837	8	837	8	837	8	837	8	837	8	837	8	837		
9	3635	18	142522	Corbett, Paul	9	714	8	761	7	0	7	0	7	0	7	0	7	0	7	0	7	0	7	0	7	0	7	0	7	0	7	0	7	0	7	0	7	0		
10	3589	16	520115	Proffers, Donald	10	704	9	761	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	0	10	0		
11	350	28	650455	Schubert, Lorber	11	0	11	0	10	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0	11	0		

Combined 15m-Std Class

Cumulative Score		ID	SSAF	Name	Jan 26, 08		Jan 27, 08		Jan 28, 08		Jan 29, 08		Jan 30, 08		Jan 31, 08		Feb 01, 08		Feb 02, 08		Feb 03, 08		Feb 04, 08		Feb 05, 08		Feb 06, 08		Feb 07, 08		Feb 08, 08		Feb 09, 08		Feb 10, 08		Feb 11, 08	
Rank	Points				Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points	Rank	Points
1	4729	22	420689	Larimore, Stu	2	985	2	903	1	666	1	1000	1	1000	1	973	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944	1	944
2	4591	11	599911	Tranquero, Mike	1	1000	1	1000	3	784	2	784	2	784	2	784	2	784	2	784	2	784	2	784	2	784	2	784	2	784	2	784	2	784	2	784	2	784
3	4170	30	336822	Newgard, Michael	4	925	4	882	4	712	4	712	4	712	4	712	4	712	4	712	4	712	4	712	4	712	4	712	4	712	4	712	4	712	4	712	4	712
4	4135	28	544434	Mordrecht, Stephen	3	939	3	897	3	489	3	489	3	489	3	489	3	489	3	489	3	489	3	489	3	489	3	489	3	489	3	489	3	489	3	489	3	489
5	3774	28	34622	Mechelke, Greg	5	917	5	797	5	806	5	806	5	806	5	806	5	806	5	806	5	806	5	806	5	806	5	806	5	806	5	806	5	806	5	806	5	806
6	3529	20	280475	Gardner, Charlie	7	772	6	758	6	513	6	513	6	513	6	513	6	513	6	513	6	513	6	513	6	513	6	513	6	513	6	513	6	513	6	513	6	513
7	3504	11	181862	Olson, Tom	6	747	5	850	5	700	5	700	5	700	5	700	5	700	5	700	5	700	5	700	5	700	5	700	5	700	5	700	5	700	5	700	5	700
8	3426	44	888700	Olson, Tom	8	848	7	760	8	240	8	240	8	240	8	240	8	240	8	240	8	240	8	240	8	240	8	240	8	240	8	240	8	240	8	240	8	240

Tony Burton and Martin Dennis came in 1st & 2nd in Sports Class Mike Thompson and Stu Larimore came in 1 & 2 in 15-meter Class

The statistic of this contest for both classes is shown on Table 1. And the Overall Region 8 Winners are:

- Sports Class:**  
 3rd Place with 3996 points, Martin Dennis in XZ, DG-202-17c  
 2nd Place with 4178 points, Jean-Claude Hauchecorne in JC, PW-5  
 1st Place with 4365 points, Tim Martin in 4Z, DG-400

- Combined 15m & Std Class:**  
 3rd Place with 4370 points, Michael Newgard in 50, Ventus C  
 2nd Place with 4591 points, Mike Thompson in M1, Ventus 2Bx  
 1st Place with 4729 points, Stu Larimore in 2Z, ASW-27

All in all we had a great, fun and safe contest: No damage to the gliders and the towplanes, and only a few bruised egos.

# Thoughts about Retrieving & Tow Ropes

by  
**Heinz Gelhaar**

A while ago we had an interesting thread in one of the newsgroups on aero-retrieves. I reproduce the salient items here because they should make all of us think when we call for or go on a retrieve

Brian writes: A couple of weeks ago I had a rope bust while trying to tow out of Monroe.

It was an unassisted take off so the wing was in the grass and the rope broke as we got started; I got about 15' total. The reason the rope broke was because it had been used until it wore out. It looked OK from the outside but there were a lot of broken strands visible inside when the line was untwisted. From what I could tell some strands take more stress than others and they let go first, then a few others, then the whole thing goes.

We spliced the line and I assume it is back wherever tow ropes live, ready to cause more problems.

Here are some of the follow-ups with good thoughts:

1. We probably should replace tow ropes every so often (every two years?). If you look at the big picture, tow ropes are cheap: Not good, if your rope breaks while towing out of Ranger Creek!!!

2. We should think about using a "new" rope for all of our aero-retrieves. At our home airport, there are bail out/emergency options that we are all familiar with. An aero retrieve from a different airport comes with



a new set of variables. Not that I am suggesting we skip our assessment of the situation, but knowing we have a new rope would add another layer of safety. I do not want to imagine a rope break out of Darrington.

3. We have a long aero-towrope which is not used for anything but long, over the mountain type tows. I never thought of it before, but it should probably be used for EVERY retrieve.

4. Towing out of Green Valley (or any short field) is best with a 150ft rope.

5. When I go out on an aero-retrieve I always check the condition of the rope before I leave.

In Summary: When you go on a retrieve check on these items:

- Is the towline new or at least in very good condition?
- Is the length of the towline appropriate for the field you will tow out of?
- Do you need an adapter? And do you have it?

Note that while a Schweizer tow ring will not fit into a TOST hitch, a TOST tow ring can be placed on a Schweizer type hitch, with the great possibility of the TOST tow ring becoming stuck in the hitch mechanism making tow rope release impossible.

BTW, this is a good page about towlines and tow fittings: <http://www.soaringsafety.org/school/towpilot/tpc2.htm>



SEATTLE WA 981

25 OCT 2008 PM 5 T



# TOWLINE

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### VENTUS B 15//16.6

1983, Masak winglets, O2, GPS,  
Sage, T/B, Dittel ATR 720B, Lx4000  
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