

Maine Powerchute Association

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May 2002

News
letter



The flying season is about to begin in earnest for all the MPA fair-weather pilots. For those of us who've been flying all through the winter - the "numb" crowd - ("numb" does not only refer to your body after a winter flight), well, we look forward to finally putting away the 20 or 30 pounds of clothes we've had to carry around, and joining the sensible fair-weather pilots.

Lot of news bits this month, along with the usual gaggle of perfectly normal pictures that we pervert with our captions, and the usual bevy of irreverent humor, along with what we call near-news. We have no serious 2 page long guest editorials either this month, so let's get on with all the shallow stuff we've grown to love!

Jerry Suke revolutionizes staying still

We reported in our last Newsletter that Wes Dagget's accident in January (which was caused by losing control after inadvertently advancing the throttle) got our champion engineer to disappear into his secret laboratory in Transylvania to find a solution.

Well, Jerry did it – he designed and manufactured a very clever restraint which can be bolted onto any powered parachute. In field tests, applying full throttle could not budge the aircraft. Since our planes requires several minutes of warm-up, and most of us at one time or another have had close calls with the PPC trying to get away during this warm up, this restraint may find a sizeable market. See the pictures below for an idea of how it works.



The Suke-Stopper in the "UP" position. A clevis pin keeps it from coming down inadvertently.

Welcome new members!

We've had three new members join us over the last couple of months whom we have not yet welcomed. They are Ed Nadeau of Pembroke, Jim Holloway of Warren, and Michael O'Donnell of Albion. Glad to have all of you aboard. All 3 of you seem to be nice normal guys, so we can't quite figure how you got drunk enough to actually join the MPA.

Reader complaint!

It was brought to my attention that the content of these Newsletters would generally qualify it for emergency toilet paper status, however the high quality paper on which it's printed keeps it from doing a good job.



The Suke-Stopper in the deployed position. Forward thrust would drive the device into the ground to keep the plane from moving forward.

We'll bring this issue to the attention of the Editorial Committee to see if we can get lower quality paper. It's a much easier solution than trying to raise the quality of the content!

New PPC wins award

Competing against 21 other powered parachute makers this year at the Sun-N-Fun in Florida, the winner of the Best Powered Parachute award went to a newcomer in the field, Gemini. The reason this is of special interest to us is that Buckeye PPC company is about to go under, and Gemini is supposed to be supplying parts for all the existing Buckeyes.

Gemini was started by Randy Sned, one of the chief engineers at Buckeye. The whole apparent demise of Buckeye is a classic case of mismanagement. They had an excellent, well engineered product, and were number one in their field. But, as many businesses have done in the past, success made them complacent and maybe arrogant, which made them make bad business decisions, and so on and so on. Anyway, good luck to Randy, who certainly has the knowledge to make a good PPC, and who was not part of the debacle at Buckeye.

Our New Hampshire Buckeye dealer and honorary MPA member Art Willard has taken up dealership for the new Gemini line. He (and his lovely and competent wife Dot) will continue with Buckeye parts as long as possible.



Jerry is giving a lesson on advanced techniques in pocket-pool, while Dunbar and Herb listen attentively

New MPA web site in progress

Ed Nadeau has volunteered to create a new web site for our club, and he has a test version on line. We're about to make it permanent, and will publish the address as soon as it is finalized.

The site will serve many positive functions. It will let the apparently many people interested in flying our contraptions know how to contact us, and answer many of the basic questions about PPCs. It will give us an opportunity to buy and sell PPCs and components on-line. It also contains a message board, through which we can leave notices about impromptu flying get-togethers, et cetera.

Ed brings an interesting perspective to our organization. Being new, he observes things that we have stopped noticing. We'll print some of his observations in the next Newsletter.

Summer fly-in schedule

The list below does not include the several PPC-only outings the MPA is planning to have this year – more on that later. These events are most of the ones we've gone to in the past, and a few special events.

June 23rd – Waterville Bicentennial Celebration at Waterville Airport.

July 13th through July 20th – Yankee Ultralight Fly-in, Greenland, NH (603-742-1659)

August 3rd & 4th – Norridgewock Fly-in, Central Maine Airport, Norridgewock (453-6607).

August 23rd & 24th – Bowman Fly-in, East Livermore, ME. (897-5448)

Sept. 5th through 8th – International Seaplane Fly-in, Greenville, ME (785-5562)

Sept. 28th & 29th – Gadabout Gaddis Fly-in, Bingham, ME (672-3978)

Kissing Carr butt

“Ask Rocking John” is a popular feature of Ultraflight magazine, and the columnist John Carr generally gives courteous and good answers to a variety of questions. Most

of his readers who submit questions, however, start off their letters with blatant kissing up, praising the great job he does, and how they love to read his stuff, and how their life would be pretty much empty without him.

This made me think that maybe the only way he'd publish a question is if you paid homage in this fashion. So I tried it – wrote a letter without any kissing up asking a technical question (what are the advantages of 2 cycle engines over 4 cycle). I may have also inadvertently made some comments about his scrawny body that he may have taken personally (since he's only about 5 feet and 100 pounds). Anyway, the following is his response in a personal letter, thereby proving my premise of no kiss-up, no publishing.

“Dear D...head,
Who the %\$#@#* do you think you are. Go look up your dumb %\$#@#& questions yourself, you overgrown %\$#*\$ moron! And *\$#@ the horse you rode in on!”

Sport Pilot discussion

Lots of material has been published on the pending Sport Pilot FAA certification. In a nutshell, the provisions of FAR103 will remain intact, therefore any true ultralight and its pilot can continue flying without any change. However, if you want to fly a two seater and want to take somebody else up for a ride, you will have to have an FAA license (Sport Pilot or higher). The exemption under which we currently fly would disappear in 3 years.

Bill Grusik just came back from Sun-N-Fun, and he spoke with numerous officials about the Sports Pilot issue. They seem to be unanimous in recommending that ultralight pilots and clubs send their views to the FAA, who apparently is truly looking for feedback from the ultralight community.

We're going to have a small meeting on Wednesday, **May 1st** at 7:00 PM at the Bonanza restaurant in Augusta to discuss the Sport Pilot issue and to draft up a letter to the FAA, which we can then send as a club, or give to numerous individuals for signature. Anybody who can make it is welcome to join in the discussion – should be fun.

The Bonanza is just off Exit 30A off I95.

MPA camping & fly-in at Deblois

Since we have a fair number of powered parachutists in the east and downeast sections of the state now, we thought we'd get a little event going in that region.

The hard surfaced runway at Deblois must be 3 or 4 thousand feet long, and there is an area adjoining it that's pretty good for camping – several MPA members have stayed there a couple of times.

Anyway, on the plus side, it's nice flying, it's quiet, we can build a fire, and won't be competing with other ultralights.

On the not-so-plus side, the airfield is a base for a crop duster operation with a couple of aircraft, and ingesting the chemicals that are stored there can result in subtle anomalies like becoming old and fat and having the need to fly strange contraptions. Oh – we're already like that, so it's OK.

More on the not-so-plus side – it is a tad remote, no water on premises, and the many acres of blueberry fields surrounding the airfield attract a lot of black bears. But that should be OK, since they have just recently awakened from their winter hibernation, and most likely have young cubs, and bears generally have a great sense of humor anyway, so we should be able to irritate them all we want.

The get-together is planned for the weekend of **May17th & 18th**. Several of us are planning to sleep out there Friday night, and probably Saturday night as well. Directions are: (DeLorme map # 25)



John Gobel trying on his flight helmet from his Viet Nam pilot days. “Damn things just stretch some awful”, he complained.

- Exit 45 off I95
- 395 East to the end – it runs into Rt. 1A
- 1A south east for about 5 miles to Rt. 46 (East Holden)
- Rt. 46 north for about 4 miles to Rt. 9 (East Eddington)
- Rt. 9 east for about 25 miles to Rt. 193
- South on 193 for about 9 miles. Airfield on your right, about ½ mile off the road, so you have to look hard. Migrant worker camp on left (Wyman's, I believe).

Hope to see many of you there. Bring the family – great place for kids since there's lots of space, they can make noise without annoying others, they can go exploring (see section on friendly bears above).

MPA general membership meeting

The original plan was to have our annual election meeting at the Deblois event, but since it is a bit far for many of our members, we put it off until early June at a more central location to be named.

Anyway, we need fresh blood in our leadership ranks, so start campaigning now. Last year, Billy started campaigning NOT to be president months before the election, but we still elected him. We had to kidnap his dog, threaten to take away some of his

toys, and do other tried and true election tricks to get him to serve another year, but that probably won't work this year!



A Billy G. picture from last year – just to get us in the mood for the warm weather days coming up.

Speaking of dogs...

Since many of us are dog lovers, or dog fans at least, here's some news from the scientific frontiers of dog breeding. The following NEW breeds are now recognized by the AKC:

- Cross between a Collie and a Lhasa Apso:
Collapso, a dog that folds up for easy transport.
- Cross between a Terrier and a Bulldog
Terribull, a dog that makes awful mistakes
- Cross between a Pointer and a Setter
Pointsetter, a traditional Christmas pet
- Cross between a Bloodhound and a Labrador
Blabador, a dog that barks incessantly

Club plans for the summer

The large fly-ins are generally fun (see schedule on Pg.2), but they are sometimes not the ideal venue for PPC flying. The other types of ultralights and GA aircraft (boring!) are jealous because we have so much more fun for so much less money, so sometimes they make it difficult for us to assume our rightful place as Kings of the Fly-in!

Anyway, many of our members have expressed the view that we should have three or four PPC-only get-togethers, with a major cookout at each being the center piece. There are several places where we may be able to hold these, such as Wayne's field in Fairfield, Maheau field in Lewiston, Lili's field in

Searmont, Doug Sukeforth's place in Bingham, Jerry Parlin's front lawn (he just finished raking it!), and several other places where we have a relationship and the owners are still talking to us. These would be MPA sanctioned events, so we could spend some of our money on porta-potties, hamburgers, etc.

This will be on the agenda at the next MPA general membership meeting, so give it some thought, and let's set some firm dates for these.

Editorial philosophy

Well, if we had one, this would be good place to put it. We'll work on it.



The can looks too small for the plane, but Jim is going to try anyway...

Officer's mailing addresses

This was requested earlier by several members, but since we're having elections soon, we'll provide the new addresses after the elections.

Sun-N-Fun report

As mentioned earlier, Bill Grusik just returned from this annual Florida event. He took lots of pictures, and we'll be publishing some of them in the next Newsletter, along with a more detailed report of the activities there and some of the events in the PPC and ultralight world that may impact us.

Disclaimers

No animals were harmed in the creation of this Newsletter.

You just wasted at least 10 minutes of your life reading this Newsletter. What were you thinking???