



NEWSLETTER - November 2007



President's Page:

Greetings - Life is like a roll of toilet paper. The further you get into it, the faster it spins.

The summer is over. The Fall is pretty much over too and last weekend was the first time for the year that I had to roll up my glider in the snow and then dry it out later in the basement.

Wow - I don't really know how that all happened so fast and now we are fast approaching the Annual Mountaineer club meeting is only two weeks away. Be sure to come. If we can fly we will fly and the meeting will go faster. Thank you to JR for the flight times.

Ben and I have been flying mostly at the West Virginia sites. We took a short trip to SLC in October and flew Point of the Mountain and Inspiration Point. Great to see old friends again.

We are planning a January trip to Patagonia to meet up with a white water guide from NC who want to start paragliding. He got his first lessons from Dwayne last summer and is racking up some serious air time down there now. From the pictures and stories he is sending back it should be lots of fun.

Hope all is well with every one and we see you in the air soon

LE Herrick, President

Upcoming Events:

SAVE the DATE !!!!!

12/1/07 at 10:30 am

Annual Mountaineer Hang Gliding Association meeting

At the LaVale Public Library.

815 National Highway. Cumberland, MD 21502.

Directions:

From the East:

From I-68, take exit 39 (Alt 40) and go right at the light to travel Rt 40 (National Highway). Follow Rt. 40 for approx. 1 1/4 mile to Grant Drive. The library is on the left on the corner of Grant Drive and National Highway.



From the West:

From I-68, take exit 40 (Vocke Road). Turn left on to Vocke Road. Make right at light at Route 40 National Highway. Proceed 1 mile to Grant Drive. The library is on the corner of Grant Drive and National Highway

Mountaineer Flight Times (Jim Rowan)

MHGA Airtimes – the only edition

6/17/07; High Pt; W 3 – 10 mph; Pete (T2), JR (S2) and Pat B (U2) all get an hour or two with Pete going OTB first followed by JR who left the ridge with 5285' and caught up with Pete just north of the Hwy Dome field. JR came in under Pete pretty low and couldn't find anything. He ended up landing at the Hwy Dome field for 12.3 miles with Pete following

about 10 minutes later. Pat soared about an hour, but didn't get high enough to go OTB and ended up in the main LZ.

6/23/07; High Pt; WNW 5 – 10 mph; Marvin (Falcon), Pete (T2), John F (Litespeed), Pat H (S2), JR (S2), Greg (S2), and Gardinator (Stealth) made it a good turnout, at least in terms of today's diminished numbers of active pilots. Everyone was treated to between 1.5 – 3 hours of airtime with Marvin taking the Airhog honors for the day. Pete and John had the highest gain to 5100' early in the proceedings. They headed south down the ridge towards Zirks, but for better or worse, heeded JR's suggestion that they were going the wrong way given the completely overcast skies in that direction. They turned around at the SW Cliffs and headed back towards launch with John coming around the corner pretty low. As it turned out, no one got that high again and everyone ended up staying local, but the fun was abundant and the beer flowed freely in the LZ at the end of the day.

6/30/07; High Pt; L&V; Marvin and JR cut both the Fairgrounds and Zirks sites and meet up with Pete at High Pt where he takes a sled to the LZ. JR and Marvin DNF.

7/1/07; High Pt; NNW 10 – 20 mph; Pete made goal by flying to the Woodstock, VA LZ for 52 miles and made several low saves and low-level tree-crossings to get there. He got away from the ridge earlier than JR who came in under Pete as he was climbing away from the hill, but JR wasn't able to hang on to that one. After getting beat up low over the main ridge for another 20 minutes in the strong and crossing conditions (and seeing how much traffic there was in the LZ), JR decided that the next time (if?) he got back up to 2500', he would head south down the ridge to the sanctuary of Zirks, or possibly Barton's, LZ as it seemed like bombing out at any moment was a distinct possibility. That strategic decision (RUNAWAY!) proved fortuitous as he found a nice thermal above the bowl at Zirks that got him to 5500' and on his way. He got to 7000' (almost cloudbase) between Ft. Ashby and Springfield, WV for his best gain of the day and then burbled along quite a bit lower until finally landing along Rt. 50 east of Capon Bridge, WV for 30 miles.

7/6/07; High Pt; WNW 10 – 15 mph; Dave P (Litespeed) and Tom M (Litespeed) launched first followed by JR (S2). Tom and Dave initially flew south down the ridge to Zirks, but came back to launch just as JR marked a nice thermal (6 – 700 fpm) and they climbed to 7000' going OTB. At Valley Mtn they parted ways with JR heading towards Levels, while Tom and Dave headed towards Three Churches. WV. Later, beer suck started kicking in and JR ended up landing beside a gas station/convenience store along Rt 522 south of Berkeley Springs, WV for 30.5 miles while Tom and Dave made it across the Shenandoah Valley with Tom landing at White Post, VA for 55 miles and Dave making it to Front Royal, VA for 59 miles. A very nice way to spend a Friday afternoon!

7/7/07; High Pt; W 5 – 10+ mph; Christy (on Kim's old SuperSport), Adam (U2), and JR join (S2) join their sailplane brethren for what turned out to be another pretty good day, albeit one without a driver. The thermals had sharp edges if you were low, but smoothed out with altitude. JR got to almost 6200' before flying upwind to Haystack Mtn. He made it back to the main ridge just as a flush cycle was claiming Adam. JR and Christy hung on long

enough for conditions to improve and it got easier. Everyone got a couple hours and there was no LZ carnage.

7/12/07; High Pt; W 5 – 10 mph; Pete

(S2), JR (S2), and Homer (Talon FB) find weak conditions under over-developing skies. Pete and JR find a bug-fart thermal in the Gap and climb ever so slowly drifting OTB (and over the airport). Pete got to about 3000' in that one before diving downwind to Irons Mtn. JR got to 2700' and dove south towards Mexico Farms. Pete's decision was the better one as he ended up getting 47.7 miles to Clear Spring, MD, while JR landed at the Mexico Farms airport where he was soon joined by Homer who wanted to land with his buddy.

7/16/07; High Pt; WNW 5 – 10 mph; Day One of the Allegany County Fair and Marvin (Falcon) and JR (S2) are there to represent the Mountaineer HGA who get yearly use of an LZ in exchange for providing a daily flying "demonstration" during the week of the fair. It was somewhat soarable, but it wasn't automatic as Marvin found out after he flew out over the racetrack and then couldn't get back up when he made it back to the ridge. JR spent 45 minutes between 1500' – 2500' in front of the grandstand and in a good position for spectators to see him flying.



7/17/07; Fairgrounds; SSW 3 – 5 mph; JR (Falcon) and Shawn McDuff (Falcon) take sleds on Day Two of the fair. Shawn demonstrates how easy it is to land a Falcon downwind which he does to avoid landing towards the parking cars.

7/18/07; High Pt; WSW 5 – 10+ mph; JR (Falcon) is the sole and whole show for the evening, but is rewarded with "poosh-out" conditions that bordered on magic air. He was able to hang out directly over the fair for extended periods of time and pretty much found lift where ever he flew, but chose to stay below 2500' in order to be more visible to the spectators.

7/20/07; High Pt; NNW 5 – 15 mph; JR (S2) and Greg (S2) fly for Day Five of the fair after the preceding day was a rain-out. They were able to get up on the main ridge and make brief forays out over the fair before returning to tank up on altitude. The

LZ was quickly filling with cars so JR led the way south to Zirks where he thought they would end up landing due to a lack of sufficient altitude to make it out to



Barton's LZ. Greg showed up at Zirks and asked about the best way to make it out to Barton's. JR responded by saying if he wasn't such a coward, he would fly around ABL using the north-facing mini-ridge and follow it out into the valley. Greg only heard the latter part of that radio transmission and proceeded to follow JR's advice. JR watched Greg fly across ABL and just above the north-facing mini-ridge with impunity. He wasn't losing any altitude, so JR followed him and they both easily made it to Barton's LZ without Greg realizing what a bold decision he had made.

7/21/07; High Pt; N 5 – 15 mph; Gardinator (Stealth and w/ family and friends) and JR (S2) fly for the last day of the fair. Gardinator got to almost 5000' shortly after he launched. JR was off the hill soon afterwards and initially got to 2940', but he was quickly drifting south down the valley

and away from the fair, so he pulled out and plummeted back to the north. He and Gardinator were both flushed to the LZ within five minutes of each other after getting between 30 – 45 minutes. Ben and LE arrived on launch shortly thereafter and LE gave it her best shot, but ended up as Alpo when she came up short trying to get to the LZ and landed her PG in the Dogpit. The dogs were cheated out of their just dessert when she hiked up the mountain with her gear.

8/4/07; High Pt; WNW 5 – 10 mph; Marvin (Falcon), JR (S2), and Gardinator (Stealth) spend an enjoyable day boating on the ridge and out in the valley with JR getting the best gain of the day to 3450' climbing over the Cresaptown ball fields, but with Marvin taking Airhog honors getting three hours of airtime. The LZ was a little challenging with the wind switching back and forth, but everyone landed with aplomb.

8/14/07; High Pt; NW 0 – 8 mph; JR (S2) and Greg (S2) take a late afternoon weekday flight with Greg's son, Tristen, driving for them for the first time proving that having children really can be a benefit. It was a light wind day, but there was enough of a lapse rate that the weak thermals made staying aloft pretty easy. JR had the gain of the day to 2260'. Both pilots got about an hour and chose to land, but just a tad bit prematurely, as Lisa (JR's new dominatrix) showed to watch hang gliding only to see hang gliders being disassembled.

8/17/07; High Pt; NNW 3 – 8 mph; Rich (S2) proves he's more of a manly-man than Christy (SS), JR (S2) and Greg (S2) as he was the only one to soar getting to 4000' after Christy takes a sledder. By the time JR and Greg got off the hill, the train had left the station and both take sleds with Rich getting scraped off the ridge just behind them. It was nice and provided good sport later in that a H2 got the glory to chagrin of his H5 girlfriend.



9/1/07; Spruce Knob; NNE 8 – 12 mph; The first day of the Mountaineer HGA's Labor Day Fly-In is the beginning of a beautiful weekend with comfortable temperatures and low humidity. After setting up their tents, Adam, JR, and the Gardinator arrive at launch to find Rich Lawrence and Shane ?? already set up and waiting to fly. JR and Gardinator cut and mowed launch and the set up area (with Shane pitching in) while Adam gets busy setting up his glider. Ben, LE, Florent, and the PG contingent arrive shortly thereafter. Rich was first HG to launch and had the flight of the day getting 45 minutes and to 6000', but he chose to land after getting spooked in the semi-tailing and somewhat ratty conditions. Shane got up briefly before heading out to the LZ. Adam launched and scratched around too long near the hill only barely making it out to the LZ. JR, Gardinator, Florent, And Ben, all had extended sleds in the ratty conditions, but only LE and the HG's made it out to the main LZ and there was a lot of sink getting there.

9/2/07; Spruce Knob; S 5 – 10 mph; The PG's get the early glory with Florent making it look easy several hundred feet over launch as the remaining Mountaineer contingent arrived at launch after the "Bataan Death March" carry up the hill. Homer (Talon FB) and Nelson Lewis (T2 144) were additions to the previous day's line-up. JR and Gardinator continued their mowing activities from the preceding day, but everyone else was too busy setting up and socializing to help them with something as menial as site maintenance. Nelson had a nice save over the foothills getting to 7000', but after flying north a few miles to Riverton, he got skeert and headed back to LZ. Most of the early launchers had brief soaring flights or extended sleds. JR launched near the back of the pack and after getting flushed off the main ridge, but he found a nice climb at the north end of the foothills to 6000'. He then blurbled down the valley 12 miles to Seneca Rocks landing at Yocum's. Homer was the last HG off the hill. He had to wait a long time for a cycle to come up the hill, but eventually got to commit aviation and a 2800' sled ain't so bad.

9/3/07; North Mtn; WNW 5 – 10+ mph; Another beautiful day in the New Germany



Valley. Conditions on the ramp weren't too bad if you picked a good cycle. Nelson volunteered to go last, but he had ulterior motives with a new girlfriend being the only available wire person. Conditions were quite good with Adam getting to 7200' on his way north up the ridge before heading out towards Seneca Rocks. JR left the main ridge early after getting to 6800' and cut the corner on his glide to the Rocks. Rich, JR, and Adam were the first wave to land at Yocum's with Gardinator and Nelson coming in a

bit later.

9/12/07; High Pt; N 0 -7 mph; Adam (U2) launched first and got up briefly. JR (S2) followed and got an extended sled with Adam landing shortly thereafter. At least the wind in the LZ was consistently north.

9/22/07; High Pt; W 5 – 15 mph; Marvin (Falcon) and JR (S2) mow and cut launch while Adam (U2) sets up his glider. The sailplanes were out and doing a god job of marking lift. There seemed to be a sweet spot out in front of launch several hundred yards that was working pretty regularly and provided JR a climb to 4500' at one point. Adam was scraped off the ridge after an hour and whacked landing downwind to the south in the switching conditions. Marvin got spooked watching the windsock switch back and forth and headed south down the ridge for Zirk's LZ. After a couple hours, JR decided he'd join Adam in the LZ, but as he was circling down to land, he saw Adam drive out of the LZ on his way home. How nice! JR chose to land NW, but it wasn't pretty and it wasn't pain-free. He said it was the conditions.

10/10/07; High Pt; SW 10 – 20+ mph; JR (S2) launched first to show Marvin (Talon) that the conditions in the air weren't going to be all that bad. It was pretty strong and textured at times, especially near the terra firma. After getting a few hundred over launch, JR got low a few times and between Marvin's windsock showing switching conditions in the LZ and Marvin reporting that the winds on launch blowing at almost 30 mph, JR was getting a bit puckered. At 2000' (150' over launch), he followed an osprey SW into the headwind and climbed to 2900' in what he presumed was a wave and was able to escape the main LZ by running away to Zirks. He ended up with 1.5 hours and a safe landing. Marvin tore down on top due to the strong conditions.

10/13/07; High Pt; W 10 – 15+ mph; Pete (S2), Florent (Sigma PG), and JR (S2) arrived at launch to find it blowing in nicely, but by the time they're ready to fly, the wind had

increased significantly. Florent was first off in the strong conditions and initially it was unclear whether he was going to be able to penetrate away from launch, but he slowly crept forward as he took the elevator skyward. Pete followed immediately afterwards, but JR ended up pinned on launch for a good while awaiting a reasonable cycle. Pete went OTB first and ended up getting low and landing at the Hwy Dome field after chasing clouds without success.

Florent followed Pete's lead and landed in the same field setting the **site record for PG's** at 12.3 miles. JR followed the same well-traveled trail getting to 5100' along the way, but his vario quit working enroute. He reached the Hwy Dome field with pretty good altitude, but the prospects of crossing five miles of tree-covered terrain to make it to Paw Paw, WV sans instruments was just a bit too daunting. Besides, he wanted to land with his buddies to simplify the retrieval as they had no driver. Pete ended up convincing the landowner's mother to drive him back to launch for \$30 where he retrieved JR's truck and returned to gather his comrades.

