

SSA Region 11 Report for Fall 2015

Overview

This has been a year of cross country training and accomplishments in Region 11. The Pacific Soaring Council (PASCO) is Region 11's partner organization whose purpose is "to initiate, sponsor, promote, and carry out plans, policies, and activities that will further the growth and development of the soaring movement in Region 11 of the Soaring Society of America." We will continue our series of seminars with another excellent event on November 15th at the Sequoyah Country Club in Oakland, California.

Early in the year the PASCO board of directors agreed to concentrate on efforts to encourage "mid-level" cross country mentoring and training to appeal to the folks who have recently passed their checkride and are looking for the next step in soaring fun. One initiative was in support of the Hollister League for a period of 5 or 6 weeks by helping with towplane relocation expenses and working with NCSA, BASA and Hollister Soaring Center to promote XC soaring with a focus on formal and informal mentoring for PASCO members.

PASCO also spread the word about Luca Bertosio's amazing glider aerobatic displays at Oshkosh and helped publicize the need for sponsors for the event.

Competitions

This year they included the **1-26 Championships** held at Minden, **Air Sailing's Sports Contest**, the **Region 11 Combined FAI Contest** and other events such as the **TAGAR's (Truckee Airport Gliding Air Races)** organized by Sergio Colacevich and the **Valley Soaring Association's race series** out of the Williams Soaring Center.

Women Soaring Pilots Association (WSPA)

WSPA held its annual Women Soaring Seminar in Minden, NV hosted by SoaringNV. Forty-eight were registered for the five-day event (plus weekend flying before and after the seminar) which included lectures, flying, the WSPA formal business and annual meeting and awards banquet with a celebration of the WSPA's 30th Anniversary and of the 38th (in a row) Women Soaring Seminar. Membership continues to grow. The WSPA added a new country to its roster with a woman pilot from Israel who attended and who capped off the week with the longest flight of the seminar of 493k.

NEITA Montague

Las Vegas Valley Soaring Association

LVVSA has had a year of transitions and change. We are down to 3 "regular" instructors from 4 the previous year but have one in the wings and others indicating interest to get the certificate. Part of the problem has been that we lost access to a local DPE-Glider several years ago so students were sent to

other locations to take their checkrides. This year we have come to an agreement with the Las Vegas FSDO that we can have a DPE come from the Reno District 2-3 times a year to do our checkrides. This is great news and we will be making use of it shortly.

Our fleet has changed a bit. We had the wings of the Pawnee completely refinished (and now the fuselage is embarrassed about how it looks...). A retiring club member donated his Laister Nugget to the club to be used in cross country flying and general enjoyment. (With another privately owned Nugget we have 2 of the 14 ever built in our club!) Our LS-4 is for sale because it just didn't fly enough the past couple of seasons and we could use the cash for some other maintenance items.

Our annual cross country safari was back to Tonopah this year. The weather was marginal during the week and then one of the cylinders cracked on the Pawnee and had to be replaced, losing another couple of flying days. The social aspect of the event was great fun as always.

Bob "Chukar" Spielman reports the following:

Nevada Soaring (NSA) has had a great year. Membership is at an all time high with 65 members where we have had about 45 members in the past. Air Sailing has about 150 members of which we are a part.

We maintain an up to date website, <http://nevadasoaring.com/>, and a facebook page https://www.facebook.com/NevadaSoaring?ref=aymt_homepage_panel.

NSA offers basic and recurring training mainly in our Blanik L23, and we also give rides and offer advanced and upgrade training in our Schweizer 2-32. The club has a nicely mixed fleet of 4 single place gliders for year round use, a 1-26, 1-36, Blanik L33, and an ASW 19. As our only glass ship, we have flown the ASW-19 nearly as much as all the other single seat gliders combined. It really is popular. During our events this year, we had unusually high number of non owner aircraft requests so we "un"stored and used our extra L33, and also borrowed a Standard Cirrus from one of our members to be used by out of town participants. We try to fly year round weather permitting, and offer training throughout the year. During the school year, NSA pilots routinely give orientation flights to high school JROTC cadets in a program funded by a scholarship managed by the Air Sailing Board of Trustees. One cadet was selected from the group to continue training through solo and successfully completed several solos in the spring.

This year's Thermal Camp during the first week of June was "maxed" out probably because of a flattering article in SOARING. The following week was the 29th Annual Cross Country Camp which was also nearly full. Later in June, NSA went on the annual excursion to the Bishop Airport to experience flying the Whites. This year's group traveled with about 15 gliders and our tow plane. Finally in July, NSA supported the Sports Class Contest with 20 contestants and 15 aircraft including the USAFA Soaring Team. The contest week was blessed with very good soaring conditions completing 5 solid competition days with only 3 landouts.

We have a shortage of instructors and have backlog of folks who want to learn how to fly gliders or add a rating. Currently, we have 2 active and readily available instructors with several available occasionally.

NSA recruits, trains and schedules tow pilots for the Air Sailing Gliderport. NSA owns and operates a well liked 260 HP Pawnee towplane with an engine monitor system. Air Sailing owns a newly renovated 235 HP Pawnee. We are in a decent shape for towpilots this year.

NSA is mishap free with our fleet this year. We have implemented tighter currency rules that requires pilots to have 3 T.O.s and landings in a glider within 90 days in order to operate an NSA club glider as pilot in command. Due to our incident/accident history, NSA is still unable to obtain hull insurance on our gliders. Therefore, the aircraft have been placed in a separate entity, Sierra Fliers LLC, which allows our NSA membership to individually obtain the required non owners hull and liability insurance. We are, however, still paying for our Pawnee nose over mishap last year with an extra \$1000 a year for insurance.

It's now August and for the most part our soaring events are over for the season, and it is time to enjoy our own recreational flying. It's been a different kind of year but we have enjoyed pretty good soaring.

Morgan Hall reports the following:

Avenal Club membership is pretty steady. Add a few, lose a few, but hover around that 50 member mark typically.

We did not hold a contest this year. A number of past competitors said they were disappointed that we didn't have it, but many of those people didn't show up the year prior so I don't know if we would have had a successful (at least break even) contest this year or not. I for one needed a break and it was very nice to not have that burden. Instead, we held an XC camp. We had fantastic attendance with 9 private ships flying. All of the "intermediate" pilots established personal best flights for duration or distance. We had several landouts and everyone was happy for the experience. Overall the club membership said they much prefer the XC camp to the contest. Less work, more fun, more involvement.

We have had a couple of private gliders sold off the field in the last year. We've added 3 new private ships as well. I think we are net positive 1 compared to this time last year and two of the private ships that left were not flown XC much. All of the additions are actively flown XC now.

We've had two pilots purchase upgraded gliders. Both moving up from DG-100's. One to an ASW-20A and the other to a Discus A. 2 additional purchases were made in the last year bringing new gliders to the field.

The club has entered a purchase agreement for one of the DG-100s and has therefore added its first Glass ship to the fleet. It's already flown about 20hrs in the first 4 weeks of being available.

We also purchased the shade structure from Rex when he dismantled it to erect the new hangar. That's going to be a fall project I think. Barring weather issues. Although I'll take a delay on that project if it means lots of rain for California.

We are also nearing the completion of a restoration of one of our 2-33 trainers. Full teardown and recovering of the fuselage. The wings just got repainted, but look bright. That's been a huge, costly, time-consuming project. A couple of fantastic members have really kept that going.

Overall the club health is very good. Finances are stable and cash positive, but we don't have the cash reserves to purchase an additional towplane or a 2-place glass ship. We are working on a possible leaseback of a Grob 103, but that's still a big question mark.

Nothing but positive news out of Avenal to report at the moment.