



# FLIGHT LINE



The publication of the Wings Of Rogallo Northern California Hang Gliding Association  
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Colin Perry flying Tandem with 2 passengers at Santa Cruz.  
Photo by Janet Murdock

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## ALL THE NEWS THAT'S FIT TO EAT !!

### April is here, so is the rain

So too is the annual April Fools cover photo of your favorite fool.

The Sand Turn LZ trust fund is now Tax Deductable Non-profit. Help save this special site that I first flew more than 25 years ago. See page2 for details.

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**Mar 2006 WOR Meeting Minutes****NEW MEMBERS, GUESTS None****Great Flights**

Steve Delayo - flew from Diablo to Byron.  
 Also flew from Diablo to Mission in 4  
 thermals.

Mark Grubbs - Flew from Diablo 19 miles to  
 Livermore valley.

Roy Spencer - Flew Mission the day it  
 snowed. Pictures are posted to the WOR  
 website.

Mike Foy - Climbed out from the 600 launch  
 at Ed Levin and reached 5900'.

Steve Rodrigues - flew Valle de Bravo in  
 Mexico.

Michel Rege - Flew several sites on a road  
 trip in Brazil.

**President's Report** Juan Loas - None

**Vice President's Report** Wayne Michelson  
 - None

**Treasurer's Report** Don Herrick

Income is exceeding expenses, due to an  
 increase in renewals.

**Membership Services** W. Jablon  
 300 people have re-upped for 2006.

**Flight Director's Report** P. Devenan  
 Wills Wing has issued an advisory regarding  
 the packing of their Lara parachutes. Pat  
 also recommends have the chute swivel, if  
 any, checked when doing a repack.

**Ed Levin Committee Report** Steve Pittman

The county has agreed to allow parents to  
 sign liability waivers on behalf of minors.  
 The revisions to the site procedures are still  
 in process. The pay phone issue is still  
 open. A private cell phone stowed in a  
 lockbox may be substituted for the pay  
 phone, which is costly to maintain. The  
 windsock at the 600 launch is in poor  
 condition.

**Mission Peak Committee Report** Steve  
 Rodrigues

Thanks to Bill Jablon, who has updated the  
 member database. The database is  
 essential for processing keyholder  
 applications. Some of the residents who live  
 on Mill Creek Road are driving fast. Extra

caution and high beam lights are a good  
 idea. Check site sticker and USHGA card  
 before transporting pilots to launch.

**Mt. Diablo Committee Report** Robert  
 Moore.

A Diablo 101 site intro is planned for April  
 29th

**Site Acquisition** Jim Woodward, Gene  
 Pfifer, Ben Rogers

Nothing new is happening at Coyote Lake.  
 Ben Rogers reported that he flew Goat a  
 few weeks ago. A rancher has put up a  
 fence between the access road and the  
 launch, but the launch is still open.

**Old Business**

The Bay Area Towing Society is updating  
 its rig.

**New Business**

Paul Gazis and Dave Wills reported on the  
 USHGA Board of Directors meeting. The  
 name change (to United States Hang  
 Gliding and Paragliding Association) has  
 been approved by a vote of the  
 membership and is therefore going to  
 happen. The Power Task Force reported  
 that the idea of adding powered harnesses  
 and ultralights to USHGPA's scope is dead  
 for now. Liability insurance for instructors  
 may be available, but would probably need  
 to be made mandatory to be financially  
 viable. Dave Wills indicated that he is  
 opposed to integrating powered flight into  
 USHGPA; that it poses a risk to the  
 organization. He also indicated that a dues  
 increase is contemplated.

Dave Wills also announced that an intro to  
 flying X-C in the Lakeview area is planned  
 for the week before July 4th.

Michel Rege proposed that the Mission  
 key distribution be done at the same  
 meeting as officer elections. It was pointed  
 out that this may require a change in the  
 bylaws. The motion was tabled.

**END OF MEETING MINUTES**

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**Other News****Sand Turn Site Acquisition**

Good Morning to all, and happy April,  
 It has been a busy winter, but the  
 fruits of our labors are starting to show.  
 As of last week, we are now officially  
 Sand Turn Inc. A Wyoming Non-profit.  
 We have our 501c3 status, and are  
 officially now a non profit entity. WOW,  
 it finally happened. We are still selling  
 tickets here and there, and I just saw  
 the article in the April issue of HG/PG  
 magazine, and it looks wonderful. I am  
 very excited about that, and thanks to  
 all at HG/PG magazine who helped  
 make that possible once again. There  
 are 90 raffle tickets left, and I am  
 working on a large mailing that should  
 be out within a week or two, hoping to  
 spur some more ticket sales. We are  
 within \$2500.00 of the matching funds  
 grant, and the replatting process is  
 also in the works as we speak. I hope  
 we will have this thing done by  
 September, and have a wonderful  
 Labor day fly in and raffle.... I will be  
 back to Sand Turn in May to finish the  
 perimeter fence, and hopefully drum  
 up a few more ticket sales. Anyway,  
 thanks to all who have been so  
 supportive of the project, and please  
 keep in touch. We will do the same.  
 Sincerely, Adam Graham.  
 sadamg@hotmail.com

**Lakeview 2006 planning**

Dave Wills sez to check out  
[groups.yahoo.com/group/lakeview06](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lakeview06)  
 for discussion about the proposed intro  
 to XC/intro to Lakeview trip during the  
 end of June. Please feel free to join  
 (it's open to anyone) and discuss this  
 trip.

# WIN! in Winnemucca

by Mike Kellog

DOUBLE YOUR PAYCHECK!! A February trip across Nevada saw me schlepping gear up Winnemucca Mountain (6742 ft.), gambling - and winning. You too can ante-up, wager, bluff -- and possibly even WIN in Winne-huck-a... Dozens of American flags lining the downtown-Winnemucca gambler's strip all indicated ENE 5-10, a good bet for a noontime run off the grassy mountain above town. I pulled Friend-of-OPEC, my thirsty '93, into the Veteran's Memorial next to the old Winnemucca Air Force Base. Proceeding on foot past baying hounds, I followed power lines that shot straight up the mountain. Hiking to an unknown launch is a real crap shoot, but the jackpot was so enormous (~2,500 feet high!) I gladly rolled the dice =8.

They came up snake eyes about two-thirds height when suddenly I was buffeted by westerlies, cross and down. WAAAH! I could've cashed out, but chose to call a bluff, likely go bust, and keep on playing. It was a slippery slope -- fossil-strewn slate covering 30-degree dirt, but I hedged my bet and kept a card up my sleeve. The summit radio facility antennae were still a long way off, and with no wind indicators, maintained an effective poker face. I sweated but didn't lose my shirt.

Cresting the ridge, I was tempted to fold. WSW 10-20. The odds were mounting. Four of a kind and a full house (three of a kind and a pair) of structures and towers with "Authorized Personnel Only" signs and graffiti formed an indifferent audience. I sensed a losing hand but the joker was wild. Maybe I'd get an inside straight. After enjoying some 50-mile views, I snuck over for a peek at what game was being played on the snowy west side.

BINGO! A southern, pristine summit featured a clean launch, and the winds cooperated. I wanted a piece of the action. No - I HAD to have it! The stakes were high but the pot was full so I bet the house, clearing the ridge easily and gliding right past Guido and Luigi, the rotor brothers.



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Talk about high rollin' -- thar's thermals in them thar hills! More payout! Even over the Air Force base, winning numbers kept coming in. And then it was the Wild West, guns and all: I discovered the shooting-range thermal! Sheriffs and other armed folks were firing their guns, ceasing only briefly for the pesky bag overhead. I hit the reset button several times. Just shoot me (I know they wanted to)! I had to pinch myself!

As I headed towards home w/the big rigs, I couldn't believe my luck. Maybe next time I'll land at the Winners Casino....



## Speak of the Devil

Robert Moore  
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### My Favorite - and Least Favorite - Diablo Flights (Part 2)

March begins the XC season at Diablo. There have been great years of March XC flights, and there have been years with no March XC. Only the weather gods know what this month will bring, but the Diablo Team will be out there waiting to find out. Perhaps you will want to join us. This month, I'm offering Part 2 of my most memorable Diablo flights - for better or worse.

#### Playing Predator to a Predator

One summer flight, I found myself soaring 200' above Juniper Ridge in a mixture of ridge and thermal lift. Looking along the grassy ridgeline, I spotted a mountain lion slinking along in the open. This magnificent creature appeared to be lazily looking about for something of interest. He didn't realize that he was about to become prey. Aligning my glider, I was able pass my shadow directly over him. Even from 200' I could see him jump in fright! This was too good to leave alone. As I continued down the ridge a bit, I watched him regain his composure and continue his stroll. He hadn't looked up, and only seemed to know that something quite strange had just happened. I turned and "shadowed" him again. The poor guy looked like he would jump out of his fur! Quickly looking around, he still didn't seem to understand that I was overhead. Fantastic! One more time, I passed my shadow over. This time he had seen enough. He made a dash for the nearest bushes before the giant predatory bird could swoop down to carry him away.

#### Landing Uphill vs Into the Wind

The closest I have ever come to being really injured was a significant Learning Experience at a Diablo LZ. After an uneventful flight from the NW Tower, everyone was choosing to land at a

simple (and now extinct) LZ called Roadies. A reasonably sized LZ that sloped uphill toward the north and bounded by power lines at the bottom of the slope and a treeline at the side-slope edge. Virtually every time I had landed there, I had landed going uphill, mostly because that was also into the wind. In my first-year H4 mind, landing into the wind was more important than landing uphill. On this day, the wind was blowing cross-slope at 5-10. Instead of doing the uphill approach, I ended up doing the really boneheaded approach - cross slope and into the wind. By the time I got into ground effect, my fate was sealed. The treeline at the edge of the field was approaching fast. With the left side flanked by powerline and fence, and my right wingtip about a foot off the upslope, I could only maneuver a bit as I zoomed toward the trees. I turned the glider just enough so that my body would miss the tree trunks and tried to mush the flare into the trees. There was still plenty of energy so the glider surged upward and slammed into the tree branches. The sudden stop swung my body forward but the tree branches held my glider just long enough for to me to fall about three feet onto my feet. The glider was pretty damaged, but I had escaped unscathed. After I finished checking my underwear for soilage, then gathering up the remains of my glider, I was gently tutored by my fellow Diablo pilots on the importance of choosing the uphill approach over the windward option. Whew.

#### A Windy Day on the Mountain

One winter day, two of us were up for some prefrontal ridge soaring. Winds were averaging 20 from the SSE on top, but very light at the base. We new that we could soar around the fantastic south face of the mountain, then run downwind to plenty of safe LZ options. While setting up at the SE launch, the winds were on the build. By the time we were ready to launch the wind was measuring between 25-30. The launches were exciting but smooth one-steppers. It wasn't long before we were topping out at 1000' above launch in pure ridge lift. This kind of altitude gives a pilot lots of room to play, and play we did.

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First, we flew out in front to sink down to just below the level of the visitor's center of the summit building. Then we would zoom back to the mountain, and quickly gain altitude just as we came within view of the tourists. It appeared to the visitors that we were shooting up out of nowhere; defying gravity right before their eyes. Next, we realized that we had the opportunity to soar over to North Peak, but using the "back" side of the mountain to do it. The SE face of Diablo is even more sheer and rugged than the NW, and made for a beautiful backdrop for this portion of the adventure. Crossing the gap between the summit and North Peak was easy with the altitude we could collect. Then we were free to cavort about on the usually-forbidden and always-foreboding east face. Realizing that there were no decent landing options nearby kept us watchful of changes in the wind conditions. When the change came, we were safely back on the main peak, but the increase in winds to around 40 was enough to indicate that we had better think about landing. My buddy had bugged out 10 minutes before me, and radioed that winds in the Blake's LZ were zero. "Please repeat, you said zero mph?" I asked incredulously. "That's right, absolutely dead for the last several hundred feet." was the reply. "Wow, that's pretty good news!" I began my downwind streak the five miles to Blake's, but couldn't resist an opportunity to safely do something I hadn't done before. Turning back into the wind, I let out the bar to trim and practiced flying in reverse. For a couple hundred yards, I watched the terrain below pass by in the opposite direction I was accustom to seeing it. Turning back tail to the wind, I zoomed the remaining miles in just a couple of minutes. At about 1500' above the outskirts of Walnut Creek, there was a minor bit of turbulence, and it suddenly seemed like I had dropped out of warp. The ground went from whizzing by to crawling as I entered the still air layer at the bottom of the atmospheric pile.

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... Speak of the Devil continued ...

Everything returned to normal, as I set up my approach and had a perfect uphill landing next to my buddy. This flight had several firsts for me, and it's not often that conditions allow for all of them in the same flight.

**The Opposite Conditions, with Unpleasant Results**

My first year of flying at Diablo exposed me to many new experiences, and provided an equal number of learning opportunities. On a few occasions, my devilish teacher decided to provide the lesson in a less pleasant format. This particular summer day, I was to learn about a trick the Bay Area inversion layer can play on unsuspecting pilots.

Before driving up the mountain, I had noted that the wind was generally southwest. Not light, but not especially windy. I didn't pay much attention to wind direction as we drove up the mountain. At the top, however, it was very light and northwest. In my innocence, I set up and launched.

Within the first minute of flight, I knew something was wrong. A mixture of turbulence and severe sink rate had me struggling to fly out into open terrain. My drift indicated that the new wind direction was SW, but certainly not light. This wind was pouring over Juniper Ridge and tumbling at me at I struggled toward the Mitchell Canyon LZ. I soon realized that Mitchell wasn't going to be an option, and my only chance was to head for the nearest bail out, the Crossroads. Unfortunately, this bailout is on the north side of Bald Ridge and at the eastern base of Eagle Peak. Just as I was careening clear of the Juniper influence, Bald and Eagle rose up to create additional mayhem.

Anyone familiar with that Robert Johnson blues classic knows that the Crossroads was the place where the musician met the Devil. Well, by this point I felt I would be happy to meet anyone if I made it to Crossroads.

I raced toward the NE as far as possible to get out of the turbulence, while still trying to stay within plummet of Crossroads. About two hundred feet

above the bailout, things smoothed out, and I pried one of my hands from the basetube to unzip.

Winds were doing about 25 and relatively steady when I made a Tinkerbelle landing in the open grassland of the Crossroads. After getting my glider turned against the wind and unhooking, I wanted to kiss the ground in relief.

While carrying my glider a mile to a paved road, I thought about the flight, and the lesson the Devil Mountain had taught. On the occasions when the wind direction is different at higher altitude, I give serious thought to how I will deal with it.

Sometimes, that means waiting to fly another day. Well, that's it for my tales of joy and dread. Next month, I will try to do justice to a subject I personally would like to know even better - the Diablo Convergence Train. You definitely want to be on board when this train leaves the station!

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**Editor's Turn**

Just back from my Turkish solar eclipse tour, with residual jet-lag and Sultan's revenge still troubling me. Because of this, the current issue is a tad late. I have some fairly reliable info that rain was persistant during my travels, so I guess that I didn't miss much flying. Many thanks to RM and MK for their submittals to this issue, and I know that many of y'all have had most excellant adventures that are worthy of being published in this humble monthly.

I also wish to encourage everyone with a steady income to support the Sand Turn Trust and help preserve a most enjoyable flying site in the hinderlands of region 5. If you have never had the opportunity to fly there, you should consider putting their planned LaborDay flyin on your busy socal calendar.

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# Wings of Rogallo FLIGHT LINE

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