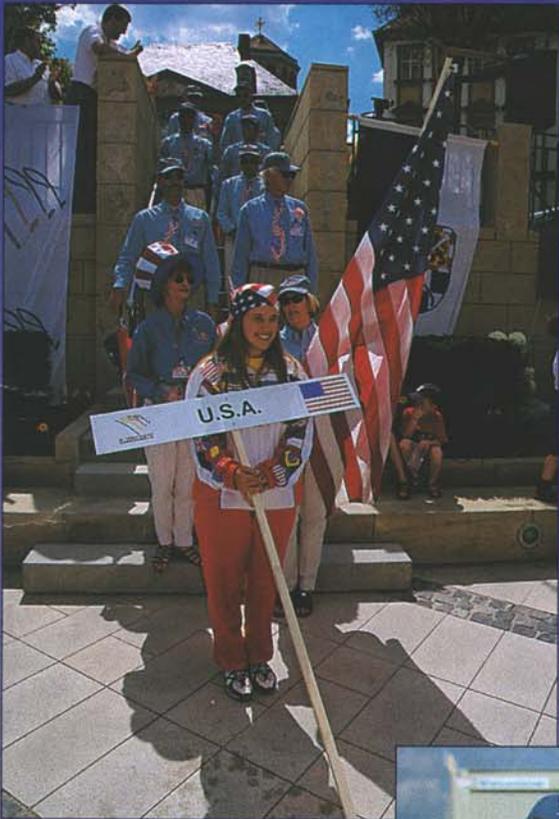


# SOARING

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World Gliding  
Championships  
99

Bayreuth, Germany

# THE TWENTY-SIX GLIDING CHAMP

## Bayreuth, Germany



by Chuck O'Mahony

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Head east on the three lane autobahn out of Frankfurt, hum along at 140 kph in the Alamo stick-shift VW Passat and a shock wave thumps your car as a BMW rockets past... with a nun at the wheel. At Würzburg, hang a right on A-7 to Schweinfurt, and then Bamberg... and the leather-clad bikers are leaving vapor trails. After 200 kilometers of motorized mayhem, you arrive in Bayreuth, the charming Bavarian city playing host to the twenty-sixth World Gliding Championships.

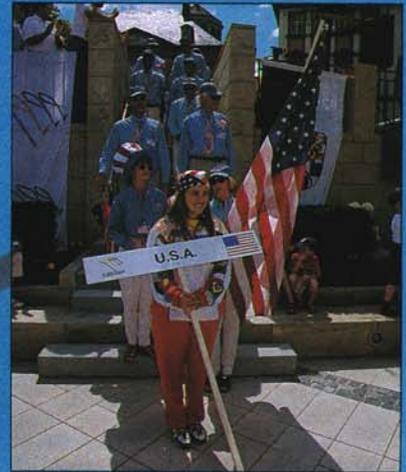
Bayreuth has a population of 74,000, and the biggest employer is the University, attended by 8,500 students. The city is best known for its annual music festival, a five-week celebration of the music of composer Richard Wagner, performed in an opera house that he helped design. Wagner's presence did much for Bayreuth, but there was a down side. In the thirties, the city became a power center of National Socialism, and Bayreuth and Wagner were important segments of Hitler's ideology. As a result, Bayreuth was heavily bombed near the close of WW II, and one-third of the city was destroyed. This year's operas only ran from July 27 to August 25, and for the rest of the year the opera house will sit idle. If the post cards are on target, Wagner was a John Wayne look-alike. Commenting on the German composer's resounding works, Mark Twain said, "Wagner's music isn't really as

bad as it sounds." Twain notwithstanding, the performances are sold out years in advance.

The contest site for the 1999 World Gliding Championships was at Bindlacher Berg airfield, just north of Bayreuth, and everything about the competition was on a grand scale. There were 122 pilots from 24 countries, and they flew from an airfield with five runways. Bindlacher has four grass strips 100' wide, ranging in length from 3,000' to 3,600', and a hard surface runway (shared with Lufthansa commuters) just over 4,000' long. The task area was reasonably hospitable for off field landings, and thermals would provide just about all the lift. The field perched on a knob at an elevation of 1,560', and with valleys on all sides it made for some exciting final glides. The runways are oriented 06/24 and were divided by the long row of trailers. The Standard Class gridded daily on the north side, and the 15-Meter and Open Classes lined up on the south side, and they took turns launching first. Twenty tow planes, 10 of them Polish Wilgas, were able to launch all 122 sailplanes in one hour from two independently operated runways.

The U.S. fielded an experienced team in this WGC, five pilots who claimed 34 National Championships among them. In the Open Class Ray Gimney flew 7V, an ASW-22 and he was competing in his ninth Worlds. Crewing

# TH WORLD ONSHIPS



*Top: The U.S. Team at opening ceremonies. There's a "Missing Man" spot beside John Byrd in memory of Clem Bowman. Right: The U.S. Team: (in back) George Moffat, Ron Tabery, Bill Bartell, Ray Gimmeey, and Mark Huffstutler, (kneeling) Karl Striedieck and John Byrd.*



*Ray Gimmeey at the tail of 7V.*

for Ray were his wife, Ruth, Stephen Irving, and U.S. Air Force Academy cadet Cathy Adams. At 66, Ray was the oldest pilot in the contest. Ron Tabery was piloting WN, a Nimbus 4, and this was Ron's fourth Worlds. His fiancée Gena, Kent Hardin, and USAFA cadet Derek Root crewed.

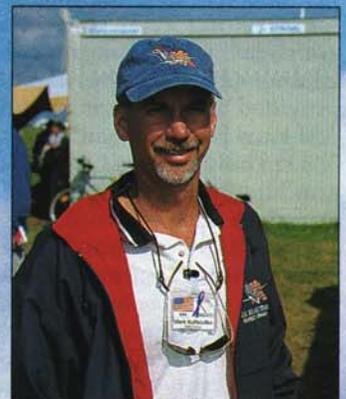
In the 15-Meter Class, Bill Bartell rented AD, a Ventus 2A, for his second Worlds, crewed by Mike and Sheila Wilson, and AFA cadet Andy Royle. Teammate Karl Striedieck flew VW, an ASW-27, in World's number eight, with his wife Iris and brother Walter crewing.

Flying alone in the Standard Class was John Byrd in H1, a Discus 2. "It's my second Worlds as a pilot," John said, "but I've crewed in a bunch more." Crewing for John were his wife Annie, Oris Barber, and U.S.A.F. Captain Joey Medlin, the 'chaperone' for the three cadets. The three USAFA cadets are all instructors in the Academy's outstanding glider program, all are 20 years old and entering their Junior year. The second pilot in the Standard Class for the U.S. was to have been Dr. Clem Bowman, but Clem was killed in a sailplane crash in the Standard Nationals at Minden, Nevada, in June. The U.S. team and crews wore a small black ribbon on their I.D. cards in tribute to Clem, and at the opening day ceremonies our pilots left a "missing man" slot for him as they marched in.

"We started organizing for Germany the day after we left France in 1997," said Mark Huffstutler, team captain for the second time. "We have only a five man team after Clem Bowman's tragic accident. We chose not to select another pilot in the Standard Class out of respect for Clem and for his family. Two-time world champion George Moffat agreed to be our team coach again, and Bob Leve is team psychologist. Leve worked with the pilots for a year, helping orient them in the team-flying concept. He likened it to getting singles tennis players to change over to partners in doubles. Julian West is our local-knowledge expert, having flown over 1,000 hours in this area. With crews, spouses and U.S. Air Force Cadets, about 25 people are on the team."

Huffstutler continued, "Two years ago we set our financial goal at \$125,000. We raised over \$30,000 from the biannual sweepstakes, and another \$40,000 from investments... mostly the Robbie Robertson and Lawrence Wood funds. We got additional income from merchandise sales, SSA member donations, and from several patrons - Lawrence Wood, Lee Hallerberg, Don Pollard, Rudy and Eric Mozer, and Marion Griffith."

"With our new selection system we chose three pilots from their 1997 performance and this allowed us to have repre-



*Mark Huffstutler, Team Captain.*



Overhead shot of the grid at Bayreuth, 122 planes.

sensation at the 1998 Pre-Worlds. John Byrd competed here last year, and John and Ann were able to pass on valuable information. Kelley Bartell took their recommendation for the hotel we chose to house just about every one of our team," Huffstutler concluded.

George Moffat says, "You couldn't ask for a better team captain than Mark Huffstutler."

Opening ceremonies for the contest were held in the cobblestone center of Bayreuth. Alphabetically, from Australia through U.S.A. the teams moved down a pair of stone stairs and each pilot was introduced to the enthusiastic crowd. After their introduction, our team popped open and twirled their red, white and blue umbrellas to a swinging rendition of "New-York, New York." It was a crowd pleaser, and Old Blue Eyes had to be looking on with a grin.

On Sunday, August 1, at precisely 10 AM, Contest Director Peter Ryder rang the bell on his table at the front of the briefing room. Task setter Walter Eisele sat at his left, color-coded task sheets for each class in hand. There were 43 pilots in the 15-Meter Class, 47 in Standard, and 32 in Open Class. It was a strong field, with 12 of the competing pilots past winners of 16 gold medals in World Gliding Championships. A high-pressure area provided strong soaring conditions, and an 11 AM launch was scheduled. The 15-Meters got a 572 km polygon, the Open Class a 635 km polygon, and the Standards drew a Cats Cradle, the European version of our Post Task. They had 4 1/2 hours to negotiate any of 25 assigned turn-points, and a landing back at the home field earned a 15% bonus. Launch at a WGC is always exciting... carefully choreographed chaos... part family picnic, part WW II fighter scramble. With 122 sailplanes jigsawed together on two runways and 20 tugs working in con-

tinuous circuits, the Bindlacher starts were awesome. Endless clamor and commotion for sixty minutes, then a silent, empty field as the crew cars caravaned back to the team huts. Every day George Moffat and Julian West sat atop the team hut looking at task maps, radioing information to the pilots on course, and helping them calculate final glides. Moffat championed team flying, and estimated it was worth 300 to 500 points over the contest.

The first day was a boomer. "I never got below 3,800' AGL," Ray Gimney said. "My logger says I thermalled 14.8% of the time, and my average climb was 6.8 knots. Even with a speed of 143 kph I only finished 17th. I would have done better, but 70 miles out I used my bug wiper and the right one wouldn't come back in. One legne we flew southeast into the Czech

Republic, first time ever in a World's."

Holger Karow of Germany won the day with a speed of 152.7 KPH, a remarkable time, but particularly for Central Europe, using thermals only. Ron Tabery was off to a good start with a sixth place finish. In Standards, P.G. Crabb took first. Paul and his identical twin brother



Grid shot on day four. The cloud patterns and cu are already appearing.

Stephen were competing for the glory of Ireland. John Byrd was still struggling to learn the quirks of his borrowed sailplane and came home 26th, but it was a tightly packed field and he earned 907 points. Werner Meuser, reigning champion in the 15-Meter Class, and his German teammate Michael Grund came home one/two. Karl

Striedieck was fourth and Bill Bartell tied for eighth.

At the next day's briefing Peter Ryder commented that they might have to start expressing the speeds in Mach numbers. A time-lapse satellite map depicted the weather in color on a big screen, and it called for another



Karl and Iris Striedieck chat with cross-country legend Hans Werner Grosse.

great soaring day. A Cat's Cradle was assigned to the Open Class, 4 1/2 hours stitching back and forth among 25 turnpoints, some of them in the Czech Republic. The 15-Metergliders got a challenging 566 km polygon, and the Standards headed out on a 524 km course.

Striedieck and Bartell flashed across the finish line in formation in a dead heat for first place, and for this day they were the two best 15-Meterpilots in the world. The win put them in first place and second place in the Class also, with Bill trailing Karl by only 14 points. Bartell talked about team flying. "Karl and I share information but we still race against each other. We were in sight of each other 80% of the time today, and we went to the same cloud. In the 200 kph range my glider seems to run a little faster, but Karl gets me in the climb." Ron Tabery and Ray Gimmey were 11th and 13th in the Open, and Ron moved into fifth place in the field. John Byrd was 28th getting home, but it was so bunched that 20 points would have moved him up ten places.

At briefing on Day Three, Contest Director Peter Ryder told the pilots that people all over the world were watching this competition on-line, while it was happening. "Transmitters which we call 'bug boxes' are installed randomly on about 20 gliders each day," computer whiz Bill Bartell explained. "They are about the size of a shoe box, and we put 'em on the hat shelf, right behind our head. There is one antenna to receive GPS, and another six-inch antenna to transmit to the ground via repeater stations on hilltops. They transmit our altitude, speed and position on course, with a reading about every four seconds. The information goes on the Internet using standard web server technology. They delay showing us on the screen, by about a half hour, so no helpful information can be



*The AFA Cadets, Derek Root, Andy Royale, Cathy Adams and Captain Joey Medlin.*

radioed to pilots on course." Bartell's wife, Kelley, a Judge in her 'other' life, was a valuable addition to the team. "I headed up the administration side of the team, starting 11 months ago. Basically I've served as Mark's assistant... fund raising, letter writing, ordering merchandise,

and coordinating the team presentation at the Knoxville convention. Whatever needed to be done, I've done." Kelley also negotiated for the team hotel, an excellent facility only minutes from Bayreuth, to the south and the airfield on the north.

Current color photos were also being transmitted. Mike Wilson used his digital camera for grid shots, aerial photography and hangar parties, and



*06, Daniel Frey, streaks home from the east.*

the pictures went directly to a web site, no hard copy required. On a less sophisticated level, but still an obvious part of the technical change, was the ubiquitous cell phone. Bob Bickers, the mustachioed captain of the British team, was helping cook ribs on the grill at the U.S. team party night. Enveloped in smoke, he had tongs in one hand, a cell phone in the other, getting an update on one of his pilots who had outlanded in the Czech Republic. Sailplane performance has changed very little in the past decade, but the technology associated with contests has exploded.

The weather for Day Three was good, but not as good. Walter Eisele shortened the tasks, with the Opens flying 480 km, the Standards 422, and the Cat's Cradle time for the 15-Meter was cut to 3 1/2 hours. The wind was predicted to shift to a more normal westerly, and although takeoff would be from 06 again, finishes would be on 24. This was good news for the pilots... landings would hopefully be less exciting. Because pilots were required to make rolling finishes, landings were a little dicey,



*Pilots Byrd, Bartell and Tabery view the eclipse on August 11.*

## DEUTSCHLAND, DEUTSCHLAND!

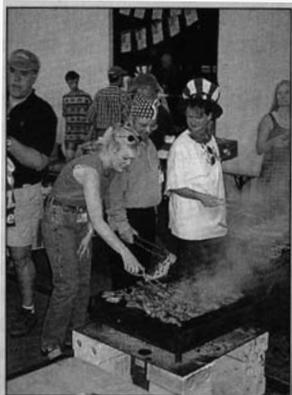


These folks are eaters, trenchermen in the truest sense. Bread and pastries, meat, cheese, and yogurt for breakfast. Wienerschnitzel, sauerkraut and mounds of potatoes for lunch, then a dinner that would satisfy a lumberjack. Even the menus are intimidating, putengeschnetztes in senfrahmose! Okay, so that turns out to be turkey with mustard sauce, but by the time you find out it's too late... you've gained four pounds.

With this Teutonic tendency to bunch several words together to make one, you can end up with signs like "**HIER BEGINNT DER FLUGSICHERUNGSBEREICH!**" and the World Gliding Championships comes out Segelflugweltmeisterschaft I doubt any German school kid ever got an 'A' in spelling. Germans are quite friendly until they get behind the wheel, and then Atilla the Hun emerges. If there are only two cars on a 100 kilometer stretch on the autobahn, one will be tailgating.

They carve beautiful woodwork with the pine from their endless forests, and they build things right. With a 90 degree turn of the handle, the double-paned 5' X 5' metallic blue windows in the team hotel room opened from the top or the side, and they had the heft of a bank vault door.

The towns are clean, and window boxes, fences and yards overflow with flowers. Prices are low. A good bottle of wine (cork, not screw top) can be had for \$3.00, and a 16 ounce bottle of pilsner is just fifty cents. The exception is gasoline at \$4.00 a gallon. Now if they could just work out the technology to run their cars on beer....



*Chris O'Mahony, Julian West and Janet Hider  
Smith Grilling Ribs for the U.S. Party*

thanks to a hump in the runway that blocked the view of the far end when they touched down. Still moving at fairly high speed, they rolled up over the crest, and WHOA!!!, a tangle of gliders sometimes loomed dead ahead. Since the hump was closer to the touchdown end of 06, runway 24 was the pilot preference for landing.

The Day was another great one for the U.S. team. The dynamic duo of Bartell & Striedieck tied for first for the second straight day and chalked up 1,000 points each, and they led the 15-Meter Class. Ron Tabery was 11th in Open Class, and teammate Ray Gimmey was 26th. John Byrd was in the middle of the pack, 24th in his Discus 2. John talked about his flight. "The entire fourth leg was in the Czech Republic. I had to watch the moving map... if I drift into controlled airspace in the East, I get zero points. A sign comes on the screen and says 'You are approaching controlled airspace.' You gotta have that moving map to play this game." On flying without a teammate, John's comment was "Actually, I've got 46 teammates. And I don't have to listen to their advice or worry if they land out."

At briefing for Day Four Peter Ryder warned of possible evening thunderstorms and told team captains to 'earth' the antennas on the team huts. Translation, 'ground them in case of lightning.' Weather dictated even shorter tasks for the day, and the longest was a 373 km polygon for the Opens. Times were slower, and John Buchanan's 132.8 kph was tops for the day as he led the Open Class. Ron Tabery was given a 33 point penalty for excess start altitude, but his second data logger showed a proper height. It saved his hide and preserved a fourth place finish. Ray Gimmey had a 27th place finish for the day, but was able to help Ron out on course. John Byrd finished in a three-way tie for 18th. Striedieck and Bartell came in fifth and ninth, but stayed in first and second place, ahead of the German team of Grund and Meuser. Patrick Stouffs of Belgium filed a protest after the 15-Meter task, claiming he was waved off by his tug pilot in a location and at an altitude where his only option was an immediate outlanding. Four stewards (including Hannes Linke from the U.S.A.) would make a ruling. In team standings, the U.S. was in first place with 906 points, but Ireland and Germany were close behind, each with 902 points. With four tasks completed, this WGC was an official contest.

Thursday, August 5 was a rainout, the first break in competition. Weather the next day was very marginal, but this being a Worlds a task was launched in all three classes. Not one sailplane made it home from the 15-Meter or Standard Class, but neither task was devalued. Karl Striedieck landed just three kilometers out and earned 1,000 points, his third win in five days! Karl joked about his win. "I feel good about it because it was a weak day. I'm doing good on the strong days, but I didn't want them to think that was the end of my potential." Bill Bartell was 18th, but this still earned him 921 points, and Karl and Bill were in first and second place, with Michael Grund of Germany third. In Standard, Baer Selen won the day, and John Byrd was 15th, putting him in the front half of the pack in 20th place. Overall, defending champion Jean Caillard of France led the Standard Class, trailed by Peter Hartmann of Austria and France's Laurent Aboulin.

Even in the Open Class seven gliders failed to finish the 320 km polygon. For the day there were 122 launches, 97 landouts. Ron Tabery came in ninth and moved into fifth place, 140 points behind Germany's Holger



*Ray Gimmey on tow in 7V*

Karow. Jan Andersen, the redhead from Denmark, was second and Francek Gerard Lherm was third. "The task was a perfect call," Tabery said. "We flew to the limit of what was possible for the weather. On final glide if you cleared the last hill and got green marks on your wings from the trees, you flew it just right." As they approached the airfield, most of the Open gliders were skimming the floor of the valley to the east, about 400 feet below runway level and more than a kilometer out. They appeared to be landing out, but slowly, majestically, miraculously, they floated up to field elevation and settled onto the runway.

Five contest days in the record books, time to party. The U.S. team hosted an American style barbecue at the field hangar. "I made 80 pounds of potato salad, cooked 40 pounds of beans, and we grilled 300 pounds of ribs" Kerry Huffstutler reported. Organizing the BBQ was just one of Kerry's many contributions to the team effort. "I came five days before the competition and volunteered with the local club, and that put me into a position to ask for extras. That's how we ended up in the first row at briefing and got the best position on the field for our glider trailers. I get ice delivered every day to the team hut (a luxury in Germany!), and whatever loose ends aren't done, I get done."

August 7 and 8, Saturday and Sunday were both scrubbed. Saturday was not a flyable day, but the Sunday cancellation turned out to be a mistake. Early on the weather looked bad, the sniffer reported weak lift, and there was an airshow scheduled for the afternoon, so Walter Eisele called off the day. By 2 PM, though, it was a beautiful soaring day, and darkness didn't arrive here until after 9 PM. Tilo Holighaus observed "There is an unwritten rule in Germany, never cancel before 4 PM."

On Monday the directors pushed hard (too hard?) to get in a task. There was a briefing at 10, a second briefing at 12:30. It took two launches to finally get the Standards and 15-Meter gliders

underway at 3:15. The Open Class didn't launch until 4:15, but a menacing cu-nim south of the field blocked the sky between their release point and the start line, and their task was cancelled. (Pilots sometimes had to fly 20 kilometers from release point to start gate. They had to go through the gate under a max altitude and under a max speed, then punch a button that said 'I'm officially starting'.)

In the Standard Class not one sailplane traveled the required 100 kilometers, and no scores were issued. The 15-Meter pilots struggled around their 240 km triangle, and only 10 made it home. Striedieck and Bartell called in from Zell, the last turnpoint, just 20 km from the finish, but they were struggling. Mark Huffstutler, in radio communication from the roof of the team hut, said

"They will either be home in 20 minutes or retrieved in 2 1/2 hours." Inside the hut Iris Striedieck was making a salad. "I don't know whether this will be for here or to go," she said. Unfortunately, the salad was 'to go.' Bill & Karl landed out... a heart breaking 12 km from the field. Germany's Grund and Meuser were two of the ten finishers, but Mark Huffstutler felt they might have had improper assistance from Open Class team-mate, Bruno Gantenbrink. Gantenbrink had stayed up long after his Class' task had been recalled, and data logger traces later showed he flew a parallel course with Meuser and Grund for 20 kilometers.

Mark filed a protest but it was denied by the stewards on the grounds that there was no conclusive evidence that the two Germans had sought or accepted any help. Gantenbrink was censured for "questionable and suspicious behavior." The protest by Patrick Stouffs for task Day Four had been upheld, and all scores for the 15-Meter Class for that day were voided. Now all three classes had five official tasks completed. The Germans picked up 150 points on our team, and Striedieck dropped to third place behind Meuser and Grund, and Bill Bartell was now seventh. Only 12 points separated the first four



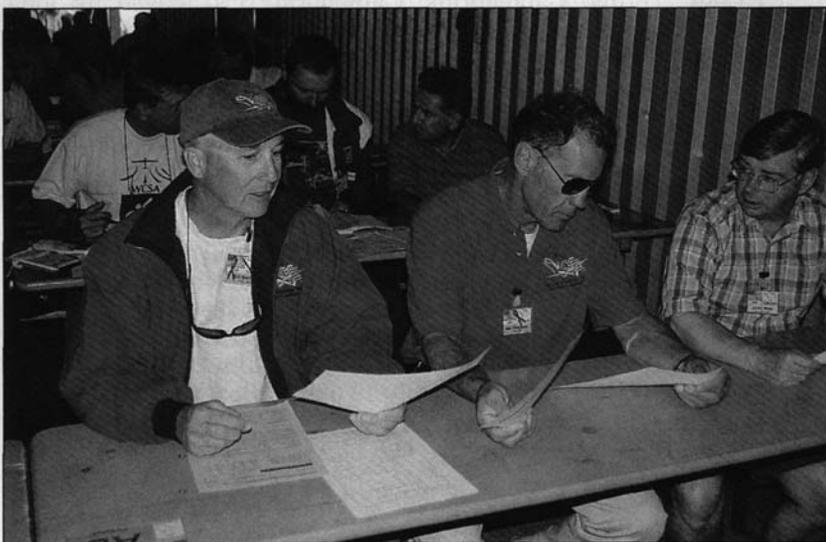
*A little village in the valley to the east of the field.*



*A scene from the opening day ceremony, downtown Bayreuth.*

places in the 15-Meter Class. In the past two flying days there were 177 landouts, this despite the fact that the Opens had not even flown on one of the days.

With all the landouts, crews were busy on retrievals. Crew persons like Iris Striedieck and Ann Byrd are for their husbands 'the wind beneath their wings.' Asked if they minded deferring to their pilots, Ann and Iris agreed



*Bill Bartell, Karl Striedieck and Julian West at the briefing.*

"it's not deferring, it's a team effort. The payback is we know they are aware, we get little feedbacks all the time. We feel privileged to be a part of it."

Tuesday, August 10 was cold and there was a solid overcast. A second briefing was held before the day was called. The next day, August 11, there was a 97% eclipse of the sun beginning at 11:25 AM, peaking at 12:40, ending at 2 PM. According to the German Luftfahrt Bundesamt (the LBA is the German version of our FAA), when an eclipse occurs it is officially night time, and you cannot fly VFR at night, so no flying could take place during the eclipse. It turned out to be a moot point. Lots of 'safe' viewing glasses had been issued, but there were only glimpses of the phenomenon through breaks in the over-

cast. Eclipse or not, it was no-fly weather.

On Thursday, after two down days, the pilots were back on course, and they flew with a vengeance. In the Open Class Bruno Gantenbrink blew away the field. He flew the 357 km task at 100.3 kph for 1,000 points, and second place finisher John Buchanan of Australia received only 887 points. Ron Tabery, still flying very consistently, was fifth and Ray Gimney was 11th. In Standards, John Byrd was sixth for his best finish. In 15-Meter Striedieck and Bartell had another strong showing, finishing fourth and sixth and beating the Germans by 300 points. Karl moved back into first place and Bill was fourth. Our placings for this day, 4-5-6-6 and 11 were the team's best.

With a maximum of two flying days remaining the standings looked like this. In Open Class, Gantenbrink and Karow of Germany led with 5,628 and 5,625 points.

Jan Andersen of Denmark was third with 5,606, only a 22 point spread from first to third. Tabery was fifth and Gimney 21st. In Standards, Jean Caillard had 5,692 points, John Coutts of New Zealand had 5,608, and Austria's Peter Hartmann had 5,574. After his rough start, John Byrd had moved up through the pack to 16th. Striedieck was on top in 15-Meter with 5,650 points, the Netherlands' Raimond had 5,627, and Italy's Giorgio Galetto had 5,618. (Given my druthers, I'd druther have finished this narrative right here... the rest sounds like it's coming from the pen of Stephen King.)

Friday the thirteenth. (These would be the final tasks as Saturday was not flyable.) On what would turn out to be the last day of the contest, the cu's started popping at 9 AM, heralding a strong day. Launch was at 11:35. The Standards flew a 394 km polygon and all but two gliders made it around the course. The only two non-finishers landed within six kilometers of the airport. Frenchman Jean Caillard in his Discus 2A ended up with 6,616 points (out of a possible 7,000!) and took home his second consecutive gold medal. John Coutts of New Zealand, at 23 the youngest pilot in the competition, won the silver with 6,502 points. France's Laurent Aboulin took the bronze with 6,467 points. John Byrd moved up to 17th in the

final standings in the field of 47.

The Open Class finished with a Cat's Cradle, and this assignment was Ron Tabery's undoing. Ron flew an excellent task for what would have been a fourth place finish for the day and fourth place for the contest, but he was booby-trapped. He entered 'Schweinfurt' into his Cambridge data logger as a turnpoint, but there were two Schweinfurt turnpoints, one an airfield, #98, one a nuclear power plant, #97, and they were only six kilometers apart. Instead of flying to the listed turnpoint #97, Ron flew to unlisted turnpoint #98, and his two longest legs were disallowed. "I got a reassuring 'ding' each time I reached my turnpoint," Ron said, "and with GPS there's no reason to look down and check." Holger Karow,

## "From the Team Captain's perspective"



So that's it! Were it not for the last competition day I would be writing an entirely different epilog. This is the nature of competition. I remember that famous commercial for the Wide World of Sports where the ski-jump guy loses it about half way down and careens out of control to crash at the bottom. "The thrill of victory and the agony of defeat". We've seen both.

In our final get together before the closing ceremonies, I tell our Team we can all go home with our heads held high. We did our best, gave 150%, and met our Mission Statement of bringing home Team honors. While we stung from the thought of what could have been, there was no reason to be ashamed. After all I said, "the U.S. was number 1 in the World Cup 13 of 15 days."

The last 5 years as Chairman of the U.S. Soaring Team Committee and Captain of the U.S. Team for WGC 97 and 99 have been very rewarding experiences for my family and me. I have tried to develop the U.S. Soaring Team into one that all countries would like to emulate and certainly one that the members of the SSA would be proud of. I pass the baton to my successor with the satisfaction that the U.S. Soaring Team is in good position both organizationally and financially.

It is only appropriate that I thank those that helped make our Team a success but I refrain for lack of space and the fear that I will leave someone out. I must however thank all the friends and members of the SSA who gave their time and money to make our Team a success. We met our objective of fully funding our Team with money to spare. The excess funds (approximately \$38,000) will be added to the Robertson and Wood funds with a small carry-forward to the World Championship account for the 2001 contest in South Africa.

The many letters and e-mails we received validated our purpose and bolstered our spirits especially in the final days when we lost some ground. Seeing our friends at the contest is always fun and the numbers continue to grow. I hope that everyone will continue to support the U.S. Soaring Team, its' pilots and crews, and most of all, the concept that the pilots of the U.S.A. are the best in the World.

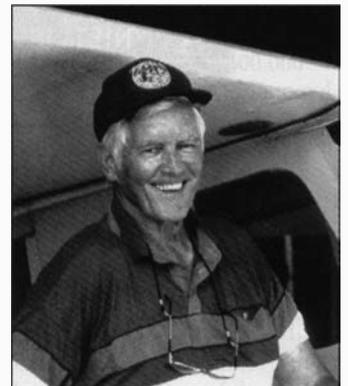
– Mark Huffstutler  
U.S. Soaring Team Captain

Germany, won the gold with 6,623 points. Jan Andersen, Denmark, won the silver with 6,578, and Bruno Gantenbrink slipped to third and the bronze medal with 6,452 points. John Buchanan was one point behind Gantenbrink, but went home without a medal. Tabery's last place finish on the final day dropped him to 11th place, and Ray Gimmey was 21st.

The real drama for the final day was in the 15-Meter Class. Coming out of a turnpoint in the Czech Republic, Karl Striedieck – the loner's loner – broke from team flying and made a bold decision to leave the pack. Forty-two sailplanes went one way, and Karl headed south alone for what looked like stronger lift. The terrain was higher, he didn't connect, and shortly he was on the ground... the only landout in the Class for the day. Crews and spectators watched in shocked disbelief as it happened on the big screen. The three Italian pilots, all flying Ventus 2s, team flew to perfection and finished 1-2-3 for the day. It was enough to give Italy's Giorgio Galetto a total of 6,618 points and the gold medal, and teammate Stefan0 Ghorzo 6,537 and the silver. Steven Raimond of the Netherlands had 6,463 points for the bronze. Bill Bartell flew the contest somewhere between consistent and brilliant and was fourth place finisher in the 15-Meter Class, only 15 points out of third. Karl really dominated the contest – even the practice days – but his disastrous final day dropped him from first to twenty-second. In the end, after their team had dropped from contention, even the Germans were rooting for Karl to win. With the unenviable task of reporting the day to SSA's web site, I paraphrased 'Casey at the Bat' and wrote "Somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout, but there is no joy in Bayreuth, Karl Striedieck landed out."

Germany won the team standings with 902 points, trailed by France and the Netherlands. We were sixth, no better or worse than our standing in St. Auban. It was a disheartening end to a contest where we almost had the medals in our grasp... no better example of the joy of victory, the agony of defeat. Always a champion, Karl showed up at the closing night dinner wearing lederhosen, a feathered tyrolean hat, and a smile. At the awards ceremony that wrapped it up, Peter Ryder said "On Day One, 122 sailplanes were launched, and on Day Seven 122 sailplanes landed safely." For the U.S. team, this contest lasted one day too many. But there's always the next century... South Africa, 2001.

**About the Author:** Charles "Chuck" O'Mahony is a frequent contributor to *Soaring Magazine* and freelances for various other aviation publications. His hardback book, *Blue Battlefields*, details his personal recollections of some 71 combat missions flown in WWII. He has authored numerous articles for *Soaring Magazine* on various World Soaring Championships and for several years has furnished the article for the SSA Annual Convention. Chuck flew the B-26 in WWII but now flies sailplanes for relaxation and enjoyment. He is a long-time resident of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.



# Help Fund The Future of United States Soaring Teams...

As you have just read our soaring teams have a long and proud history of international participation. Over the last several years the opportunity to compete internationally has grown as more classes become sanctioned by the FAI. More teams and eligible pilots puts the title of World Champion within the reach of entirely new segments of the soaring community including Club, World and Junior pilots. The chart above shows when each FAI class participated in their first World Gliding Championship. Notice the recent growth in classes and events.

FAI Classes Eligible for Competing in World Soaring Championships		
Class	Year	Championship
Open	1937	Germany
Two Place*	1952	Spain
Standard	1958	Poland
15-Meter	1978	France
World	1997	Turkey
Junior	1999	Holland
18-Meter	2001	Spain
Club	2001	Australia
Feminine	2001	Lithuania

\* Eliminated 1958

## An urgent need...



More teams, eligible pilots and international events have stretched team funding well past the breaking point putting our teams ability to compete internationally at risk.

## Contributions make it happen...

While many competing teams receive government assistance our teams rely on a mix of direct contributions and perpetual trust income to compete internationally.

Direct contributions are immediately available to the team at their full value. Participating in the SSA sweepstakes, buying a raffle ticket at a contest or sending a check to the SSA for team funding are all examples of direct contributions so critical to fielding our soaring teams. Perpetual trust income has become increasingly important to fielding our teams internationally. This type of contribution is perpetual as the funds are invested with the income used to sponsor teams perpetually. Robertson Trust contributions provide a critical, stable, long-term, source of team funding.



## A long term strategy?

Since both types of contributions are tax deductible, a long-term contribution strategy to minimize tax burden and maximize support might incorporate comfortable direct contribution every two years and larger, trust contributions with less frequency. How much to contribute is determined by each of our individual circumstances. Every dollar counts.



## Now is the time...

Not all competition happens in the air. Often it is what happens on the ground months before World Soaring Championships that makes the difference.



Adequate team funding is where it all starts. Our international competitors are doing what it takes to compete and win and so should we. If our soaring teams are going to compete internationally they need our support. While most of us can't be in the cockpit we can still do our part to make sure our pilots have the opportunity to compete and win.

Please make a direct contribution to the U.S. Soaring Teams or a perpetual contribution to the Robertson Trust today!

### Robertson Trust Contributions

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