



## USA SOARING TEAMS

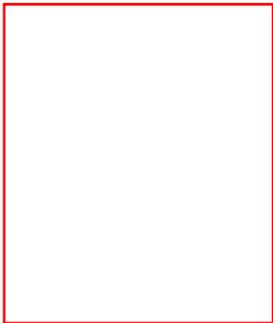
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## US Soaring Team Day Reports & Results



Saturday, December 29

**27th World Gliding Championships**, Mafikeng, South Africa, December 18-31, 2001. Check this page for daily updates.



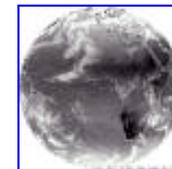
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## Day Report - December 29

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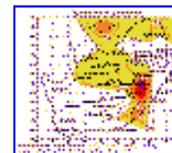
**NEWS FLASH- USA! USA! 15-Meter pilot Gary Ittner wins the day in South Africa with a speed of 120.2 Kph and moves into 1st overall - by one point! He was so fast today he even out ran Team Captain Gary Kemp's camera on the finish. Doug Jacobs wins the day in Standard class with a flight of 118.8 Kph.**



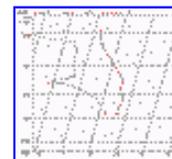
0900 GMT  
Satellite  
12/29/01

### December 29 Preliminary Scores

Day	Place	Points	Pilot	#	Overall	Points	Task/flown/speed	Contest Day
10		836	R. Gimmey	7V	13	7045	421 km 123 Kph	Day 9
14		823	J. Payne	HW	11	7107	421 km 119 Kph	Day 9
8		934	K. Striedieck	KS	10	7454	463.5 km 115.8 Kph	Day 9
1		1000	G. Ittner	P7	1	8045	475.4 km 120.5 Kph	Day 9
25		784	C. Garner	W3	17	6477	402.6 km 105.0 Kph	Day 9
1		1000	D. Jacobs	DJ	15	6660	402.6 km 118.8 Kph	Day 9



T-Storms?  
12/29/01

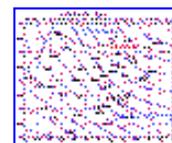


Sounding  
12/29/01

See all the scores on the official web site - [here](#) \* Land Out

### From The Weatherman

This morning we have particularly clear conditions with excellent visibility. The weather balloon was still visible to the naked eye at 55 000 ft!!!!!!! During the course of the morning some cloud appeared about 70-100km to the northeast. The existence of this is supported by the Irene (Pretoria) upper air sounding. With the upper air sounding for Mafikeng available at around 07:15 it soon became apparent that we can expect blue conditions for a large portion of the day with thermal tops set to be around 10000 ft and as the temperatures increase into the task area we may see cloud bases up to 11 000ft. There is a 20% probability for thunderstorms in the task area to with the first signs of over development expected to the southwest. Our expected maximum temperature today will be 30 °C and going as high as 34 °C in places in the task area.



Winds Aloft  
12/29/01

### Today's Tasks

For more information on today's tasks see the official sight under tasks. [WGC Site](#)



WGC  
Scores

Class	Task Type	Distance
Open	AAT Assigned Speed Task	424.73 km

15-Meter  
Standard

AST Assigned Speed Task  
AST Assigned Speed Task

464.21 km  
402.6 km



[WGC Site Link](#)

[Mirror Site](#)

### Tracking

Several GPS tracking units are being used to show the flight path of competitors. These tracks, despite some initial problems, are now displayed in near real time on the official web site. To view these tracks go to the official web site and look under tracking. It looks like the Standard class will be carting trackers today based on the dramatic reshuffling in the scores that occurred yesterday.

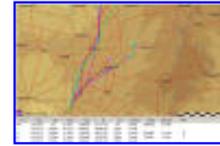
### Tracking Samples From Today - Click on image



And they are off!  
Tracking just after the start.  
Click to expand.



Approaching the first turn.



Heading for second turn.



[Photo Gallery](#)



[Meet the Team](#)

### WGC Traces On Web

Want to see how the top pilots achieve those amazing speeds? Many of the actual GPS flight logs from the first days of the championships are now available on the web. You can download these logs and have a look with any of the flight analysis software available including SeeYou. Thanks to John Leibacher for organizing the logs and posting to Günther Eichhorn's [Soaring Server](#). To find the logs [go here](#). The logs are also available on the official site.



[Time in South Africa](#)

### Bulletin 20, Saturday, December 29 - John Good

Yesterday proved to be a schizophrenic day – and one of the trickiest yet at Mafikeng. The forecast was the best of the contest, and through mid-afternoon the day lived up to expectations; pilots reported lift as strong as 10 knots to nearly 12,000' MSL. There was a less streeting than expected, but this was of little concern, with great lift readily available in most areas. Besides, the best cloud streets of the day before didn't develop until later in the afternoon, so most pilots expected another easy run upwind on their final task leg.



[Read Jim Payne's Day 6-9 Report](#)  
Adobe PDF



Jackie Payne - Jim's crew Photo Gary Neep

It didn't work out that way. Although the forecast had suggested that lift would persist late into the evening, most pilots found that conditions were noticeably weaker by 4:30, and verging on desperate by 5:30. What little streeting had been evident earlier was gone by 4 pm, and the final leg was no piece of cake, except for those who started reasonably early and flew fast. The result was a considerable shakeup in scores and standings.



Pencil glide

It wasn't a great day for the US pilots. Standard class had an assigned area task and both Chip Garner and Doug Jacobs had great first legs, which led them to conclude that the right strategy was to go long in both turn areas, to avoid being under the declared 3:30 minimum time for the day. Like many others, they were caught in the rapidly weakening conditions on the final leg. Doug landed about 25 miles out in a large, high-quality, surprisingly remote field. Chip diverted east and landed at an airstrip about 20 miles out, for a relatively painless aero retrieve. The big news in Standard class was that New Zealand's John Coutts, who'd been flying almost flawlessly, was unable to get home. He thus dropped from first to third in the overall standings, putting Mike Young of Great Britain on top.



Open Grid

In Open class, both Ray Gimmey and Jim Payne were among the many pilots with good early runs who waited a bit long to head for home. They used their long wings to advantage and managed to stagger home just as the day died completely, but their speeds suffered. Brothers Laurens and Oscar Goudriaan (the first syllable is pronounced "how", with a guttural "h") of South Africa did things exactly right and finished first and second for the day. This allowed Oscar to take over first place from Holger Karow, who was among those that struggled on the final leg of the task.



17 Ray Gimmey landing in the BSM 328L9 Photo Karl Striedieck

In 15-Meter class, Gary Ittner had a reasonable run, but also got caught in the weakening conditions: he wound up 10th for the day. Karl Striedieck was among the last to finish, as the day was nearly dead. The big news was that many of the class leaders got in trouble. Stephano Ghiorzo of Italy, who'd been leading, landed out. The result is that Gary now stands third in the cumulative standings, just 8 points out of second and about 130 shy of the lead. With daily point swings twice that large rather common at Mafikeng, it's still anyone's race.

Molly Jacobs was among a group that paid an impromptu visit to the local outdoor stadium yesterday. This is a giant, incongruous thing, worthy of the Olympics or the World Cup. It sits on the north edge of town, easily visible from the airport about five miles away. It should by rights have been locked up tight, but the visitors found it wide open, with friendly groundskeepers happy to show them around. They got to run around the track, inspect the luxury boxes, and in all had a grand tour. The stadium is rarely used, but is kept in fine repair, and there are hopes that the South African football (i.e. soccer) team will soon pay a visit. In terms of exceeding any local need, this stadium is a match for the Mafikeng airport and its 14,700' runway.



Mafikeng Stadium, located at the north edge of town, 5 mi from airport

Today's forecast could be called cautiously optimistic. Lift should be 6 knots to perhaps 11,000' MSL, but there is also a 20% chance of thunderstorms throughout the task area. Pilots were no doubt wondering whether this was like the 20% of recent days, during which no storms were seen, or the 20% of the practice period, which seemed to mean that at least a few afternoon and evening storms would reliably be evident. Another problem is an influx of cooler and moister air from the northeast, which should reach the airfield by mid-afternoon, and could invade the task area to the south.



One theme of this contest is the Vryburg Road. Vryburg (pronounced "Fryburg") is a town 150 km southwest. The road runs from Mafikeng to Vryburg, the direction from which most final glides are done. Thus, most retrieves (and there have been plenty of them during this contest) start with a drive along the Vryburg road. A good many crews here have probably seen enough of this road by now. The road is straight, the surface is generally good and the speed limit is a brisk 120 kph in most areas, but slow-moving traffic and the occasional oncoming donkey cart will keep you on

your toes and limit your overall speed (if you happen to encounter a South African thunderstorm, you may be restricted to walking speed). The road points almost directly at the setting sun, so you learn to keep your windshield clean and to be on the lookout for cars that are slow to turn on their lights.

But the real fun starts when you leave this road. With luck, your pilot has obtained good driving directions from the farmer in whose field he landed (navigation by dead reckoning is not recommended). Even so, nearly all the road are dirt, generally of reasonable quality (though this can vary a lot depending on recent weather), but with occasional rough sections to prevent you from getting into any sort of high-speed groove. We've found that the farmers' driving directions are generally accurate, but not always easy to follow: "At the stop sign, turn left into a driveway, then right at the first gate." This was quite correct, but we weren't prepared for the gate to be a full 20-minute drive from the stop sign, along a narrow sandy driveway.



A handheld GPS receiver is quite useful (it reassured us that the endless driveway was in fact taking us toward the glider), but not a reliable substitute for driving directions. On the first day, Ugo Paolillo (an Italian Open-class pilot) landed in the same field as Doug Jacobs. His crew was using GPS-only navigation, and took more than an hour to cover the final 2 km. The farmer spotted their trailer wandering back and forth in the distance, and we set off in our car to flag them down and lead them to the muddy Nimbus 3.



We've heard stories of remote retrieves for which aerial scouting was essential (Ray Gimmey's now-legendary outlanding of Dec 22 is one example). Gillian Spreckley told of a retrieve during which her husband Brian, with trailer in tow, was following the directions of a spotter airplane to a glider in a very remote field. "Turn right onto a dirt road, about 100 meters ahead," said the pilot. Brian was puzzled: "I see no turn here." "Just there, on your right, a winding dirt road leading north – about 4 km along that road you'll find the glider," said the pilot. Brian stopped and inspected the "road".

"Sorry," he reported, "but it's a dry river bed."

Really detailed topographic maps would have been useful here at Mafikeng. These are

apparently not available locally – the best maps we’ve been able to find depict a vast area, and certainly don’t show local farm roads. I think a good rule for flying in any area that’s even moderately remote would be for the crew to have a handheld GPS receiver and a really top-quality map (the map should include a lat-lon grid, so the glider’s position can easily be plotted). If there is cellphone coverage (it’s surprisingly good here in South Africa, though not quite perfect) then both pilot and crew should have a cellphone with a well-charged battery.

It’s now 3:30 pm. The pilots are now far enough away to be out of radio range. Initial reports indicated that conditions were weaker than forecast, but apparently better lift was found some 50 km on course (initial task legs are to the southeast). There is some sign of overdevelopment well to the south and, unfortunately, tasks for all classes will take them there. Everyone is now unsure what to expect late in the day – not many pilots remain who haven’t a story to tell about getting caught 80 km out as the lift goes from 4 knots to 1 knot, seemingly within 15 minutes.



### Saturday, December 29 - Gary Kemp

Today, there was some confusion as to the start of the briefing, but it was finally held at the regular time. Tasking was in the 400km range with the 15 meter taking off first and a task of about 287 miles and then going down slightly from there to the Open at 404km . It is much hotter today and Major Medlin of the Air Force Academy is covered up completely, he was a glorious red. The cadets have been busy trying to get rides in the Scheibe motor glider and the little 250kilo tow plane the Samba.

The conditions seem better and at 4:08 it still seems plenty hot, we have heard pilots at 11,000 feet out on course and Jim Payne reported one 11 kt thermal although I think most of them are working at around 6 kts. Karl Striedieck went off well ahead and he is giving useful intelligence to his team pilot Gary Ittner and the Standard Class ships, all of whom shared approximately the same first leg.

Yesterday, I got some good finish pictures yesterday but not many of our guys came blazing over dropping water, maybe today.

Some good pictures, guys finished fast, Gary said he was only 100 feet over final glide for a long way. The later starters caught him at the first turn but out of that he went directly on course toward some wispy cu, that worked and the pack went toward some cu off course that didn't, when I do that I land.



Ray and Jim were frustrated by being caught by the fur ball down the second leg. Doug Jacobs also won the day at a very good speed. He felt very good about the effort and it is great to have two pilots in position one for the day. Gary made up 98 points on first overall, passing second place by 47 points and being only 32 points behind first. (ED: Final Score sheet has Gary in the lead by one point!) He was so fast all I could get was his tail.....see picture.

**Editor** - Check out the competition. Visit the [German team](#), the [Canadian team](#), the [Dutch team](#), the [British team](#), the [Polish team](#), the [New Zealand team](#), the [Swiss team](#) and the [French team](#) as they all have excellent sites.



  
[Practice Day Reports](#)

## USA Soaring Team Results 2001/2002

To catch up on all the news for the 2001 U.S. World Soaring Teams see the [US Team News](#) for the top finishers in each class plus the U.S. pilots final standings. See the U.S. [Team Archive](#) for team background since 1950. As part of the Archive tour see the [US Team History](#) page for a complete listing of US Teams since 1950 or the [World Champions](#) page for a complete listing of champions since 1937.

US Team Web Additions? Problems? Corrections? [US Team Web Master](#)  
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