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**US Soaring Team Day Reports & Results**



**Monday, December 31- Last Day**

**27th World Gliding Championships,**  
Mafikeng, South Africa, December 18-31, 2001.



[Navigate Day Reports Main Page](#)

**Day Report - December 31**

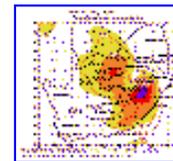
**NEWS FLASH- The Open class is launched but then the day is scrubbed. With the final day scrubbed the 27th World Soaring Championships in South Africa has been concluded. What a contest! The down to the wire finish with the overall leaders changing on an almost daily basis.**



0900 GMT Satellite 12/31/01

**From The Weatherman**

Rain, rain, and more rain. We all woke up to a very wet world this morning. The was satellite photo showing us a line of storms developing all the way out to the west. During the course of the morning the cloud line started breaking to the south. If we do manage to start flying today the competitors could expect a fairly tricky day. There is still a lot of cloud hanging around the airfield and getting away may be difficult. The condition of the air mass to the south is not clear as things have changed quite considerably during the morning. The apparent lack of cumulus formation down there may be indicative of fairly stable air. The maximum temperature expected today will be 28°C.



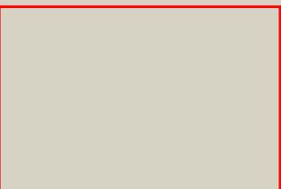
T-Storms? 12/31/01

**From The Organizers**

Its all over folks! As the sniffers failed to meet the minimum criteria, as announced at briefing by Brian Spreckley, Day 11 has been cancelled. A party of note is next on the agenda today as the pilots of the 27th World Gliding Championships de-rig for the final time at Mafikeng International Airport. As Dick Bradley so aptly put



Weather Map 12/31/01



it at at briefing this morning in the words of John Lennon "... you're such a lovely audience. we'd like to take you home...." . The official prize-giving takes place at 09h00Z tomorrow and fond farewells will be made as the eyes of the Worlds best gliders pilots turn to Rieti, Italy in 2003.



[WGC Scores](#)

### Final Standings - Top Ten

The final cumulative scores for the 27th World Soaring Championships in South Africa. The top ten and Team USA.



[WGC Site Link](#)

[Mirror Site](#)

### OPEN CLASS

Place	Points	Reg	Pilot	Country	Glider
1	8625	AS	O. Goudriaan	RSA	Asw 22ble
2	8509	22	M. Sommer	D	Asw 22ble
3	8414	TM	A. Kunath	BRA	Nimbus 4
4	8341	HM	L. Goudriaan	RSA	Asw 22ble
5	8325	X	H. Karow	D	Nimbus 4m
6	8293	VB	T. Bode	D	Asw 22ble
7	8262	EC	E. Napoleon	F	Nimbus 4t
8	8209	FM	I. Renner	AUS	Ash 25e
9	8121	N1	P. Harvey	GB	Nimbus 4t
10	7846	IQ	D. Schmid/ a. Keller	CH	Ash 25
11	7842	7V	R. Gimney	USA	Asw 22ble
13	7816	HW	J. Payne	USA	Nimbus 4



[Photo Gallery](#)



[Meet the Team](#)

### 15-Meter Class

Place	Points	Reg	Pilot	Country	Glider
1	8867	WM	W. Meuser	D	Ventus 2ax
2	8779	1R	S. Raimond	NL	Asw27
3	8619	VP	J. Centka	POL	Asw27
4	8599	P7	G. Ittner	USA	Ventus C
5	8467	EX	A. Horn	D	Ventus 2ax
6	8405	EW	F. Hoyeau	F	Ventus 2a
7	8309	ACH	H. Romeijn	NL	Ventus2b
8	8221	VS	S. Ghiorzo	I	Ventus 2a
9	8203	5A	H. Breidahl	DK	Ventus 2a
10	8148	721	E. Johnston	GB	Ls6
15	7784	KS	K. Striedieck	USA	Asw27



[Time in South Africa](#)



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

### Standard Class

Place	Points	Reg	Pilot	Country	Glider
1	8609	DA	L. Aboulin	F	Discus 2
2	8596	57	M. Young	GB	Ls8
3	8592	EF	J-m. Caillard	F	Discus 2
4	8455	232	J. Coutts	NZL	Ls8
5	8215	80	A. Davis	GB	Discus 2

6	8153	LB	R. Briigliadori	I	Discus 2
7	7989	X1	M. Ichikawa	JPN	Ls8
8	7808	SB	B. Selen	NL	Ls8
9	7793	C64	P. Crabb	IRL	Ls8
10	7650	UG	T. Claffey	AUS	Ls8
13	7539	DJ	D. Jacobs	USA	Ls8
16	7296	W3	J (c) Garner	USA	Discus 2

### 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.

### Bulletin 22, Monday, December 31 - John Good

If you were a fiendish type, had control of the weather and wished to see a soaring day with a fair share of hazard and the maximum of luck, you'd probably order up conditions like yesterday's. With cumulus clouds rapidly overdeveloping in the area where all gliders were tasked, the problems would naturally be greatest for the class that was last to start. Yesterday, that was the 15-Meter class. As many pilots including Gary Ittner could tell you, it was about as far from a straightforward and honest racing day as soaring weather gets.

The conditions at launch time looked slightly less dire than the weather forecast had predicted, and the best cumulus lay to the east, where all classes were sent on similar Assigned Area Tasks. But the cumulus built rapidly – too rapidly – and by the time the Standard class task opened, it was clear that there would be some significant storms to deal with. In retrospect, a task to the southeast and south would have worked much better, but there is no option at a World Gliding Championships for last-minutes task changes.

The Standard class was off first, followed by Open and 15-Meter classes. The problem was at the second turn area, a circle of 40-km radius with its center some 130 km east of Mafikeng. The purpose of a large turn area is in part to cope with unreliable weather.

But when you're dealing with African thunderstorms, 40 km may be too small. It was yesterday – the storm grew to the full size of the circle, and beyond. The first two classes were fortunate – there was still lift (occasionally good lift) near the rain and lightning, and the storm consisted of two cells with a slot between them that offered a route into the turn area from its southwestern edge. Most pilots in these two classes made use of this slot, though as you'd imagine most didn't proceed much



beyond the outer edge of the circle (there's a limit to how far a wise man will stick his head into an angry lion's mouth). A few pilots found a route into the circle by passing south of the storm and nipping the southeastern edge of the circle; in both classes, these pilots did the best.

Gary was with the leaders in the 15-Meter class, all of whom were no doubt wishing their task had opened at least 20 minutes earlier. Gary had information from the US Standard and 15-Meter class pilots who'd been through the area. They reported that the slot between the two cells had worked, but looked to be closing. Jim Payne did a reconnaissance mission to investigate the southern and southeastern edge for Gary, but found that this was now hopeless.



As the 15-Meter pilots approached the second turn area, it was clear that the storm now entirely filled it and that getting into it would be difficult indeed. As they flew north along its western edge, the lift remained good, but they were being crowded to the west, away from the edge of the turn area that they had to reach to get credit for completing the task. Cloudbase was lowering and they found themselves flying in the "wispsies," with reduced visibility. Gary reasoned that chances were rapidly diminishing and the short route would be best, so he turned right for about a 5-mile run through rain. He was able to reach the turn area and then glide back west to where there was still sun on the ground. But the storm had sucked most of the energy out of the air. He found a weak climb, but this was not enough to reach the better conditions, now well to the west of the storm. He landed in a good field that soon became a quagmire of mud as heavy rains hit.

The other 15-Meter pilots continued north and despite the restricted visibility managed to find a reasonably rain-free route into the turn area. They used the same path out again, and thus preserved enough altitude to glide west where soarable conditions could still be found. The result was that Werner Meuser of Germany regained first place, while Gary dropped to 4th overall. He can take some satisfaction that it took one of the flukiest tasks of a very tricky contest to push him out of the top spot.

Yesterday's weather is just about the worst a contest can encounter. It was obviously flyable, and there is a strong tradition that tasks should be set on any flyable day. Just as obviously, yesterday's tasks were bound to involve much luck and no small amount of danger to pilots. You're tempted to conclude that there is some point past



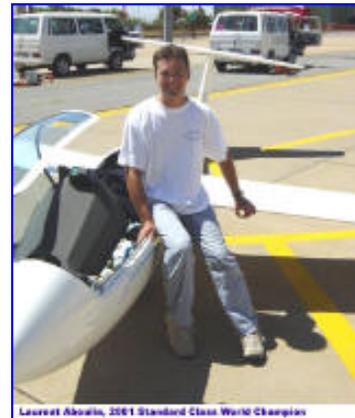
which a task should not be set even though gliders can stay in the air. I think everyone would prefer weather that's clearly unflyable to conditions that lure pilots into the sky, only to scare, frustrate and disappoint them. Of course, I'm writing this from the perspective of a member of the US Team. No doubt there are many who take the view that variable weather and the luck it brings are

as much a part of the sport as ailerons and tow ropes. I don't disagree, but feel that some standard other than "If we can go, we go, regardless" might be the best approach.



The Standard class task yesterday was set at 3.5 hours. In view of the very dubious weather that was forecast, there were many who felt it should have been three hours at most (3.5 hours has proven to be a long time to fly even on a good day at Mafikeng). In addition, the turn areas were not very large, except for the second one (which proved to be far too small for the job, as it was entirely filled with a thunderstorm). The result was not a good task. Not one pilot was able to fly for the full 3.5 hours, and many were far under this minimum time. Having escaped the storm to the east, they would have loved to fly further, but there was no additional turn area in which to accumulate distance. The two French pilots got a big boost in score because they found a route to the far side of the second turn area which earned them more distance. A number of other pilots were as fast or faster, but could not make use of their speed to grab more miles.

But some sort of justice was done here, as the extra distance he covered enabled Laurent Aboulin to re-take the overall lead. He has thus completed a remarkable comeback from his disastrous 55-point score on Day 4. At the time I believed that such a recovery was scarcely possible, but his skill and the volatile weather and scoring at Mafikeng showed that it was. To put this in perspective, consider that if he'd merely had a terrible day (scoring, say, 500 points), he'd have a huge lead, instead of the small advantage he now enjoys (estimated by various preliminary scoresheets as something between 12 and 17 points).



We awoke this morning to drenching rain, and I doubt anyone thought it would be possible to fly. But by 10 am the sky was clearing from the southwest, and by 11 the sun was shining. Gliders were quickly assembled and pilots were keenly interested in the weather briefing at the (delayed) pilots' meeting. It was a strange one. The information and forecast models clearly indicate just two possibilities: either the day will remain blue and hopelessly stable, or we'll see rapid buildups and giant thunderstorms.

It's now 1 pm. All gliders are gridded and of course most pilots are eager for one more chance to fly. The sky is blue except for high clouds receding to the north. The sniffer has been launched and is reporting weak lift to about 1500' AGL. It's not clear whether all classes will be able to fly, but the sun is certainly hot and we all feel that the lift must improve.



The end of a big contest is always



tinged with sadness. The hopes of only a few pilots have been realized. Human nature causes many to dwell not on the interesting and occasionally excellent flights they made, but on the opportunities missed. Sound friendships built over several weeks are about to

be severed. A large assortment of equipment such as tiedown stakes and ropes, hoses for waterballast, umbrellas, lawn chairs, buckets, etc. is about to become surplus junk.

At 1:30, the decision has been made to scrub the day for the Standard class (at the back of today's grid). There is celebration at glider DA – Laurent Aboulin is the World Champion. He took a strange route to get there, but in my view turned in much the best performance here. The Open-class gliders are launching, though the sniffer has rarely been above 2000' AGL.

It's just before 2 pm, and the 15-Meter class has been told to put 'em in the box. Gary Ittner will not get his chance to avenge yesterday's landout -- Werner Meuser of Germany is World Champion. The Open class remains aloft, grinding around in low, weak, blue conditions. I think we know the outcome now.



It's now 2:20, and Open-class gliders are buzzing the airfield, doing high-speed pullups and trailing waterballast. Their task has been scrubbed. Oscar Goudriaan of South Africa is World Champion. WGC 2001 is now history.

**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.