

# AN APPEAL TO ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE 1-26

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This article is being submitted to *Soaring* as an expanded response to the appeal issued by Tony Doherty in the last 1-26 Association Newsletter. The essence of Mr. Doherty's appeal is that it is certainly time for all 1-26 owners to become class conscious, and to develop into an active one-design association. The advantages are all there, simply waiting for some real organization.

The basic limitation in Mr. Doherty's approach, I feel, is that it is directed solely to 1-26 owners, whereas the development of a truly active one-design class depends on *all* 1-26 pilots, whether they have their own ships, borrow from friends, or rent from the many fine commercial operations throughout the Schweizer dealership. With this broader participation in mind, let us consider in some detail how we might rally the interest that will encourage the growth of a true 1-26 Class Association.

## II. FORMULATING THE PROBLEM

The "interest factors" to be exploited are something like the following:

A) The sailplane pilot (owner, renter, etc.) soars because, above all, he loves to soar. Thus, any 1-26 association should emphasize the *soaring* itself by making it more exciting, more challenging, more rewarding, and yet still *easy* and *relaxed*. Too many complications take the fun out of any activity.

B) The sailplane pilot loves to attain goals, thus gaining personal satisfaction in his own accomplishments. The FAI goals (Silver, Gold and Diamond badge legs and awards) are certainly a fine performance incentive, but not nearly enough. Certainly some more goals should be placed before the 1-26 pilots to stimulate their soaring activities, especially on a one-design basis.

C) The sailplane pilot enjoys the social contacts that come with his flying. The common interest in soaring binds all sailplane pilots together, but an even closer relationship tends to develop among those competing on an equal basis with one another, so that comparing techniques, equipment and performances takes on special meaning and understanding.

The author enjoying a flight in his Schweizer 1-26. This orange and white ship was built from a kit in 1960 by Dr. Robert Chase and has been called the "queen of the home built 1-26's" by Paul Schweizer.

Photo by Tom Hirst



## III. PROPOSAL FOR ORGANIZATION AND SUGGESTED PURPOSES OF ORGANIZATION

The success in organizing the 1-26 Association lies on the *local* level, with the pilots and interested participants themselves. Local chapters will develop only if *someone* decides that he is going to found one, and takes the initiative to start the organization. This someone should either appoint himself and start talking, phoning and writing, or better still he should be picked by mutual consent from among a group already active in a given soaring region. The development of the 1-26 Association chapters should start *now* and is, I believe, more important at the moment than the development of 3-ship "flights," as suggested by Mr. Doherty. The reasons why this is so are apparent from the following suggestions.

The *purpose* of the 1-26 Association chapters should be first, on the local level, to sponsor easy weekend tasks, such as short goal-and-return flights or triangles, similar to the usual sailing courses. The flights should be designed to take about an hour under existing meteorological conditions, so that several rental pilots can have a crack at the task in one or more available rental or club ships, and without incurring burdensome rental fees. One 1-26 from a commercial fleet of several, such as at Les Arnold's Sky sailing Airport in Fremont, could be set aside on task days for those rental pilots wishing expressly to compete, leaving the other ships open for normal local flying activities.

The flights should be planned so that any necessary retrieve is relatively short and easy. The club towplane, or one of the commercially available towplanes, could be designated for retrieves on task days. One or more retrieve cars and trailers, with crews rotating from weekend to weekend, or formed by nonflying family members, could also be standing by. Let me emphasize, however, that the tasks should be easy enough, or at least flown in suitable conditions, so that odds are very high that the pilots can complete the task, even though they may be fairly inexperienced.

Points could be awarded for speed (which implies skill in ship handling and thermal soaring),