

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Austria Addendum

Sir:

Upon reading my Austria accident account in the June issue of *Soaring*, I noticed an error which I traced back to my original manuscript. It has little to do with the accident described, but is significant to any discussion of spin-recovery techniques.

The error is in the last sentence of the third paragraph, where it reads, "... spin recovery could be similarly effected by full nose-down elevator followed immediately by full anti-spin rudder." The "full nose-down elevator" should have read "partial nose-down elevator".

Most airplanes and sailplanes normally spin with their noses well down, and full nose-down elevator during recovery initiation would be unnecessary, and possibly dangerous, because the aircraft would be forced into a negative-G condition. Normally, neutral elevator or partial nose-down elevator provides optimum recoveries. In stable ships that have good stalling characteristics and reasonably limited nose-up elevator power, such as the Skylark 4 and most Schweizer sailplanes I have flown, excellent spin recoveries can be made with rudder alone and the stick can remain full aft during the initial part of the pull-out.

On the other hand some sailplanes that have sharp stalling characteristics and high nose-up elevator power will not recover at all unless the control stick is brought at least part way forward when counter-spin rudder is applied. The Tiny Mite was one sailplane with such characteristics.

I can only recall three times that I have found it necessary to use full nose down elevator for a spin recovery. The first was during an intentional solo spin in a Pratt-Read sailplane. I later discovered that this sailplane was placarded against solo spins with my cockpit weight, and it was too tail heavy to safely spin. The second was with an old Schweizer 1-23A sailplane in which I was making an extended five-turn spin. I never found a good answer to why it occurred, but after about three turns the 1-23's nose started to come up and the spin flattened considerably. It took full nose-down elevator and full anti-spin rudder to effect recovery, and then only after a delay of two additional turns in the spin. Very possibly this sailplane also was tail heavy beyond recommended limits, at least with my 160-pound pilot weight.

The third case was during the recovery attempt with the Standard Austria that I described in the June issue. Here the ship stalled unintentionally while thermalling in gusty conditions, and I had applied full forward stick before the sailplane actually started its abnormal nose-high spin. By "nose high", I mean the Austria's nose during the spin was approximately 20 to 45 degrees below the horizon, whereas it is close to 60 degrees nose down in a normal spin. As you know, I was unsuccessful in this latter spin-recovery attempt, and the cause has not yet been determined.

DICK JOHNSON

Vexations & Vandalism

Sir:

Last Saturday I flew from Prescott to a point nine miles NNE of Laguna Pueblo in my Schweizer 2-32, 294 mile., 15 miles short of tying the National Record.

At 280 miles out I was nearly 14,000 feet high and within easy gliding of Albuquerque, not even counting the tail wind. I was shot down by a sinker which cost 7,000 feet of altitude in six minutes.

This was following by landing damage. (I hit an unobserved road marker post with the right wing.) That night the aircraft was vandalized and someone smashed the canopy. This was followed by a highly complex walkout.

A real heart breaker! But as they say: "Soaring is fun."

JOSEPH C. LINCOLN

Phoenix, Arizona

Red Dog's Rebuttal

Sir:

At the risk of incurring the ire of a medicine man from New York (Webster defines a "Shaman" as a medicine man) with any more "rambling reminiscences," and since I don't know my knoodling pin from a galloping rod or any of the technical argot of soaring and can't write about *that*, and will probably draw further renunciations from up New England way for reporting the intrinsic difference between the making of a long flight from Odessa or Marfa (inevitably), and furthermore, since the weather in general has been abysmally foul in these parts (but not from blistering heat) my erstwhile sunny disposition has soured to the extent that I am taking up the cudgel to debunk the Summary of Long Soaring Flights of 1965 as so ably and *erroneously* reported in the May issue of *Soaring*. Not that this biased type of report is not unusual coming from a California group vying to outdo a Texas group whose members are known for their modesty and a couple of whom (I think of E. J. Reeves and George Coder) are prime examples of the strong *silent* types.

Therefore, what we want to know (and I use the term "we" purposefully as I may need reinforcements if this is published) is: *Why in the Sam Hill did you leave the Sisu out of the Long Flights Report?*

True enough, most Sisu pilots are reluctant to report any flight short of 300 miles as being insignificant, but the statistics still bear out the fact that the Sisu are truly the winner in *all* categories except number of flights, and we freely concede that to the 1-26's. But, as regards *all other categories*, we beg to differ.

For example:

RANKING OF SAILPLANES

(by Average Distance)

Sailplane	Flights	Av. Dist.
1. Sisu	4	316.30
2. Prue std.	6	271.17

The above includes two flights with a 310.7 mile average by Dean Svec, Dale May's distance flight from Adrian (272.8 miles) and Al Parker's flight, during 1965, from Odessa to Elkhart, Kansas (371.0 miles).

In ranking of Pilots (by Total Distance

Flown) Dean Svec, with three flights totalling 866.8 miles (average 283.9 miles) is top man.

In the Ranking of Sites (by Average Distance Flown) we put Marfa, where 15 500-km triangles (average distance, 310.70 miles) were completed during the Marfa Camp.

Now we don't particularly want to rub it in but a little elementary arithmetic and a casual mention of a few other flights in Sisu at this point might be in order. For instance, the five Sisu entered in the 1935 National contest at Adrian averaged 230.9 miles on free-distance day, with the redoubtable Dale May winning the day with 272.8 miles. And this in weak conditions.

The old Lone Ranger, Al Parker seems to be able to coax a few miles out of the Sisu too. In *three flights alone* he flew a total of 1505.41 miles for an average of 501.8 miles per flight! Along the way he garnered the World's Distance Record, the Lilienthal Award, the World Coal Record and the Barringer Trophy. As a matter of fact Al's overall distance average per flight is pretty remarkable since he has been flying the Sisu. He has made a total of eight distance flights for a total of 3351.41 miles flown, averaging 418.92 miles per flight.

Just for the record, they are:

Odessa to Kimball, Nebr.	647.17 miles
Odessa to Great Bend, Texas	487.24 "
Odessa to Winfield, Kansas	474.00 "
Marfa to Springer, N.M.	423.00 "
Odessa to Elkhart, Kansas	371.00 "
Marfa to El Capitan, N.M.	317.00 "
Georgetown, Texas to Okla.	311.00 "
Odessa to Springer, N.M.	321.00 "

Total 3351.41 miles
Average, 418.92 miles per flight. And every flight Diamond distance or more, up to and including *double Diamond distance*.

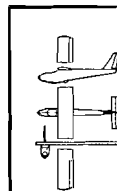
This is just a sample of many flights in Sisu. John Ryan has made several of over 400 miles. Dick Johnson made quite a long flight in one of these sterling machines in Argentina and Bill Ivans has made some very respectable flights (even if he is from California).

In all fairness I think we should concede that a few fairly good flights have been made by other type sailplanes from Odessa and Marfa, Texas. And it is rumored that there may be an influx of rubber machines in this area in the not too distant future. This should provide some scientific answers as to the reaction of plastics to the blistering heat of Texas.

RED DOG WRIGHT

Odessa, Texas

★ *Soaring bows to the vastly superior humility of the Texans, freely concedes the truly marvelous exploits of Sisu owners in general and of Mr. Parker in particular, but hastens to assure its readers that the outrageous letter printed above was written (at least partly) in jest. All non-Texans (and non-Sisu owners) may now carefully remove the knives, twisting as little in the process as possible—Ed.*



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