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CALENDAR

May 22, 6:00PM - General Membership Meeting at Freehold - Organized Pot Luck Dinner before the meeting: We will try to 'organize' pot luck meals before the membership meetings at Freehold. This will allow everyone who wants to contribute to do so. Jim Sidway will act as coordinator. Please contact Jim to find out what you can bring. He will keep track of who brings what to which dinner so that everyone has a chance to contribute to one of four food categories over the course of the season. The categories are *Entree, Salad/Bread, Dessert* and *Beverage*. The goal is to have the proper balance of items from these four categories for each meal. Jim can be reached at jsidway@earthlink.net or **203-264-6170**. These pre-meeting meals have become a popular tradition. You are encouraged to participate and keep the tradition going.

Nutmeg News is the official publication of the Nutmeg Soaring Association, Inc. Edited by Jim Sidway, 211 Lum Lot Road, Southbury, CT 06488-1960 203.264.6170 jsidway@earthlink.net

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Editor: Jim Sidway

Approach Considerations at Difficult Sites

By David B. Rossetter

CFIIAG (ignore the IA part – it has been a long time!)

Nutmeg Instructor

Much of my early aviation career was spent flying sailplanes in the Midwest. Our home airport (Hinckley, IL) had one runway. 9/27 was 2,600 feet long and 250 feet wide. The highest obstacle within ½ mile of either end of the field was the August corn – about eight feet. Our normal operation consisted of landing the sailplanes on the north side of runway to roll up next to the launch line, which was on the south. Except for the heaviest ships on the hottest days, we did not have to pull the gliders back to launch. Compared to Freehold, flying out of Hinckley was not much of a challenge (except when we had to dodge the parachutists).

Teaching a student approaches involves learning and being aware of many factors. In this article, I intend to limit the discussion primarily to options that ensure we arrive at the right place on every approach. I will not get into issues of visual judgment, angles, how to control airspeed, deciding on an approach speed, coordinated turns, or landing techniques – although doing all those things correctly is strongly implied!

Different pilots use different techniques to judge where they are in the pattern: “I want to be 600 feet about here”, “the spot should be down 45 degrees here”, “I want to turn my base here”, etc. I prefer the “TLAR” method – That Looks About Right! But that is not what this article is all about. Let’s discuss approach and landing considerations that vary depending on the geography of different soaring sites.

When I teach a student how to plan and fly a landing pattern, I stress that one has to examine all aspects of the landing environment including the runway, approach, obstacles, weather, traffic, sailplane performance, other local considerations, and one’s own skills. This planning must begin long before the flight.

When thinking about the pattern and approach, one first considers all the options available. I like to break down the options into two categories: everything that allows you to land longer verses everything that allows you to shorten the approach. Ideally, you plan your pattern to land with an equal amount of either option to allow compensation for the inevitable unforeseen circumstances or less-than-perfect judgment. The goal is to stay in the middle of the “high/low slot”.

At Hinckley, I taught the students to plan flying the pattern with half spoilers (extending them at midfield). We started with a generally standard pattern that was modifiable depending on conditions.

The options available if one is low in the pattern include waiting longer to initially extend the spoilers, extend them less than one half (or close them), tighten the pattern, shift the pattern to compensate for wind, and increase the airspeed on final if there is a headwind (to take advantage of the wind gradient – less headwind at lower altitude – and ground effect).

If one is high, one can widen the pattern, open the spoilers sooner and more, shift the pattern to compensate for wind, and slip during the turn to final and on final. No 360’s late in the pattern!

In addition, one must fly the sailplane precisely (good airspeed control and turn coordination), have traffic awareness, and plan to land on the chosen spot. As an aside, I always stress having the final pattern planning (including checking the wind and picking a pattern airspeed), checklists, and radio calls finished before entering the pattern (at the correct altitude) so one can concentrate on flying.

Flying a pattern at Freehold is a bit more challenging! We have an unusually shaped runway (thanks to the creek) that does not really line up with the pavement, lots of tall trees on all sides, and hills on the north and east sides that really mess with any wind. If one approaches too short or low, there is no level ground to help out. Ground effect does not work above trees. Plus, landing in the trees is much more exciting than settling into a corn field! We do NOT worry about landing nice and short to avoid pulling the glider to the launch area.

In our planning we first want to choose a landing spot. When landing west (runway 30) a good spot is opposite the south side of where the paved taxiway intersects the paved runway. There are several advantages to this area. First, the field is much wider here giving lots of options on those days that the field is littered with aircraft on the ground. Second, the spot is far enough down the runway that there are more options available when the airborne judgment fails and you find yourself a little low. You now do have flat field available to help you make it to the spot.

Since our field is surrounded by the trees and hills, it is a good idea to plan a little steeper pattern than normal. I teach to plan to fly the pattern with 2/3 spoilers and to plan on extending them opposite the landing spot. A steeper approach gives a

pilot more options if low but fewer options if high. This is the tradeoff one must make when flying out of a challenging field. Fortunately, our runway is long enough (with the extension at the end) to still be safe.

In addition to the pattern options discussed above, one must consider the effect the trees and hills have on the approach. When the wind is blowing from the northwest or north, one can expect some additional sink on final to 30 as well as lots of turbulence. Consider adding an extra five knots or more (but fly it precisely) to the approach speed.

Finally, on runway 30 it is not possible to initially line up for the grass south of the pavement on final approach. The trees lining the creek get in the way! One has to first line up for the pavement until past the trees then make a small S-turn or slip to move over to the left. Flying this lineup maneuver is another good reason to have enough altitude (and precisely flown airspeed).

You still have all the options to avoid getting low that you did when you were flying in the flatlands. The risk of being a little high can be greater so you want to make sure your slipping skills are polished. However, it is possible (even at Freehold) to be too consistently high – especially on runway 12 (ever watched that creek coming up at you?). If every approach involves a slip then you are hanging out at the high end of that high/low slot and you might want to consider a wider downwind leg. In general, we have the same high/low slot we had in the Midwest, but the slope is steeper and the end of the slot is further down the field. Don't be tempted to land short once you feel the field is "made". A good pilot always lands on the spot! Of course, that spot may change depending on traffic.

All the same considerations are useful to review for off-field or strange airport landings. You have to give yourself time to evaluate the field for length, obstacles, landing spot, and weather and make your decision about how to best stay in the middle of the high/low slot. Don't wait for the last second!

So let's remember: at Freehold, there is no reason to make a short field landing over the trees. You simply eliminate a large percentage of your options by doing so. Pick your landing spot, plan your approach considering all the variables and fixed hazards, and follow the plan making adjustments as necessary.

Lets make this another safe season flying our of new airport!

MARCH 2004 MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 7:45 PM on March 26, 2004. President Bruce Stein Reported the Following:

The Pawnee engine repairs are completed at a cost of \$7,208 - most of the moving parts were replaced. A pre-heater for cold weather will be used, multi weight oil will be used, and the engine will be pickled during the winter storage period.

The Grob has returned from its 3,000 hour inspection and needs to be waxed to prevent moisture damage. Lubrication of specific parts is recommended and no lubrication of others should be done. If you are in doubt as to what to do ask. Drain holes in the aileron boxes should be kept open. Look in to the aileron boxes for water as part of preflight inspection.

FREEHOLD RADIO FREQUENCY IS NOW (122.85).

There will be a new form available to duty pilots when calling for the weather brief .The list will give each item in the order that its given to make recording the information less complicated for those who are not familiar with this procedure.

April 10 will be the opening day weather permitting; all possible hands will be needed.

Hangar construction is due to start soon, three weeks is the expected construction time.

We have a noise complaint form that should be completed in full by any Nutmeg member receiving a complaint at the field.

Runway improvements are still in limbo, think positive.

Remember the 122.85 Freehold Radio Frequency!

2004 Schedule

April 3: Safety Meeting

April 10: Opening Day

May 22: General Meeting - Freehold

June 21-26: Region 1 Contest

June 28- July 11: Encampment at Freehold

July 24: General Meeting - Freehold

September 25: General Meeting - Freehold

October: Mifflin Ridge (week of 4th or 11th?)

November 6: General Meeting - Freehold

November 13: Closing Day

2004 DUTY SCHEDULE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DUTY PILOT</u>	<u>INSTRUCTOR</u>	<u>PAWNEE</u>	<u>SUPER CUB</u>
Sat. 4/24	P. Meny		R. Ward	D. Rossetter
Sun. 4/25	K. Goldin	R. Ward	D. Page	S. Neal
Sat. 5/1	D. Jackson		T. Huber	
Sun. 5/2	D. Barody			
Sat. 5/8	J. Sidway			
Sun. 5/9	P. Scarpelli			
Sat. 5/15	J. Burke			
Sun. 5/16	R. Mayer			
Sat. 5/22	OPEN			
Sun. 5/23	R. McNamara			
Sat. 5/29	L. Herman			
Sun. 5/30	W. Rogg			
Sat. 6/5	L. Ramsdell			
Sun. 6/6	B. Stobbe			
Sat. 6/12	OPEN			
Sun. 6/13	L. Stoller			
Sat. 6/19	OPEN			
Sun. 6/20	R. Szigeti			
Sat. 6/26	M. Neal			
Sun. 6/27	A. Lennon			
Sat. 7/3	R. Duckworth			
Sun. 7/4	T. Bagnall			
Sat. 7/10	P. Quinn			
Sun. 7/11	D. Laitinen			
Sat. 7/24	K. Goldin			
Sun. 7/25	S. Barody			
Sat. 7/31	L. Mayer			
Sun. 8/1	P. Scarpelli			
Sat. 8/7	R. McNamara			
Sun. 8/8	L. Herman			
Sat. 8/14	M. Neal			
Sun. 8/15	A. Lennon			
Sat. 8/21	P. Quinn			
Sun. 8/22	W. Bagnall			
Sat. 8/28	L. Stoller			
Sun. 8/29	B. Stobbe			

The Duty Pilot schedule currently has a few open dates. Please take a look at it and add your name on an open day if you are able. The Duty Pilot is an extremely important part of our operation and the entire show runs much, much better when we have one on the field.

REMEMBER: If you cannot serve on your scheduled day you are responsible for finding a substitute. Please don't simply just not show up as this poses an inconvenience to those who come to fly (not to mention it is a sleazy thing to do).

Field Phone: 518-634-7346 (have this number with you when you fly!)

Office Phone: 518-634-7626 (Clem's Office).

Weather: 1-800-WXBRIEF (1-800-992-7433)

Don't forget the vast amount of weather data available on our web site at <http://nutmegsoaring.org> - click on the weather map graphic in the lower right of the home page. From there you can access METARs (reports), TAFs (forecasts), Winds and Temperatures Aloft and much more.