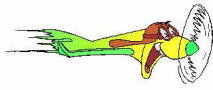
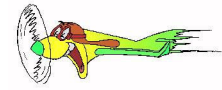


Huron County Airport



Scud Runner



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Inside this issue:

- | | |
|--|---|
| Pilot's Lounge
<i>(from the Manager)</i> | 1 |
| Squawk
<i>(from experience)</i> | 2 |
| Touch and Go
<i>(flying tips)</i> | 2 |
| Compass
<i>(about the airport)</i> | 2 |



"To most people, the sky is the limit. To those who love aviation, the sky is home."

Anonymous

Pilot's Lounge: Cluster Ballooning

By Sandy Gordley, Airport Manager

The balloons range in size from four to seven feet; depending on the mix of sizes, anywhere from 50 to 150 balloons may be needed. It takes a crew of fifteen to twenty people about an hour and a half to inflate the balloons. The inflated balloons are sealed using tape and cable ties, and are tied with nylon twine. The balloons are attached in groups of four or more to the ends of long nylon straps called risers; the risers are then attached to the pilot's harness. Different length risers are used to hold the balloons at different heights, in layers. More balloons are attached directly to the pilot's harness.

The pilot is in a harness designed for paragliding, which includes a rear-mounted emergency parachute. The pilot can stand up in the harness to take-off or land; there's also a little seat built into it, for greater comfort while flying. Bags of water ballast hang beside the pilot, and are used for maneuvering. The pilot also carries an altimeter, GPS and two-way radio. With the pilot tethered to the ground, the amount of ballast is adjusted so that the cluster balloon is just slightly buoyant, with just a pound or two of net lift. This allows for an initial rate of ascent of 100-200 feet per minute.



To control the altitude of the cluster balloon, the pilot takes off with more balloons than needed and carries ballast to balance out most of the excess lift. To level out or descend, the pilot releases or bursts balloons. To slow the descent or ascent again, the pilot releases ballast. The balloon may also gain a certain amount of lift during the flight due to solar heating of the balloons.

To make best use of the limited number of changes in rate of ascent/descent available, the pilot starts the flight by an ascent to altitude, noting the wind directions at different altitudes on the way up to, usually, 3000-5000 feet. After reaching the maximum altitude, the pilot levels out, and then descends to the altitude that had the wind direction that will let the pilot track the desired course.

On approach to landing, the pilot levels out at 100 feet or less, heading in the direction of an appropriate field or open area. The chase crew is directed out ahead of the balloon to meet it at landing. The number of landing attempts is limited by the available ballast. The pilot can throw a drop line to the crew and they then slow the balloon and the pilot bursts a few balloons and drops gently to the ground.

Squawk: *Pilot/Operator Responsibility*

By Sandy Gordley

It is the pilot/owner responsibility that all maintenance logs are filled out and done correctly:

FAR 91.405(a) is directed to “each owner or operator of an aircraft.” It requires that the owner or operator “shall ensure that maintenance personnel make appropriate entries in the aircraft maintenance records indicating the aircraft has been approved for return to service.” This provision is independent of, and in addition to, the FARs requiring maintenance personnel to make appropriate logbook entries after maintenance.

FAR 91.407 (a) which overlaps to a great extent, provides that “No person may operate any aircraft that has undergone maintenance, preventive maintenance, rebuilding, or alteration, unless (1) it has been approved for return to service by an authorized person and (2) the maintenance record entry required by FAR Part 43 has been made.” Of course, the person referred to clearly includes the owner-pilot.



Touch and Go: *Radar Beacon Phraseology*

By Sandy Gordley

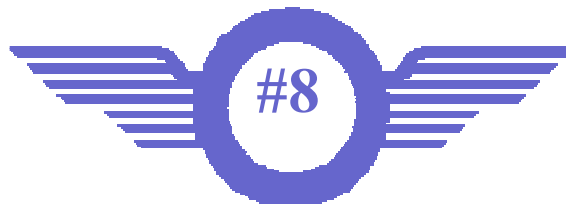
- ♦ **SQUAWK (number).** Operate transponder on designated code in Mode A/3.
- ♦ **IDENT.** Engage the “IDENT” feature of the transponder.
- ♦ **SQUAWK (number) and IDENT.** Operate transponder on specified code in Mode A/3 and engage the “IDENT” feature.
- ♦ **SQUAWK STANDBY.** Switch transponder to standby position.
- ♦ **SQUAWK LOW/NORMAL.** Operate transponder on low or normal sensitivity as specified. Transponder is operated in “NORMAL” position unless ATC specifies “LOW” (“ON” is used instead of “NORMAL” as a master control label on some types of transponders).
- ♦ **SQUAWK ALTITUDE.** Activate Mode C with automatic altitude reporting.
- ♦ **STOP ALTITUDE SQUAWK.** Turn off altitude reporting switch and continue transmitting Mode C framing pulses. If your equipment does not have this capability, turn off Mode C.
- ♦ **STOP SQUAWK (mode in use).** Switch off specified mode (military).
- ♦ **SQUAWK MAYDAY.** Operate transponder in the emergency position or code 7700.
- ♦ **SQUAWK VFR.** Operate transponder on code 1200.



Compass: *Miscellaneous*

By Sandy Gordley

Here’s a bit of airport history. In 1979 there were electrical wires, above ground, at the east end of the runway. The airport board considered this to be a hazard, so they erected a 57 foot tower, with lights, adjacent to the runway threshold. The electric lines were buried in 1983 by the power company who then charged the airport \$25,000.00.



Wings & Wheels: Mark your calendar: August 8th from 8 a.m. to noon. The Civil Air Patrol will be taking care of the breakfast this year, however, we still need volunteers to help out. We have a few who have “enlisted” but could use a few more. Please contact Sandy if you can help.