

Scenario Based Training – A Practical Demonstration

As you open this month's magazine some of you are planning on attending the SSA convention this month in Greenville SC. The SSA staff and local soaring pilots have put together a great program and there will be lots to see on the exhibit floor. But that's not all there is for you in Greenville.

For decades the Soaring Safety Foundation trustees have been known as the 'safety guys'. Always pointing out people's mistakes and urging everyone to 'fly safely'. But the Trustees are not just interested in safety, they are also strongly committed to helping every instructor provide quality instruction. All five trustees are active glider flight instructors with a combined total of more than 200 years of instruction given. Three of the trustees are also Designated Pilot Examiners. We know how to teach!

We are also committed to helping every pilot understand how to extract the best flight training your instructor can give you. We know how pilots learn, the common problems they have and how to guide them through difficult patches to become the safe pilot we all want to be.

This is why the SSF is updating its logo and using the motto 'Safety through Training'.

If you have been reading this column for the past few months you will notice that we have been advocating the adoption of Scenario Based Training (SBT) as the preferred method to teach and learn about flying and soaring.

The military and airlines have been using this approach for years with excellent results. They have the advantage of a "captive audience" of pilots who have no option but to participate in the program. While we can't require that all glider pilots and glider flight instructors adopt this method, we can provide the training needed to understand the value to our community and the skill needed to bring this training into your club or commercial operation.

To start this process the SSF will host a 1 hour training session Friday afternoon at the convention center. This will be the only session on the schedule. We have even decided to close the exhibit hall to encourage everyone to attend. This will not be your standard 50 minute lecture, but a practical demonstration on how to use SBT skills to explore several real life events. The trustees have identified 4 potential scenarios that lead to accidents and incidents:

1. Planned rope break at 300 ft AGL.
2. Low getting back to the pattern.
3. Planning your first off airport landing.
4. Recovering from a high-speed spiral dive.

The Trustees will take 2 of these scenarios and develop them into SBT training modules. Using the P.A.V.E. (Pilot, Aircraft, enVironment, External pressures) model, the trustees will walk you through the process of identifying the major threats, and the mitigation strategies you can use to overcome these threats. We will demonstrate how interactive, thought provoking, and intensive SBT training can be.

Not quite convinced, here's an example of the types of skills you will learn using SBT training. Imagine it is the end of the soaring day and you are 1200 ft AGL in the club's 2-place glider while 3 other single place gliders are nearby at the same altitude. You will be landing with a slight left cross-

wind and the runway is 2500 x 100 ft asphalt with no lights. How will you all land safely?

Using the P.A.V.E. model you would first determine the skills and proficiency of each pilot. Do you know them personally or are you new to the club? How comfortable and proficient are you in your glider? Have you been in this situation before or is this the first time? Have you thought about this situation before or are you suddenly trying to make up a plan? How good are you at spot landings? With a little thought you can easily add to this list.

The next step is to examine the aircraft. Are there any unusual characteristics of any of the gliders? For example are some flap only for landing or does everybody have spoilers? Do they all have the same sink rate or are some going down faster than others? How effective are the spoilers and wheel brake in the glider you're flying? What about the other gliders, are their wheel brakes effective? Come up with 2 more questions you would like to ask.

Then think about the enVironment. How comfortable are you with landing in the expected cross-wind? Will there be a wind gradient or turbulence on final? How will the hard surface runway effect your landing and roll-out? Can you exit the runway during the landing roll, or are there obstructions and obstacles that prevent you, and everyone else, from doing this? Is there a ground crew on the ground ready to help move stopped gliders off the runway? Can you stage the gliders off the side of the runway? Now, you begin to see how effective SBT training can be, add a couple more questions to this list.

Lastly lets talk about the External pressures. Does anyone really need to get down first (needs to pee)? Is everyone trying to be 'the last glider in the air'? Are you going to rush back and expedite your landing so you're not a factor? Have you ever tried to expedite a landing? Does your glider go in the back of the hanger, so it should land first? What else can you think of?

So there you have it. A dozen or more questions that you need to ask and answer just to complete this simple task of safely landing 4 gliders on a single runway. Now think about this. Would you rather try this after you and your instructor went through all of these questions or would you rather be faced with this someday without any thought or planning?

Attend the SSF SBT training session Friday afternoon during the convention and learn more about how SBT can make you a safer and happier pilot. We'll save you a seat!