From the Editor

This issue brings us two interesting papers, one presented at OSTIV Congress XXXI in Uvalde, Texas, and the other contributed directly.

Thanks to the tireless efforts of our Associate Editors our efforts to re-align with the publication schedule are beginning to show progress. My heartfelt thanks to Associate Editors Ian Oldaker and Zafer Aslan for overseeing the reviews of the papers in this issue, and to all the AEs and (above all!) authors whose labor make *Technical Soaring* possible.

And, as always, we thank our peer reviewers — you know who you are!

OSTIV Congress XXXII

Now is a good time to start planning to attend OSTIV Congress XXXII, which will be held in conjunction with the 33st World Gliding Championships in Leszno, Poland, 21 July – 10 August, 2014. The schedule for the XXXII OSTIV Congress:

- Opening Ceremony: Wednesday 30 July 2014
- Technical Sessions: Thursday 31 July – Saturday 2 August
- Excursion: Sunday 3 August
- Technical/Scientific Sessions: Monday–Tuesday 4–5 August
- Closing Dinner: Wednesday 6 August 2014

A call for papers will appear in *Technical Soaring* around January 2014.

Back Issues

Thanks to the efforts of Journal Manager and EIC-emeritus Ward Hindman, back issues from Vol. 24, No. 4 (October–December, 2000) to the current issue are now online at `journals.sfu.ca/ts/`. The project continues and earlier issues will be made available as soon as possible.

As a reminder, while we allow authors to include color figures in their papers, *Technical Soaring* is printed in greyscale. Nevertheless, the online version of *TS* at `journals.sfu.ca` is in full color.

Comments

Readers are invited to send the editor comments on papers. News of interest to *TS* readers (upcoming events etc.) is also welcome.

Respectfully,

Judah Milgram
Editor-in-Chief, *Technical Soaring*
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Reader Comment: Origins of "ALPTHERM" ("Know the Sky," TS 36(4))

To the Editor,

In Volume 36, Number 4, Russell E. Lee published a remarkable article covering the "History of Soaring Meteorology" over a century. (Ref. 1). The discovery of the primary forms of lift is beautifully presented chronologically — a pleasure to read.

I would like to call your attention to the final section of the article entitled "Computers and the Internet" which deals with the most recent period. My name repeatedly appears in this section, first in connection with a computer software algorithm which is eventually called "convection model ALPTHERM" and cited as Ref. 53 (here, Ref. 2). The referenced paper has two authors and is unspecific about assigning the origin of the convection model to either one. As our paper has been mentioned in "History of Soaring Meteorology," it seems appropriate to throw light on the significant contribution of co-author Dr. Bruno Neininger to our paper (Ref. 2).

Summertime glider activity in the upper Rhône Valley (Swiss Alps) began in the early 1960s. In 1979, Neininger, a glider instructor and physicist, started to investigate the vertical structure of local winds and temperature. The release of the big red balloons from the glider camp was an attraction for children of all ages.

Pilot balloon soundings and surface observations revealed atmospheric flow and temperature structures in a mountain valley (Ref. 3). As a result the Gold method was adapted from flat to complex terrain (Ref. 3) in order to take the volume effect (geometric air mass correction) into account. Meteorological investigations initiated by Neininger continued for about a decade. A number of bachelor and master theses supervised by Neininger resulted from these efforts in the upper Rhône Valley. Knowledge about the diurnal cycle of the atmospheric boundary layer in complex terrain was gained.

For years following this, daily weather briefings were given to glider pilots with cloud base altitude to expect in the afternoon — assessed by the modified Gold method. On average, these predictions were perceived as an improvement by pilots and forecasters. However, there were occasional "outliers." In 1989 Neininger gave weather briefings at the Hangglider World Championship in Fiesch (upper Rhône Valley) based on local soundings. On a particular day with an observed inversion pi-

lots smashed the prediction by climbing straight through the inversion predicted as persistent according to the modified Gold method applied to the local sounding. Food for thought: static methods have limits.

So Neininger came to think about a dynamical model. He conceived a numerical convection model with buoyant parcels being generated and released at individual elevation layers of complex topography. The modelled parcel motion redistributes atmospheric quantities at explicit speeds (updrafts) and erodes inversions. Neininger was the one to code the first version of this numerical model in Pascal computer language and he named it "ALPTHERM." Academic credit for creating "ALPTHERM" should therefore definitely go to Bruno Neininger.

Consequently, the name of co-author Bruno Neininger in Lee's Ref. 53 clearly deserves a prominent place in the history of soaring meteorology. All discussion of "ALPTHERM" should be closely connected with the name of its creator, Bruno Neininger. Great care is necessary when handling possible future references to our 1994 paper about "ALPTHERM."

I hope that this comment may clarify the record.

Respectfully,

Olivier Liechti
Winterthur, August 11, 2013

[1] Lee, R. E., "Know the Sky: A History of Interaction between Meteorology and Soaring," *Technical Soaring*, Vol. 36, No. 4, October 2012, pp. 84–93.

[2] Liechti, O. and Neininger, B., "ALPTHERM — A PC based model for atmospheric convection over complex topography," *Technical Soaring*, Vol. 18, No. 3, July 1994, pp. 73.

[3] Neininger, B. and Liechti, O., "Local Winds in the Upper Rhône Valley," *GeoJournal*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 1984, pp. 265–270, ISSN 0343-2521.