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US Soaring Team Day Reports & Results



Sunday, December 23

27th World Gliding

Championships, Mafikeng, South Africa, December 18-31, 2001.



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Day Report - December 23

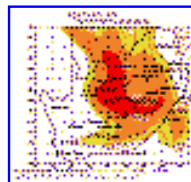
NEWS FLASH: The Open and 15-Meter Class are not flying today in South Africa. The Standards are off on a weak and windy day. Jim Payne has filed a Day 1 to 5 recap from a pilots prospective. The report is in Adobe PDF format and available by [clicking here](#).



0900 GMT
12/23/01
IR Satellite

December 23 Preliminary Scores

Day Place	Points	Pilot	#	Overall Points	Task/ flown	Contest Day
-		R. Gimmey	7V 11	2929	No Task	Day 4
-		J. Payne	HW 7	3008	No Task	Day 4



T-Storms?
12/23/01

-		K. Striedieck	KS	14	3140	No Task	Day 4
-		G. Ittner	P7	4	3514	No Task	Day 4
16	389	C. Garner	W3	15	2795	136.9 km*	Day 4
18	239	D. Jacobs	DJ	20	2242	84.0 km*	Day 4

See all the scores on the official web site - [here](#) * Land Out

From the officials this AM: The official sniffer, Gillian Spreckley, reports cloud base to be at 7500' msl. The 15m and Open classes have already received the "Stand Down" and we are waiting for a decision on the Standard Class, currently on the grid. Lucian Banitz of the South African Weather Service reports a "better than average" chance of over development and rain. We have just learned that the Standard Class will commence launching in 15 minutes time. (11:40 ZULU)

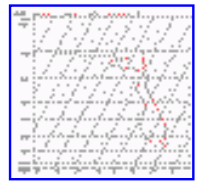
From The Weatherman

Rain, Rain Rain!!! The spectacular lightning display of last night culminated into cloudy, showery conditions this morning. There is a low pressure system west of Mafikeng (with the trough line extending further NWwards) which is drawing in moisture from Botswana. Together with the upper-air disturbance which is situated over us at the moment, the two systems work together to generate thundershowers in our area. This situation is expected to persist through most of the day with dubious flying possibilities. Tomorrow might be a better day for flying again since these systems will have passed to the east by then.

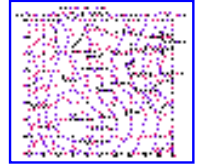
Today's Tasks

Assigned Speed Tasks were chosen for all classes. For more information on today's tasks see the official sight under tasks. [WGC Site](#)

Class	Task Type	Distance
Open	AST Assigned Speed Task	No Task
15-Meter	AST Assigned Speed Task	No Task
Standard	AAT Assigned Area Task	2:30 Time with 245 km at turns



Sounding
12/23/01



SFC Wind
12/23/01

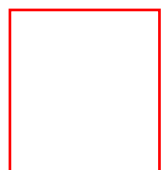


[WGC Scores](#)



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[Time in South Africa](#)

[Read Jim Payne's Day 1-5 Report](#)

Adobe PDF

14:15 - Bulletin 15, Sunday, December 23 - Gary Kemp

Last night a low and moisture moved in and we were treated to multiple thunderstorms and lightening. Ray Gimmey weathered at least one of these storms on his off field retrieve that got he, Kenny, Ruth and the four Air Force cadets home at 5:30 am. We just got his logger in, in time for scoring at 8:30 this morning. Grid was held until 12:00 for Standard with the Open and 15-Meter canceled early in anticipation of a late start to a weak day. Finally the Standard Class Took off at 13:40 for an AAT of 234.88km and 2 1/2 hours. Thermals are weak to start, about 1.5 kts to 7500 feet, with wind in the 20 kt range from the North. There are still 8 days of competition left and anything can happen as we saw yesterday so we will keep fighting the good fight.

15:33 - Pilots are now on course, several have already landed in 20kt wind and 1.5kt thermals. All Standard Class went on course within 7 minutes of Gate Opening.

Tracking

Several GPS tracking units are being used to show the flight path of competitors. These tracks, despite some initial problems, are now displayed in near real time on the official web site. To view these tracks go to the official web site and look under tracking. [WGC Site](#)

From tracking command: With today's 15m task already cancelled, we may unfortunately have no tracking today. We await a decision on the Standard and Open Classes, but it is doubtful we will be able to arrange the installation of the tracking units in the time remaining, without unfairly hampering the pilot's involved. More news as events unfold.

Bulletin 15, Sunday, December 23 - John Good

Yesterday, the reach of the declared tasks exceeded the grasp of a good many pilots, especially in the Open and 15-Meter classes. Conditions on course were probably the best yet seen – there were reports of 8-kt and better thermals to around 13,500' MSL, and good cloud streets on some legs. But when your task opens around 1 pm and the day starts to die around 4:30, 609 km (the length of the 15-Meter task) is a lot of ground to cover.

The Standard-class task was shortened to 470 km, and this proved about right, provided you didn't dawdle. Doug Jacobs and Chip Garner both had reasonable runs, but also had one slow section each, which kept them from appearing at the top of the day's scoresheet. In

retrospect, it appears that they both caught “the last bus home” – conditions on the final upwind leg weakened considerably shortly after most of the Standard class had finished, and from 5 pm on it was very tough.

The 15-Meter class certainly found it so. Both Karl Striedieck and Gary Ittner got close to home, but were forced down about 15 miles out. Both attracted crowds of interested spectators, and found the crowds friendly. Karl said of the 609-km task: “I did the six hundred – it was the nine I had problems with.” There were just 7 finishers in 15-Meter class. One was class leader Steven Raimond of the Netherlands, who stopped about 100 meters short of the finish line; this was still good for a finish, with 5 minutes added to his time.

Long wings are one proven way to cope with weak conditions, and Jim Payne made them work – he was one of 11 finishers in the Open class. He was quite glad of his early start, but the final glide was dicey – at one point he thought he



Team U.S.A. at opening ceremonies

might be landing on the long (and, depending on traffic, very landable) airport driveway, meaning he needed about another 100' to make the finish line. He was able to find the help he needed and wound up 8th for the day. (Later, a couple of gliders did land on the driveway.)

Ray Gimmey's story is one for the record books. He was close to home and needed only a few hundred feet to finish. He decided to deviate west toward the last remaining wisps of cloud, but found no help there. With the airfield in view but rising on the canopy, it was time to start the engine of his ASW-22. He may have got the sequence of switches wrong, or perhaps some limit switch malfunctioned – in any case, the engine did not extend and he was forced to land in a cornfield. The landing was safe, but the fun was just starting.

He phoned US Team Captain Gary Kemp to report his status (pilot and glider undamaged) and his position (it worked out to be 15.4 miles west of Mafikeng airfield). He also reported that he'd seen no useful roads leading to his field, and reminded Gary that his glider did not come with a trailer – one would have to be borrowed. This was quickly arranged (the contest organizers here are really quite helpful) and a tow pilot willing to do some aerial scouting took off toward the setting sun.

It was clear that some serious manpower would be

needed for this mission. Fortunately, we had just received a consignment of US Air Force Academy cadets, come to help crew for the US Team at Mafikeng and not yet over their jet lag. It would have to be a baptism by fire – four unsuspecting cadets were stuffed into the 7V crew van along with Ruth Gimmey and crew chief Kenny Price, and they departed the airfield just before sunset, trailer in tow.

The tow pilot directed them, in all flying a couple of hours, most of it in the dark. The route followed a gravel road, and then a primitive track through high grass and thorn bushes. All agreed that navigating this route would have been well beyond impossible without aerial vectors. Visibility ahead was rarely better than 20 feet, with thorn bushes scraping the sides of the van and trailer. At one point a trailer wheel fell into a hole, damaging the fender; but they were able to drag it out of the hole and to continue their slow progress.



Meanwhile, Ray had hiked through the soft, sandy field in the direction of home. He came to a barbed wire fence, which clearly marked the limit of all driving. He had the foresight to make a mark in the dirt to serve as a departure point for re-

locating the glider. Around 9:30 pm the van and trailer came into view. Seven pairs of hands now faced the daunting task of moving a huge glider about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile through a soft sandy field and across a barbed wire fence. It was about this time that the rain began.

They moved the glider in pieces – first the wingtips, canopy and horizontal stabilizer, then each wing, and finally the fuselage. This final beast was enormously heavy with its useless motor, and could be moved only a few feet at a time. It required two and a half hours to get it to the fence, and another 30 minutes to get it over the fence and into the trailer. The rain continued through all this, with plenty of wind and lightning.

They'd had the foresight to turn the trailer around first (itself a considerable project) so now the remaining task was to retrace the rough track back to the dirt road, a distance of about 5 km. In an hour and a half they were back to navigable territory, and in another 30 minutes back at the field to drop off the trailer. They were in bed by 5:30 am. Such is the exotic and glamorous sport of racing sailplanes.

Amazingly, the entire crew (less Ray, who was allowed a sinful three hours of sleep) was up by 8 am and off to the airfield to assemble and clean the ASW-22. After all, they had to be ready for another task. This job was made more difficult by 25-knot northerly winds and occasional rain, but they had the beast ready to go shortly after the pilot's meeting. Despite the bad weather, gridding was set for noon, and 7V was there, ready to go. Shortly after this, the tasks for Open and 15-Meter classes were canceled. No strong complaint against this decision was registered by the 7V crew. We told crew chief Kenny Price that he has lost his lead in the race for the "pampered crew" award, and may in fact be permanently disqualified from eligibility.

It's now around 2:30 pm, and the Standard class is flying. There is some lift to 7500' AGL, but there is also a strong northeast wind and a serious threat of overdevelopment and thunderstorms. It appears that the task will be opened, and there are few crews that expect flying finishes today. I may have more interesting retrieve stories to tell tomorrow.

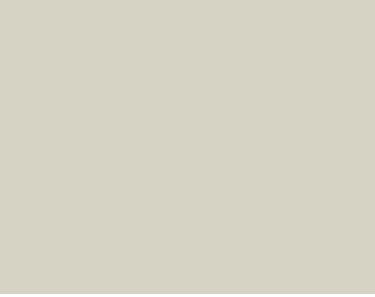
I have other things to describe, but no time to write just now. I must be off to ensure that the DJ trailer and crew vehicle are ready to hit the road.

Jim Payne has filed another update from South Africa. The report is a recap of the last five days from a pilots prospective. The file is in Adobe PDF format and is available for your viewing pleasure by clicking [here...](#)

Editor - Check out the competition. Visit the [German team](#), the [Canadian team](#), the [Dutch team](#), the [British team](#), the [Polish team](#) and the [French team](#) as they all have excellent sites.



USA Soaring Team Results 2001/2002



To catch up on all the news for the 2001 U.S. World Soaring Teams see the [US Team News](#) for the top finishers in each class plus the U.S. pilots final standings. See the U.S. [Team Archive](#) for team background since 1950. As part of the Archive tour see the [US Team History](#) page for a complete listing of US Teams since 1950 or the [World Champions](#) page for a complete listing of champions since 1937.

US Team Web Additions? Problems? Corrections? [US Team Web Master](#)
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