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## US Soaring Team Day Reports & Results



Friday, December 28

**27th World Gliding Championships,**

Mafikeng, South Africa, December 18-31, 2001. Check this page for daily updates.

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## Day Report - December 28

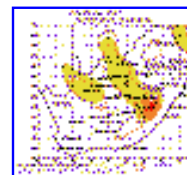
**NEWS FLASH-** It is is a big day for shaking up the score sheet as the overall leaders in each class change and several land out. The day started out looking like a "cracking good" day with big tasks. About half way into the tasks the weather started to look less good. Doug Jacobs and Chip Garner land out in the Standards. The leaders in the Standard and 15-Meter may have joined them.



0900 GMT  
Satellite  
12/28/01

## December 28 Preliminary Scores

Day Place	Points	Pilot	#	Overall Points	Task/ flown/ speed	Contest Day
16	698	R. Gimmey	7V 13	6227	616.5 km 111.9 Kph	Day 8



T-Storms?  
12/28/01

15	704	J. Payne	HW	11	6302	615.1 km 112.3 Kph	Day 8
16	612	K. Striedieck	KS	12	6520	475.4 km 107.2 Kph	Day 8
10	774	G. Ittner	P7	3	7045	475.4 km 120.5 Kph	Day 8
25	556	C. Garner	W3	15	5728	371.4* km	Day 8
24	571	D. Jacobs	DJ	16	5660	383.5* km	Day 8

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

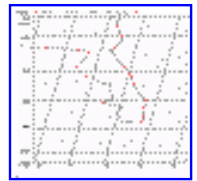
### From The Weatherman

Our first impressions of the day were promising, and as we started working our way through the available data we soon came to the conclusion that the pilots are in for a nice day's flying. We still have an inversion in the upper levels that will suppress overdevelopment, although a 20% thunderstorm probability is still indicated. Clouds can be expected as far west as Upington today. The upper air sounding supports first cloud development to occur at 8000ft and later going up as high as 11500 ft and even 12000ft in places. We can look forward to a maximum temperature of 29 °C for today with higher temperatures out to the west. The wind will also be a moderate north easterly all the way up to cloud base.

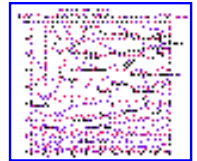
### Today's Tasks

For more information on today's tasks see the official sight under tasks. [WGC Site](#)

Class	Task Type	Distance
Open	AAT Assigned Area Task	556.37 km at turns / 4:40 hrs
15-Meter	AST Assigned Speed Task	480.86 km
Standard	AAT Assigned Area Task	421.33 km at turns / 3:30 hrs



Sounding  
12/28/01



Winds Aloft  
12/28/01



WGC  
Scores



WGC  
Site Link

Mirror Site

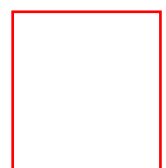


Photo  
Gallery



Meet the  
Team



Time in  
South Africa



Open



15-Meter



Standard

The official organizers web site includes these excellent images of each days task. Click on the image to expand.



Open Grid

### 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. Today's tracking will be of the top five in the Open Class.

### WGC Traces On Web

Want to see how the top pilots achieve those amazing speeds? Many of the actual GPS flight logs from the first days of the championships are now available on the web. You can download these logs and have a look with any of the flight analysis software available including SeeYou. Thanks to John Leibacher for organizing the logs and posting to Günther Eichhorn's [Soaring Server](#). To find the logs [go here](#).

### Bulletin 19, Friday, December 28 - John Good

Yesterday was the best soaring day yet at Mafikeng. There were reports of 9-knot thermals to nearly 12,000' MSL, and for the first time every one of the 70 best pilots in the world was able to make it home (actually, it was 69, as one pilot did not launch). Speeds were much the best of the contest.

The really eye-watering performances came in the Open class. These were due not so much to the spectacular performance of these gliders, but to the fact that their task was well aligned with the cloud streets that developed about the time they were setting out on their first leg to the south. A few pilots reported that the early going was a bit iffy, but from there it was excellent flying under long cloud



Open Class on the grid in Mafikeng. Grid positions are controlled by placing numbered buckets (green for Standard class) in the correct order. The gliders are placed so their nose faces the bucket that has the assigned number. Photo - John Good.

streets with few circles (when speeds range above 150 kph, you can be sure that very few circles were involved). A measure of the day was that 131 kph was good for 19th place -- second to last! The US Open class pilots had quite respectable speeds -- around 142 kph -- but were not as well connected to the cloud streets as the winners.

In 15-Meter class, the US pilots did well: Gary Ittner was third, just two points out of first; Karl Striedieck was seventh. They made good use of the excellent conditions, but because of their task spent a bit less time flying cloud streets than did the long-wingers. The US also had good results in the Standard class, where Doug

Jacobs was third and Chip Garner was 4th. Chip had a slight problem at the end of the flight -- he was comfortably above final glide height until he ran into sinking air as he approached the final steering point, located at a dam about 3 km from the finish line. At this point you are supposed to report "W3, dam, direct" to signify that you will shortly be making a straight-in finish. Chip's report was "W3, damn low." But he managed to make the finish line, albeit with rather little to spare.

Yesterday evening the US Team hosted a party in the International Village beer tent. We sponsored beer and various munchies for all, and the party was deemed a big success (not least because this was the first day when



everyone was in a position to attend -- no crews were away retrieving their pilots). The beer and food were arranged by the contest caterer at very reasonable prices, and received good reviews (though it's perhaps worth noting that South African tastes in snacks don't run far toward the vegetarian end of the scale).

All these goings-on near the place he innocently selected as his temporary home have apparently convinced the puff adder to seek other lodgings -- he has not been seen

in several days. I'm disappointed not to have got a picture of him, though apparently no one else did either.

The barn owl that resides in the Briefing Hangar is made of sterner stuff – he is regularly seen perched on a steel girder high above the assembled pilots, and occasionally will fly the length of the hangar by way of entertainment. Perhaps he knows that only four competition days remain, after which peace and quiet will be restored. Presumably all the food cast off by these humans will lead to an increase in the local mouse population, so the barn owl may yet profit from WGC-2001.



A view of Mafikeng airfield, looking NW

Today looks like an improvement over yesterday. The forecast is for 9-knot thermals to over 11,000' MSL, and these predictions have consistently been a bit conservative (which is generally how pilots like

them). So we may be getting close to "classic" Mafikeng conditions. At around 500 to 550 km, today's tasks don't seem especially long in view of the good forecast, so I expect we'll again see excellent speeds. The northeast wind again means that the final task legs will be upwind, but in view of yesterday's streeting, there is little concern about this.

In common with some other world contests I've attended, a small point of contention here is the music played over the public address system. Such a system is quite useful for occasional announcements; apparently recorded music must fill all the space between them. The issue of what music to play is always a difficult one, as the audience ranges in age from 15 through 75. I'm among those who feel that silence would be the best compromise, but it seems this is not an option.

Pilots and crews suffered loud rock, rap and "new age" music for the first couple of days, at which point complaints grew so loud that changes had to be made. We now hear some classical music, some reasonably muted rock, and



Standard class pre-grid lineup

some tolerably strange hybrids. The last few mornings we have assembled the gliders to weird sounds indeed – rather like medieval monks singing Gregorian chants to tunes vaguely recognizable as 1970s- and 1980s-era rock. We reached some sort of milestone this morning as the monks did their version of Led Zeppelin's "Stairway to

Heaven."

Launches are now complete, and the soaring conditions seem every bit as good as predicted. We hear reports of 7- and 8-knot lift to nearly 10,000' MSL, with steady improvement. So far there appears to be less streeting than yesterday, but it is still early. I expect some very good speeds today, and (with any luck) few to no landouts.

A good number of other teams have reported landout experiences similar to what Doug Jacobs, Karl Striedieck and Chip Garner encountered last week: large numbers of enthusiastic and friendly villagers (mostly children) flocking to the glider after landing. There have been no reports of any ill will and only the most minor problems.



The ultimate in this sort of landout must surely be the experience of the great French pilot Gilbert Gerbaud (he was a World Champion in 1993, and was tragically killed in a glider crash near Alamogordo, NM in May, 2001). He took

part in a French gliding expedition to China in 1986. The Chinese had a locally-made 2-seat trainer in which they asked him to take a Chinese glider pilot on a short cross-country flight. The flight went well but the day died early and they were forced to land in a large field some 20 km from home. At some distance in the field were teams of people displaying red banners, and rather little attention was at first paid to the glider. But in time the banner-carriers saw the glider and decided to investigate. This attracted the attention of those who'd been watching the banner performance, and then the attention of nearly everyone over a rather wide area. Soon the large field seemed very small indeed as a crowd later estimated to be 100,000 people surged in for a view of this unique machine. There was no ill will, just excitement and curiosity, but in the end the glider was entirely destroyed.

It's now 3 pm, and the sky looks better and better. We're starting to see some of the streeting that pilots will want to use on their way home. If these cumulus clouds are honest, conditions are now "cracking good". Anyone who hopes to place well today will probably need to turn in his best speed of the contest.

### **Friday, December 28 - Gary Kemp**

Many compliments for the team party the U.S. put on, tonight we are looking forward to the South African Team Braili.



Charlie is that 50 feet? Photo by Gary Kama

Today looks like the best day yet. Start altitudes are good and since the tasks are near 300 miles or 4.5 hrs for Open, the pilots are promptly after it. Lift strengths should approach 8 kts with averages better than 5. First reports of pilots on course is that they are cruising between 9000 and 10500.

We hear the pilots for some time and then about 4:30, I mention the weather has changed, it is cooler and I begin to fear that it is going to be tough. We get the 15 meter pilots back and then the Open Class pilots, Doug lands out and Chip lands out and we arrange for an aero retrieve, and he just makes it before sundown. I leave the field at 7:30 and it is now just after 8:00. This weather is very interesting. Days are definitely short.

**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.



The US Team, just after Opening Ceremonies



Lucky Dancer's cockpit in Boneyard (19.8 after launch)



[Practice Day Reports](#)

## 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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