

Greater Boston Soaring Club

Welcome to the Greater Boston Soaring Club and to the fantastic sport of soaring!

This document will provide some background on the club and pointers on finding information that will be both useful to you as a member and to help ensure safe operations.

Club history can be found at <http://www.soargbsc.com/history.php>

GBSC is a club and not a commercial operation. It therefore depends on the active involvement of its members to govern and operate the club effectively for all members. The club is governed by a board of directors. For 2010 the board consists of

- President – Eric Foertsch
- Treasurer – Dwight Schirmer
- Clerk – David Simmons
- Operations – Ray Williams
- Maintenance – George Young
- Towplane Maintenance – Ritts Howard
- At Large – Ken Flaton

Within a few days of your application being received you should be on the various GBSC Yahoo mail groups, GBSCTalk and GBSCBusiness. If you don't start getting emails from GBSCTalk contact the membership coordinator at membership@soargbsc.com.

There is also a WeekdayFlying list if you interested in weekdays ops (Contact Tony Velhurst to be put on the email list).

You should also receive a userid/password to the members only section of the GBSC web site.

There is significant material on the GBSC website for reference. Obviously taking it in all at once would be impossible but you are encouraged to spend time looking through it. Of course don't hesitate to talk to members and/or post questions on GBSCTalk mail group

You should check out the various club documents at http://www.soargbsc.com/public_procs.php that include the membership manual, ground handling procedures and a number of safety related documents.

In the members only section is the membership roster with email, addresses and phone numbers.

And certainly for student instruction, don't miss <http://home.comcast.net/~verhulst/GBSC/student/>

New members are strongly encouraged to arrive early (i.e. 9:30AM latest) to learn how to preflight the gliders, do positive control checks, get the gliders moved down to the staging area. (put that ground handling knowledge to work) and just get an idea of the general startup.

Also, as you will soon learn, get your name on the signup sheet! There is nothing more frustrating than showing up at what you think is a reasonable time in the morning, sign up but find out you are way down on the list, and not fly till late afternoon.

After a couple weeks consider showing up later in the day for your lesson and help out in putting the ships away and stowing the golf cards and other equipment.

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Again as GBSC is volunteer run, you will also be expected to formally help out in weekend operations. You will be probably be contacted in short order by the Operations director and assigned duty days as either a logger or SFO.

Loggers are usually but not necessarily a student pilot, and the logger keeps records of each flight so the charges can be billed to the appropriate party.

The SFO (Senior Field Officer) is typically a person with at least a private pilot glider license. The SFO's responsibility is to manage the ground operation during that day. See information located at http://www.soargbsc.com/sfo_resp.htm

Each member is typically assigned SFO or logger duty 2- 3 times per year. If you are assigned a duty day and you find it conflicts with your schedule, it is up to you to find a replacement. Put the GBSCTalk email list to work and ask other members to switch with you. Once a switch is made let the Operations director know so he can update the schedule accordingly.

If you are coming in via the junior program you will be assigned duty shifts by the Junior Program coordinator to help in ground operations.

A junior assists in setting up, retrieving gliders (hauling around gliders with a golf cart), closing up at end of day and any other duties assigned by the SFO or flight instructor.

Towlines, the GBSC email newsletter will include instructors, towpilots, SFO's and loggers for the upcoming weeks so it is always a good idea to check it out to make sure you aren't expected to work the next weekend!

As a member though we hope that you will help out wherever and whenever needed. The gliders belong to all of us. While there is a maintenance coordinator and each glider has a team assigned to help keep the ships in good order, there are always things to be done such as repairing or painting trailers, minor mechanical maintenance on gliders, lubricating parts on the gliders, etc... The more that each of us pays attention to these things, the safer the operation, the longer the equipment will last, and the less potential breakdowns will be experienced.

Another area where help is appreciated is mowing the grass around the tie down areas. Somehow mowing grass at the airport is much more fun that mowing grass at home.

Our season generally runs along the following.

March- Safety meeting for the coming season. Members are expected to attend or are required to pass an online safety test before flying club equipment.

End of March/Early April- Assembly of gliders. The gliders are typically stored for the winter and must be returned to the field and re-assembled for the season. This activity also includes installation of tie downs for the gliders. Many hands make light work.

Also airport/facilities cleanup. After a long winter it is necessary to clean any rocks off the grass area that is typically used for the glider operation and to roll the grass to smooth out any ruts that may have appeared over the winter. The green clubhouse and radio shack (and equipment therein) may need to be cleaned up and organized for the upcoming season.

Early May – Some members head down to Mifflin, PA, the soaring Mecca on the east coast. From Reedsville Airport you can experience ridge soaring and work on your cross country skills. Members can make requests to the board to take a club ship to Mifflin. Club instruction is not available.

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Sterling Fair – weekend after Labor Day. Once a year the airport hosts the Sterling Fair and all gliders need to be moved off site. Help is needed to move the gliders. Over the last few years, the club has left a glider at the field as an exhibit. Members are needed to man the exhibit to answer questions and provide community outreach.

With the Sterling Fair the club takes the opportunity to move operations, both locally and to the White Mountains. In general, gliders are moved Labor Day weekend between a local airport, (eg Tanner Hiller), and towing some ships to Franconia, NH where members can experience ridge soaring. The mountains at Franconia also help generate good thermals and the scenery is quite spectacular. So in either location you can expand your soaring experience to an airport other than Sterling. Instructors will be available at either location so students can continue their soaring practice.

As always volunteers are needed to help make this happen. Assistance is required to move equipment from Sterling to either Tanner Hiller or Franconia and back; as well as in Franconia during the soaring operation. If you are a student, hook up with an experienced pilot to help ferry the gliders. It's another great learning experience.

In October we have Wave Camp. A couple of club gliders are moved to Gorham, NH so members can fly the wave over Mt. Washington. This is an opportunity to get in some experience flying in wave which is completely different than either thermal or ridge soaring. At this time of year the foliage is typically close to peak. An instructor may or may not be available, but generally experienced club members are available to take you up.

Late November – end of the season. Gliders must be taken apart to be stored for the winter. The more hands that are available to help with this activity the faster it will be done. If enough interest warrants some club ships (2-33 and 1-26) will be left on insurance for winter flying. Of course a formal winter flying group is created with the expectation that the group will check on the condition of the ships weekly and help clean off and shovel out the gliders after storms.

In January we have our Holiday gathering. Only 3-4 more “dark” months left before equipment is re-assembled for the new season.

This is of course just a brief summary of operations of the club. Feel free to contact any board member and/or post your questions on GBSCTalk.