

First Ever Canadian Soaring Society Diamond Level Achievement

AL Hoar
CSS Director

The first person to reach the Diamond Level in the Canadian Soaring Society was Steve Yurchevich of Calgary. He completed the final task, a 5 km cross country flight with a minimum duration of 1 hour and ending in a landing 5 m from a spot, on June 21, 1990.

Other tasks required for the Diamond level are: a 3 hour thermal flight, a 2 hour thermal flight, a 4 hour slope flight, and 10 km and return cross country flight. All of these with an R/C glider—no motor! It's difficult to do any of these tasks. Steve did all except one of them in the spring of 1990.

Another unique requirement is that the Diamond hopeful must submit a description of each flight. Here is what Steve said about the 10 km cross country flight:

"Soon after launch the glider encountered a booming thermal. Ten minutes later at about 3500 feet of altitude I headed the Cruise-Air west. At 5 km the glider was down to 2000 feet. As soon as the glider entered over some freshly ploughed fields it climbed to approximately 3000 feet. At 8 km we were back down to 2000 feet and once again a welcome site, another freshly ploughed field. This time the Cruise-Air was still climbing at the 10 km marker. The first leg took 19 minutes."

"After turning around at 3500 feet we headed back. However we couldn't believe our eyes at what had happened back at the starting point. A huge black storm



Steve Yurchevich, Calgary, Alberta, is the first person to achieve the Diamond Level in the Canadian Soaring Society. Here's Steve with his 14-foot span scratch-built and designed Cruise-Air. Below the C.S.S. decal is the newly-earned Diamond.

cloud had developed. I put in full down trim, Brian was driving at 65 km/hr and the glider was still pulling away from us. We hoped to reach the finish line before the storm struck. At 17 km our luck ran out, it began to rain, then we were being pelted with 5 mm hail stones, and to add to that the wind was now blowing toward us at 15 to 20 km/hr. To keep the transmitter from getting wet inside I had to face it backwards and reach around to the sticks. The glider crossed the 20 km marker at an altitude of less than 150 feet. Jeff (the spotter) and I were completely soaked. Typically for Alberta, as soon as the glider landed the sun came out again.

Of course, it takes a lot of helpers to do some of these tasks, and a witness for all of them. Steve very generously took all of those who helped, and their spouses, out to a dinner party. At the party Diamond level awards were presented. These were a C.S.S. pin with a Diamond center, and a wall plaque highlighting the achievement.

For those R/C glider flyers who are not members of C.S.S., here is a statement of our aims: "To bring together all R/C sailplane pilots in a common goal to promote our hobby at all levels; to help you become a better sailplane pilot; to have more fun at the flying field by attempting the various tasks."

For more information or to join, write to Al Hoar, 5644 Dalrymple Hill NW, Calgary, Alberta, T3A 1Y4; or contact your provincial director. You must be a member of MAAC to join CSS. □

Is There A Need For Commercial Instruction?

Bruce Evans, Newsletter Editor
Ajax R/C Model Club

Student training is something that's both the strength and weakness of our clubs. Second only to maintaining a place to fly, R/C flight training is one of the biggest responsibilities of our clubs. Most of the time, the system works great. Volunteer instructors looking after eager students do an excellent job. However, some people are falling between the cracks.

To many middle aged newcomers to our hobby, time is more scarce than money. Family and business responsibilities that many younger members don't have to cope with can keep the older student from in-

struction nights or mornings. Often these members can set aside periods of time for intensive instruction but volunteer instructors don't have the same flexibility or they may simply have other things to do with large patches of their free time.

In the U.S. a few commercial R/C flight schools have sprung up. These cater to the newcomer who can set aside three days or a week at once. These schools provide a package with equipment supplied and maintained. All the student's available time is spent learning to fly, not learning to repair. We've got to look at this area up here.

Hobby shops have a very definite interest in getting people flying as quickly as pos-

sible — particularly the middle aged business person who has disposable income for new equipment. Some of the present volunteer instructors might like to make a bit of extra money to buy the new plane, motor or radio. However, clubs are very reluctant — almost antagonistic towards such endeavors. Clubs usually mention concerns about legal liability and conflict of interest but the bottom line is an opposition to the idea of paid instruction.

This is where MAAC must step in. There should be no problems changing our liability insurance to allow commercial instruction. Certainly there'd be an extra charge; this would be borne by the paid instructor

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