

2026  
APR



## GULL WINGS NEWSLETTER

Torrey Pines Gulls Radio Control Soaring Society (TPG)

AMA Charter Club 129

Website: [www.torreypinesgulls.org](http://www.torreypinesgulls.org)

Editor – Dale Gottdank

### Message from the President

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Chuck Norris

Hi everyone,

Last evening, Gary Fogel, Ray Pili and I attended a meeting with the AMA leadership. Specifically, we met with Greg Stone the AMA President, and Stephen Haston with the AMA Foundation, along with attendees from other clubs in the San Diego area. We covered a lot of ground, but we ended up brainstorming about how we can reach out to new members - not just for our club, but nationwide for our hobby in general.

Greg and Stephen are very serious about figuring out how the AMA, the AMA Foundation, and all of us who care about our hobby, can show people why what we do is cool, and fun, and something they'll want to do too. It's very parallel to what we've been working on within our club, so this is something we're well primed to be thinking about.

My own thoughts run to how we can get kids in elementary, middle and high school some exposure to the hobby, and show them a path they can follow to get started in what may become a lifetime passion for them. But rather than just telling you what I'm thinking, I'd like to invite you all to help brainstorm about this as well. Remember back to when you first saw your first RC model. What was it that hooked you, and how did you get on the path that led you to today? If you have kids, think about what might resonate with them.

#### Photo above:

TPG Members gathered for an exciting session of slope combat at the Poway Slope (Bob Hirsch photo)

(continued next page)

## Message From the President (Continued)

Let's discuss and bounce ideas off each other, and maybe we'll come up with something that we can actually try to do, maybe with some backing from the AMA Foundation.

I look forward to the conversation.

Chuck

### You're invited!

The Gulls will be hosting a **Social Night on Friday, April 17th**. This event will coincide with the International **H**and **L**aunch **G**lider **F**estival. Come out to the Poway field and mingle with your fellow club members along with some of the friendliest DLG pilots in the world.

San Diego's **URBN Catering** will bring out their custom-built **pizza truck** to serve **unlimited woodfired pizza** and salad followed by cannoli for dessert.



Food will be served from 6-8pm.



Please **PayPal \$25** to **treasurer@torreypinesgulls.org** for each interested party to get on the list. Space is limited so we will accept 20 reservations.

### Message from our Raffle Chairman – Michael Gillen

**The Torrey Pines Gulls is happy to announce the return of raffles at the bi-monthly Club Meeting.**

Because the meetings are not in-person, we will be using the F3X Vault to coordinate selling raffle tickets, with the winner drawn at the end of the Club Meeting. You must be present at the drawing (logged in to the meeting) to win.

On F3X Vault, we have set up an event "TPG Club Virtual Meeting Via Zoom"  
[https://www.f3xvault.com/?action=event&function=event\\_view&event\\_id=4326](https://www.f3xvault.com/?action=event&function=event_view&event_id=4326)

When you register for that event, you will have the opportunity to make a "Donation," which will buy you raffle tickets. One \$5 donation will buy two raffle tickets; no limit.

There will be a raffle sales cutoff during the Club Meeting, which will be announced during the meeting. Typically, the cutoff will occur just before the guest speaker begins. Just before the end of the meeting, we will draw the raffle winner.

The prize for the first raffle is an **E-flite Night Radian 2.0m PNP** (needs Rx and battery).

Good luck!

## TPG April/May Events

DATE	EVENT	COMMENTS
April 4 <sup>th</sup>	Old School Vintage Classic Woodies – Balsa BOTs, Olys, Sagittas – whatever is built-up wood	Torrey Pines Gliderport No Contest Registration Required Fun Fly!
April 11 <sup>th</sup>	DLG Contest	Poway Flight Center Register on <a href="#">F3X Vault</a>
April 18 <sup>th</sup> - 19 <sup>th</sup>	International Hand Launch Glider Festival – 31 <sup>st</sup> Anniversary	Poway Flight Center Register on <a href="#">F3X Vault</a>
April 21 <sup>st</sup>	Club Virtual Meeting	Zoom link: <a href="#">TPG Virtual Meeting Zoom Link</a>
April 25 <sup>th</sup>	TPG Slope Combat Fiesta	Poway Slope Register on <b>F3X Vault</b> when open
May 2 <sup>nd</sup>	TPG-AIAA foamboard event – 9AM- 2PM. UCSD/SDSU Foam Board Design/Build/Fly Contest –	Torrey Pines Gliderport No Contest Registration Required Mentors wanted!
May 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Tow Hook Contest F3L/F3RES – 2m & 1.5m	Encinitas Flight Center Register on <b>F3X Vault</b> when open
May 9 <sup>th</sup>	Foamies – Ahis, Alulas, Radians – if it's foam, this is your day.	Torrey Pines Gliderport No Contest Registration Required Fun Fly!
May 10 <sup>th</sup>	F5J Contest	Poway Flight Center Register on <b>F3X Vault</b> when open
May 16 <sup>th</sup>	Team DLG Contest	Encinitas Flight Center Register on <b>F3X Vault</b> when open
May 31 <sup>st</sup>	Tow Hook Contest F3L/F3RES – 2m & 1.5m	Encinitas Flight Center Register on <b>F3X Vault</b> when open



At the slope (Ray Pili photo)

## Thank you to our IHLGF 2026 sponsors!

The 31st International Hand Launch Glider Festival is coming up soon in April. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our generous sponsors of this event. Click on the logos to visit their websites.

You don't have to fly in the contest to attend and bid on items; and a large percentage of the proceeds will go directly to the USA F3K team for their next World Championship opportunity.



## Club Meetings

The Torrey Pines Gulls hosts bi-monthly club meetings virtually via Zoom. It's easy to use Zoom, join in the fun, chat with others; and we typically have a presentation about a topic in RC soaring or something aviation related and a **chance to win a great raffle prize (see page 2)**.

At our last virtual meeting, in February, we were joined by Former Chief Engineer at the Lockheed Martin Skunk Works, Mike Swanson, for a review of how the Skunk Works executes programs; some fascinating recent examples and how the team fosters a culture of innovation to be successful. We all enjoyed Mike's presentation, including some great stories and connections between the Skunk Works and our RC aeromodelling community. Thanks, Mike!

**Our next club meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 21, 2026, at 7:00pm PDT.** You can be sure we'll have a fascinating presentation and as always, a time to touch base with flying buddies and friends. The Zoom link will be shared with the club via discord and Google Groups prior to each meeting. It also appears on the Upcoming TPG Events list in the Newsletter.

This month's presentation summary is below:

### Design Enhancements for F3L Gliders

**Daniel Schulman, Amelia Chiavetta, Blake Huckaby  
San Diego State University**

This presentation details the structural analysis and modification of the Yellow Jacket 2M RC glider for the FAI F3L competition class. We will discuss the transition from a baseline kit to an optimized platform through the use of computer-aided design modifications, computational fluid dynamics, and finite element analysis to evaluate critical flight scenarios. The session will cover our decision-making process aimed at increasing efficiency in the performance of the Yellow Jacket. Finally, we will share insights from the construction process and our preparation for flight testing and competition.



(see bios on the following page)

## Club Meetings (continued)

**Daniel Schulman** is a 4th-year Aerospace Engineering student at San Diego State University. Throughout his academic career, he has focused on structural analysis and hands-on, applicable engineering rather than purely theoretical studies, leading him to take a primary role in the project management and structural integrity of this glider optimization project. Following graduation, Daniel will begin his career as a Project Engineer at General Atomics in Poway, where he has previously spent the last two summers interning within the same group. During his free time, he enjoys travelling, body-building, EDM music, wakesurfing, and skateboarding.

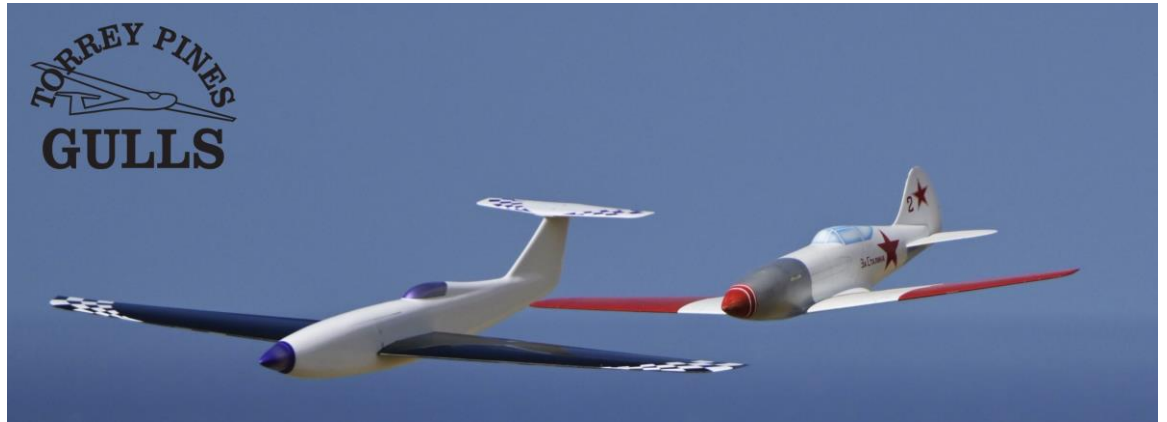
**Amelia Chiavetta** is a graduating Aerospace Engineering student at San Diego State University with a minor in Italian. Throughout her academic career, she has pursued hands-on, applied engineering by leading the recovery avionics teams for high-powered rockets at SDSU's Rocket Project, interning as a Composites and Manufacturing Engineer at General Atomics Aeronautical Systems, and conducting flight test research at Wayfarer Aircraft Research & Development on a NASA SBIR funded program. She serves as President of Il Circolo Italiano, Vice President of the Space Club, and an officer in Tau Beta Pi, and has earned recognition including multiple full scholarships to attend AIAA SciTech in Orlando. In her free time, Amelia enjoys playing guitar, flying Cessna aircraft, building model aircraft, surfing, rock climbing, running, and practicing ballet. Following graduation, she will be joining the Systems and Flight Test Team at General Atomics.

**Blake Huckaby** is a graduating Aerospace Engineering student at San Diego State University. Throughout his academic career, he has focused on aerodynamics, power, and control systems, applying these disciplines directly to this glider optimization project by conducting computational fluid dynamics (CFD) and aerodynamic analysis using ANSYS software. Blake has built hands-on engineering experience through complex design projects, including developing a wind shaper wall for aerial firefighting research and designing a “moon-tracking” camera to simulate satellite directional subsystems. Currently applying his practical problem-solving skills as a maintenance engineer for campus facilities, Blake is actively seeking an entry-level Aerospace Engineering role in the aerospace sector following his graduation this May. In his free time, he enjoys golfing, fishing, and working on or modifying his 2013 Scion FR-S.

## News from the Slope – Bret Locke, Slope Coordinator



Bret Locke



### Conditions are Ripe for some Slope Action!

Conditions at the slopes have been light but ideal for our floaty craft. There has been plenty of sunshine to enjoy and temps have been moderate. Air California Adventure appears to be finished mowing in the RC Landing Area, making for long soft landings, which is a sought-after benefit of flying at Torrey Pines. TPG scheduled events continue for the 2026 summer.

There is not much to report on past events as the weather did not cooperate with our plans. March 7th, the Gliderport Scale Fun Fly was scheduled, but the wind was blowing in the wrong direction.

#### Upcoming Events

April 4th, the Gliderport Slope Old School Vintage/Classic Woodies will be at Torrey. The date of this event has been pushed forward a week to accommodate the Fly-in for our late friend Cliff Hunter. Wonderfully crafted classic gliders are usually present along with their builders. The schedule is from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

April 25th, is another Poway Slope Combat Fiesta at the Poway Slope. This event is attracting an ever-growing number of pilots due to sheer fun of the event. Please register on F3X for this event for planning, scoring and a spot on the podium.

The Summer 2026 Slope Season has come early, go out there and enjoy!

Sincerely,

Bret Locke  
TPG Slope Coordinator

## News from the Slope (continued)

### SAFETY ALERT:

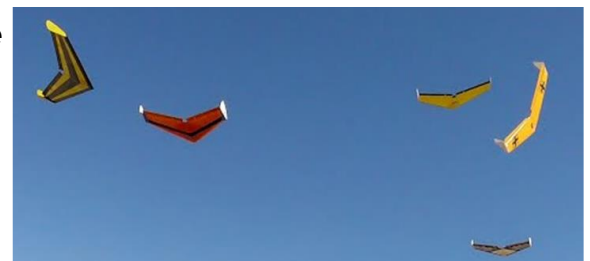
Our most effective safety practice is the Blue-Sky Rule; your depth perception cannot be trusted; Maintain Situational Awareness; and fly with a spotter if feeling overwhelmed by your plane or by paraglider traffic. In uncomfortable situations (i.e. numerous paragliders in the R/C window), landing is always a great option. If warranted, politely ask the Gliderport flight director to help clear the RC window.

### TPG Gliderport Schedule for 2026

April 4 <sup>th</sup>	Old School Vintage Classic Woodies – Balsa BOTs, Olys, Sagittas – whatever is built-up wood
May 2 <sup>nd</sup>	TPG-AIAA foamboard event – 9AM-2PM. UCSD/SDSU Foam Board Design/Build/Fly Contest – Mentors wanted!
May 9	Foamies – Ahis, Alulas, Radians – if it's foam, this is your day.
June 6 <sup>th</sup>	Katie Martin International Tribute. A day to remember and celebrate Bob's amazing wife Katie. Lots of Hobie Hawks (Katie's favorite) aloft. All RC soaring aircraft welcome, but be sure to bring out your classic Bob Martin planes too!
July 4 <sup>th</sup>	Aerobatics Day – TWF/PNF – Jesters, Ahis, Shrikes; whatever turns on a dime
August 8 <sup>th</sup>	Fly 'n Swap Again! – A day to fly and swap meet. Clean out your garages and make room for more birds
September 5 <sup>th</sup>	Old School Vintage Classic Woodies Again! – Balsa BOTs, Olys, Sagittas – whatever is built-up wood
October 17 <sup>th</sup>	UCSD/TPG Buddy Box & Skilled Pilots Mentorship Day
October 18 <sup>th</sup>	Redman Rules Contest – Ribbons for 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> . For the uninitiated, Redman Rules involve beer can bowling and limbo line.
December 5 <sup>th</sup>	No Shopping Saturday – A week or so after Thanksgiving to get out of the house

**Also, keep an eye out for details on our next Poway Slope Combat session.**

**The next event of 2026 is scheduled for April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2026**



## February Tow Hook Series/TD Fun Fly Report – John McNeil

About 15 of us came out to Encinitas for a Fun-Fly. We do this instead of holding an F3RES contest several times a year. This gave us time to help each other out, tuning aircraft and learning techniques. On Sunday, there were at least three maiden flights of new or "new to me" planes. All day, you could see friends huddled over planes, launching for each other and calling air. The weather was beautiful, making it easy to focus on the airplane setup.

We also set up the winch for open-class planes. At most fun flies we have an informal contest, but this day was so busy that I think the 5 big planes only flew a couple of times each. Dave Hall brought his winch out to test, so we didn't put out a club winch. These 4m span planes really load the winch, so the tests were solid. Photos from the event below, and on the following page.



Gary Fogel launching (Ian Cummings photo)



John McNeil launching (Ian Cummings photo)

## February Tow Hook Series TD/Fun Fly Report (continued)



(Ian Cummings photo)



(Ian Cumminas photo)



(Ian Cummings photo)



(Ian Cummings photo)



(Ian Cummings photo)



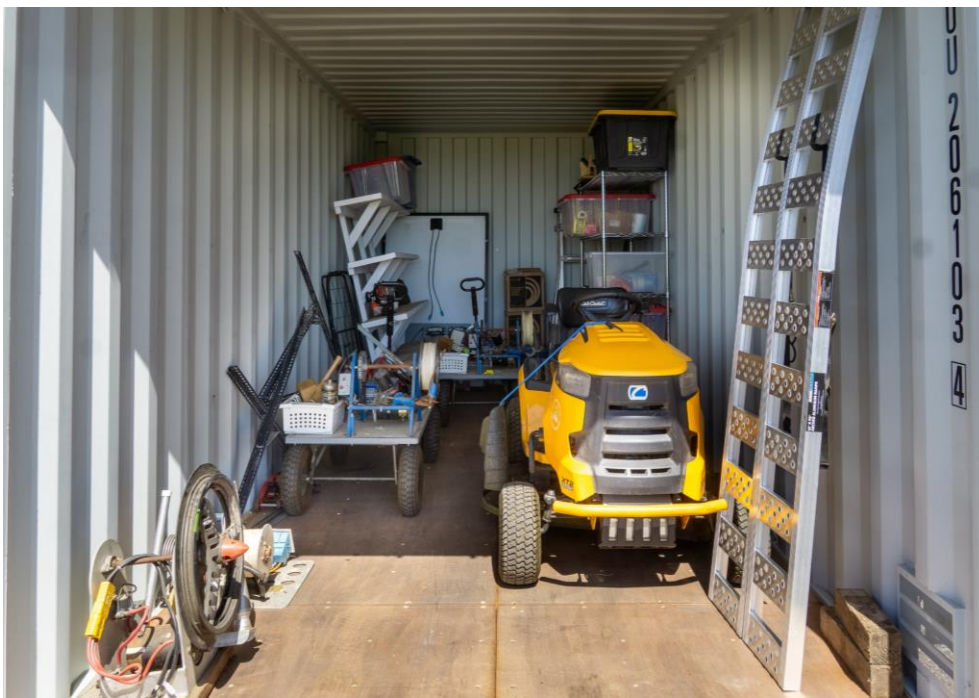
(Ian Cummings photo)

## February Tow Hook Series/TD Fun Fly Report (continued)

The other big activity of the day was cleaning the new container and the trailer. Don Lochhead and Tom Farley didn't fly at all; instead, they coordinated this task. You may not be aware that Cliff, Tom, and Don developed a plan to replace the rotting container where we stored the mower and other club equipment. This container was installed at the Encinitas field years ago. Since it sat on the ground, bees moved in, and the club has hired beekeepers to remove them multiple times over the years. This costs several hundred dollars each time. To remedy this, Cliff and Don presented a detailed plan to replace the container, along with exact cost estimates, to the TPG EC. This plan was approved, and the new container was installed earlier this year. The new container sits well above the ground to prevent bees from moving under it. The old container was hauled off, and equipment was moved quickly with little organization.

With the International Hand Launch Glider Festival fast approaching, we decided to completely empty both the trailer and the container. Don brought a bunch of bins, and the Fun Fly was paused while we quickly sorted the entire TPG field equipment collection. Don orchestrated very efficiently. It was fun seeing gear we've used since the dawn of time. One of my favorites were the CD with all the hand launch tasks recorded by Keith Finkenbinder. Note I wrote hand launch. This was from before the discipline was recognized by the FAI as F3K and before discus launch was invented. In the same box was the only CD player we could find back then that reliably played a 10-minute round in 10 actual minutes.

Thanks to Cliff, Don, and Tom for making this happen, and to the pilots who gave up part of their fun fly!



New cargo container, cleaned up and reorganized. (Ian Cummings photo)



Trailer loaded up for the IHLGF coming up this month (Gary Fogel photo)

## March DLG Contest Report – Justin Tolman CD

The March 2026 DLG contest/clinic was held on Saturday March 21st with 9 pilots in attendance. Ian Cummings and Tom Farley had spent the previous day meticulously grooming the grass and it showed. The field, still green from the winter's rain, looked amazing.

It was a mild 60 degrees early in the morning. A sure sign that it was going to be a warm day. But would the morning conditions provide early lift?



DLG pilots (Bob Hirsch photo)

In Round 1 (Task A, 5 in 7), Group A was unable to find 5-minute air. Sportsman Malick Hernandez was able to stay aloft the longest (2:45) and take the K. The tides quickly turned, however, for Group B. William Lalla, Mengchen Li and Justin Tolman all were able to find 5-minute air and all 3 shared the K.

As quickly as it came, the big, buoyant air of the first round was gone for Round 2 (Task B, Last 2), Group A. Despite a lack of big lift, Chuck Norris was able to put in some masterful flying, not much above launch height the entire time, in order to put together two fantastic flights to take the K. In Group B, Mengchen and Malick shared the K after getting both of their 3-minute flights as well.

For Round 3 (Task G, Five Longest) it was time for some quick turn practice. This task requires precision turnarounds in order to maximize efficiency. In Group A, it was Mengchen who dropped only 6 seconds to earn the K. In Group B, it was Mengchen's fellow UCLA attendee Xiaoyang "Tony" Zhao who took the K after dropping just 20 seconds.

As we moved into Round 4 (3 Longest) the lift was becoming more readable and sustainable. In Group A, Mengchen dropped just 5 seconds to edge out Justin for the K. In Group B, it was Tony who put together 3 solid flights to take the K over Malick.

## March DLG Contest Report (continued)

Round 5 was the pilot-favorite: Poker. In Group A, Tony put together 3 well-calculated flights to earn a dominant K. Notably, Justin called “window” with roughly 6 minutes on the clock only to fail to make time on that call. In Group B, William Lalla went “all in” and masterfully executed a brilliant flight to take the K over Mengchen’s more conservative 3-call strategy.

In Round 6, it was time to climb the rungs of Big Ladder. In Group A, William put together 5 great flights to take a dominating K. In Group B, Justin took the K over Don Lochead.

We ended the day with Round 7 (1,2,3,4). In Group A, Mengchen and William battled it out with impressive quick turns and fantastic flying. Mengchen eked out the K by just 2 seconds. In Group B, Tony and Justin went head-to-head but it was Tony who took the K by just 4 seconds.

When we tallied up all the points, it was Mengchen Li who came out on top, followed by William Lalla and Xiaoyang “Tony” Zhao.



Contest winners: Mengchen Li, 1st Place (center), William Lalla, 2nd Place (left) and Xiaoyang "Tony" Zhou, 3rd Place (Justin Tolman photo)

## March DLG Contest Report (continued)

### F3X Vault Scores

#### Rounds (1-7)

#	Pilot Name	Total	Diff	Completed Rounds (No Drops In Effect)						
				Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5	Round 6	Round 7
1	<b>3</b> Mengchen Li 🇨🇳	6823.8		1000	1000	1000	1000	980.8	843.0	1000
2	<b>1</b> William Lalla 🇺🇸 🇨🇦	6649.0	-174.8	1000	799.2	978.4	874.6	1000	1000	996.8
3	<b>11</b> Xiaoyang Zhao 🇨🇳	6600.1	-48.9	854.6	823.6	1000	1000	1000	921.9	1000
4	<b>2</b> Justin Tolman 🇺🇸 🇨🇦	5905.8	-694.3	1000	728.3	965.7	983.4	235.3	1000	993.1
5	<b>7</b> Chuck Norris 🇺🇸 🇨🇦	5765.4	-140.4	794.7	1000	806.4	855.2	716.3	631.2	961.6
6	<b>10</b> Malick Hernandez 🇺🇸 🇨🇦	5742.7	-22.7	1000	1000	952.2	970.7	300.5	781.0	738.3
7	<b>6</b> Don Lochhead 🇺🇸 🇨🇦	5726.8	-15.9	805.0	933.3	901.5	726.4	588.2	935.4	837.0
8	<b>12</b> Scott McCurdy 🇺🇸 🇨🇦	4852.6	-874.2	578.4	998.1	895.3	893.9	901.5	585.4	0.0
9	<b>9</b> Ian Cummings 🇺🇸 🇨🇦	4023.3	-829.3	565.7	572.2	840.4	580.1	350.6	699.5	414.8
10	Luke Skywalker 🇺🇸 🇨🇦	0.0	-4023.3	0.0	DNS	0.0	DNS	DNS	DNS	DNS
11	<b>8</b> Doug Cronkhite 🇺🇸 🇨🇦	0.0		0.0	DNS	0.0	DNS	DNS	DNS	DNS

Our next DLG contest is right around the corner on April 11<sup>th</sup>. This will be the last chance to tune up before the 31st International Hand Launch Glider Festival on April 18-19<sup>th</sup>.

Sign up for April 11<sup>th</sup> here:

[https://f3xvault.com/?action=event&function=event\\_view&event\\_id=4118](https://f3xvault.com/?action=event&function=event_view&event_id=4118)

There is still plenty of time to get signed up for IHLGF here:

[https://f3xvault.com/?action=event&function=event\\_view&event\\_id=4277](https://f3xvault.com/?action=event&function=event_view&event_id=4277)

Hope to see you there!

Justin Tolman

TPG DLG Coordinator

## March F5J Foamy Fun Fly Report – Don Lochhead, CD

Eleven pilots met up at the Poway field for our second Foamy Fun Fly of the year. We flew a 3-heat format consisting of four rounds. Target time was 7 minutes with landing points scored using standard F5J landing tapes.

The contest had a special meaning because it was held in conjunction with a Memorial Fly-in conducted mid-way through the contest honoring our great friend Cliff Hunter.

Here's a link to Jake Olefsky's video of the actual Fly-in group launch:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBGARLauPXU>



In addition to the eleven contestants, many more showed up for the Fly-in honoring Cliff Hunter (Bob Hirsch photo)

Conditions were clear and sunny with only an occasional breeze, which made things feel warmer than the actual mid-80's temperatures. Lift conditions were good enough to allow the top pilot in each flight to exceed a 6-minute flight most of the time.

As typical, we saw a variety of planes competing including Night Radians, a UMX Radian, and an old school stick-built glider. Milan made his maiden Night Radian launch in Round 1 for the "K" with a 6:46 flight time with 45 landing points.

After four rounds, Milan took first with Gary in second and Ray rounding out the podium.

### F3X Vault Scores – Round 5 was canceled

#	Pilot Name	Total	Diff	Completed Rounds (N)				
				Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5
1	<b>14</b> Milan Bregman	3957.28		1000	957.28	1000	1000	NE
2	<b>3</b> Gary Fogel	3833.08	-124.20	937.88	1000	1000	895.20	NE
3	<b>8</b> Ray Pili	3818.51	-14.57	818.51	1000	1000	1000	NE
4	<b>5</b> Chuck Norris	3345.90	-472.61	1000	739.13	878.63	728.14	NE
5	<b>11</b> Mike Swanson	3314.85	-31.05	658.50	1000	795.51	860.84	NE
6	<b>10</b> John McNeil	3000.00	-314.85	1000	0.00	1000	1000	NE
7	<b>7</b> Jake Olefsky	2469.56	-530.44	798.34	418.87	252.35	1000	NE
8	<b>15</b> Don Lochhead	2208.06	-261.50	426.89	1000	174.40	606.77	NE
9	<b>12</b> Jeff Sinsay	1800.68	-407.38	1000	586.96	213.72	NE	NE
10	<b>1</b> Christoph Efstathiou	1139.95	-660.73	795.58	344.37	NE	NE	NE
11	<b>4</b> David Hall	333.81	-806.14	110.50	223.31	0.00	0.00	NE

## March F5J Foamy Fun Fly/Contest Report (continued)



Milan with his Radian (Bob Hirsch photo)



A few folks flew UMX Radians; mini-versions of the Radian. Here's Jake with his UM and Brian timing. (Bob Hirsch photo)



Gary, about to launch his Radian with John timing (Bob Hirsch photo)



John launching his vintage Larry Jolly Electricus (Bob Hirsch photo)

Please join in on the next fun Fly, Vault registration is open.

[https://www.f3xvault.com/?action=event&function=event\\_register&event\\_id=4152](https://www.f3xvault.com/?action=event&function=event_register&event_id=4152)

## Club Membership Update – Christoph Efstathiou



Christoph  
Efstathiou

Hello Gulls,

**Thank you so much for continuing to renew your memberships. We currently stand at 85 memberships for 2026.**

**If you have not yet received your card and key, please let me know and I will get that to you as soon as possible.**

**I will be travelling later this month, so if you renew towards the end of April please be aware the key and card might not arrive until the end of the month. Thanks for your understanding!**

### **Renewing or new members must fill out the registration on our web site.**

Please use the link below when joining as a new member or renewing an existing membership. Fill out the registration form completely and pay using PayPal, credit card or check. If you have not signed up for the TPG Google Group, you will be sent an individual email when becoming a member.

<http://www.torreypinesgulls.org/membership.html>

### **Membership Processing**

Please use the link below when joining as a new member or renewing an existing membership. Fill out the registration form completely and pay using PayPal, credit card or check. Current members will receive a renewal notice using the TPG Google Group email process. If you have not signed up for the TPG Google Group, you will be sent an individual email.

<http://www.torreypinesgulls.org/membership.html>

All new and renewing members will receive a membership card and key (if requested, for Encinitas and Poway). The key provides access to the gates at our Encinitas and Poway flying sites. Members who fly at the Torrey Pines Gliderport and are Gliderport rated will receive a club lanyard from a club representative at the Gliderport. Members must wear the lanyard with the membership card attached when flying at the Gliderport, for safety reasons. Remember, you must have a current AMA membership to join TPG. To join AMA, follow this link:

<https://join.modelaircraft.org/torreypinesgulls/>

Please contact us at: [membership@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:membership@torreypinesgulls.org) if you have not received your membership materials or have any membership-related questions.

## Club Membership Update (continued)

### Annual Membership

TPG's membership period is January 1<sup>st</sup> through December 31<sup>st</sup>. Renewals begin November 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

### Club Dues are as follows:

- **Full Members** – \$60 per year
- **Youth Members** (19 years or younger) – \$5 per year
- **Student Members** (full-time) – \$20 per year
- **Work Credit** You will receive a credit of up to \$20 on your annual dues; \$10 per each half-day working at any TPG flying field. When filling out your registration form, there is a place to input your hours/credit.

New members joining in the first six months of the year pay the full rate. Those joining in July through September pay half the applicable rate. If you are a new member joining in October through December, you pay the full rate, but your membership is considered paid through the end of the following year.

You can get more detailed information regarding your yearly membership benefits by using the following link: [Torrey Pines Gulls Membership Guide](#), which will provide answers to many of your questions regarding Torrey Pines Gulls activities. Also review the TPG Club Bylaws for more information at: [Club Bylaws](#)

Christoph Efstathiou  
Membership Chairman  
[membership@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:membership@torreypinesgulls.org)



Note: TPG membership information will not be shared or sold and will only be used to contact members for purposes of TPG business.

## Where We Fly – Panoramas – Ian Cummings

Here are Ian Cummings' immersive panoramas of our world class flying sites; the world-famous Torrey Pines Gliderport, Poway Flight Center, where each year the club sponsors the IHLGF (International Hand Launch Glider Festival) and the Encinitas Flight Center. Clicking on the pictures takes you to our sites:

**Click on this photo to visit the Torrey Pines Gliderport.**



**Click on this photo to visit the TPG Poway Flight Center.**



**Click on this photo to visit the TPG Encinitas Flight Center.**



## How We Compete

### F5J Contest Series

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John McNeil

#### **Thermal Coordinator – John McNeil**

Thermal Duration (winch launch) contests have been moved into the Tow Hook Series (see the following pages). For F5J contest dates, check the following link on the Torrey Pines Gulls website:

<https://www.torreypinesgulls.org/f5j-competition.html>

Also, be sure to subscribe to the RCGroups 2026 TPG F5J contest schedule thread for contest news. In the meantime, check out what's been going on during 2025:

<https://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?4662319-2025-TPG-F5J-contest-schedule>

or contact John McNeil at [thermal@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:thermal@torreypinesgulls.org)

### DLG/Hand Launch/F3K Contest Series

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Justin Tolman

#### **DLG Coordinator – Justin Tolman**

For DLG contest dates, check the calendar on the Torrey Pines Gulls website:

For information, contacts, rules, etc. for past and upcoming Hand Launch/DLG contests, check the following link on the Torrey Pines Gulls website:

<https://www.torreypinesgulls.org/discus-launch-glider-series.html>

Also, be sure to subscribe to the RCGroups 2026 TPG DLG Contest/Clinic Series thread for contest news:

<https://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?4841707-2026-TPG-DLG-Contest-Clinic-Series-Information>

or contact Justin Tolman at [dlg@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:dlg@torreypinesgulls.org)

## How We Compete (continued)

### Team DLG Series

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John McNeil

#### Thermal Coordinator – John McNeil

Following a successful and fun launch of this new contest format in 2024, we have expanded the team DLG schedule in 2025. Each event will be on a Sunday following a Saturday monthly DLG.

Also, be sure to subscribe to the RCGroups 2026 TPG Team DLG Contest/Clinic Series thread for contest news.

<https://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?4861235-2026-TPG-Team-DLG-Series>

For more info, contact John McNeil at [thermal@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:thermal@torreypinesgulls.org)

#### Team DLG format:

- Teams consist of exactly four pilots.
- In each heat, three of the pilots fly while one pilot times and provides team direction.
- Each round, the timer is rotated. After four rounds, all team members will have timed once.
- Contest rounds follow F3K formats except:
  - Flight timing
    - Flight time starts when the last of three pilots releases the model.
    - Flight time ends when the first of three pilots time would end.
    - If any pilot lands out of bounds, then the flight scores zero.
    - (In other words, all three pilots fly each flight together for a single flight time)

For full details, check out this RCGroups Forum:

<https://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?4617285-New-F3K-Team-Contest-Format>

## How We Compete (continued)

### 2024 TPG Tow Hook Series - F3L/F3RES/TD/1.5m

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John McNeil

#### Thermal Coordinator – John McNeil

The TPG Tow Hook Series was a great success in 2025; more contests, fun fly clinics and even a multi-club/multi state event, The Coastal Cooler, which was held in August.

For information, contacts, rules, etc. for past and upcoming Tow Hook Series contests, check the following link on the Torrey Pines Gulls website:

<https://www.torreypinesgulls.org/f3l-res-competitions.html>

Also, be sure to subscribe to the RCGroups 2026 TPG Tow Hook Contest/Clinic Series thread for contest news.

<https://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?4861221-2026-TPG-Tow-Hook-Series-F3L-F3RES-TD-sub-250g>

For more info, contact John McNeil at [thermal@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:thermal@torreypinesgulls.org)

#### Aircraft Classes

- 1.5m RES bungee launch. Max flying weight is 250g. Construction materials and techniques must follow F3L rules.  
Maximum flight time is 5 minutes.
- 2m RES bungee launch. Construction materials and techniques must follow F3L rules  
Maximum flight time is 6 minutes.
- AMA thermal duration open class. Winch launch. Skegs are allowed  
Maximum flight time is 10 minutes.

#### Equipment

At least three landing tapes will be provided, marked for F3L. AMA TD will use the same landing bonus formula as the other classes.

F3L compliant bungees will be provided by the club and set up at the CD's direction. At the CD's discretion, all bungees may be shortened from F3L standard to accommodate field conditions. Lighter 1.5m meter bungees will also be setup.

Winches:

A single winch will be on TD days. The winch shall be set up in parallel with, and at the same length as the stretched bungees. The winch will not have a retriever.

## How We Compete (continued)

### F5J Foamy Fun Fly and Contest/Clinic Series



Don Lochhead

TPG will continue our F5J style foamy fun fly contest (and clinic) Series in 2026 at our Poway field.

This is truly a fun-fly and a great way to get into F5J style flying. Any foamy or stick-built plane up to 2m (or so) is welcome. Night Radians are very popular but we also see Yellow Jackets (stick-built) and a variety of other vintage foamy and balsa stick-built aircraft.

We typically pause mid-contest for a quick clinic. Subjects generally focus on F5J topics of interest to pilots getting into the format. The events are free but we still ask all pilots to sign up on F3X Vault so we know how many to expect and can run the matrix ahead of time.

For information, contacts, rules, etc. for past and upcoming F5J Foamy Fun Fly and Contest/Clinic events, check the following link on the Torrey Pines Gulls website:

<https://www.torreyпинesgulls.org/foamy-fun-fly.html>

Our next fun fly will be held on July 18<sup>th</sup>. Sign up and come join in on the fun.

[https://www.f3xvault.com/?action=event&function=event\\_view&event\\_id=4152](https://www.f3xvault.com/?action=event&function=event_view&event_id=4152)



Bob Hirsch photo

## League of Silent Flight and TPG – Gary Fogel



Gary Fogel

The League of Silent Flight (LSF) <https://www.silentflight.org/> is the special interest group (SIG) representing RC soaring to the Academy of Model Aeronautics. LSF has its own lengthy and important history, having first been conceived of in Northern California in 1969, and helps arrange the annual RC soaring Nationals at Muncie, Indiana each summer. Additional info on its history can be found here: <http://www.silentflight.org/images/documents/lfsstory.pdf>

Mark Smith was the first local to sign up for the LSF program with LSF #19. His father Rod was not far behind with #28. They may have been flying more with Harbor Soaring Society at that time (1969/1970) than Torrey Pines Gulls but soon were enjoying membership in both clubs. Since then, over 10,000 people from around the world have signed up and received an LSF number.

Don Edberg was the first in the club to achieve LSF SAP Level III (February 2, 1974). Randy Warner was not far behind, completing the level on April 25, 1974.

Don Edberg was also first in the TPG to achieve LSF SAP Level IV (June 27, 1975). Keith Finkenbiner completed the level on July 8, 1975 but was likely living in Illinois at that time. Ben Clerx completed Level IV on September 30, 1975 but was perhaps living in Honolulu at the time.

Larry Jolly completed his SAP Level V on November 16, 1983 but may or may not have been a member of TPG at the time. TPG members Don Edberg completed his on July 8, 1989. Since then, George Joy (1992), Patrick Dionisio (2002) and Keith Finkenbiner (2002) have completed Level V:

- SAP Level III – 51 pilots
- SAP Level IV – 31 pilots
- SAP Level V – 5 pilots

Larry Jolly (1983), Don Edberg (1989), George Joy (1992), Patrick Dionisio (2002), Keith Finkenbiner (2002)

For LSF eSAP, only one pilot in the history of the program has completed Level V – Larry Jolly (September 2, 2015). We need more pilots signing up and completing eSAP levels especially given the popularity of F5J, our regular F5J fun flies, and the opportunity to use electric launch DLGs in our monthly F3K contests.

## League of Silent Flight and TPG – (continued)



Who in the TPG is currently working on which levels? I have the following info; if you do not see your name listed and wish to be added please let me know. It's good for us to have a list of current aspirations so that we can help others team up along the way and get to their goals. Don't forget to use 2026 TPG events towards next levels!

First	Last	SAP Level next to achieve	eSAP Level next to achieve
Milan	Bregman	Level I	
Gary	Legerton	Level I	
Mengchen	Li	Level I	
Paul	Nibecker	Level I	
Scott	McCurdy	Level I	Level II
Justin	Tolman	Level II	
Christoph	Efstathiou	Level II	
Ed	LaCroix	Level II	
Jake	Olefsky	Level II	Level II
Eric	Metzdorf	Level II	
Daniel	McFarland	Level II	
Don	Lochhead	Level II	
Ian	Cummings	Level III	
Mike	Verzuh	Level III	
Ray	Pili	Level III	Level II
Tom	Kiesling	Level III	
Mike	Smith	Level IV	
Steve	Condon	Level IV	
Chuck	Norris	Level V	Level II
Gary	Fogel	Level V	Level III
John	McNeil	Level V	
Scott	Condon	Level V	
David	Hall	Level V	
Ben	Clerx	Level V	
Rick	Shelby	Level V	

## How We Connect

# Questions or concerns?

You can have your questions answered at: [www.torreypinesgulls.org](http://www.torreypinesgulls.org)

We have a [Contact Us](#) link in the drop-down menu that appears when you scroll over [The Club](#) next to [Membership](#), [Locations](#), [Contests...](#)If you have any questions, concerns, suggestions, etc., here's your chance.

## Don't forget to join

In order to maintain a line of communication among members, we have a TPG Google Group. Please make sure that our club Membership Chairman has your current email address. You can confirm this by contacting [membership@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:membership@torreypinesgulls.org). If you are not already a member of the TPG Google Group, you will be sent an invitation to join.

When you join as a member of the private TPG Google Group, the club will distribute notifications, newsletters, contest events and holiday party info, etc. This information will keep you informed of all club activities throughout the year. You don't need a Gmail address to participate in Google Groups, but you do need to be a member of TPG.

Google Groups provides a great way of communicating with one another. If you have any questions or concerns about almost anything having to do with flying, building, finding another club member, etc., you can post them on Google Groups. It also allows you to send links and attachments, just like regular email.

...and, very importantly, since all postings/emails are done through Google Groups, your actual email address is not visible when notifications are sent out to the club members. Also, only members of the group can post to the group, so joining the group does not add to your spam burden.

So, verify that the club has your correct email, make sure you receive an invitation to join Google Groups and sign up!

### Procedure for Joining Google Groups

Here are the steps new club members need to take to be added to Google Groups if they don't have a Gmail account/address:

1. Go to the [Google Account Sign In page](#).
2. Click Create account.
3. Enter your name.
4. Click Use my current email address instead.
5. Enter your current email address.
6. Click Next.
7. Verify your email address with the code sent to your existing email.
8. Click Verify.
9. Confirm with TPG Membership (Cliff Hunter) the above steps have been completed, use the following email address: [membership@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:membership@torreypinesgulls.org)

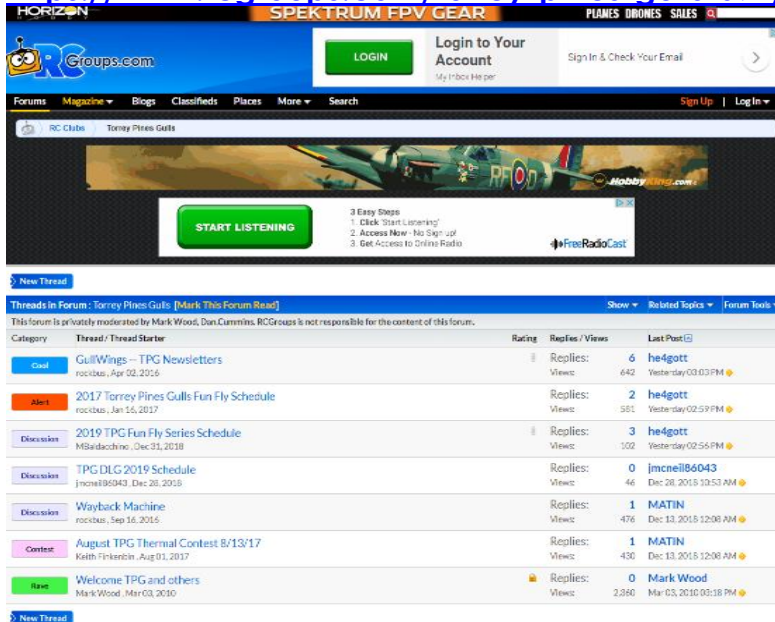
## How We Connect (continued)

# Are you a member of ?

If you're not...**you should be!** RCGroups is the most widely used and active online Radio Control Community for everything RC, from planes to cars, to boats, drones, radios, power systems...pretty much anything RC! It includes forums, specific interest threads, blogs, discussions, etc....and, more importantly, The Torrey Pines Gulls Forum.

To get started, click on the link or web page below to get to the TPG Club forum. You can also get there from the **Clubs** link at the lower right of the RCGroups home page and scroll down to Torrey Pines Gulls.

<https://www.rcgroups.com/torrey-pines-gulls-672/>



Category	Thread / Thread Starter	Replies	Views	Last Post
Goal	GullWings – TPG Newsletters rocksas, Apr 02, 2016	6	642	he4gott Yesterday 03:03 PM
Alert	2017 Torrey Pines Gulls Fun Fly Schedule rocksas, Jan 16, 2017	2	561	he4gott Yesterday 02:59 PM
Discussion	2019 TPG Fun Fly Series Schedule MBaradachino, Dec 31, 2018	3	102	he4gott Yesterday 02:56 PM
Discussion	TPG DLG 2019 Schedule jmcneil86043, Dec 28, 2018	0	46	jmcneil86043 Dec 28, 2018 10:53 AM
Discussion	Wayback Machine rocksas, Sep 16, 2016	1	476	MATIN Dec 13, 2018 12:08 AM
Contest	August TPG Thermal Contest 8/13/17 Keith Finkestein, Aug 01, 2017	1	436	MATIN Dec 13, 2018 12:08 AM
Item	Welcome TPG and others Mark Wood, Mar 03, 2010	0	2,840	Mark Wood Mar 03, 2010 03:18 PM

If you haven't yet joined RCGroups, click on the **Sign Up** link at the upper right and follow the instructions.

Once you've navigated to the Torrey Pines Gulls Forum, you can subscribe to the Forum or to any of the individual threads within the Forum.

To subscribe to the Forum, click the **Forum Tools** link and select "Subscribe to This Forum" from the dropdown menu. Then choose from the notification dropdown menu. If you want to subscribe to a specific thread, click to open the thread, and click the **Thread Tools** link. Select "Subscribe to This Thread" from the dropdown menu. Again, choose from the notification dropdown menu.

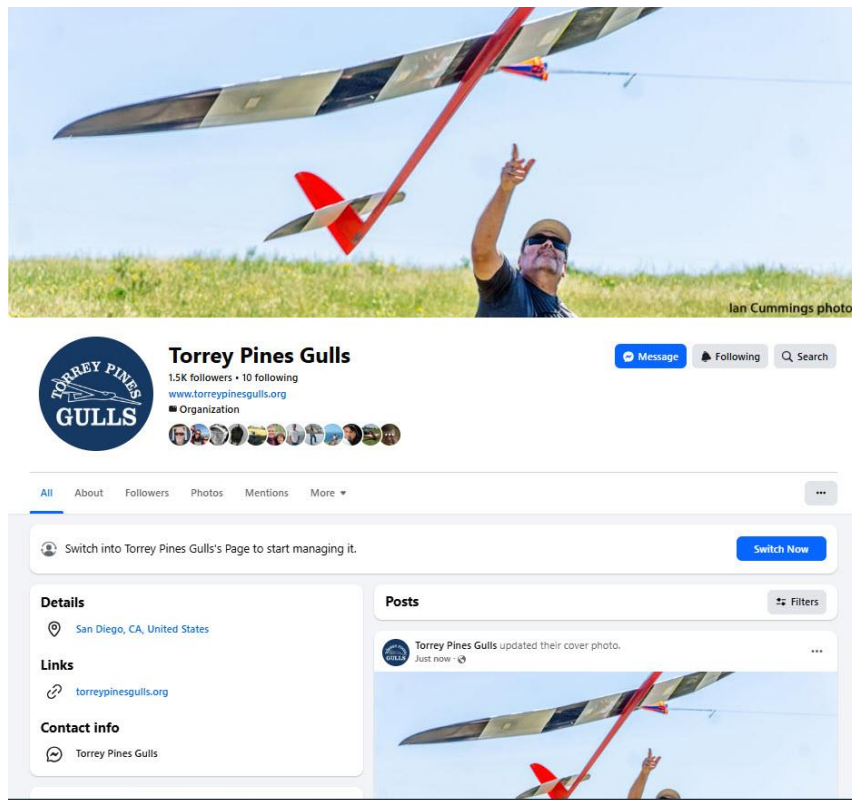
RCGroups allows you to post photos and videos. By subscribing, you can keep up with the latest events, club activities and member postings.

## How We Connect (continued)

### Check out the TPG **facebook** Page

If you haven't had a chance yet, check out our TPG Facebook page by clicking the links below for new content posted by club members and friends.

<https://www.facebook.com/TorreyPinesGulls/>

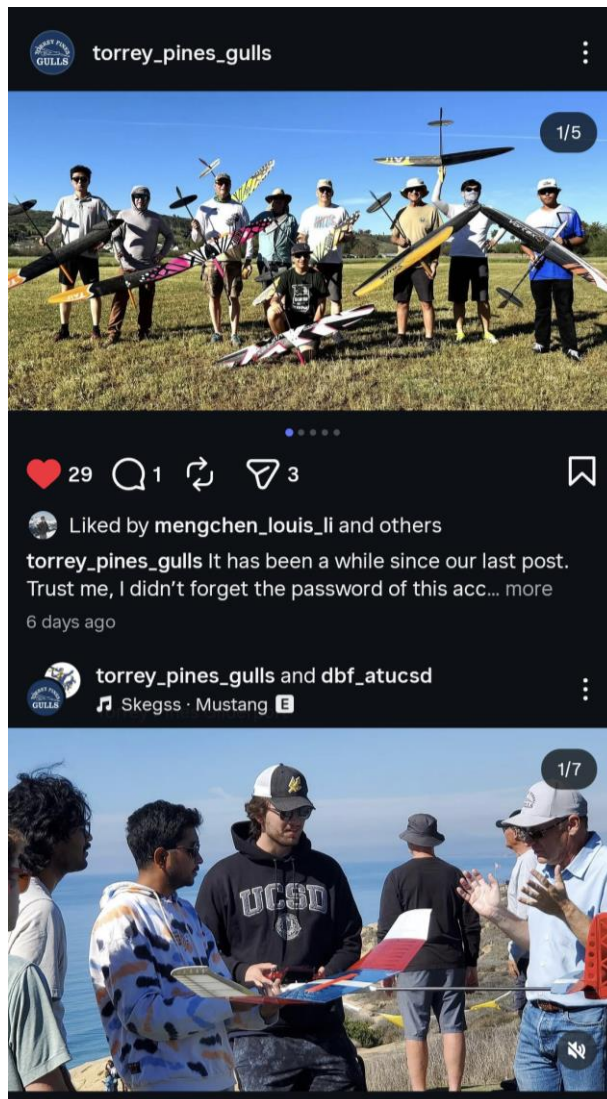


## How We Connect (continued)

TPG is on 

TPG's Media Coordinator, Mengchen Li, has created an Instagram account for the Torrey Pines Gulls. If you're already on Instagram, search for `torrey_pines_gulls` and click on follow. If you're not on Instagram, well, now's a great time to join!

Also, if you have any photos or videos of your RC soaring activities, contests, builds, fun flies, etc., send them along to Mengchen at [media@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:media@torreypinesgulls.org) and you might find your submittal on a TPG Instagram post.



## How We Connect (continued)

Join the Conversation:  **Discord**

Discord is a free website and app that you can download to your phone or computer that gives you access to the Torrey Pines Gulls group chat. This is an active discussion group with interesting conversations happening all the time. It's a great place to ask questions and learn from your fellow members. Event reminders and club news are posted to our Discord server so you can stay up to date with what's happening.

To get in:

1. Visit the Discord website and download the app to your computer or click the 'Open in Browser' link.
2. Or, search through your phone's app store for the Discord app and install it.
3. Create a free account inside the app or website.
4. Scan the QR code or click the link below it to join.



<http://www.discord.gg/vRdV6Fd9nP>

## Newsletter Submissions - Dale Gottdank, Editor



Dale Gottdank

Please contribute to our **GULL WINGS NEWSLETTER**

**Send pictures, or maybe even an article!** It could be just a paragraph with some photos from a great soaring day ...even something interesting you've seen on the internet. I'd like to have the newsletter published by the first week of every month. If there's a project you're working on, don't just post it on RCGroups...share it with your club!

Please send in your articles or photos ([communications@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:communications@torreypinesgulls.org)) by the **25<sup>th</sup>** of each month so they can be included in the monthly newsletter. If there are too many, we'll save them for the next issue. Photos should be in their original, high-resolution format. The newsletter can be found on the Torrey Pines Gulls website at <http://www.torreypinesgulls.org>.



## Club Officers and Contact Information

President	Chuck Norris	<a href="mailto:president@torreypinesgulls.org">president@torreypinesgulls.org</a>
Vice-President	Gary Fogel	<a href="mailto:vp@torreypinesgulls.org">vp@torreypinesgulls.org</a>
Past President	Ian Cummings	
Secretary	Dale Gottdank	<a href="mailto:secretary@torreypinesgulls.org">secretary@torreypinesgulls.org</a>
Treasurer	Don Lochhead	<a href="mailto:treasurer@torreypinesgulls.org">treasurer@torreypinesgulls.org</a>
Communications Officer	Dale Gottdank	<a href="mailto:communications@torreypinesgulls.org">communications@torreypinesgulls.org</a>
Thermal Coordinator	John McNeil	<a href="mailto:thermal@torreypinesgulls.org">thermal@torreypinesgulls.org</a>
Slope Coordinator	Bret Locke	<a href="mailto:slope@torreypinesgulls.org">slope@torreypinesgulls.org</a>
DLG Coordinator	Justin Tolman	<a href="mailto:dlg@torreypinesgulls.org">dlg@torreypinesgulls.org</a>
Membership Chair	Christoph Efstathiou	<a href="mailto:membership@torreypinesgulls.org">membership@torreypinesgulls.org</a>
IHLGF Coordinator	Chuck Norris	<a href="mailto:president@torreypinesgulls.org">president@torreypinesgulls.org</a>
LSF Coordinator	Gary Fogel	<a href="mailto:vp@torreypinesgulls.org">vp@torreypinesgulls.org</a>
Webmaster	Jake Olefsky	<a href="mailto:tpg@foldnfly.com">tpg@foldnfly.com</a>
Media Coordinator	Mengchen Li	<a href="mailto:media@torreypinesgulls.org">media@torreypinesgulls.org</a>
Historian	Gary Fogel	<a href="mailto:historian@torreypinesgulls.org">historian@torreypinesgulls.org</a>
Raffle Chairman	Michael Gillen	Contact via TPG Discord server

### Executive Officers



Chuck Norris



Gary Fogel



Dale Gottdank



Don Lochhead



John McNeil



Bret Locke



Justin Tolman



Christoph Efstathiou

## Photo of the Month Contest

Each month club members may submit photos of an activity related to soaring and the newsletter editor will post a **WINNER**.

A Photo of the Year winner will be selected from among the monthly winners and will receive a prize (their photo will be used as the website and newsletter masthead AND will appear on the following year's club membership card); so **horizontal format photos are preferred**.

Email your photos (**JPG format and original high-resolution version, please**) to Dale Gottdank at [submit@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:submit@torreypinesgulls.org). Please provide your name, location of photo and photo description. Note: December photo of the month winner(s) will be included in the following year's Photo of the Year competition.



**4<sup>th</sup> Quarter (Oct-Nov-Dec 2025) Winner** – Steve Stanton launching his self-designed Cayley at a TPG F5J contest (Bob Hirsch photo)

## Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



**January Winner** – Lone glider near the Black Mountain Gliderport (Kevin Vu photo)



**February Winner** – Justin Tolman mid launch (Dave MacNeil photo)

## Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



**March Co-Winner** – Kellen LeBlanc launching at the Tow Hook Contest (Bob Hirsch photo))



**March Co-Winner** – Group launch at the February Poway Slope (Combat) Fiesta (Bob Hirsch photo))

## Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



Gary Fogel launching at the March Tow Hook Serie/TD Fun Fly (Ian Cummings photo)



**April Co-Winner** – John McNeil launching his open class ship at the March Tow Hook Series/TD Fun Fly (Ian Cummings photo)

## Photo of the Month Contest (continued)



**April Co-winner** – Jeff Sinsay launches a well-worn, but still well-flyin' Radian (Bob Hirsch photo)



### **TPG Classified Ads Policy**

Classified ads are free to TPG members for non-commercial purposes. Commercial customers should contact the editor. To submit an advertisement, send the information to [communications@torreypinesgulls.org](mailto:communications@torreypinesgulls.org). Ads must be submitted by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month to appear in the next issue. All advertisements will remain in the newsletter for the month of issue and will be removed for the following issue. If you wish to advertise for another month, you will need to notify the editor or resubmit.



**Quote of the Month:**

*“A common mistake that people make when trying to design something completely foolproof is to underestimate the ingenuity of complete fools.”*

*~ Douglas Adams*



December Poway morning (Bob Hirsch photo)