

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Welcome Message
Date: Tuesday, August 11, 2020 10:38:54 AM

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Good morning Andrew,
Below is the forwarded email string.
Please let me know if you have any other questions.
I'll be in the mountains and out of range Aug 17- 23, but otherwise available.
Thank you,
Bryan Trujillo
[REDACTED]

Begin forwarded message:

From: Matt Herron [REDACTED] >
Date: July 26, 2020 at 3:13:28 PM PDT
To: Bryan Trujillo <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Re: Welcome Message

Hi Bryan: When I returned from a Lampson flight last week and attempted to recharge the batteries, one took the charge and the other gave a coded message for a problem with a low cell and would not charge.

I reported this to LZ Design, and they have arranged to send me two new circuit boards for the batteries. Apparently, this problem has occurred before to owners of the 16 cell (as opposed to 14 cell) batteries. Steve Bair told me he had the same problem. The circuit boards are scheduled to arrive in Tuesday via DHL. I'll let you know if I have further problems.

I was not aware that Truckee has also restricted charging of FES batteries. Shouldn't be a problem for any site that has normal 110 v power as I assume Truckee does. In the case of Air Sailing, all their power is generated from their own system: Battery banks + diesel generator + solar array. Apparently there is a power surge when the FES chargers are plugged in and that has crashed Air Sailing power system.

Another problem that apparently is a concern with the 16 cell batteries occurred on my first flight out of Lampson. I made a normal takeoff, noticed a "engine heat" warning on the FCU, and shut down the engine. (Probably didn't need to have done that -- it was probably only a yellow warning, calling for a reduction in power.)

Anyway, I was circling at about 800 AGL, looking for lift and finding only sink. So I headed back for the field, tripped the radio to announce landing, and the engine started spontaneously, and would not quit even when I dialed back the FCU. So I cut the main power switch and the engine STILL kept running -- to my ears at least.

Recognizing that I now had a serious problem, and would have to land with the prop spinning, I put full focus on getting the aircraft safely on the ground. I was low enough that I cut the downwind and began base at mid-field (there was plenty of runway), but when I turned final a cross wind had pushed me just beyond the strip so all my attention was on getting back to a lineup with the runway. I was also concerned with not nosing down enough to create a prop strike, and probably stalled a couple of feet above the runway. The result was a hard landing and a blown tire. Fortunately, there was no other damage to the glider or myself. I felt very fortunate. It was my diciest landing in 18 years and 1,600 hours of flying.

I learned from LZ Design that apparent RF interference with all the multiple antennas in a modern cockpit had occasionally caused the unexpected engine start when the PTT switch was operated. Luka sent me detailed instructions on how to make hardware and software changes to correct both that problem and the fact that my prop docking was not perfect. After I had the tire replaced and tested the system, everything worked perfectly. I should say that I've had fantastic support from LZ Design. They're very responsive and stay with a problem until it's fixed.

I've been towing from a CG hook for 18 years. Initially, I had problems with my LS-4, which had only a roller skate wheel for a tail wheel. But after I fixed that, I've had absolutely no takeoff problems through three other gliders. I'm sure you'll do OK, but I understand your concerns.

Cordially,

Matt

On 7/23/2020 2:50 PM, Bryan Trujillo wrote:

Hi Matt,

Flying at Lampson sounds like it could be good.

Sorry to hear about the battery problem... What is the issue?

I have not experienced any problems with the main batteries; but did have to wait about a year from the time I decided to stop flying, due to others having those big problems, until they returned from Slovenia after being reworked. The small 12V backup battery does not seem to hold a charge well between flights, though.

I am curious now about the phase one trials, but I won't ask!

My Silent is now waiting for me at Truckee, to which I plan to return some time next week. The batteries are home with me in Moss Beach, and I plan to take them charged, and use a mix of tows and maybe one self launch, perhaps more if I can figure out how to recharge. Maybe see who might have an adequate generator. Seems wrong to do that, though.

I am also a bit apprehensive to take a tow, as I have not yet done one yet in that glider, and have only experienced one other tow with a CG hook.

Cheers,

Bryan

Convergence over Montara Mountain/ Scarpa peak (I have since received a new brighter Oudie so I don't have to use the home made hood):

On Jul 22, 2020, at 12:38 PM, Matt Herron

[REDACTED] > wrote:

Hi Brian: I'm currently flying out of Lampson Field in Lake County, California. It's not ideal (I'm the only glider, and towing to launch site without banging a wing is a problem), but it's close to my weekend digs.

I'm still in phase one Airworthiness trials (don't ask!) and I did fly a nice four hour flight at Air Sailing a week ago, but took a tow. So far, I've done two self-launches at Lampson. Currently experiencing a battery problem.

Matt

On 6/4/2020 8:35 PM, Bryan Trujillo wrote:

Hi Matt,

We met some years ago at Air Sailing during a cross country camp or three.

I hope this note finds you well in these strange and difficult times.

Congratulations on taking delivery of your Mini lak FES!

I have a Silent Electro that I normally keep and fly at HMB, but have taken it to both Air sailing and TRK.

I am curious where you will be flying (I assume Air Sailing), and what your method of battery charging is or will be, now that restrictions have been placed both there and TRK.

Best regards,

Bryan Trujillo



Here's mine:

image1.JPG

On Nov 27, 2018, at 8:55 PM,
Matt Herron



wrote:

Hello: I'm Matt Herron (Sr),
and I

currently fly a LS-6, mostly
out of

AirSailing in northern

Nevada. I have about

1,500 hours in gliders, and
none in power

aircraft.

In October I flew to Lithuania and spent a week at the LAK factory, where I flew a modified LAK 17B FES with a beefed up battery pack that allowed it to self launch. I also flew the MiniLAK FES and made a down payment on Mini #29 which will be delivered to me sometime next year.

I wrote an article about my visit for Soaring which will appear early in 2019, and I agreed to make my Mini available for SAS conventions.

What follows is a report on my trip that I sent to fellow glider pilots:

Dear Friends:

I just returned from a week in Lithuania where I visited the LAK glider factory and flew three different gliders including the new MiniLAK FES, a self-launching electric motor glider.

The visit began with a certification flight in a Polish Puchacz two-place glider, which qualified me to fly in Europe. (I also underwent a

FAA Class II medical exam
before leaving the US – also
necessary for European flying.)

All flying took place at Pociunu
Aerodromas, a huge grass field
in southern Lithuania that has
hosted at least three FAI
international soaring contests. I
slept at the clubhouse and had
most of my meals there.

Day two saw three more flights
in the Puchacz with Vytas
Maciulis, the Director of the
LAK factory who was my host
in Lithuania. Vytas was
obviously trying to decide
whether my flying skills gave
him the confidence to entrust
one of his expensive gliders to
my hands. Apparently I passed
because I went on the next day
to fly an experimental self-
launch version of the LAK 17B
FES, a 18 meter ship that I
towed to about 3,000 feet,
released and only then started
the engine once I felt
comfortable with the glider.

Engine starts are dead simple. A
master switch is activated, and
the engine is started and
controlled by simply twisting a
knob on the instrument panel.
The panel reports engine rpm,
current voltage, battery
condition, and temperature
readings for the battery pack,
engine controller system, and
motor. The propeller winds up
swiftly to a climb rate of about
4500 rpm or whatever you set.
Turning off the engine is

another matter. The propeller must dock with the blades folded correctly alongside the fuselage, and the docking mechanism depends on the prop windmilling at at least 1500 rpm. It took me a couple of tries to get that right.

I made a second flight in the LAK 17 from a paved runway, this time an engine launch. Again, the launch was dead simple: rotate the knob and take off. I flew for about 30 minutes with multiple engine starts and stops, then landed.

The LAK 17 flights were necessary because my Mini sat on the factory floor in pieces while workers installed various monitoring systems. I was convinced they would never have it assembled by Monday, and normal Baltic fall weather (rainy) also made any Mini flight questionable.

But Monday afternoon was mostly clear, and when Vytas and I arrived at the strip four workers were doing final assembly of the Mini. Vytas flew it first to make sure everything was connected to everything. Then it was my turn.

Again, take off was simple. I climbed to about 3,000 feet, turned the engine off and began to take the measure of the Mini.

She was a sweet thing to fly, perhaps the sweetest glider I've ever flown. She was responsive, but not twitchy, settling easily into a 45 degree bank and holding it effortlessly. But the big question remained: could she hold altitude at high speeds? In other words, did she have cross country legs, or like most 13.5 meter gliders would she fall out of the sky when I put the hammer down? Vytas had stressed her wing profile which was slender and designed for speed, and when I pushed her three times she did hold altitude in a satisfactory fashion. The Baltic afternoon was cool and slightly overcast, and so I had no chance to test her in thermals, but a German pilot had flown her 530 kilometers last summer without using the engine, so I would guess her cross country chops are more than adequate. I was smitten, and I decided on the spot to buy her.

The rest is anti-climax. Vytas and I worked out a contract for the glider and a trailer. It will be finished some time next year (I'll probably fly my LS-6 through the 2019 season), and will be delivered from Hamburg probably by auto carrier. Meanwhile, I'm working on an article for Soaring, and have agreed to make the Mini available for display at the next Soaring Society convention.

Thus begins a new chapter!

Matt

PS: For pictures, please visit:

[REDACTED]

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