

THOMAS L. KNAUFF (1997)

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and other sources



Tom Knauff's contributions to the sport and science of soaring are immense. He is an accomplished soaring pilot who has stressed safety and worked to improve soaring instruction throughout his career.

In 1975 he and partner, Doris Grove (also an accomplished soaring pilot and Hall of Fame member) established a commercial operation and catalog store at Ridge Soaring Gliderport in Pennsylvania located at the base of the Bald Eagle Ridge.

Tom has written several glider flight training manuals, is a frequent speaker at soaring events and has published many articles in *Soaring* magazine from 1978 to the present. He has also utilized the excellent soaring ridge to set many records, has participated in enumerable national competitions often placing in the top ten including a win in the 1989 National Open Class and has competed on the world level.



His world records include:

1979: Out and Return Distance; 829.7 km

1981: Out and Return Distance 1,000.88 km

1983: Out and Return Distance; 1,646.68 km

1986: Triangle Distance; 1,362.68 km

1993: Free distance using up to 3 turn points; 1,394.04 km

Although these records have proven the possibilities for the sport, Tom's writings and instruction manuals are perhaps even more valuable as they guide soaring pilots to successful and safe careers in the sport. Fortunately for the soaring world, he has chosen to utilize this vast experience to help others safely enjoy our special sport.

Tom's first aviation experience was in 1943 when he flew a model off the porch roof for an unsuccessful attempt at flight. A few years later flying began to obsess his life. Now his FAA CFI Revalidation Clinics are recognized as among the best. He has been named the Flight Instructor of the Year for the Eastern Region. As is not surprising, he is an FAA Designated Pilot Examiner.

His books include:

Accident Prevention Manual for Glider Flight Instructors, with Doris Grove, 2nd edition, 1993

Accident Prevention Manual for Glider Pilots, with Doris Grove, 1992.

After Solo, 1995

Cockpit Guide for Glider CFI's

Glider Basics from First Flight to Solo, 5th edition, 1993

Glider Basics from Solo to License [edited by Allan Northcut and Norm Gilmore; drawings by Robert Fitch]. 1st ed, 1984.

Glider Emergency Procedures

Glider Flight Instructor Manual, 2001

Judgment Training Manual for Glider Pilots, with Doris Grove, 1985

Judgment Training Manual for Glider Flight Instructors, 1986

Off Field Landings, 1993

Ridge Soaring the Bald Eagle Ridge, 1987

The Bronze Badge Book

Transition to Gliders: A Flight Training Handbook for Power Pilots, 2nd ed., 1990, 1984

On the fun side of life, he was the stunt pilot for the 1999 film *The Thomas Crown Affair*. He has also traveled the world with Doris to explore soaring in other areas.

Tom Knauff was the first American to be awarded the Kronfeld Challenge Cup (1991). He also shared the SSA Eaton Trophy with his wife and partner, Doris Grove, in 2000. In addition, he received the Exceptional Achievement Award in 1983 and 1986, and the Certificate of Appreciation (with Doris Grove) in 2004. His competition awards include the du Pont Trophy and the Stroukoff Trophy both in 1989.

He earned Silver #2205 in 1972, Gold #787 in 1973, Diamond #385 (Int #2301) in 1977 and the 1000 K Diploma #15 (Int #31) in 1980.

