

Tennessee Tree Toppers Accomplishments and Projects



Henson Gap Site: The TTT owns a beautiful 4.5- acre launch site at Henson Gap, the home of our famous wooden radial ramp. We proudly offer members use of a clubhouse with kitchen and running water, showers and bathrooms with flushing toilets, a large pavilion, expansive camp grounds with electrical hookups for campers, beautiful views of the Sequatchie Valley, and an opportunity to make great new friends.

Whitwell Site: The TTT owns our 1-acre cliff launch. We plan to buy a landing zone as soon as possible.

The “Whitwell LZ Field of Dreams” Project: The TTT has been saving half of their annual profits for many years towards the eventual purchase of an LZ at our Whitwell site. Various focused fund raisers have been initiated to contribute to the Field of Dreams, such as TTT License Tags, t-shirts, and cookouts. Other fund raisers are in the planning stage.

The TTT Internet Page: www.tennesseetreetoppers.org is the place to go to learn all about the TTT and keep up with current events.

Team Challenge (TC): The TTT believe that TC is one of the best ways to teach H3's the fundamentals of XC flying. Please see the three articles by Tree Toppers published in the USHPA magazine January 2008 issue about the Team Challenge experience.

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There are links to our web page where everyone can copy our “XC Teaching



Competition Model in a Box” and adapt it to fit their needs or legal requirements. Clubs across the country can download all our operational and organizational documents that we created for TC 2007 and used again in 2008 so successfully. This year one of our



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newest and youngest members wrote a custom, automated software scoring program for Team Challenge.

Team Challenge is a continually evolving project with emphasis on teaching. Our national level competitions are big intimidating events, and a giant leap for most developing pilots to take on. Our next evolution of Team Challenge will include a “Sport” class using the current successful introduction to XC format and a “Gettin’ Ready to Race” class to prepare new to competition pilots for the bigger meets.

Revamp the Ramp: The TTT raised \$32,000 in early 2008 to repair the radial ramp



at Henson Gap. Fundraiser response was so great that a small surplus remained after rebuilding the ramp. We put that surplus directly into the LZ fund. A beautiful donated brass plaque commemorating our history, the successful fund raiser and completion of the repairs well ahead of schedule is almost ready for installation near the ramp.

The TTT Land Trust: TTT completed its Land Trust which protects our 45-acre Henson’s Gap LZ from development in perpetuity.

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The TTT Newsletter: The newsletter was resurrected in 2008 with two “beta test” issues. In 2009, we will publish quarterly newsletters in March, June, September, and December. The current model for the TTT newsletter is more of a mini-magazine than a newsletter. In addition to sharing information about current club activities and news, Tree Toppers have a venue for sharing flight reports and personal achievements, technical information, travel and comp stories, and “How To” articles. Our newsletter is free for download at our website.

TTTFlymail: The TTT discussion forum is located at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/TTTFlymail/> Flymail provides a place for TTT members to stay in contact and learn from one another, make plans for flying, and discuss various topics of interest.

Soarcasting Program: Two more of our youngest members wrote a software program that harvests information from Dr. Jack’s soaring forecasting program (for a site fee) and automatically organizes the most useful data in an easy to read table. It will soon be a one click site for everything the soaring pilot needs to plan a weekend of flying. The program is in Beta stage now and will be even better soon. The forecasting program is accessible from the TTT web page and provides simple interpretive statements about the “soarcast”.



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TTT: Our TTT club is truly a national club. We have members from almost every USHPA Region. TTT is full of creative, motivated soaring enthusiasts. We hope to share our success with the national hang gliding community and preserve our sport for future generations. USHPA and TTT share common goals. TTT is successfully growing membership and preserving sites for perpetuity. We believe we represent the model for successful hang gliding clubs. The city of Dunlap, TN distinguishes itself from neighboring communities with the title of "The Hang Gliding Capitol of the East." We are a member of the Dunlap, TN Chamber of Commerce.

We have developed a successful model to carry knowledge forward for future generations of hang gliding enthusiasts with the Team Challenge. We are building our LZ fund so we can purchase a landing field for our wonderful Whitwell Launch site. The



TTT Board is putting together a strategic plan to secure hang gliding in the Sequatchie Valley forever and plans to expand our influence in the sport locally and on a national scale. We want to be America's Hang Gliding Club!

The Soaring Society of America has led a successful rebuilding of their membership and participation chiefly through development of local and regional competitions, mentorship and Sport class activities. USHPA should follow this model. TTT has developed a very successful model, The Team Challenge, that can easily be exported to any and all hang gliding clubs across the country with interest in hosting similar events. We look to the

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USHPA for leadership, guidance and cooperation as the TTT continues to work for the hang gliding community. We work hard at having fun and want to share what we've



built. All our documents, minutes and plans for development are available to anyone interested in following our model to improve hang gliding resources. We are happy to help. We ask to be heard and helped as well.