

## Soaring

There's nothing quite like the exhilaration of flying a sailplane into a strong thermal and circling up to the clouds. You have the freedom to soar as the eagles do, your sailplane's long wings silently slicing through the skies. Soaring gives pilots a sense of accomplishment to seemingly defy gravity and stay aloft for hours in a graceful aircraft with no need for an engine.

## In Minnesota?

Minnesota is beautiful to see from the air, and it is also a wonderful location for soaring flights. Weather conditions that cause thermals - upward air currents that lift a sailplane - occur often during the season. A typically good flying day will have cumulus cloud bases (marking the thermals) that average 4,000 to 6,000 feet and higher, which permits soaring flights lasting several hours. There have been flights in Minnesota that achieved over 400 miles and heights of 16,000 feet. Our soaring season extends from early April into November.

## How do they do it?

Sailplane pilots start each flight with a short tow behind a power plane like a Super Cub. On a day without thermals, they will then glide gently down from 3,000 feet in about 20 minutes. But soaring pilots can also stay aloft in columns of rising air, fueled by the sun heating the ground. Soaring is, in fact, an indirect way of harnessing solar energy. When pilots choose to land, they control their descent precisely with airbrakes and/or flaps and return to the airport as safely as conventional powered aircraft.

## Come Fly with Us

If you are interested in joining MSC, we would like the opportunity to meet you and take you up for a demonstration ride. Stop by any sunny weekend in the early afternoon and we will do our best to get you a ride before the end of the afternoon. The pilot will most likely ask you to share the flight costs.

## Minnesota Soaring Club Membership Application

Applications are accepted by the club via email. You can either print this brochure, scan it, and send it back by email, or provide the following information directly by email with the subject heading "prospective membership" to the following email:

[mnsoaringclub@gmail.com](mailto:mnsoaringclub@gmail.com)

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Category (circle one): **Full** 2/3 1/3

SSA Number (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

SSA Membership Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Aviation Experience (ratings, hours, towing, etc.)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** All membership applications are reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors.

## Other Useful weblinks:

MSC Website: <http://www.mnsoaringclub.com>

MSC on Facebook: [mnsoaringclub](https://www.facebook.com/mnsoaringclub)

Soaring Society of America: [www.ssa.org](http://www.ssa.org)

# MINNESOTA SOARING CLUB

## Club History

Founded in 1959, the Minnesota Soaring Club is a group of about 100 people who have joined together to own and operate soaring equipment, to conduct soaring flights, and to share the unique experiences of soaring. The club is based at Stanton Airfield in Stanton, Minnesota.

## Equipment

The club owns three sailplanes and a towplane:

- Schleicher ASK-21 – 2-seat, fiberglass
- SZD-50-3 (Owl) – 2-seat, fiberglass
- SZD-51-1 (Junior) – single-seat, fiberglass
- Super Cub towplane (160 hp)

## Benefits and Obligations

The Minnesota Soaring Club is a working and volunteer club: the members serve as ground crew, tow pilots, flight instructors, plus they perform other tasks necessary for the club to conduct flight operations. Members contribute according to their individual abilities and their licensed qualifications. Part of the benefit of belonging to the club is to share the experience of soaring as well as the opportunity to pursue individual goals. Instructors volunteer their time to student operations on weekend mornings; in turn, the students arrive early to prepare the sailplanes for the day's flights. New members should plan to attend monthly meetings and participate in club activities. All members must attend an annual safety meeting.



## Location

The Minnesota Soaring Club is located at Stanton Airfield in Stanton, MN. Stanton is on Highway 19, midway between Northfield and Cannon Falls. From the Twin Cities, travel south on Highway 52 toward Rochester. At Hampton, follow Highway 56 south to Highway 19. The airport is on Highway 19, immediately west of Highway 56. Look for the hangars.

## **Flight Scheduling**

In much of Minnesota, the soaring season begins in April and continues until the snow flies in November. Most of the soaring activity occurs on weekends when flights are limited to one hour so that others may fly. Members sometimes fly on weekdays so that they can make longer flights and/or cross country flights. During the soaring season, the club conducts an operation each Saturday and Sunday (weather permitting) including an excellent flight-training program most weekend mornings. There is no charge for the instruction, other than the normal flight charges.

The daily flight schedule is determined by a simple sign-up procedure. As each member arrives at the field he places his/her name on a list. After the conclusion of the scheduled training for the day, regular soaring operations start. At that time, whenever a sailplane is available, the member at the top of the list may elect to fly or to pass and retain the top spot for another sailplane.

## **Other Events**

The club conducts monthly meetings to discuss club business, to entertain, and to educate the membership.

Members organize trips with club and private gliders to other airports, such as Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, and more distant locations such as the Wasatch Mountains in Utah.

Airport picnics and an annual banquet are also enjoyed by members and guests.

Club members also participate in special soaring events such as the 15-Meter Nationals, the Open and 18m Nationals, and the Region 7 Sports Class Contest, all in nearby Albert Lea, Minnesota.

In recent years, the club has also hosted a cross-country soaring camp for pilots interested in exploring beyond the bounds of the airport. The cross country soaring camp is open to pilots of all abilities. The camp is a great opportunity to learn from some very experienced pilots.

## **Membership Categories**

Three membership categories are offered. Dues and equity share values are listed below for each category of membership. The annual dues are divided into two equal installments, billed in February and June. MSC is a Charter Club of the Soaring Society of America. MSC dues cover membership in the SSA, and all members receive a monthly copy of SSA's "Soaring" magazine.

### **Equity Shares**

Club members share ownership of the club assets and may vote on club decisions in proportion to their share percentage (Full, 2/3 or 1/3).

## **Membership Types**

### **Active Member**

**Full Share:** \$2,000  
Annual Dues: \$400  
Refund: 75% of current full share  
Flight Privileges: Full  
May sponsor family member

**2/3 Share:** \$1,333.33  
Annual Dues: \$600  
Refund: 62.5% of current 2/3 share (after 2 yrs.)  
Flight Privileges: Full

**1/3 Share:** \$666.67  
Annual Dues: \$800  
Refund: 25% of current 1/3 share (after 3 yrs.)  
Flight Privileges: Full

### **Family Member**

Sponsored by Full Share member Spouse and/or children under age 23  
Membership Fee: \$100/family member  
Annual Dues: \$100/family member  
Refund: None  
Flight Privileges: Only one member of the family may be on the flight list at a time.

## **Flight Charges**

Each flight incurs a tow charge, based on altitude, and a sailplane flight charge, based on the flight duration. A flight record is kept of each day's flights and the treasurer sends out billings every other month. Members with their own planes only pay the tow charges.

### **Tow plane Charges**

\$21 + \$0.70/100 feet of altitude  
(2,000 feet = \$35.00, 3,000 feet = \$42.00)

### **Glider Plane Flight Charges**

ASK-21 = \$0.45/minute (\$27/hr.)  
SZD-50-3 (Owl) = \$0.45/minute (\$27/hr.)  
SZD-51-1 (Junior) = \$0.45/minute (\$27/hr.)

## **Equity Refund Policy**

Resigning members equity refunds are paid from cash flow. Depending on the time of year, there may be a delay in repayment until funds becomes available.

Some departing members also choose to donate their equity toward the future of the club.