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*For those unfamiliar with modern soaring...*

Soaring is the sport of using natural atmospheric power to fly high, far, and fast. It has been described as three-dimensional sailing, a game of weather, skill, luck, and equipment. Sailplanes are the most efficient of soaring machines, now routinely capable of gliding distances 40 times their altitude, while sinking less than 2 feet per second. In competition, sunlight-generated thermal updrafts (and sometimes slope winds) are used to race closed courses of 100-300 miles over several hours.

More on the internet. Start at the Soaring Society of America's comprehensive site, [www.ssa.org](http://www.ssa.org)



For gift or sponsorship offers, you may contact the USA Soaring Team or the SSA Youth Committee:

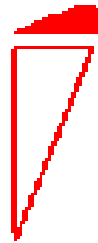
John H. Campbell, SSA Youth Chairman  
 jhpc@hotmail.com, (303)432-2127

Donations to the JUNIOR TEAM via the Soaring Society of America, Inc., are tax-deductible. Send to:  
 SSA, PO Box 2100, Hobbs, NM 88241-2100

[www.soarcsa.org/ssa/ssay/jrtm.htm](http://www.soarcsa.org/ssa/ssay/jrtm.htm)  
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**2003 JUNIOR TEAM**



**representing the USA in  
 FAI World Soaring Competition  
 for pilots under the age of 26**

**Soaring has come of age** as of the 1990s: From scientific puzzle in 1920 to space-race classroom in 1970, soaring is now a lifetime recreation of many levels and facets. The world's leading aviation sport, it is the passion of hundreds of thousands, whether they fly self-launching sailplanes or paragliders, top the mountain wave in solitude, race hundreds of miles in gaggles, or ride a smooth evening thermal with a club visitor.

**Youth sailplane programs** have been the most recent area of development, helping to ensure a steady influx of energetic pilots and ground crews. Most European nations have youth training camps at a "National Soaring Center" and whole systems of youth records and contests. "Junior National Championships" are uncovering many top pilots.

**Government subsidies** are common in Europe, since youth gliding is usually "the" recruiting tool for Military and Airline aviation careers. Our own USAF and USA air carriers do not stress gliding quite as much, so it is important for our Junior Soaring Teams to get support from private and commercial sources.

**With your help**, the USA can send a well-equipped, competitive team to the **FAI World Junior Gliding Championships**. The third of these contests will be held in Nitra, Slovakia, July 7-19, 2003. Similar International Junior contests were held at Cambrai, France (1989), Alleberg, Sweden (1991), La Roche/Yon, France (1993), Leszno, Poland (1995), Freudenstadt, Germany (1997), Terlet, Holland (1999), and Issoudun, France (2001). SSA has fielded a team at every one since 1989, joined occasionally by non-European countries such as Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. We have managed great distinction as well: USA pilot Sean Franke scored a daily win at each of three JGCs, and Joe Walter had two of his own.



**CHRIS SAUNDERS** (age 18)  
Beltzville SC, PA  
STANDARD CLASS (Discus 2a "Y4")

**Senior at Lehighon High School. Private glider license. 600 soaring hours. FAI Silver badge, 2 Diamonds. Kolstad Century I, II, III. SSA Kolstad award 2002. Holds 3 PA State soaring records. Ranked 32nd out of 621 on SSA list.**

Soaring runs in Chris Saunders' family as his uncle is Tom Beltz, who was a US National Champion and a member of the US Team at age 22. Having soloed a 1-26 on his 14th birthday, Chris is an experienced pilot in his own right, also flying airplanes and ultralights. Chris earned his Silver Badge at age 14 and his Diamond Distance at 16. He has flown several Regional and 2 National contests, including a stunning 2nd place in the 2002 Standard Class Nationals flying a Discus A built the year he was born. Chris is also an accomplished RC modeler, walking away with the best Junior Duration at the 1998 AMA Nationals. Chris plays varsity soccer at his High School, is a kicker for the football team and a member of the ski club. Chris says, "I have been involved with flying all my life, since I live on my grandfather's airport. I have been flying the club Grob since I could reach the rudder pedals. When I was eleven, I soloed in a J-3 Kitten ultralight".



**GARRET WILLAT** (age 21)  
Sky Sailing, CA  
STANDARD CLASS (Discus 2a "Y1")

**Student at San Diego CC. Commercial, Instructor glider licenses. 2,000 soaring hours. FAI Gold badge, 2 Diamonds. Kolstad Century I, II, III. SSA Kolstad award 1996. Holds 3 CA State soaring records. Ranked 156th out of 621 on SSA list.**

Garret Willat really soared into gliders on his 14th birthday by soloing 18 of them, the entire Sky Sailing fleet plus a few private ships. Within a week, he went on a safari flying a Grob G102 over 430 miles. On his 16th birthday, he not only got his Private glider license but soloed all the Sky Sailing towplanes. On his 18th, he got his Commercial Glider and CFI-G certificates. Garret's first soaring flight was before he was 2 weeks old. He lived 8 years at the airport in Fremont, then moved to Warner Springs when his parents Bret and Karen relocated the FBO. He has been featured in a few TV shows and rebuilt a 1947 Cessna 140. Garret serves as a volunteer fire fighter and a member of the San Diego Sheriff's Aero Squadron. He has toured the USA crewing for fellow Kolstad winners Sean Franke and Gordon Boettger, and has himself flown Region 9 and the Sports, 15 meter, and Standard Nationals. Garret has been to a WJGC before, as crew for Danny Sorenson in 2001.