

# SETTING A MICROLIGHT RECORD

Who's been the highest, the farthest, the fastest? These are questions many of us have pondered at some time. The answers lie in a current addition of *World and United States Aviation and Space Records* (available through USUA—\$18.95 plus S&H). Below is a brief description of how to make a world or national record attempt and an introduction to world, national and point-to-point records.

As one may expect, attempting to beat an existing world record can be quite a challenge. On the other hand, setting a national point-to-point record is fun and relatively easy. And there are many records to be made or broken that fall in between. Whichever one you choose, you can look forward to the excitement and personal fulfillment of attempting a record.

USUA is the sanctioned ultralight and microlight representative from FAI, through the National Aeronautic Association (our national body representing all U.S. aviation to FAI), for national and world competition and world record attempts.

## **A brief description of how to make a World Record Attempt.**

Review the current edition of *World and United States Aviation and Space Records*. Identify the record you believe you can exceed, or the record you believe you can set where there is not now a record.

Call USUA at (301) 695-9100 and discuss the possible flight you are considering. You will receive detailed information including the formal sanction request form which must be completed.

Complete the sanction application form, returning it with the applicable fee to NAA. This sanction request - once approved - will give you an exclusive right within the U.S. to attempt to set the record. Normally the sanction is good for a period of 90 days. If you are not already an NAA member you will have to join at this time, and you will have to purchase an FAI Sporting License.

With an official observer on hand you make the flight.

Documentation on the flight is sent to NAA and then FAI to confirm your record. If it is accepted - congratulations, your name is now part of aviation history!

## **World Microlight Records**

World records are established through the world governing body, the Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI) located in Switzerland. FAI is the international organization responsible for the coordination of air sports, competition and certification of all aviation and space records in the world. Every year FAI updates records of aerial activities ranging from modeling and parachuting to heavy commercial aircraft and space shuttle flights.

Microlights (which encompasses ultralights) are defined under Class R in the FAI Sporting Code Section 10 as one or two seat with a specified maximum mass and a very low wing loading. Specifically, a microlight may have a gross weight of up to 662 lbs for a single place and 992 lbs for a two place with stall speeds under 35 knots. There are subcategories of microlight that include: weightshift trike, rigid wing/aerodynamic controls, foot launched powered paragliders and hang gliders, and powered parachute trikes. Requirements for setting world microlight records are contained in Section 10 (available through USUA—\$5.95 plus S&H).

In 1997, the FAI Microlight Commission, responsible for governing ultralight and microlight competition and records, divided Weightshift Trike and Rigid Wing/Aerodynamic Controls into two groups where there had previously been only one record category for both groups. This substantially expanded the available number of record categories.

There are currently 41 world records recorded for microlights (FAI Class R). Two Americans currently hold three world records. Mike Brawner (USUA 767) of Dickinson, Texas and Thomas Pratt hold distance records, both using the super-efficient Mitchell A-10.

A world record sanction fee is paid prior to the issuance of the sanction with a registration fee paid at the time the record is claimed. The sanction fee includes listing in the next edition of World and United States Aviation and Space Records book. A certificate of record is available for an additional charge. World record holder lapel pins and blazer patches are also available.

## **National Microlight Records**

National records are established through the United States governing body, the National Aeronautic Association (NAA) located in Arlington, Virginia just outside Washington, D.C. NAA is the national organization responsible for the coordination of air sports, competition and certification of all aviation and space records in the United States. Every year NAA updates records of aerial activities ranging from modeling and parachuting to heavy commercial aircraft and space shuttle flights. Records for Microlights are currently available for Speed, Distance, Altitude, Time to Climb and Point to Point.

## **Point-to-Point Records for Microlights**

The minimum distance between takeoff and landing points is 77.7 statute miles (125 km). These points must be within 37.3 sm (60 km) of the town/city center. The speed recorded will be the average speed along the straight line distance between the takeoff and landing points. Any time spent on the ground will be counted as flying time. Takeoff and landing must be made from airports/flight parks that are depicted on Sectional Charts.

The Official Observers must either be USUA Colibri Observers or FAA employees, and must conform to the FAI Official Observer requirements found in the FAI General Section.

Certification of takeoff and landing times must be in reference to Coordinated Universal Time/UTC (which can be obtained by calling (202) 762-1401 on the forms provided).

All vehicles must fit the FAI definition of a microlight. Registration of the microlight and USUA membership are mandatory. In addition, NAA membership and FAI sporting license are required. Full NAA membership is \$34 per year; FAI sporting license is \$25. The FAI sporting license is valid for the calendar year.

The combined sanction/registration fee of \$150 for point-to-point records must be paid prior to the contestant attempting the record. This fee includes listing in the next edition of World and United States Aviation and Space Records book. A certificate of record will be prepared for an additional fee of \$25.00 (mounting charge is an additional \$30.00).