

Soaring Society of America Nomination of James M Payne Lilienthal Medal for 2002

It is rare that a candidate would exhibit strengths in all three avenues toward the Lilienthal Award, but James M Payne has done so.

Jim, known as “Jet Pilot” to his soaring friends, has set two World Records in 2000, which brings his total to five. Not only were they international marks but they bettered a previous record of *Ingo Renner below 200 kph* to an astounding 246 kph. Jim has flown triangles and Out and Return flights in the wave generated by the Sierra Nevada Mountains in California. He has personally set the five fastest records ever in a glider. Although 146 mph sounds fast, he actually has two Out and Return flights even faster: 500 km at 247.49 kph (154 mph) and 300 km at 167 mph. He is listed in the 2000 edition of Guinness book of World Records.

In the USA the National Aeronautic Association annually selects top record flights from the entire spectrum of aviation. Jim’s flights have been honored three of the past four years. These pioneering flights blazed a trail for other soaring pilots to follow. Jim has always maintained safety first. He has previously computed the Vne for the altitudes and conditions he expected to fly and has stayed within those published limits. Although he first started wave speed flying back in 1996 other pilots have not been able to duplicate or better his exploits. He freely shares his knowledge in seminars and presentations at the SSA annual convention. He has written articles for *Soaring* (copied in other countries magazines) describing the safety procedures necessary for this type of flying.

Jim has rendered eminent service to the sport of gliding over the years. He was team captain for the US team at five World Soaring Contests—Australia, Austria, Uvalde, Sweden, and New Zealand. He has been President of the Sailplane Racing Association, Chairman of the Contest Rules Committee, Director of the Collegiate Soaring Association, Director-at-Large for the Soaring Society of America, Director of the SSA and Vice President of the SSA. He has been National Champion, and top three at five other national contests.

He has set 56 National Records and 5 World Records. His 1,000-km triangle flight in a standard class glider earned a coveted spot at the Hilton Cup camp in 1998. He has won the Tuntland award for a flight test article about soaring and the SSA Exceptional Achievement Award twice. Jim Payne exemplifies the best in achievements and willingness to give back of his time and experience to other pilots.

Submitted by the Soaring Society of America

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