

Skylines

The official newsletter of the *San Diego Kite Club*

Vol. X No. 4

Nov 1999

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Colombia is More Than Just Coffee

by Ron Despojado

After several last minute arrangements, I made my com... com.. c-c-c-comm...commitment to go to Colombia South America as an invited guest of Yaripa Ecological Group. My hosts would take care of all arrangements once I got to Bogota. I heard of a lot of political unrest happening there, but was assured by the sponsors we would be very secure.

My first step was getting to Houston where I would eventually board a plane to Colombia. On the jetway onto the Bogota bound plane I was confronted by a DEA Agent and his pistol packin' assistants. They asked me, and everyone else getting onboard 'Are you carrying in excess of \$10,000?' I figured these guys weren't joking so I refrained from telling them that I only had \$9,950. I arrived in Bogota after an approximately 5 hour plane ride and had absolutely no idea who was picking me up or where I was to go. After stumbling with the language and making it through customs I stepped outside the terminal, not knowing what to expect. I had hoped to see a sign being held up with my name on it but no such luck. Five minutes later, a young man comes up to me and asks if my name is Ron. I breathed a sigh of relief and said yes.

The days ahead were to help make kites for approximately 10,000 children. Yes, 10,000!! But that would be split up into 10 different groups over 2 days. We would each have 500 kids at each session and location. I made a few quick friendships with mainly english speaking guests from England, Canada, and the right-hand coast of the United States.

The first night we met with some of the local young women who were friends of some of the Yaripa group. While relaxing the first evening in a bar, one of the girls gave me my nickname for the week: 'Coquette'. Translated it means 'flirt'. Where she got this I have NO IDEA.

After one day of sightseeing and dinner, all the invited guests and Yaripa group met for a meeting. Not everyone spoke spanish or english so things had to be said twice. Jairo ('Hi-ro') was the man in charge and gave instructions which he finished up by saying something and looking directly at me, giving me a stern look. There was a chuckle from those who understood. Ines, Jairo's wife, translated into English and what Jairo had said was 'everyone should be sure to come back to the hotel early and not stay out too late.' I quickly defended myself and said I wasn't the only one out late.

The day came when we would start building kites for the kids. Even though the kites were already in kits, we wanted to give the kids the feeling they built it themselves, so they had to basically attach the bridle and flylines. We were driven to schools and playgrounds within Bogota where children from several schools would be. The first thing the invited guests did was to give a demonstration of kite flying. The flying areas were always too small and hardly any wind. But the kids enjoyed seeing us adults running around and gasping for air as we tried to keep the kites afloat.



Signing Autographs Backstage

Continued Page 6

SDKC Officers 1999-2000

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<i>Events Coordinator</i>	John Rogers (619)691-8640 jrogers@home.com	<i>Founder</i>	Dan Willan

Charlie's Column

There are club members not satisfied with results of the last election. Because no one seems to be willing to do anything more than mumble accusations for which they seem to have no grounds, I will waste no more time with them. If those voices believe they have legitimate concerns, they have a right to deal with them as provided in the by-laws. Otherwise, let us get on with flying kites and having fun.

We have, in the last month, gained six new members. Not bad at all. We are now soliciting renewals from past members whose membership has expired. Most of those we believe will renew once they are reminded of their expiration dates.

We have a new Membership Chairman. When Alan Watson heard we needed help, he stepped forward to fill the breach. I applaud his interest in kiting and his help to the club. We need a couple more like him- Specifically someone to take over Greg Lawrence's position as PR/Publicity.

The proposed Fiesta Island golf course and motor-home park has been rejected, giving us time

to really prepare to present our case for an air-space park. The current Mission Bay Master Plan would seem to be in our favor, but it is going to take time.

A small trailer is being donated to the Club to store and transport our equipment. Hopefully it will help get our proposed 'flying circus' going.

We are getting a number of inquiries about our annual New Years Fly. Does anyone out there have any suggestions as to where we can hold an open house on New Years eve? We have money to rent a hall if we can find one centrally located. Some ones home might be a second choice but we would rather not place such a burden on a member if it can be avoided. Call me at home [(619) 223-5121] if you have any suggestions. We will, in any event, have the customary fighter kite thing on the 31st. Good Lord willing and the creek don't rise, the Millennium' T-shirts will be ready for the occasion.

Charlie M'Clary
President SDKC

Help Welcome These New Members

Charles Andricci
Darcelle, Jonathan, and Kyle Clark from Huntington Beach, Ca.
Thomas and Jane Manson from Glendale, Az.
James, Dana, and Mark Saghy from San Diego, Ca
David de Franchi from San Diego, Ca.
William Stiles from Dulzorra, Ca. (Welcome Back)

"SKYLINES" is published bimonthly by the San Diego Kite Club. All articles related to the sport of kiting are encouraged.

All opinions expressed are solely those of the individual author and not necessarily those of the San Diego Kite Club.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

NOVEMBER

20 - Board Meeting at
9:30 am
General Meeting at
10:30 am
Located at Tecolote
Shores south of the
Hilton on Hwy 5

25 - Thanksgiving
See Notice Below



Thanksgiving Week at the Oasis

by Susan Shampo

Avi is not happening this year, which leaves many of us wondering how to get our kite fix and what to do with ourselves for the weekend before Thanksgiving. We now have a wonderful suggestion.

For a number of years, members of the Northern California Kite Club have been driving their RVs to the Oasis Resort just north of Rosarito Beach and spending the week on the beach relaxing, flying kites, talking kites, and basically just having fun. Allen and I joined them and Steve LaPorte, who was there working on a film, last year and had a wonderful time. Their private beach is great for flying, the grounds of the Oasis are gated, guarded and gorgeous. It's a short drive to enjoy shopping and baja lobster in Puerto Nuevo and food is also available right on the grounds.

NCKC has gotten us a reduced rate of \$79 per night for suites overlooking the beach. RV space can be reserved for \$30 for 4 adults. They also have larger suites and RVs for rent. Call the Oasis (<http://www.oasisbaja.com>) at 1-800-818-3133 or 1-888-709-9985, ask for Irma

DECEMBER

20 - Board Meeting at
9:30 am
General Meeting at
10:30 am
At The Usual Place

25 - Christmas

31 - Fighter Kite Comp.
at Tecolote Shores

JANUARY

01 - Annual New Years
Day Fly at Mariners
Point

Don't Forget To Visit The
San Diego Kite Club on
the Web at:
www.sdkc.net

or Genevieve and mention that you're part of the NCKC group to get this rate. More information can also be gotten from Pete and Sue Hartman (peteandsue@caitel.com).

Plan to spend as many or as few days with us as you can between Saturday, Nov. 20 and Saturday, Nov. 27. You know we'll have fun!

Events are subject to last minute changes.

For more information contact Joanne McClary (619) 223-1111

Do you have a small news article that we should know about? Let your fellow members know by sending it to us for the upcoming newsletter.



AKA National Convention '99

by Susan Shampo

Despite the lack of a flashy destination, the AKA annual convention, held this year in Muncie, Indiana, was five fun-filled days of kites, kites and more kites that passed all too quickly. If you've never been, the convention offers something of interest to everyone involved in any aspect of kiting. Competitions range from buggy "drag" races and fighter kite fights, to the standard two- and four-line sport kites, to probably the biggest segment, kite making of all description. There are also mass ascensions, rokkaku battles, banner and kite parades ... everything kites!

Many workshops were offered on topics like applique techniques by artists such as Jose Sainz and Charlie Dunton, Quadline Ballet Choreography by our own Ron Despojado, Kite Flying in India by Stafford Wallace, Brian Champie's ever popular "I Hate to Walk" seminar on avoiding the "walk of shame" when good tricks go bad, indoor flying with Nelson Borelli and many, many more than there is room to detail here.

I was surprised to learn that in spite of it's name, the American Kitefliers Association National Convention draws attendees from around the world, including England, Canada, a large contingent from Japan and other far away places.

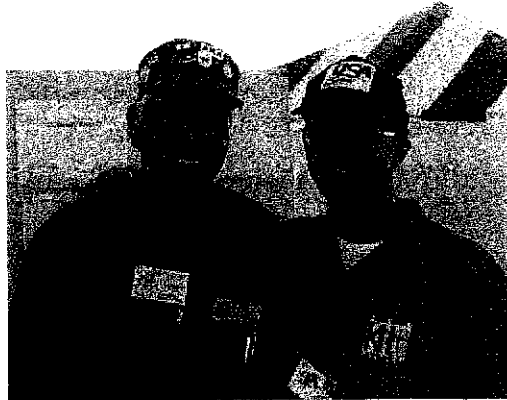
The weather was only semi-cooperative this year. Novice and Intermediate flyers, Team Trains and Freestyle competitors had to cope with very difficult low to NO wind conditions on Wednesday. Thursday was about as good as kite days get, starting out with bright sun and fairly stiff wind that mellowed to about 10-12 mph by the time events started. Friday and Saturday were not as kind and rain soaked and chilled us to the bone but there was wind and no thunder or lightening. All events went as scheduled and a good, but soggy time was still had by all.

One of the highlights for many of us was Saturday's Past Masters competition. It was the first time that I ever seen flying through a dog stake and I was totally mesmerized by the grace with which Sue Sedgewick (formerly Taft) flirted and played with her kite at her side. It was pure beauty. Also impressive in a large way were Brian Vanderslice, flying multiple kites, Ron Reich's sultry Arabesque multi-kite routine, Dean Jordan's 8-person field crew who, when his kite crashed, all looked at each other and did nothing, Darrin Skinner's unending rendition of something Star Trekish, Lee Sedgewick's "Lady in Red" ... but it was a joy to watch these masters from an earlier time strut their stuff and show us newcomers a little about our rich kite heritage.

Continued Next Page



Susan Shampo in her Muncie Hapi coat with Alan Stroh during a rainstorm



Living Legends Ray Bethell and Ron Reich



Susan Shampo with Big Sam Ritter and Big Brian Champie

All Photos and Captions
Provided by Ron
Despojado



Competitors from So. California represented our region proudly and brought home a good number of trophies. They are:

making

Steve LaPorte, 3rd place Stunt/Sport for his Spirit quadline

Steve Bateman, 2nd place special award for Novice Kitebuilders for his Sliver in the Sky

Fighter Kite Competition

Steve Bateman, 1st place Experienced Line Touch

Dual Line

Susan Shampo, 3rd place Experienced Ballet, 2nd place Experienced Precision

Pairs Ballet

Team Papalotes (Barb Dockendorf/Tom Stoner), 2nd place Masters

Quad Line

Ron Despojado, 3rd place Masters Ballet

Eric Allen, 1st place Experienced Ballet

Susan Shampo, 3rd place Experienced Ballet

Open Freestyle

Ron Despojado, 1st place

Steve LaPorte, 2nd place

Steve Bateman was one of three recipients of this year's KiteLoft Fellowship, which helps worthy kites with convention expenses. This is the second year in a row that an SDKC member was honored in this way. Last year Ron Despojado was selected.

But even more valuable than the trophies and cool stuff I bought at the Fly Market was the opportunity to spend five days with over 500 people who are each as nutty about kites as I am. The friendships that were started in Muncie and those that were renewed and strengthened there are what stick out in my mind and make me smile every time I think about my most recent kite adventure. It's trite but true ... there's no people like kite people!



Ron found people in Muncie to be very friendly.



Moon Over Muncie

by Ron Despojado

Every year at the AKA Convention its a great time with lots of stories to tell. This years in Muncie Indiana was no different.

While I was practicing one early evening, Ron Gibian and Chuck Abney, both of whom shared a room and rent-a-car with me, decided to pick me up to go to dinner. I hear Ron G. yell out to me that we are headed for the hotel and then dinner. I asked him if we were leaving at that time, he said yes. So I yell back that I will wrap up and join them right away. Chuck then shouts out '... and hurry up!!' I laugh and had already said I would wind up, so I take a quick look around, felt it was safe, then responded back to Chuck in the van 'Hey Chuck!' From there I proceeded to turn my back to him, yank up my shirt, and then 'moon' both Chuck and Ron G.

They laughed and laughed. Then laughed again. I wondered why they thought it was so funny. I pick up my bag and walk towards the minivan which was outfitted with dark tinted windows. Still more chuckles from the two of them. Ron G. says to me to go in the side door. I open the door to find the Japanese contingent all applauding, bowing, and laughing. Included in this group was Mr. Modegi-san, head of the Japanese Kiting Association.

Yes I bared my backside to the Japanese special guests. I offered to walk back to the hotel instead of sitting with the Japanese.



Ron and the Japanese guests.



'Columbia' continued from page 1

When it came time to actually building the kites with the kids, a lot of them wanted just to hear me speak English, so I would count to ten and then ask them to repeat. Then it seemed like they just wanted to hear ANYTHING in English, so I just said things like 'Hey, lets order a pizza!... What's on TV?... How 'bout that Monday Night Football Game?' The kids just looked wide-eyed and asked for more. I had been told that the children would be asking for autographs on just about anything, including used Kleenex and candy wrappers. So, thanks to ANCAL and Neil Tuthill, I had genuine 'Ron Despojado Trading Cards' made and brought a few to the schools. My mistake was that I did not bring enough for everyone. I found myself not only signing kites, but the bags they came in, the trading cards, soccer balls, t-shirts, and forearm. The children and their gratitude would just melt your heart. They have so little and to be given something, especially from someone from the USA meant a lot to them. When their kites were completed they would run and run and run all over the playground. No matter if the wind was there or not, or if they were going in the wrong direction, they were non-stop. The site would put a smile on any grinch's face.

One night four of us 'foreigners' went to a disco and met up again with the locals. The cab ride there was more thrilling than any roller coaster ride I had ever been on. At the disco I noticed we got plenty of strange and sometimes dirty looks from a lot of the local men. I finally figured out they didn't like the site of these tourist types dressed like tourists (you mean I need LONG pants??) at a table with 5 very attractive Colombian young women. They tried to teach us how to salsa dance with some measure of success. But we all had a great time.

Finally the day of the big festival arrived. We were told there would be a crowd estimated to be in the 40 to 50,000 range. I found it hard to believe, but wanted to see it. One at a time we were scheduled to perform in the middle of an amphitheater, and yes, I could see there were at least 20,000 people there, with tens of thousands more in the multi-acre park. One of the early performances was myself, Team Keops from France, and Lam Hoac from Canada flying in a last-minute quadline team. This truly was Team Revolution International! It was as if we had been flying for a long time- all our mauevers and choreography was tight. A little later on I flew a solo ballet, and since the winds were swirling I found myself running around to chase the wind. When I finished, the crowd went wild! But unfortunately I found out how thin the air was as I was gasping to catch my breath.

Before I left the USA, I packed a lot of my old kite

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Ron and Security Guards at the hotel



Ron and yet MORE Security Guards at the Big Event



Flat Tire During Cab Ride



Shaking Hands and Meeting the Children

t-shirts and decided to pass them out in the crowd. When I wasn't performing or helping someone, I took a bag of shirts, walked over to the crowd, and just started throwing them. Little did I know this would be a frenzy. The third or fourth time I did it, I was told to stop because a lot of the audience was climbing all over each other to get the shirts. A few times some tried to just take them out of my hands. Likewise with the trading cards, I was passing them out and eventually found myself surrounded by hands reaching out. Soon after I felt a tug on my arm and was rescued from the mob. This was a scary feeling that I thought I would never experience- being surrounded by dozens or maybe hundreds of people reaching to get to you.

Eventually it was again my turn to perform. This time I chose to do the 'Pretty Woman' program. When the music started the crowd was clapping to the beat. As I went through each of the phase of the program, the crowd showed their appreciation. When finished, again I was gasping for air and felt light headed, but the roar of the crowd was obvious. These people love kites!!! They really appreciate the show we were putting on.

Other highlights of the show included a 13 meter kite built by the visiting Guatemalans. There kite was put together by hand with a paper skin made up of different colors of paper glued together. Unfortunately as the kite was being prepared to launch, a gust of wind caught it and sent it collapsing around the manlift it was being hoisted by. After the first crack of bamboo, it soon sounded like gunfire as the kite crumbled. Tears flowed by everyone witnessing the tragedy, those who built it spent almost the entire night putting it together.

Soon the festival was over and a lot of spectators hung around near what could be considered 'backstage'. A lot of pictures were taken, autographs signed, and well wishing spectators just wanting to shake your hand. Shortly thereafter rain started to fall and there was hardly any cover. Eventually we had dinner and then back to the hotel. Many of us had to leave the next day so a ride was arranged to take us to the airport in the morning. But- the bus would arrive at 4:00 in the morning, and most of us did not go to sleep until 2:30. This afforded me a nice nap on the plane back to the US.

And on a somewhat sad note, one of my kites decided it wanted to stay in Colombia so it somehow never got back into the kite bag.

This trip was quite an experience. All the five days I was in Bogota, there was never a dull moment- including a political assassination, a flat tire during a ride, the ever-present panhandlers, lots of 'agua-diente' (fire water), an employee strike at the hotel, and countless other events. But the most

memorable being the appreciation of the people for something we do just for fun- flying kites. The people made you feel special, and the wide eyed wonderment of the children stole your heart.

Next time I will remember to bring something warm, no one wears shorts in Bogota.



Team Revolution: Ron Despojado, USA ; the Grezs Brothers, France ; Lam Hoc, Canada

*All Photos and Captions
Courtesy of
Ron Despojado*



Throwing T-shirts Into The Crowd



One Of John Rogers' Kite Stowed Away To Columbia



Mix-96 Kite Fest

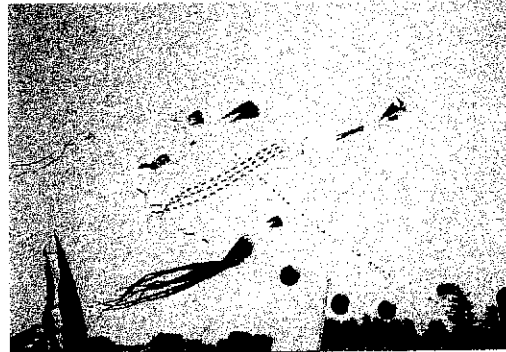
by Dorine Imbach

One night back in August we were pleasantly surprised by a call from Tom McAlister (proprietor of the Berkeley Kite Festival) with an invitation to a fun fly put on by a radio station in Sacramento. Since we passed on the Berkeley festival this year, we decided it would be fun to see some of the people we missed and also could use it as an excuse to visit Ed & Gail Lindsay at their home away from home in the Sierras.

We headed out in our trusty little truck on Friday night and put some nighttime miles on before stopping for the night alongside some San Joaquin Valley cotton fields. Since the fly was on Sunday, we had all day Saturday to make like tourists. We decided to visit Old Town Sacramento, where we'd always wanted to stop, but never seemed to find the time. Late that afternoon we headed for the prearranged hotel, the Holiday Inn, and found Tom and Barbara (Papalotes) and Dave Gomberg also trying to check in. Somehow they couldn't find our reservations. After a few fruitless phone calls, Bruce Morrison showed up and promptly helped the clerks find our reservations.

That night we got together with Joanne Petithory and Lee Thrall, and Ed & Bonnie Wright for a most excellent Texas Barbecue dinner, reminiscing about past Junction Kite Retreats and hearing about their adventures at Fano this year. After a relaxing "jacuzz" we settled down for a good night's sleep, only to be awakened in the wee hours by a rude car alarm outside our window.

The first annual Mix-96 Kite Fest was held at Oak Grove County Park, south of Sacramento. We had been warned that there usually isn't any wind there and to be prepared to put on a ground display. So we were pleasantly surprised when we arrived and saw some of Rod and Cindy Thrall's large inflatable kites and windsocks already starting to fill the sky.



The Skies at Mix 96 Fest

There was wind and it had arrived early! Soon Rod's kites were joined by ones from Dave Gomberg's huge kite bags, Tim Helwig, Nathan Sendan and a few others.

In the adjoining field, stunt kite demos and competitions were taking place, with a few mass ascensions scattered throughout the day. Ed & Bonnie, Lee & Joanne arrived just in time for the soft kite mass ascension and filled the sky with the Wrights' South Park character parafoils. My favorite mass ascension was for dragon kites. King Tut flew among dozens of small mylar dragons, looking like the patriarch among his offspring. It was a challenge avoiding all the invisible lines of the darting kites, and Tut finally succumbed to the onslaught.

The festival was quite spread out with several food and merchandise booths, a bounce house and other kiddie attractions, and a stage for live music. We cruised the grounds at lunch time with our complimentary lunch tickets and discovered we were to be fed by the same Texas Barbecue place we had eaten the night before. Mmm... cow.

J.R. Tolman had a tent full of kids making kites all day; the Bay Area Sundowners put on their usual spectacular show; and everyone had a good time in general. The only negative thing I can think of is that we learned late in the day that the car alarm we heard earlier belonged to Darrin Skinner, who had a large kite bag full of "classic" old kites stolen that morning. Major bummer!

Many local people stopped by and commented on how lucky we were that there was wind that day. It was a little bumpy and stopped dead a few times, sending all the kites to the ground, but for the most part, we kept the sky full. The day ended watching Gomberg stuff his huge kites, including the gigantic Peter Lynn Octopus, into his ample kite bags, which he says he has used as a makeshift bed on many kite odysseys. The kiteflyers were invited to a dinner at the Old Spaghetti Factory, but we had to decline so we could get started up the hill to visit the Lindsays.



Gail Lindsay not flying a kite at their "Home Away From Home"

Photos Courtesy of
Dorine Imbach



The results of the 1999 Southern California Open held in San Diego on 9-25-99 are:

NIP
1) Danielle Fermin 58.667

NIB
1) Danielle Fermin 68.600

IIP
1) Serafin "Bob" Fermin 67.067
2) Scott Metz 67.000
3) Benjamin Messin 63.467

IIB
1) Scott Metz 70.667
2) Serafin "Bob" Fermin 69.600
3) Benjamin Messin 69.200
4) Jesse Lawrence 67.867

EIP
1) Alan Brooks 65.800
2) paul Eshelman 27.733

EIB
1) Paul Eshelman 58.533
2) Alan Brooks 53.000

MIP
1) Miguel Rodriguez 74.200
2) Susan Shampo 67.133
3) Brian Champie 59.600
4) Lionel Gibbons 55.533
5) Larry Bush 50.267
6) Steve La Porte 42.800

MIB
1) Larry Bush 86.533
2) Miguel Rodriguez 86.267
3) Brian Champie 84.400
4) Susan Shampo 83.933
5) Steve La Porte 80.400
6) Lionel Gibbons 80.333
7) Ron Despojado 70.333

EIQP
1) Marshall Morgan 63.467
2) Jesse Lawrence 59.517
3) Ellen Morgan 58.833
4) Alan Brooks 54.433
5) Susan Shampo 53.433
6) Benjamin Messin 48.167

EIQB
1) Susan Shampo 77.267
2) Jesse Lawrence 76.733
3) Alan Brooks 73.400
4) Ellen Morgan 68.067
5) Marshall Morgan 63.067

MIQP
1) Ron Depojado 89.533
2) Paul Eshelman 74.867
3) Eric Allen 68.517

4) Lionel Gibbons 65.233
5) Steve La Porte 62.200

MIQB

1) Ron Despojado 90.200
2) Steve La Porte 87.867
3) Eric Allen 76.733
4) Paul Eshelman 74.267
5) Lionel Gibbons 74.067

EPB

1) Against the Wind 73.800

MPB

1) Papalotes 81.067
2) Zopilotes 80.533
3) Avispados 78.667
4) Sons of Thunder 68.533

(Ed. note: Sorry but there is not a story to accompany these results.)

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Fighters At SoCal Open

by Steve Bateman

The first fighter competition associated with the Southern California Sport Kite league was held at the Southern California Open on September 25, 1999.

Six contestants entered: Howard Gordon, Steve Bateman, Johnny Hsing, Charlie M'Clary, Vic Heredia, and Jack. The competition was good, with each contestant fighting in at least three matches before being eliminated.

The battle between Jack and Charlie was very good, especially when the line touch was from over. The same held for the battle between Steve and Vic. The first point (an over point) went on for at least three minutes before Steve won the point. Steve went on to go ahead 3 points to 0, then floundered as Vic changed to a well tuned kite to lose 4 points to 3.

In the finals Vic was up against Johnny on the main field for the crowd to see. They put on a good show, with both during the match having a ground crash to lose a point. In the end Johnny won out at 4 points to Vic's 2.

For the first fighter event at a SCSKL event, the response was very favorable from the crowd and the contestants. The next competition will be looked forward to for more than just sport kites!

San Diego MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



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- Renewal
- Change of address

Membership dues per household (Check one)

	1 yr.	2 yrs.	3 yrs.
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Newsletter 1st Class Mail	<input type="checkbox"/> \$23	<input type="checkbox"/> \$45	<input type="checkbox"/> \$67
Newsletter Overseas Air	<input type="checkbox"/> \$30	<input type="checkbox"/> \$59	<input type="checkbox"/> \$88

Amount enclosed: (U.S. funds only)

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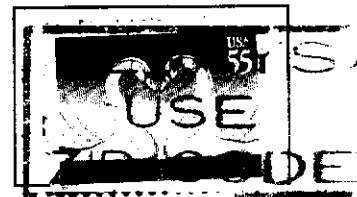
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