

# THE INITIAL LAUNCH OF TECHNICAL SOARING

Information by Bernard Paiewonsky and Floyd Sweet

Technical Soaring has now passed its 25th anniversary, and Bernard Paiewonsky and Floyd Sweet, the founding publishers and editors, have offered to provide through this article some insights about the initial launching of the journal.

The idea for a new scientific and technical journal for the soaring community occurred in the summer of 1970 at the OSTIV Congress. At the time, Bernard Paiewonsky was the chairman of the SSA Technical Board and Floyd Sweet was the chairman of the OSTIV Technical Committee, and they were experiencing considerable frustration with the slow pace of publication of scientific and technical papers in *Soaring* magazine. The SSA Technical Board had been directed to generate publishable papers on scientific and technical topics relevant to soaring but *Soaring* magazine only had a few pages per year available for articles of this type. On the other hand, the Swiss Aero Club was regularly publishing OSTIV Congress scientific and technical papers in a special section of their well-known monthly magazine, *AeroRevue*. The OSTIV papers appearing in *AeroRevue* were later reprinted, bound and distributed as Congress proceedings.

There was a large turnout of papers presented at the OSTIV Congress in Alpine, Texas in 1970, and it was clear that the existing outlets for publication would be saturated and it would be several years before the papers were published and a proceedings could appear. With this in mind, Paiewonsky and Sweet sounded out some SSA Directors on the possibility of getting more space in *Soaring* magazine or possibly starting a new journal. Bernald Smith, SSA director and chairman of the SSA Publications Board, was very encouraging. It was clear that space for scientific and technical articles in *Soaring* was not likely to be increased. On the other hand, if a new publication could be self-sustaining and not cost the SSA anything out of pocket, then a new journal would be fine, he said. The SSA Technical Board could go ahead and do it. There were some formalities to take care of and they were attended to later on at SSA Directors meetings.

Cedric Vernon was the editor of the OSTIV publications including the papers that appeared in *Aero Revue*, and Paiewonsky and Sweet talked to him at the Congress in Alpine about publication problems in *Soaring*. Together they worked out an arrangement to share the OSTIV papers with a new U.S.-based journal to be called *Technical Soaring*. Paiewonsky and Sweet committed to conform to the OSTIV two-column format and to provide camera-ready copy for proceedings.

Things were now underway and the SSA Technical Board had the authority to move ahead. Paiewonsky and Sweet both lived and worked near Washington, D.C. and for them the authority to act was, and still is, a very important item to have. Of course, no money had come with the authority to proceed, but there was a large backlog

of OSTIV papers and a substantial number of papers that the Technical Board had solicited from the SSA membership. These had been peer reviewed but remained unpublished due to lack of space in *Soaring*. Thus, in the Fall of 1970, manuscripts were sorted to get a balance of topics, these were then organized into issues and volumes, the pages were counted and the first issue then went out for estimates for printing and binding.

*Technical Soaring* was started as a bootstrap operation in 1970-71. Paiewonsky and Sweet had volunteer help for layout, assembly, administration and subscription management but the typing, printing, and mailing had to be paid for. These two volunteers agreed that they would pay for the printing and mailing of the initial batch of Vol I, No. 1 themselves. The SSA supported the effort with free ads in *Soaring*. It was hoped that subscriptions would follow and the journal would become self supporting. The initial 1971 annual subscription price, domestic, was \$6.00, including postage.

As Paiewonsky and Sweet personally fronted the start-up money, they found that they could only afford to print 350 or 400 copies of the first issue. However, subscription orders came in very quickly and they quickly had to get a second print run of the first issue. Being conscientious about the project, they were very concerned about timely production and fulfilling the subscriptions. The typing and cut-and paste work was done in the evenings by contract piecework typists and the layouts were prepared on the Paiewonsky and Sweet kitchen tables. All this was done before the era of personal computers, and the two volunteers supplied hand made, camera-ready copy to the printer. The masters for printing were typed on special format sheets and all corrections were made with tape or white-out. All graphics and drawings were adjusted to actual page or column size then cut to fit and cemented into place.

Paiewonsky and Sweet used the initial subscription income to pay the cost of the second printing run of Vol I, No 1. The flow of new subscriptions just about matched the flow of prepared manuscripts through the first year and they were able to complete the rest of Volume I with print runs of about 800 copies per issue. By the time they reached Volume II there were about 725 subscribers, more or less, and the subscriber roster stayed between 700-850 for several years with half the subscribers being from overseas. The subscription income continued to just about cover the outside typing, printing and mailing expenses for the years that Paiewonsky's wife, Sabina, became seriously ill in the late '70s and Paiewonsky and Sweet could no longer do the manuscript layout and preparation work at home. *Technical Soaring* was a going operation by then and they were able to get help with production and distribution from the SSA offices in Santa Monica. Finally, John McMasters took over the editorship from Paiewonsky in 1980.

The hopes Paiewonsky and Sweet had for the journal have been fulfilled many times over and today they are pleased that it still has an international readership. They

continue to offer special thanks to those initial subscribers who took a gamble on *Technical Soaring* and signed up on the basis of the preliminary announcements

Paiewonsky and Sweet also express their appreciation to Sabina Paiewonsky and Frances Sweet, both now deceased, who contributed time, energy and administrative and managerial skills for nearly ten years to help Technical Soaring survive. They also acknowledge the contributions of Mike Vore who designed the original cover layout, Rose Marie Licher, Don Monroe and the many others who helped with the production, editing and distribution of *Technical Soaring* in the 1970s.

Paiewonsky and Sweet say they have enjoyed watching the evolution of Technical Soaring. They approve of the modern cover style and layout, and feel the content is first

class. They offer their best wishes for its continuing future success for the next twenty five years and beyond, and urge readers to maintain support by subscribing. Paiewonsky and Sweet indicate that it is their hope that authors will continue to maintain an interest in publishing papers of high quality and relevance to the soaring community in Technical Soaring.

Today, *Technical Soaring* continues as a joint effort of OSTIV and the SSA. The journal is edited by volunteers – Rob Sjostedt for the SSA and Ladislav Smrcek for OSTIV – and the SSA provides the manpower and facilities for assembling, printing and mailing the publication. It remains the best-recognized journal in the world for the presentation of current materials concerning the scientific and technical aspects of the sport of soaring.

Bernard Paiewonsky and Floyd Sweet  
Founding Editors and Publishers