

The history of the German Free Flight Magazine

THERMIKSENSE

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THERMIKSENSE, the German free flight magazine has now existed for 35 years. Four times a year 500 copies are sent to all parts of the world with subscribers coming from as many as 24 countries. On about 60 pages THERMIKSENSE covers a wide range of topics having to do with free flight. Apart from reports about the international categories of F1A, F1B, F1C, F1D, F1E and F1Q you can also find articles on model plans and technique, aerodynamics and design, theory and practical hints, FAI/CIAM and DAeC, news and competition reports, critical and entertaining contributions. Last, a comprehensive survey of the latest dates and calendar of national and international competitions is normally part of an issue of THERMIKSENSE, too. Having contributed to THERMIKSENSE as from issue 4/1976, Bernhard Schwendemann, who is also responsible for its publication, has been the editor in chief since 1981.

The origins of THERMIKSENSE date back to the year 1976, when Claus Gretter and Roland Reutlinger distributed around 30 copies of a 24-page journal called "Bartabschneider" (which was a play on words referring to the old German word for barber and the insider word for thermals) at a price of 0,70 DM at regional competitions in south-west of Germany. However, a Bavarian club magazine had already been given the title "Bartabschneider", they changed the name to "Thermiksense" (which practically means the same expressed with different words). Up to now one of the distinguishing features of this journal has been the cartoon on its front cover page, which had originally been designed by Claus Maikis as from 1977 before Will Nakashima (USA) took over in 1998.

Circulation and prices of TS issues

The circulation figures and total number of pages have continuously increased to over 500 subscribers and 60 pages so far. After reaching a circulation of 200 copies and 34 pages in 1981, the publication figures rose to 230 issues and 50 pages in 1983 before THERMIKSENSE began to comprise 60 pages in 1985 which is still what its average size is today. While its circulation figures rose from 320 in 1985 and 400 in 1987 to 450 copies in 1989, the periodical



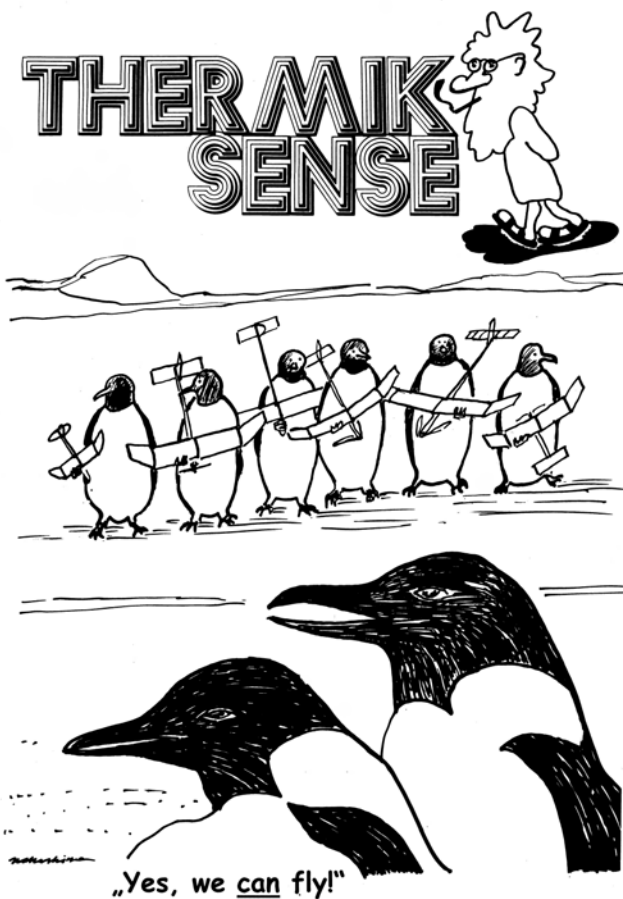
"Wow, Kleopatra war Freifliegerin!"

"Wow, Cleopatra was a Free Flight flyer" (of the fair sex), a Will Nakashima's cartoon on the cover of TS, 3/2004. These wonderful cartoons have been a feature of the magazine since 1998.

reached its record level of over 500 copies in 1995. Of course, this development was bound to result in a rise in prices, too. When THERMIKSENSE cost 2 DM per issue in 1980, readers were charged 5 DM in 1988, and as from 2008 the price has amounted to 5 € worldwide with excess charges having to be paid for airmail delivery only. Around three quarters of all readers come from Germany and another 50 subscribers are from the German-speaking countries of Austria and Switzerland. The other readers are scattered in as many as 21 countries worldwide.

What THERMIKSENSE does

THERMIKSENSE mainly focuses on techniques and competitions. The editorial staff try to cover all the different classes and this can be seen in the fact that each of the contributors is in charge of reporting about one of the special flight categories. But it is also a claim of THERMIKSENSE to report about a variety of other topics and to offer a forum for discussion. Hence, its section on "Personal Affairs" is usually widely read and evokes most reactions on the side of the readers, since many free flight adherents are not only interested in models and their technical details but also in the "acting people" in their sport. And as the free flight is also embedded in a political framework (just like in real life) there is comprehensive and, if necessary, controversial coverage on such



This Nakashima cartoon appeared in the cover of the 4/ 2004 issue of THERMIKSENSE.

sports organizations as German Aeroclub (DAeC) and FAI/CIAM. Last but not least, the cartoon series "Hägar the free flyer" by Klaus Leissner has been an integral part of the "Freifluch & Cooltour" section in which you can find humorous, entertaining and cultural contributions to THERMIKSENSE.

THERMIKSENSE tries to be a free flight journal that gives in-depth background information and provides useful and comprehensive service arranged in a clear layout. The journal is therefore divided into different sections such as "gliders", "rubber powered", "engines", "electro-powered", indoor, CO₂, hand launch glider, Page 3 (the editorial), letters to the editor, DAeC/CIAM, hints, aerodynamics, Freifluch&Cooltour, competitions, personal affairs, publications, suppliers, topical items, calendar. The claim of THERMIKSENSE is also based on the editor's professional training and his job career. Apart from having a PhD in physics and having worked as a freelance writer for a local newspaper during his studies he also studied journalism and communication theory for some semesters. The 58-year-old has taken part in FIB competitions on national and international level ever since for nearly 40 years now. Today, he works as an engineer developing electronic assisted braking systems for most of the commercial vehicles produced in Europe.

But just as free flight models have changed over the years, so has the way THERMIKSENSE is made.

In the beginning some articles had to be enlarged or scaled down with the help of a photocopier; others had to be typed on a typewriter; headlines had to be stencilled in ink; eventually, the layout of the different pages had to be glued together using a pair of scissors before everything could be taken to the printers' shop. Over the years the computer has become an ever more important tool and since 2004 merely a CD with PDF-files is sent to the printers' shop. The contributors used to come mainly from South-West Germany, which meant that there was one joint editing conference meeting per year in which everything had to be discussed. In the meantime contributors are from all over the German-speaking countries and communication takes chiefly place via e-mail.

THERMIKSENSE has had its own web page since 1996, only three years after the actual start of the World Wide Web. You can log in to www.thermiksense.de for the latest dates and calendar as well as for reports about competitions and their results. On this page you can also find a general introduction to free flight, a comprehensive list of further links, topical news and many hints for free flight enthusiasts.

All this work cannot be accomplished by one man alone, both considering the time that has to be invested and the expertise it takes. Hence, it is the many individual contributors that form the backbone of the periodical as all of them are experienced flyers. A great number of them having been active participants in World Cups and World or European Championships.

THERMIKSENSE contributors to date

Claus Gretter	1976 - 1987
Claus Maikis	1977 - 1997
Wolfgang Köppl	1980 - 1984
Peter Brauchle	1980 - 1988
Klaus Salzer	1981 - 1984
Stefan Rumpp	1986 - 2005
Jörg Hammerschmidt	1986 - 1998
Bernhard Sauter	1990 - 2000
Thomas Merkt	1993 - 2000
Dieter Ducklaß	1994 - 1995
Thomas Wiesiolek	1995 - 2005
Wolfgang Gerlach	1996 - 2008
Frank Adametz	1997 - 2006
Walter Hach	2000 - 2009
Jorgen Korsgaard	2001 - 2004

The current team (2010) is :

Johannes Seren	F1A
Walter Eggimann	F1B
Rolf Stäbler	F1C
Rainer Lotz	F1D
Werner Ackermann	F1E
Dieter Siebenmann	aerodynamics



A meeting of the editorial board of Thermiksense in 2001. From L to R :Thomas Wiesiolek, Frank Adametz, Bernhard Schwendemann, Stefan Rump, Wolfgang Gerlach, Rolf Stabler. Missing on the picture: Walter Hach, Jorgen Korsgaard .

Thomas Weimer	hints/tips
Dieter Brehm	competitions
Wibke Seifert	personal affairs
Will Nakashima	cartoons
Guido Plutzer	link master
Heinz Hofmann	shipping
Thorsten Lutz	webmaster
Andre Lauer	webmaster

are critical voices on some of the articles. But as mentioned above, the readers are invited to put forward critical views and any contributions in this respect are very welcome.

THERMIKSENSE back issues

All issues of the magazine THERMIKSENSE since 1986/87 are available in the two German central libraries, Deutsche Bibliothek in Frankfurt and Deutsche Bucherei in Leipzig as well as in the central library of south-west Germany Wurttembergische Landesbibliothek in Stuttgart For copies available for sale see the web-site of THERMIKSENSE: www.thermiksense.de.

All work is done on a voluntary basis. As there is almost no advertising in this magazine, THERMIKSENSE can not be published at a profit. Its main expenses are for printing and distributing the journal. However, publishing THERMIKSENSE does involve the occasional problem. Every now and then there

Awards

Finally, it should be mentioned that official awards have been given to the magazine so far. In 1991, THERMIKSENSE was awarded the Lilienthal-Diploma by the German Aeroclub DAeC on the occasion of its 15th anniversary and in 2009 the editor in chief was handed over the Icarus-Cup by the DAeC for outstanding service to the aeromodelling sport.



THERMIKSENSE's Chief Editor, Bernhard Schwendemann, flying in competition with F1B model in 2009.

