

Specialist Report : Simugliding

Flight Simulator X

The major novelty is the release of the new Microsoft Flight Simulator X (FSX)

www.microsoft.com/games/flightsimulator/

The basic package of FSX as sold by MS now includes a modern glider, the DG 808. The realism of this model is acceptable but some bending effects of the wings look strange. The virtual cockpit is good but not quite as good as in the best add-ons for FS 2004. The flight dynamics are better than in FS 2004 but still not as good as in the best dedicated glider simulators.

FSX also includes thermal but it seems quite difficult to really define the weather conditions that you want.

An aerotow simulation is also provided which is not quite as realistic as some of the other simulators.

Compared to the excellent scenery in FS 2004, FSX has taken another leap forward in realism. The pictures of the landscape are stunning. However you need the fastest processor and the latest graphic card to get an acceptable frame rate at the highest level of details.

Dedicated Glider Simulators

There are still 4 glider simulators on the market :

SFS (German)	www.sfspc.de/
Sailor of the Sky (Spanish)	www.sailorsofthesky.com/
Silent Wings (Norwegian)	www.silentwings.no/home/
Condor (Slovenian)	www.condorsoaring.com/

An excellent comparison of these products written by Roddy Maddock has been published in the December 2006-January 2007 issue of Sailplane and Gliding. Roddy believes that Condor is the best soaring simulator for the time being.

Multiplayer on line contests

Multiplayer contests on internet become more and more popular. See the contests organised with Silent Wings and Condor:

<http://www.silentwings.no/mp/>

<http://www.speedbattle-cup.com>

Use of gliding simulator for training

A very interesting experiment has been done in Lasham where they used a house built simulator based on Silent Wings to train an "ab initio student" until he was capable of flying it to solo standard (including spinning and all emergencies). They put then the student in a glider and he managed to fly solo in only 5 real flights! Read the article on this promising approach in the June-July 2006 issue of Sailplane and Gliding.

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