

Flying with the “triple V” probe.

For the past 7 years I’ve flown my Ventus C with ESA-Systems triple probe (K-1, pitot and static), first with a Borgelt B50, lately with Cambridge 302 vario. Both in K-1 TE compensation.

By “trial and error” I managed to get my K-1 probe to be close to perfect but it was a very long process of flight and probe tip “filing” to get it to satisfy my needs for a proper TE compensation of vario data. It was complicated further by a leak on a pneumatic connector that got worse as the flying season progressed – an O-ring got harder and started to leak weeks after my instrument panel was reinstalled after winter storage.

Few years ago I noticed a new type of K-1 probe, one with twin double slotted tip (I call it the “V”probe), and talked with Erwin Salzinger of ESA-Systems about it’s properties – very good TE compensation regardless of “side air flows”, yaw or gusts. The probe was also at perfect K-1 “right out of the box”.

I wanted one!

But there was a problem – my tail socket was a triple probe one and it was impossible to manufacture a triple probe with a “V” K-1. K-1 twin probe with pitot or static yes, but all three - NO. Erwin was very adamant – technological limitations.

Imagine my surprise when a day or two before start of 2006 Polish Open Class Nationals at Leszno, Poland, Erwin Salzinger, frequent guest pilot here, stopped me and asked with a big smile if I wanted to try his new probe – a prototype, one that until a week before he didn’t know how to fabricate.

YES! 10 seconds later my probe was replaced with the “triple V”.

Differences were evident, first during the tow – 302 was faster but at the same time more stable, and then during entire flight. I was smiling as I landed – perfect K-1, fast and accurate indications during all phases of flight.

I used that probe through the Nationals and few weeks later during the World Gliding Championships in Sweden.

My enthusiasm got the attention of my teammates: Stan Wujczak and Janusz Centka. Stan was about to fly in the WGC on a brand new ASG-29 and was afraid of vario problems with no time to fix or flight test. He was right – his first flight was the last training day before the start of WGC.

Erwin promised to work over a weekend to fabricate “triple V” probes for both Wujczak and Centka and deliver them to Sweden in time for the World Championships.

Janusz needed one for the very dynamic “Diana 2”.

Wujczak’s comments ...”to be able to see on the vario what “my behind” feels is great, to get that on a brand new glider – that has never happened to me during my almost 40 years of competition flying”...

He placed 4th in 18m class, Janusz won the 15m one!

Thank you Erwin!