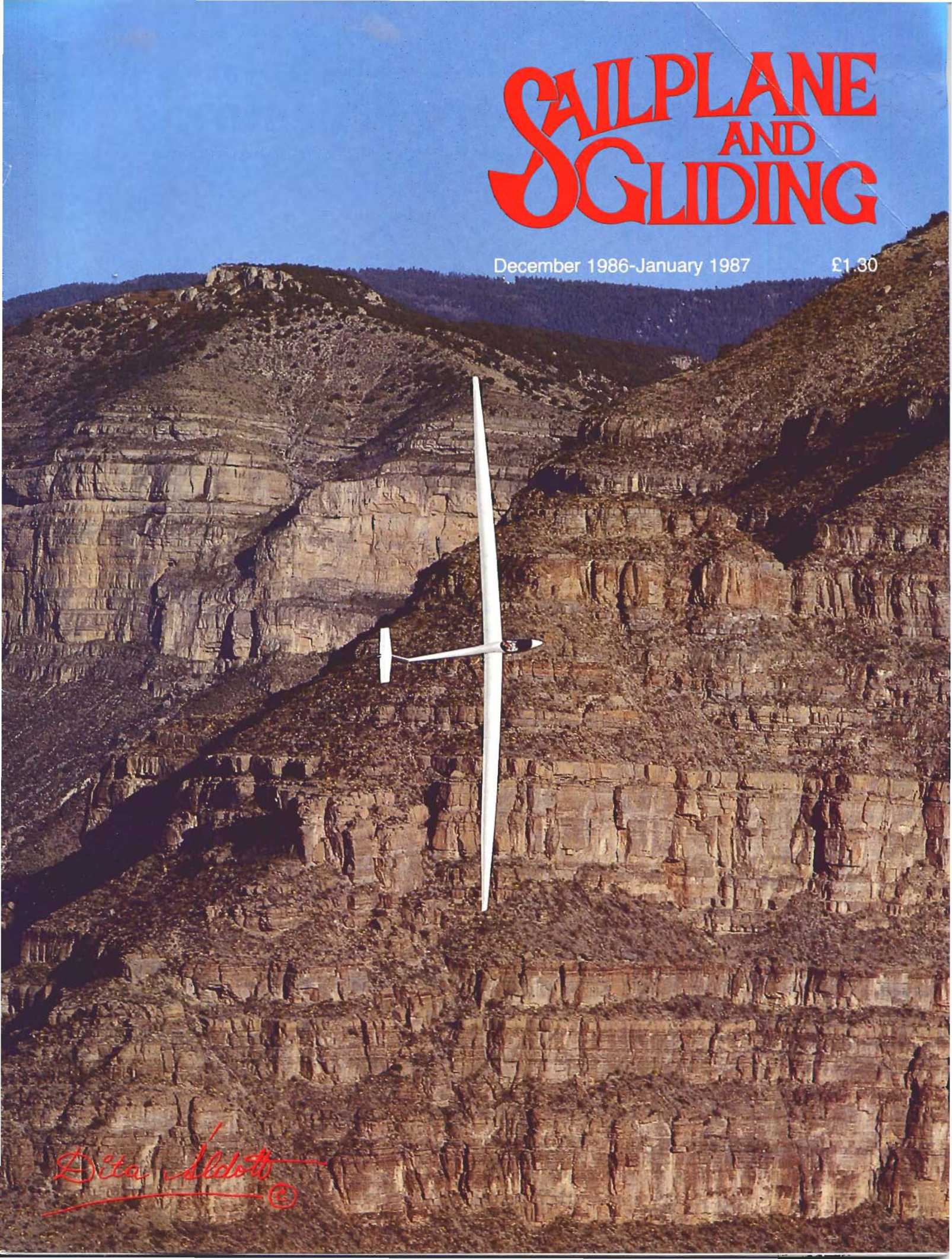
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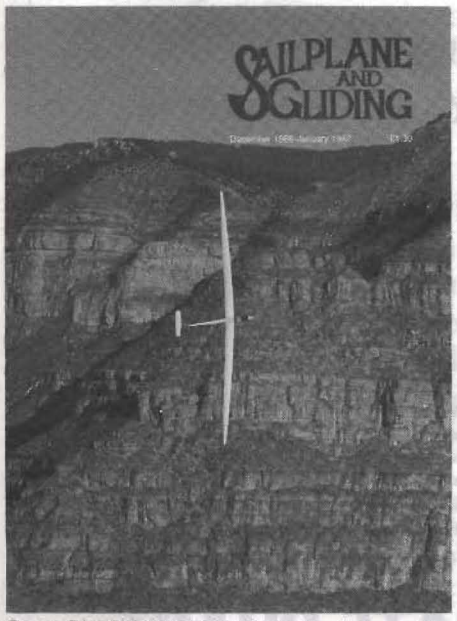
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Cover: Dita Aldott took this dramatic photograph of Sandor Aldott flying his Nimbus 3 in the Sacramento Mountains at Alamagordo, New Mexico. *Centrespread:* Sandor, Master of Photography, CPP, ASP, caught this beautiful scene of a DG-100, piloted by Gary Amburgey, over the Odessa oilfields, Texas, from his Nimbus 3.

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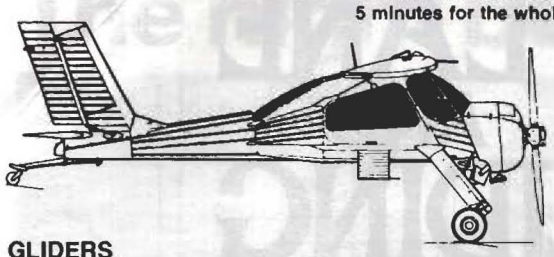
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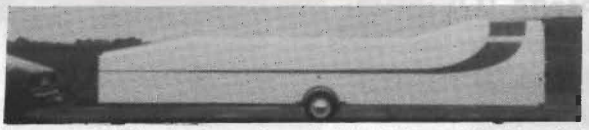
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MIKE JEFFERYES

INTER-CLUB LEAGUE FINAL

Mike reports on the final held at Parham from August 23 over the Bank Holiday

The Southdown Gliding Club have participated with great enthusiasm and success since the South-Eastern League was formed in 1982. They sent a full team to HusBos for both of the wet September weekends of 1983 when we attempted to achieve a final contest. They were present at the 1984 final at Dunstable, coming 5th. They again won the South-Eastern League in 1985 and in the final at Booker achieved an impressive victory becoming National Champions and winning the Douglas Trophy for the year.

It was at Booker in August 1985 that they first invited us to their club at Parham on the South Downs near Brighton for the 1986 Inter-League Final. I have to confess considerable initial trepidation. Could a small club like Parham handle such an influx of visitors? Wasn't it unfair to ask all Leagues to travel to one end of the country? This was a particular concern because in 1986 things seem to have become re-established in the north with two Leagues now operating.

In spring 1986 we voted. My apologies to the Northern Leagues that I disallowed your veto and accepted Southdown's invitation, and my thanks and congratulations to the Derby & Lancs team for the effort you put in to trail down from Camphill, and for the obvious enjoyment that you shared with the rest of us in a most successful weekend at Parham.

Perhaps the best piece of planning by our hosts was their failure to win their own League this year! Therefore, as non-combatants, they put all their concentration into the organisation and **Didn't They Do Well?** It seemed as though the entire Southdown Club was there, each performing their own role to make all of us visitors feel welcome and comfortable. We all have very happy memories of the weekend. Our thanks to them all, particularly to Dave Connaway who worked so hard to have the final held at Parham and then even harder as contest director to ensure its success.

* * *

Saturday's northerly airstream was ideal, giving plenty of help from the South Downs and holding back any interference from sea breezes. Tasks sent all Classes east then back west to explore the Downs. TP1 was the railway station at Cooksbridge for Intermediate and Novice and at Polegate for Pundit. All shared Butser Hill radio mast as TP2. TP3 at Lasham gave the Novices 173km, at Newbury Racecourse gave Intermediates 230km and at Didcot gave Pundits 309km.

Keith Mitchell's satellite dish warned of high cloud approaching from the west and urged early starts. This proved exactly correct. A large number of memorable kilometres were flown and all 20 competing gliders landed out safely.

The winning Pundit (Modesty stopped Mike giving his name. Ed.) flying a DG-202/17m achieved 300.9km for Essex (and the shortest retrieve). Peter Roberts of Derby & Lancs, also flying a DG-202/17m, won the Intermediate Class with 176.1km with Chris Clarke (Vega) 2nd for Cotswold at 152km.

The achievement of the day was by Davina Hoolahan who won the Novice Class for Kent with 111.3km in her K-6E only two weeks after flying her Silver distance. Andreas Jelden of Booker (K-18) was 2nd Novice at 98.3km.



The triumphant Kent team from left to right – Joe Janzo, Davina Hoolahan, John Hoolahan, Tony Moulang, Ray Smith, Colin Beer and Tim Gardiner. *Photo:* Mary Beer.

Sunday's weather was outstandingly good; the same northerly flow with cloudbase exceeding 5000ft and no threat of deterioration. However, after Saturday's outlandings shorter tasks were set. All Classes used the Downs, with Cooksbridge at TP1 and Butser Hill as TP2. Novices then returned to Parham for 136km. Intermediates went on to Lasham as TP3 for 173km and Pundits to Newbury for 230km.

In contrast to Day 1, 20 out of 21 competitors finished and so did a fair number of *hors concours* – including Ian Ashdown (Saturday's task setter) whose local knowledge and skill would have won him the Pundit task. The visitors were doubly grateful that Southdown were not competing!

Winner of the Novice Class was Mark Taylor in his K-6CR at *54.5km/h. It was a great pleasure to see him doing well for Rattlesden in their first appearance in the final as winners of the East Anglian League. Second Novice was Chris Morris (Libelle) from Avon Soaring Centre at 54.2km/h. Even the one outlanding was little disappointment – it gave a Silver distance to Chris Ramler from Camphill. That K-6E from Kent came 3rd equal at 49.4km/h flown by Davina's husband John, who did enough to retain the overall lead for Kent in the Novice Class.

Winner for the second day running to put Derby & Lancs into a commanding lead in the Intermediate Class was Peter Roberts in his DG-202/17m at *65.9km/h. In second place was Colin Beer of Kent (Libelle) at 64.4.

Pundit day winner was Ed Johnson of Cotswold (Kestrel 19) at *73km/h. This followed his second place on Day 1. But overall lead in the Pundit Class was retained for Essex by John Bridge (Jantar 1) who came 2nd at 71.3. (Can't understand what kept him!)

* * *

There was no attempt at a 3rd day. The BBC were advising against even standing outside without anchor and guy-ropes, let alone aviating in the face of ex-hurricane Charlie on Bank Holiday Monday. The final results therefore rested on the scores of the first two days – still uncon-

* *Handicapped.*



The broken lines lead to either existing members whose future is uncertain (and fingers are crossed for them) or new clubs we hope will be joining next year.

firmed. Provisional results indicated Essex to be in the lead with Kent, Derby & Lancs and Cotswold close behind.

Now we come to the tragic bit! A short length of celluloid failed to record the entire weekend's accomplishments by the Essex Intermediate, and the organisation were forced to make a significant adjustment to the scores.

It is fitting that the efforts of the Hoolahans' K-6E in the Novice Class brought the final victory to Kent, with Cotswold, Derby & Lancs and Essex equal second.

Congratulations Kent – 1986 National League Champions and winners of the Douglas trophy.

And for 1987?

Avon Soaring Centre have kindly invited us to Bidford-on-Avon for the Inter-League Final over the August Bank Holiday weekend 1987.

The perennial questions are being debated:

1. Should the Intermediate Pilot definition be changed? to . . .

Any Pilot who by April

- has never flown in a Nationals level competition

&

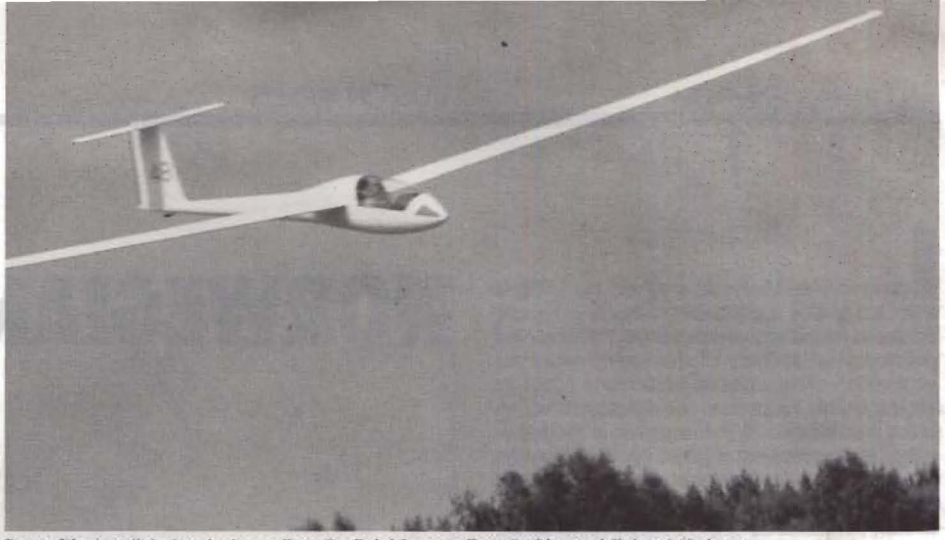
- has not flown a 500km Diamond distance leg

(& perhaps

- has never been above 50th in the Regional Promotion List).

2. What changes are wanted or needed in the structure of the Leagues? The map shows the present distribution of Clubs/Leagues with some potential changes identified.

By the time this is published further decisions may have been made – but I would welcome views from anyone who'd care to express them to: Mike Jefferyes, 15 Sycamore Way, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 9LZ.



Dave Findon (Nimbus), Avon Pundit, finishing on Day 2. *Photo:* Michael Erdman.



Above, briefing on the grid on Day 2. *Photo:* D. Connaway.
Below, Humphrey Chamberlain (Rattlesden Intermediate) taking off in his LS-4. *Photo:* Michael Erdman.



JUSTIN WILLS

NORWEGIAN SAGA

Justin explores the north and crosses the Arctic Circle

I suspect that everyone involved in gliding is attracted to it by a mixture of reasons which are unique to the individual concerned. Whilst I enjoy practically all aspects of the sport, I find the exploration of new places particularly fascinating, especially if little or no gliding has been done in the area hitherto. With the growth in the knowledge and population of glider pilots it might be thought that the opportunity for such flying is steadily reducing, but with the improvement in aircraft performance and transport systems the accessibility of places that were previously unexplored is constantly increasing.

I had flown in southern Norway in 1972 and was reminded of its potential by Birger Bulukin of the Norwegian team at Rieti. Promising myself another visit, I dug out my old school atlas on which I plan all my grand schemes.

Geographically the country is immensely long, the distance from Kristiansand in the south to Nordkapp being 1650km, the same as from London to North Africa. The Arctic Circle roughly bisects the country, and it is daylight virtually the whole time in summer. Rainfall is high on the western side of the coastal mountain chain, but where the country broadens in the south and north the inland areas benefit from the rain-shadow effect and some parts of the extreme north are very dry. Correspondence with Birger confirmed that practically all gliding activity was confined to the south, and even here there were large areas relatively unexplored. Further north virtually no gliding had been done. My plan, therefore, was to try to fly the full length of the country up to Nordkapp, and hopefully even explore the Lofoten Islands. The map showed that there was a string of airfields along the route, but launching would be a problem.

This was overcome by Bob McLean and John Ellis generously offering to lend me their demonstrator DG-400 for the trip. It also showed their considerable faith in the aircraft, which proved totally justified. It was easy to fly as a glider, with a good performance, and simple to operate under power with excellent take off and climb characteristics which kept engine time to a minimum. In addition, for my peace of mind, they fitted additional fuel tanks which gave a theoretical still air range of over 500 miles. It was the ideal aircraft for the job.

On June 28 we drove with Birger Bulukin from Oslo to Eggemoen airfield which, like many of the smaller airstrips, consisted of a single runway surrounded by pine trees, and assembled the DG-400 for the first time. The weather looked encouraging, with a light northerly wind and cumulus forming at 4500ft, so Birger in his LS-6 suggested a dog leg flight of 350km to the north to include the two highest peaks in Norway, the Glittertind and the Galdhopiggen, ending up at Ringebu airfield. I flew cautiously northwards following the clouds and keeping high, as the country below seemed to offer little in the way of landing possibilities, despite Birger's advice that in southern Norway this was not a problem. He in the meantime, had taken a more easterly course, where conditions looked weaker, and only afterwards admitted that this was because the direct route was almost unlandable!

After covering 100km the mountains appeared to the north-west and I felt myself drawn irresistably towards them. The country below rose steadily so that the last 20 miles consisted of high moorland and numerous lakes. I climbed to 7000ft in a shallow cumulus over Bygdin and then found further lift on its upwind edge which took me steadily to 14 000ft. From this height the wave pattern ahead became clear and for the next two hours I toured the whole area from the Glittertind across to the eastern side of the Jostedalsbreen. The mountains seemed to vary from great rounded humps to jagged individual peaks, the former being covered by snowfields and icecaps evidencing the very low temperatures that must prevail in winter. The glacial lakes displayed a remarkable range of colours from green through turquoise to steel blue. The lift, whilst never strong, seemed distributed over a very large area and it was not until I had almost reached Ringebu that I finally came below 10 000ft.



The Rondane mountains with peaks up to 7000ft.

Birger arranged for us to stay that night at the local camping site in one of the wooden huts which offer practically the only economic accommodation in Norway. On his instructions we took suitable precautions against mosquitoes, including the use of a burning coil placed on the window ledge. During the night I was dimly aware of a crash as Birger closed the window, and on a couple of further occasions I reflected semi-consciously how well the coil was lasting. Finally at 6am we awoke to find the hut thick with smoke and the floor well alight, and not a mosquito in sight!

The wind had now veered to the north-east, and the sky remained clear until 11.30am when the first small cumulus appeared. I planned to continue flying northwards, whilst Birger decided to accompany me for the first 75km before returning to Eggemoen. My course took me directly over the Rondane mountains which proved to be a magnificent area of peaks up to 7000ft, with steep slopes of grey shale and cliffs of dark rock interspersed with snow filled gullies and bowls of ice lakes. The region looked very remote, yet there were adequate fields within range and of all the areas I saw during our trip I thought this the loveliest.

25km to the north I found an unmarked wave which took me gently to 11 000ft whilst Birger passed below and then turned southwards. I headed on over the Dovrefjellpass and along the deep valley leading to Oppdal. This appeared to mark the northern limit of the good soaring area and thereafter lift weakened as I approached Trondheim and its fjord. There was no definite sea breeze front, but by the time I reached the city itself the only ragged cumulus was based at 2500ft, whilst 30km to the north I could see further clouds on the other side of the fjord.

Accordingly I fished out the engine and performed my first aerial restart, and after an exciting pause, due to my fear of using the choke and flooding the engine, it burst into life and I climbed briskly to 6000ft. Cloud cover ahead looked increasingly extensive but with an obvious wave pattern. I called up the airfield at Namsos who reported reasonable breaks to the west, so I cautiously navigated my way along the gaps following lenticulars which consisted of such extraordinarily fine droplets that I felt I was porpoising amongst the folds of an immense bridal veil. Once over the fjord I let down on to a nearby headland whence I could see the airfield. The glider was given a prime parking place overnight on the edge of the apron, after flying another 350km.

During the next two days increasingly bad weather prevented further flying while we drove northwards for 900km to Bardufoss. The only bright moment occurred as we crossed the Arctic Circle, when the sky suddenly cleared to reveal a stack of lenticulars overhead. The public weather forecasts were restricted to the "umbrellas on a map" variety, whilst the aviation service received its forecasts from Bracknell and had no access to satellite information. We concluded that in a country of such length continuing high pressure in the south almost certainly implied low pressure to the north. Regretfully, therefore, we turned south again, with Gillian spending another day valiantly coping with the wet roads, poorly lit tunnels, two ferries, a puncture and the unnerving Norwegian habit of suddenly pulling out and then occupying the crown of the road at 70km/h.

'This area looked really remote with a spectacular white plateau of snow . . .'

400km later we were back under blue skies at Hattfjelldal where we found a private airfield close to the village and the river, set amid rolling farmland. Lying 50km inland and being surrounded by 6000ft mountains it looked an ideal area for wave, but that day there was little wind. I drew up a narrow 300km triangle to the north-west, and had to use the engine to cross the Okstindan mountains and reach the Svartisen massif. This area looked really remote, with a spectacular white plateau of snow and ice 6000ft high straddling the Arctic Circle. Its western face fell directly into the sea, whilst to the north and east great glaciers flowed between rounded promontories into milky green lakes.

As I descended into the rocky valley opposite the eastern glacier terminus the air came alive, and I was able to start thermalling off the exposed rocky areas to just above the ridge line. After a few minutes I suddenly realised that the character of the flight had subtly changed; since starting the soar I had begun to notice details which I had overlooked before: that frozen overhang; the changes in colour of the water around the glacier snout; the total absence of any animal tracks in the snow. My new awareness arose



from a sense of identity with the landscape whilst using natural forces to sustain me, whereas my earlier dependence on the engine had limited my perceptions to those of an aerial voyeur.

I worked my way slowly back towards Hattfjelldal, marvelling at the variety of the surrounding mountain shapes. The Okstindan range, with its elegant snowfields and classic alpine peaks, lay only 60km from the massive bulk of the Savartisen, which looked like a gigantic Christmas cake. A similar distance further to the west I could see the island of Alsten, with its seven almost identical sabre toothed peaks of smooth rock evenly spaced 2km apart. I wondered what extraordinary force had fashioned such diversity.

With only two days remaining we drove back to Ringebu and found weather which showed that a good Norwegian day is significantly better than its UK counterpart. I flew a 512km O/R to Lunde in the south-east in conditions that were so good, with cloudbase rising to 9000ft, that the topography below was irrelevant except at the start where I made a very hamfisted job of climbing out of the Ringebu valley. Thereafter I flew very conservatively to complete the course in just over five hours and claim a British motor glider record.

Having no previous experience of flying such a machine in conventional circumstances, I was interested to see how the presence of an engine which could be restarted in flight would affect my normal flying. I found myself flying the DG-400 far more conservatively than I would my LS-6.

'. . . I concluded that a motor glider is the ideal machine for exploration of new areas . . .'

Subconsciously I was more concerned at having to use the engine, and thereby invalidating the record attempt, than I would have been at the prospect of landing out in a pure glider. This seemed so irrational that the following day I deliberately set out to fly more aggressively. The result was opposite but equal: I proceeded to have a series of low scrapes which I certainly would have avoided normally, and, like the previous day, covered the ground more slowly. I concluded that a motor glider is the ideal machine for exploration of new areas, but flying one to get the best out of it calls for different tactical considerations compared to flying a pure glider, especially over inhospitable terrain, and it would take considerable time before I could become accustomed to it.

Further record plans were frustrated on our last day by areas of overdevelopment. Nonetheless both Birger and I exceeded 600km around meandering courses, with mine ending at Eggemoen. The effect of latitude on the length of the soaring day was demonstrated by the 12½hrs between Birger's take-off and my landing.

In a country of only four million people there are many areas where the landscape changes in a very short distance from one of comforting civilisation to another of desolate remoteness. On the final day I found myself flying northwards along the Hemsedal valley. The southern part was broad with good landing fields, and even a gliding club at Storefjell. However, once past the town the mountains closed in, forcing the road through a narrow cleft whence it started ascending a deep valley to a 4000ft pass marked by a lake whose waters were a steely grey. The valley walls were near vertical, and on either side there were broad snow-ribbed plateaus interspersed with lakes and barren peaks up to 6000ft. In the absence of any greenery, and with cloud cover both increasing and lowering, I felt I was flying down a wedge into a monochrome world that led to Hell itself. Finally at the junction with the Laerdal valley an advancing storm swallowing up the surrounding mountains in its progress gave me the excuse I needed, and I simply turned and bolted. Not until I had covered the 40km back to Hemsedal and the sunshine did I feel at ease again, and the whole experience then seemed dreamlike by the suddeness of its transition.

Flying in Norway was never dull.

BUYER BEWARE

If you are changing gliders this winter or becoming an owner for the first time, then you should heed Derek's advice

No one really believes that the beautiful second-hand glider they have just bought can be anything but a bargain. But in fact there are many pitfalls to avoid and you could be the person to take over a heap of problems unless you are aware of them.

"Buyer Beware" as the lawyer would put it. You could buy an airworthy glider which is almost unusable.

Consider the "just been refinished" sales talk. My old foreman friend used to say "A coat of paint can hide a multitude of sins." Ask yourself why the new coat of paint? It could be that the fabric is time expired and you might be landed for a complete re-covering job in a year or so. Fortunately it is remarkably difficult to disguise a poor repair without hours of work with filler and elbow grease. Refinishing any machine well is expensive in either time or money and there is no such thing as a good, cheap job or C of A. Those coats of gloss finish may be all right on a motor car but they can be the start of a very real problem on a glider.

Unfortunately the fact that it has a valid C of A or has been completely overhauled does not mean that it is all right. Many of the older machines have put on weight over the years and this inevitably means that the C of G has moved aft and that the range of permissible cockpit loads will have been drastically reduced. In fact some types become almost unusable when the minimum cockpit load to keep the C of G within safe limits becomes close to or even the same as the maximum allowed by the C of A.

If you are forming a syndicate the average pilot may just need a little extra weight but a girl pilot may end up having to carry 60 or 70lbs to fly it at all. Moreover if they are inexperienced it will not be wise for them to fly with the C of G anywhere near the aft limit and you may have difficulty getting enough ballast into the cockpit.

So what should you look for when buying a glider? Obviously you must look carefully at the finish and general state of both the glider and trailer. Ask the owners to rig and derig it for you. Difficulty in rigging can be caused by distorted fittings or by a poor repair causing misalignment.

Fly the glider. Does it trim out to fly straight at both high and low speeds? Does it have persistent bad wingdrop at the stall? Do all the instruments work satisfactorily.

The glider logbook should tell you quite a lot about both its past history and the present owners. Who repaired it after any accident it may have had? Has it been well kept with full details of repairs and inspections carried out? Has it been flown regularly?

What about the minimum and maximum cockpit loads shown on the C of A document – are they reasonable? (Don't rely on the cockpit placards as they can be badly out of date.) A minimum of more than 170lbs is going to be a real embarrassment for light weight pilots and may make the glider difficult to sell at a later date. Don't think that it will be just a matter of adding a few pounds of ballast in the nose. This can be quite difficult to do and even more of a problem if you want to put it in and take it out quickly for other pilots.

'The weighing of gliders is notoriously inaccurate and it is not unknown for serious errors in calculations.'

Pay particular attention to the results of **all** the previous weighings. Gliders never get lighter and any increase in the empty weight will result in the C of G moving aft and increasing the minimum cockpit load. The weighing of gliders is notoriously inaccurate and it is not unknown for serious errors in the calculations. You should expect an increase of 20-30lbs for any general respray job and there is something fishy about the weighing if the glider does not get heavier, and about any movement of the C of G forward.

If you doubt the figures why not write into the Bill of Sale "subject to satisfactory re-weighing". I know of at least three cases where this would have saved a lot of problems.

Recently a club bought what seemed to be a cheap two-seater. Of course it had a valid C of A so they thought it had to be a bargain. Besides quite a number of seemingly small defects which took several weeks to rectify, it was grossly overweight partly due to repairs but also to having been repainted all over. The minimum cockpit load for solo was well over 200lbs and the maximum just sufficient for two light pilots flying without parachutes.

Of course most gliders have a semi aerobatic category so that, when sanctioned by the BGA, some increase in the all up weight is possible if it is considered non aerobatic. But that club has probably spent more on getting it flyable than it would have cost to have bought a better machine in the first place.

Moral – always get professional advice from an independent inspector before buying a used machine. (Inspectors can differ in opinion as to what is acceptable.)

'Quite unwittingly the pilot had been flying with the C of G well off the aft limit in a dangerously unstable condition.'

More recently we have seen an apparently beautiful glass machine that may well be unflyable. The more recent weighings make no sense with the C of G well aft of the normal position. On re-weighing, the minimum cockpit load worked out to be 230lbs proving that there was a serious error in the last weighing. Quite unwittingly the pilots had been flying with the C of G well off the aft limit in a dangerously unstable condition. Fortunately the owners took advice after finding that the glider was difficult to fly.

In this case the previous owner had sprayed the whole aircraft with a non-aircraft finish to make it look worth its inflated value. Not only is there a weight problem but the fact that the control surfaces have been painted may well result in flutter problems. The balance of the ailerons and other control surfaces on modern machines is particularly critical and after refinishing they should have been checked and rebalanced. There was no record of this having been done and it seems possible that the inspector concerned may have been unaware of the dangers involved.

The question arises as to who is liable for the cost of buying an unflyable machine. Is the BGA inspector liable for failing to check the previous weighings or the work done, or for passing on an unflyable but airworthy machine?

At best a court of law might rule in your favour; at worst you may be suing for money that isn't there. And worst of all in the meantime you and your partners are without a flyable machine.

So buyer beware. Get expert advice, look carefully at the logbook and the C of A and don't buy a heap of trouble.





WHO SAID GLIDING CAN'T BE A FAMILY SPORT?

These photographs were taken at the 1986 Nationals. Top left, Stephen Jones, youngest holder of all three Diamonds, sends father Ralph off at the Open Class Nationals. *Photo:* Jane Randle. Top right, Jim Weston with his son Jeremy at the 15M Nationals. *Photo:* Bernard Smyth. Middle right, John Patchett, tug pilot at the 15M Class Nationals with his daughter Claire. *Photo:* Bernard Smyth. Bottom left, Steve White, who came 3rd in the Standard Class Nationals, getting his wife, Maggie, and daughter, Lucy, working on his Pegasus. *Photo:* Nelson Hurst & Marsh. Bottom right, John Young helps his son Michael (Ventus B) at the Open Class Nationals. *Photo:* Jane Randle.







A TRIBUTE TO VERONICA

Being married to Veronica was the greatest blessing of my life. She was kind, warm, intelligent, humorous, hospitable and lovely in every possible way. Scores of friends and colleagues have written to me to underline those marvellous traits in her character.

She knew for 40 days that she had inoperable cancer. She died as she lived, bravely, lucidly, without a trace of sentimentality or self-pity, seeking only to comfort those who loved her. Believe it or not we had quite a few laughs in those final weeks: that was her special gift.

I haven't felt much like writing recently, but I do think that Mrs Platypus's piece written ten years ago will be a more than worthy substitute for anything I might do. Her rare excursions into writing for *S&G* were so good that I would occasionally forget their true authorship and take credit for them myself. Only then might she look just a little stern.
PLATYPUS



Articles by Platypus have entertained readers of this magazine for some years. Now Mrs Platypus gives a full, frank unexpurgated account of life with Platypus and offers some advice to those about to marry gliding enthusiasts.

DON'T

When Platypus proposed, he made his priorities perfectly plain.

"We could get married at the end of May" he suggested at breakfast one morning (all the best proposals take place at breakfast) "because that's when the Nationals are on. One of my syndicate partners will be flying the Kestrel so I shouldn't be able to glide for a week anyway and could take you on honeymoon."

Arrived at the Registrar, Platypus patted his pockets, found the 2p he keeps for retrieve phone calls, and not much else. Like Royalty, Platypus rarely carries cash; and while I don't usually mind too much being his purse-bearer, I felt it unseemly for a bride to ferret in her handbag. So I waited demurely while Platypus asked the Registrar (a Mr Peacock) if he would accept Barclaycard or a cheque. Mr Peacock, with a guffaw, declined; and Platypus was just contemplating a whip-round among the witnesses when he came upon the fivers he keeps for retrieve dinners and the situation was saved.

Our honeymoon, on which Platypus pointed out several gliding sites into which I declined to be inveigled, ended up at the Nationals which by an amazing coincidence lay directly on our homeward path.

I knew that the first flush of romance had really worn off by an incident some six weeks later, however. I accompanied my new husband to a competition in France – the first gliding competition with which I had ever been involved.

On the first day, on the launch point, French tug pilots were whipping the gliders into the air with ferocious speed and efficiency. I was standing dreamily by the trailing edge of the wing, watching the glider piloted by Platypus being attached to the tow rope, when I noticed all about me had scattered and were bellowing urgently. I drifted off and it was explained to me severely that I could have been decapitated by the tail plane.

Recounting the incident to my bridegroom in bed that night I was touched when he sat up in alarm.

"You must *never ever* do that again," he said. "You could have *severely* damaged the tail plane."

All this was some years in the past. Now as a gliding wife of some years' experience who has been blooded by a retrieve which earned Platypus a trophy for the worst retrieve of the year (why did *Platypus* collect the trophy, I ask myself? Why not the crew? Anyway it was a gliding club ashtray and he doesn't smoke) I feel qualified to pass on some words of advice to those about to marry gliding enthusiasts.

First, unless you have to, don't.

(I didn't have to. I just loved Platypus.)

If you do, you will have to accept that gliding is going to come first with your husband. For instance, your sex life will to some extent depend on the weather.

"You wouldn't *DARE* write that" said Platypus in bed this morning.

I would and I will.

Gliders as phallic symbols

On weekend mornings, Platypus springs from bed and tweaks open the curtains. If the sun is shining, I know I've got to get my clothes on fast if I want to accompany him to the club. If on the other hand he returns to bed, I know it's a poor gliding day. . . .

"I think gliding is a substitute for sex" I once remarked, when considering the Freudian aspects of the sport – the phallic symbolism of high performance gliders, thrusting into thermals and waggling their wings in uncoupling rituals with tow planes.

"Nonsense, sex is a substitute for gliding," said Platypus briskly, and there are times when I think he wasn't joking.

The second thing you have to decide is whether you intend to be a gliding widow or a gliding wife. You can either opt for



"Your sex life will depend on the weather." Illustration by Platypus.

widowhood, waving him off to the club each weekend and taking up golf – or a lover; or you can accompany him to the club and take the consequences.

If you opt for the second alternative, and you don't terribly care for hard work and being shouted at, the line to take is that one simply could never aspire to be a second Kitty Wills or Beryl Stephenson, and it could be sheer presumption to try. Regrettably, one simply isn't of the calibre required to drive a trailer 400 miles through the night, nor has one the physique to throw together a Kestrel 19 with effortless ease and good grace. I do occasionally hold Platypus's wingtip (though dropping it from time to time ensures that it is only occasionally) and last season I did retrieve him from the field next to the club. Of course, you will have to cultivate some alternative skills instead – provide syndicate noshes willingly, feed crews, map-read intelligently, listen wholeheartedly and generally offer moral if not physical support.

The most endearing thing about Platypus is his absentmindedness. At a very early stage, his friends warned me that I should have to watch him like a hawk to make sure that he didn't get airborne while still in possession of the car keys. I also try to prevent him from taking-off while he is sitting on his maps, and try to find the things he loses – keys, maps, sunglasses, tools, shoes – last week it was the inspection panel.

By a man's friends you shall know him, they say, and Platypus's friends are a particularly Stout Bunch (speaking purely metaphorically). Not many people would endure conditions rather worse than trenches in World War I to retrieve him in a snow storm, nor de-rig in pitch dark in a field knee deep in cow pats, nor drive 200 miles in the wrong direction and 200 miles back again (French villages have similar sounding names) and still remain on speaking terms with the instigator of all this suffering. Platypus's friends, however, do all this and more. For my part, I have learned to understand their jokes. At the beginning, when they reported picking up Platypus on the radio at 500ft over Evesham (when in fact they had not heard from him at all) they were puzzled by my phlegmatic calm. It was however ignorance rather than a humourless *sang froid*; I just didn't know how low 500ft was. Now I giggle politely and hope it is a joke again.

One thing you don't have to worry about is the Other Women. His glider is his mistress.

I have learned a lot of things since taking up with Platypus. I have learned, for instance, never to go on a retrieve in a mini skirt – apart from the difficulty of climbing barbed wire fences, the horse flies near some Continental gliding sites are vicious and ungentlemanly. So I always arm myself when going anywhere near a gliding site with trousers, Wellies, sunglasses, fur coat, sun hat, food, knitting, reading matter, money, a corkscrew and a complete change of clothes (see note on cow dung retrieve). Thus prepared for any weather and all eventualities I can await Platypus's return in as much comfort as possible.

I have learned that Platypus is generally sweet-tempered and tolerant. Two things, however, drive him into a frenzy. One is when I do something wrong when towing the glider to the launch point, and the rope snaps.

The other thing which can prove greatly disturbing to the serenity of my home life is a letter from Kirbymoorside bringing tidings of another mandatory mod. Four letter words echo around the house and we have a bad half hour before Platypus regains an even keel.

Putting into effect the mandatory mod, of course, takes its toll of Platypus's time and temper as well. As does trailer painting/maintaining. Fortunately the weather is nearly always too wet or too dry. If it's pouring clearly he can't be fettling, and if it's fine he's flying.

One thing you *don't* have to worry about if you marry a gliding enthusiast (well, not much, anyway) is the Other Women. His glider *is* his mistress, and takes up so much of his time, energy – and money – that he hasn't really any to spare for anyone else. *You* have the advantage of knowing the enemy intimately and being able literally to take her apart any time you choose. The ultimate sanction, of course, is that you can leave her stranded if he takes-off with her and doesn't return to you – you can refuse to retrieve him if he's paying her too much attention – but he'll never abandon her for you, so if you want to see your husband regularly you'd better just accept her. You don't have to overdo it, of course; Platypus often invites me to join him in rubbing her down or touching her up, but I don't consider this to be my scene at all. I do have to lend my hairdryer to dry out the water in her wings and my hairspray for her barograph (not to mention bits of my carpet to pad her trailer more comfortably) but that's as far as it goes.

I've just had a thought. How about an *"AUNTIE"* Platypus column in S&G, with advice to worried gliding brides, etc?

"My husband is spending longer and longer at the club, and keeps mentioning Libelle in his sleep. Should I worry?" – Only if he lands out in her.

"My boyfriend spends hours in his trailer with a girl he says is a member of his syndicate. He says they're weatherproofing it. Could this be true?" – Probably.

How about it, Editor? *(We've got enough problems without inviting any from readers. – ED.)*

Anyway with all said and done, life with Platypus is never dull, and I wouldn't have it any different for the world.

He has viewed the prospect of this article with some trepidation, and at one time I offered to suppress it.

"Not at all," he said generously. "As a matter of fact, I think I'm quite flattered at the thought of you being a kind of Boswell to me. I'll give you a Johnsonian quote if you like," he offered.

So as I pinched the title from Dr Johnson, I'll pinch the last line, too.

"When a man is tired of gliding," says Platypus, "he is tired of life."

Platypus's many readers will be pleased he will return in the next issue.

NELSON HURST & MARSH STANDARD CLASS NATIONALS

Dunstable from August 16-25

The 1986 Standard Class Nationals achieved six from a possible ten days; exposed certain anomalies in the scoring system; set us racing on two splendid days and scraping on two others. A typical British Nationals in fact!

The Nationals were admirably hosted by the London Gliding Club and sponsored for the first time from within the square-mile of the City of London, by Nelson Hurst and Marsh.

A wide spectrum of sailplanes were represented. The most numerous, surprisingly, were the Discus (Discii?), closely followed by ASW-19 and LS-4. At the lower end the three Std Cirrus were led home by Martin Durham who flew consistently to come 9th.

Day 1, Saturday, August 16 – 295km quadrilateral, Barrington, near Duxford – South Marston – Hungerford.

At briefing it was evident that the camera start procedure had not been fully thought through, and we were surprisingly advised that, provided we did not infringe the airspace overhead, it would be quite in order to climb into cloud prior to starting.

Most of the non-finishers landed on the second leg

More than half the Class completed the race. A strong westerly wind gave significant wave interference, and most of the non-finishers landed on the long, into wind, second leg. Once round the South Marston corner it was all downhill. Downwind anyway and only three who reached South Marston failed to get home. Speeds were in the 77 to 48km/h range, with Steve White tying with Martyn Wells for 1st place. The computer could not separate their 0.01km/h difference! It is unusual to single out the back marker, but Andrew Davis came to grief soon after turning into wind at Barrington. This must rate as his worst day ever and of course left him with no hope of a leading place. But there was no way out but up, and up he was to come!

Day 2, Sunday, August 17 – 185km triangle, Lutterworth – Stoke Dry Reservoir

Briefing produced the somewhat startling news that 95% of competitors had probably infringed the local airspace prior to the start and normally would be disqualified. In future a tug "with a blue flashing light" would patrol at the highest permissible height. Anyone spotted above that height would be disqualified. The 5% who had not infringed on day one were not identified and so could hardly claim unfair advantage. We got the message!

This time only 12 got home, headed by Dave Watt at 56km/h, with Andrew Davis close behind. The slowest finisher, Mike Young, had 38km/h, and it doesn't take much to realise that you have to fly all day if you are going to be that slow. The start was a nervous business. Better weather round the north on the task area was not visible from Dunstable and each launch seemed to be into vague greyness and an almost certain land-out situation. No one got away before 3pm and Chris Rollings left soon after 5pm and flew well into the evening for his 86km to Husbands Bosworth. Seven other early starters enjoyed the northern route, progressed well down the third leg, but were one thermal too late to join the dozen finishers. A 600pt day with a third of the field scoring less than 100.



The day winners from left to right: standing – John Bally, Steve White, John Cardiff and Martyn Wells. Squatting – Chris Garton and Dave Watt. Simon Hutchinson, who shared Day 5 with John Bally, is missing from the line-up.

Day 3, Tuesday, August 19 – 290km triangle, Honeybourne – Devizes.

Announcement of this task at briefing was met by disbelief since we had just had two days of rain, and low cloud and mist still prevailed. Mike Garrod was confident that his weather would come good and we were sent off soon after lunch. The general feeling that we should have reverted to the smaller fall-back task proved correct, but it was too late. Many pilots got their best-ever Nationals placing this day – 5th!

Twenty-three achieved this distinction with precisely ONE point; three pilots did twice as well with TWO points, and John Cardiff flew for nearly 7hrs and a magnificent 265km for FOUR points. The previous day one could get four points for only 2km! John spoke diffidently of his struggle, prefaced with "For four points you want the whole story?"! He deserved and got an enormous round of applause!

Day 4, Wednesday, August 20 – 296km triangle, Banbury – Bury St Edmunds.

This turned out to be a corker. All but one got home, speeds ranging from 97 to 65km/h. Andrew Davis was in his element to win and by now had pulled up 20 places to 19. By a slender margin of only 30pts Dave Watt held on to his overall lead. It is interesting that the best racing days nearly always finish up effectively 400 or 500pt days. The days with a 1000pt spread are the almost good ones, where everyone goes a fair distance but few get home. Time to adjust the scoring system yet again?

Day 5, Saturday, August 23 – 417km triangle, Marlborough – Long Mynd.

This day we got zapped by a depression that no one could see coming. By the time the die was cast and we were launching the first hint of trouble appeared on the satellite pictures off Ireland. By the time we had all romped round Marlborough (I counted 23 gliders in one thermal there) and were happily passing Y near Cheltenham, upper cloud had spread disastrously across Wales and was clearly cutting off any hope of getting to the Mynd. The radio was quiet for a time but then we all got strangely cheerful and started chattering. Someone said "Roll to Worcester" to his crew. This was repeated so often in the next few minutes that Ted Lys finally called his crew, saying "You had better go to Worcester, I think there must be a party there!". Anyway we crept past Malvern and practically the entire Nationals ended up in fields within 30km of each other. This made it an effective 330pt day with each extra km worth 5pts. What price John Cardiff's 265km now?

Day 6, Sunday, August 24 – 352km double triangle, Hungerford – Silverstone – Dunstable – Didcot – Silverstone.

After the late, late retrieves of the night before we did not quite know how to take this one. Mike Smith, that thoughtful mathematician from York, had been canvassing such a task for some days, and here we had it. It was splendid! Helped by excellent weather we whizzed round our first 200km triangle, rounded Dunstable in droves to the delight of the sponsor, whose chief guests were present on this lovely summer day, and thence round the 150km. The winning speed was an impressive 102km/h by Chris Garton in his new Discus, thereby putting the seal on his bid for selection to the British team. He started soon after Martyn Wells whom he caught up eventually. Martyn anxiously asked his crew for Chris's starting time, to be told (erroneously) "24 minutes after you". Martyn's nose went down sharply, but Chris hung on grimly to the end. Shows what can be done when you really have to try! Martyn's time was impressive enough to bring him into the overall lead, replacing Dave Watt who had held pole position since Day 2.

That was the end of it. Bank Holiday Monday did its usual thing and we all packed our bags in time to leave by mid-afternoon, soon after prize-giving. The sponsors "trial lessons" went on well into the wet, grey afternoon; we all drank their beer. Photographs were taken and thanks expressed, especially to the Dunstable membership for the hard work we all know goes into such a smooth operation.

Thank you Dunstable.

TWO-SEATER COMPETITION

The first Pocklington Two-Seater Competition, held by Wolds GC from August 11-15, was successful with the competitors determined to come back next year, but there was one problem – the British summer.

For 3½ days the rain fell and the wind blew and we have probably set a record for the lowest number of points scored – Mark and Jeremy Niman (K-7) won with 11.1pts.

The main reason for starting this Comp was to give cross-country and competition training to Bronze C and pre Silver C pilots under supervision from the more experienced with a secondary reason to put some fun back into competition flying. So next year:

- All two-seater gliders will be eligible, regardless of performance.
- The competition (similar to 1986) will be run along the lines of the BGA handbook so giving competition experience.
- It will be held for seven days, from August 9-16, making it more worthwhile for people to travel further and to give us a better statistical chance with the weather.

SIMON PARKER

FINAL RESULTS

Standard Class

			Day 1 16.8 295km ■ Barrington (nr Duxford), South Marston, Hungerford			Day 2 17.8 185km ▲ Lutterworth, Stoke Dry			Day 3 19.8 290km ▲ Honeybourne, Devizes			Day 4 20.8 296km ▲ Banbury, Bury St Edmunds			Day 5 23.8 417km ▲ Marlborough, Long Mynd			Day 6 24.8 352km double ▲ Hungerford, Silverstone, Dunstable, Didcot, Silverstone			
Pos	Pilot	Glider	Speed (Dist)	Pos	Pts	Dist (Speed)	Pos	Pts	Dist	Pos	Pts	Speed (Dist)	Pos	Pts	Dist	Pos	Pts	Speed (Dist)	Pos	Pts	Total Points
1	Wells, M. D.	LS-4	77.02	=1	1000	(40.58)	=8	519	158.0	=2	2	91.00	5	878	205.60	=3	928	101.22	1	979	4326
2	Watt, D. S.	Pegasus	76.71	3	997	(56.32)	1	596	110.0	=5	1	90.68	6	894	203.40	6	917	90.11	9	825	4230
3	White, S. A.	Pegasus	77.01	=1	1000	(45.58)	3	543	77.0	=5	1	91.93	4	812	196.00	=7	880	91.30	8	842	4178
4	Garton, C.	Discus	61.90	15	834	(43.67)	4	534	70.0	=5	1	92.39	3	819	192.90	=14	864	102.77	1	1000	4152
5	Campbell, D.	Discus	75.14	10	979	(39.49)	11	514	171.5	=2	2	85.40	10	815	191.10	17	856	84.94	15	754	3920
6	Metcalfe, G.	ASW-19	76.39	=5	993	(41.72)	=5	524	00.0	=28	0	82.90	15	777	196.00	=7	880	81.30	24	704	3878
7	Cardiff, J. D.	LS-4	59.97	16	813	(41.72)	=5	524	265.5	1	4	85.21	=11	812	182.40	23	812	94.09	4	880	3845
8	Smith, D. A.	LS-4	76.01	7	989	149.6	19	359	90.7	=5	1	82.14	16	766	183.90	22	819	91.53	7	845	3779
9	Durham, M. W.	Std Cirrus	75.22	9	980	(40.70)	=8	519	65.0	=5	1	79.34	20	724	196.00	=7	880	78.55	28	666	3770
10	Gorringe, J. P.	LS-4	75.64	8	985	162.8	=16	395	65.0	=5	1	85.06	13	810	182.00	24	802	84.05	18	742	3735
11	Lysakowski, E. R.	Discus	76.40	=5	993	(41.01)	7	521	154.5	=2	2	69.01	35	570	196.00	=7	880	83.74	19	737	3703
12	Smith, E.	Std Cirrus	72.59	13	951	162.8	=16	395	65.0	=5	1	77.41	=24	695	193.10	13	866	78.96	26	671	3579
13	Baily, J. D.	Pegasus	74.90	11	977	15.0	=32	0	79.0	=5	1	89.25	8	872	207.00	=1	936	85.11	14	756	3542
14	Hood, L.	LS-4	59.35	17	806	162.8	=16	395	34.0	=28	0	85.19	=11	812	178.90	26	794	81.62	23	708	3515
15	Rollings, C. C.	Pegasus	67.39	14	894	86.7	20	185	108.0	=5	1	76.78	28	686	196.00	=7	880	91.81	6	849	3495
16	Stewart, K.	Discus	76.68	4	996	48.8	23	80	40.0	=28	0	77.77	23	701	191.60	16	858	92.27	5	855	3490
17	Davis, A. J.	Discus	(57.7)	39	79	(51.34)	2	572	90.7	=5	1	97.19	1	1000	205.60	=3	928	95.85	3	905	3485
18	Hutchinson, S.	LS-4	53.54	20	742	(40.16)	10	517	70.0	=5	1	71.51	33	607	207.20	=1	936	76.64	32	*589	3392
19	Hill, D. J. M.	Discus	52.10	21	726	28.6	=28	24	65.0	=5	1	90.11	7	885	205.60	=3	928	88.88	10	808	3372
20	Williamson, J. S.	ASW-19	(205.5)	24	389	172.6	=14	423	76.0	=5	1	77.22	26	692	195.70	12	879	84.47	17	748	3132
21	Young, M. J.	Pegasus	(134.2)	34	240	(38.82)	12	510	57.9	=5	1	78.78	21	716	192.90	=14	864	86.11	13	770	3101
22	Aspland, W.	ASW-19	(152.7)	33	278	172.6	=14	423	94.0	=5	1	83.70	14	789	187.00	21	831	86.50	12	776	3098
23	Dall, R.	Discus	72.83	12	954	30.4	=26	29	65.0	=5	1	76.99	27	689	167.90	34	739	78.85	27	670	3082
24	Watson, A. J.	DG-300	57.86	18	790	42.3	=24	62	80.0	=5	1	70.66	32	622	178.30	=30	792	86.77	11	779	3046
25	Joint, T.	Discus	(178.2)	29	332	173.0	13	424	40.0	=28	0	77.41	=24	695	177.80	33	*742	84.79	16	752	2945
26	Throssell, M. G.	ASW-19 (Club)	48.80	22	690	24.3	31	12	90.7	=5	1	81.06	17	750	189.60	=18	848	74.13	31	605	2906
27	Smith, G. N. D.	LS-4	(187.2)	=26	351	28.6	=28	24	70.0	=5	1	78.75	22	715	189.60	=18	848	83.45	20	733	2672
28	Smith, M.	ASW-19	(262.0)	23	508	61.6	21	115	30.0	=28	0	72.92	31	628	170.90	32	754	74.90	30	615	2620
29	Forrest, B.	ASW-19	(181.2)	28	338	30.6	=26	29	94.0	=5	1	79.81	18	731	178.30	=30	792	81.94	21	713	2604
30	Buckner, K.	Discus	(168.7)	30	312	49.1	22	81	40.0	=28	0	79.70	19	730	139.10	37	596	80.75	25	696	2415
31	Hayes, D.	ASW-19	(111.2)	36	191	00.00	=32	0	57.9	=5	1	73.45	30	636	178.60	=27	793	81.91	22	712	2333
32	Benoist, J. D.	DG-300	(193.0)	25	363	7.3	=32	0	70.0	=5	1	94.49	2	951	179.00	25	799	(265.6)	36	215	2329
33	Langrick, J.	Std Cirrus	(156.2)	32	286	27.5	30	21	40.0	=28	0	70.78	34	596	188.00	20	839	76.01	33	*581	2323
34	Aldis, C.	LS-4	(187.2)	=26	351	00.0	=32	0	34.0	=28	0	76.39	29	680	156.80	=35	684	69.29	35	538	2253
35	Clarke, A.	ASW-19	(72.2)	38	110	00.0	=32	0	40.0	=28	0	64.97	37	509	178.60	=27	793	74.94	29	616	2028
36	Cox, A.	DG-100	(89.2)	37	145	00.0	=32	0	24.0	=28	0	66.64	36	534	156.80	=35	684	70.71	34	558	1921
37	Reading, P.	ASW-19	(158.7)	31	291	17.8	=32	0	3.2	=28	0	67.97	38	504	178.60	=27	793	(142.2)	37	107	1695
38	Kay, W.	DG-300	54.84	19	756	00.0	=32	0	90.7	=5	1	85.77	9	820	00.00	39	0	DNF	=38	0	1577
39	Camp, G. W. G.	DG-100	(123.7)	35	218	42.3	=24	62	46.0	=28	0	(244.0)	39	218	138.00	38	591	DNF	=38	0	1089

*=photographic penalty; DNF=did not fly

ELSPETH MORRISON

IN THE BEGINNING

Why does gliding lose so many *ab-initios* to other sports? Perhaps Elspeth's experience is the reason and it is time those clubs guilty of a poor training programme reformed

What made you start gliding? I've been asked many variations on that question. When? Why? Where? How? At the age of ten, or thereabout, I read a story about a cross-country flight. It was pure fiction and could never have happened but a seed was sown.

The seed fell on stony ground. I had never seen a glider. It was many years before I had my first flight. Over the years I climbed mountains, scaled crags, traversed glaciers, skiied, sailed, even played golf but gliding slipped away into never never land. There were too few hours, too little money and too many activities. Once I met a glider pilot but before a trip to the Long Mynd was organised the contact moved from Birmingham to Manchester. So I hitch-hiked to North Wales to climb the classic routes on Tryphan.

Time passed. I thought, without too much regret, I would never go gliding. But I never forgot.

There came a day when I had time on my hands. It all fell into place. Go gliding. I asked two questions. Where? How? Two weeks later on May 29, 1977, I arrived at Portmoak.

It was a hot sunny day. High pressure hung static over Scotland. A gentle east wind passed between Bishop and Benarty. There was no hill lift, no thermals, nothing! I climbed into a red Bocian. A cable was attached to the Super Cub. I had waited a long time for this. I was curious not apprehensive.

The experts shouted strange phrases and waved their arms about. All clear above and behind. Take up slack. All out. The Bocian trundled along the ground slowly, picked up speed and I was airborne.

'I looked around and experienced a new perspective of the countryside.'

At 1500ft we were free. The world was silent. I looked around and experienced a new perspective of the countryside. We drifted gently downward, under the control of the instructor and I came to earth as we rumbled and bumped along the grass strip.

It was not enough and later that same day I was back in the Bocian. Perhaps the instructor was trying to put me off. He explained the primary effects of the controls. He let me have a go and I noticed a slight difference in the smoothness of the flight!

He demonstrated a stall. Interesting! Over the lock he dropped a wing and brought the nose up. As we plummeted sideways towards the water my stomach took up an unusual attitude. Very interesting! We resumed normal flight and once again I was brought back to earth with a gentle bump.

I would be back.

Subsequent progress was probably the slowest on record for any aspiring glider pilot.

The high pressure and east winds continued and the next three flights were in a Motor Falke. After a one week course in September I was familiar with Bishop hill and could carry out basic



Elspeth, director of Information Technology at Queen Margaret College, Edinburgh, has a Silver C and flies a syndicate K-6E.

exercises with a reasonable degree of co-ordination. Foolishly I thought I was well on the way to becoming a pilot. My first contact had been too easy.

There was a lot I still had to learn if I was to become a glider pilot.

The first lesson was perseverance. I displayed a singular lack of this characteristic. In October and November I went to Portmoak two or three times. Conditions were very poor. Clouds were low. Rain fell. A few faithfuls wandered disconsolately around the clubhouse. No one knew me. No one spoke to me. Discouraged I stayed away until the spring. Spring came and passed. Summer came. Did I really want to fly?

I enrolled on another course. The company was good. The conditions were passable. My appetite was whetted. This time I would persevere. The club was alive with *ab-initios* and early solo pilots. The winch was unreliable. The typical day was seven hours of labouring on the ground and perhaps three circuits or half an hour soaring Bishop. Three things were required, a cable, a two-seater and a willing instructor. It was almost impossible to get all three together. I became proficient as ground crew.

After fifteen different instructors, most of whom seemed reluctant to hand over control to the *ab-initio*, I began to doubt if it was possible to progress.

In late November it was a typical day. Up before dawn to start labouring, I had been airborne for thirteen minutes on three unsatisfactory circuits. The day was getting on. Light might last another forty minutes. If I was lucky I might get another flight. I was next on the flying list. There was a free T-21 and the winch was actually working. The missing item was an instructor.

A tall rangy lad called George would take me for a circuit. How much experience do you have? Before I could reply he added that I might as well take it up the launch. Six hundred feet up the wire his voice remarked laconically that I was "overdoing the left wing down a bit". There was a slight crosswind for which I was not consciously compensating. The wire released, I turned right and contacted gentle lift. The instructor checked. We were in lee wave and went up to 2000ft. Told to use up the height any way I chose, I concentrated. A 360° turn to the right. Straighten up. A 360° turn to the left. Straighten up. Reverse the turn. Shallow turns. Keep the ball in the middle. I concentrated. Then the quiet voice asked where we were. I looked out of the canopy. We had drifted well downwind, two fields behind the field boundary. We should not be there. I turned upwind and glanced at the altimeter. The next question was "Where are you making for?" I was heading for the red farm roofs, the conventional high key point. I pushed on then realised the point of the question. I turned on to a shortened downwind leg. Completing the circuit, I rounded out and bumped to a stop. I did not know who this instructor was but it was a great flight. The instructor had not twitched on the controls once. I flew the glider. Not without mistakes I should add.

Although I had been prompted I had both recognised and corrected for the mistakes. I wished all instructors had his approach.

It was May before I saw George Lee again. By this time I knew he was a World Champion and was surprised and gratified when he greeted me. He asked how I enjoyed flying solo. I was still on the merry go round of fighting for the two-seater, cable and instructor. He was surprised at my response as he thought I had been just about ready for solo in November.

That was the second real lesson. The *ab-initio* needs continuity of instructors. I almost learnt it too late. Between that flight with George Lee and going solo there were eighty launches of which only six gave me flights of more than ten minutes. In all I had flown with twenty six instructors, none of them were interested in my progress (or lack of progress). Most tended to say on launch and landing "Just follow me through on the controls." Perhaps I was unlucky. Perhaps I had been too patient, modest or lacking in initiative. I had not pushed.

I started hassling and in June went solo. It was an anti climax. At the top of the launch expecting

the voice of an instructor I realised that all was peaceful. The decisions were all mine.

Throughout June lift was disappointing. Competing with other early solo pilots for a K-8 I clocked up circuits. Could I cope with the ridge on my own? At last conditions changed. At midday someone offered me a K-8. Not waiting for a briefing I climbed in and closed the canopy. At the top of the launch I made for Bishop hill. It was working. The K-8 soared. After forty minutes flying out towards the loch to join the circuit the lack of systematic training and experience began to tell. There were two gliders abandoned on the south field, the conventional landing area. At high key point, convinced that they would be moved, I planned the circuit. No one moved the gliders. Progressing rapidly along the downwind leg I decided to change my landing area to the middle strip. Too close in I went well back over the field boundary to burn off excess height.

'As my spine hit the roof of my skull the glider dropped again . . .'

Turning on to a long final glide it registered that the wind had strengthened. Making little headway into the wind I brought the nose up. Surely a shallow angle would stretch the glide. Not true! The speed dropped off. Just over the fence, I relaxed too soon, turburlence and wind gradient met the glider. It dropped, hit the ground and rebounded. As my spine hit the roof of my skull the glider dropped again and came to rest.

To my surprise nobody bawled me out. The observers had been, I now suspect, even more apprehensive than I was. There had been a series of errors. However, both the K-8 and I were undamaged. I was back in two-seaters but not for long.

The solo flights clocked up. At this time Portmoak was predominantly a winch launch site for all club aircraft. At weekends two-seaters were virtually never at the aerotow strip. Yet for Bronze C it was necessary to be cleared for aerotow launches. This became the next battleground.

At roughly four week intervals I would win a skirmish and get both a two-seater and an instructor behind the tug for a check flight. There were two possible outcomes. The relatively new instructors on hearing I'd never had a solo aerotow would suggest another check flight "just to be sure". The experienced instructors thought I was fine but it was not a good day for a first solo.

November came. My morale was sinking. I hibernated for two months then went skiing. The *piste* was vanishing by the end of March so there was no excuse for not returning to the battlefield of Portmoak.

Still clocking up solo circuits and also instructors it was time to concentrate seriously on the Bronze C. I hassled and eventually got some training on field landings and spin recovery. I had achieved fifty solo launches, including several soaring flights. There only remained the hurdle of clearance for aerotow. One fine day in July a senior instructor agreed. Together behind the Super Cub a K-8 and I reached 2000ft without trouble.

This surely is the end of the tales of frustration on the airfield. It was for eleven months. For some reason, that I no longer remember, I just drove off into the dusk. I did not return until May the next year.

The return was to a little changed SGU. Anonymously I took my place in the queue for K-13s and instructors. A few people recognised me. Very soon there was promotion back to a K-8. For three months I persevered then did my usual summer disappearing act. No wonder progress was slow.

In the autumn conditions were not encouraging. Flying was sporadic in October and November but I took and passed Bronze C papers. December and January were worse providing no flying at all. Bronze C checks were completed before Easter 1982. I was still virtually hill bound and ignorant of thermals but at last I could almost be classified as a pilot.

It was almost five years since I had enjoyed my first flight. Five years, 233 launches, 54hrs, 36 instructors, three CFIs. What a record! It does not sound quite so bad when I remind the reader that I was only on the airfield in twenty-four months of this period.

Several I knew gave up before achieving solo, others made solo before disappearing.

I do not believe it was all my inadequacy. I admit that not all *ab-initios* suffer the same experience. Some start because an experienced friend shows them the ropes. Some have an abundance of self-confidence and will become a nuisance rather than be discouraged. Some find a tame instructor to take them under his wing. (No pun intended.) Several I knew gave up before achieving solo. Others at least made solo before disappearing.

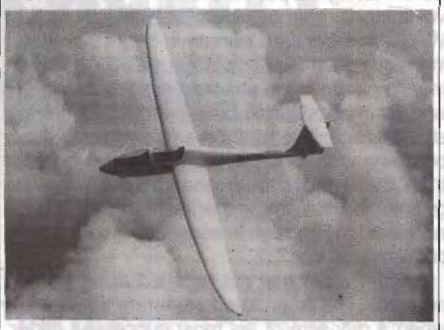
Portmoak at that period had too many *ab-initios*, an inadequate and unreliable launching system, too many barely interested instructors and poor organisation. It is now better, partly because there are fewer *ab-initios* and partly because the organisation has improved.

However if the gliding community wants the sport to prosper we must not be complacent. Would-be pilots must be nurtured. Systematic training must be planned for *ab-initios*. Direction and supervision must be available for early solo pilots. Take note all CFIs and senior instructors.

A final word to the aspiring pilots. Do not be discouraged. It is all worth while. You need plenty of time (give up other hobbies) and perseverance (give up all activities off the airfield). Finally to ensure continuity find two good instructors and either handcuff them or bribe them but don't let them get away.

UK EIRE
GROB
SOLE AGENTS

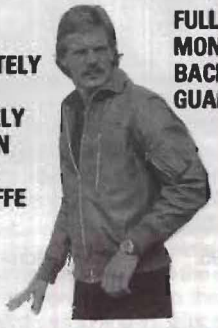
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LOOKING BACK

PERCY SINCLAIR PILCHER (1866-1899)

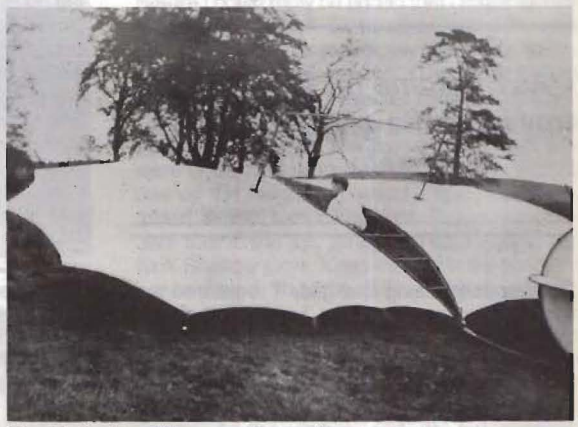
The second in our series about the people and events that have contributed to gliding

"For some years I have been afflicted with the belief that flight is possible to man." So began the voluminous correspondence between Wilbur Wright and Octave Chanute in May 1900. Later in the same letter: "Knowledge and skill in handling the machine are absolute essentials to flight and it is impossible to obtain them without extensive practice. The method employed by Pilcher of towing with horses in many respects is better than that I propose to employ, but offers no guarantee that the experimenter will escape accident long enough to acquire skill sufficient to prevent accident."

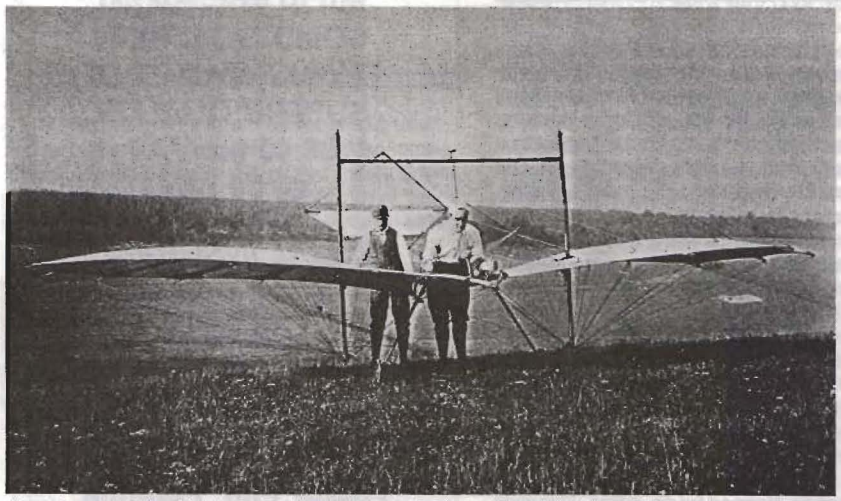
Percy Pilcher had not escaped accident long enough! He had crashed seven months earlier when a guy-wire of his most successful glider, the Hawk, had snapped and he was killed, but he had come very close indeed to achieving some of the triumphs which were later reserved for the Wright brothers.



The Bat 1895. "Too much dihedral," Pilcher with his sister at Cardrose.



The Gull 1895. "Too much area."



The Hawk 1896 which was a success and built mainly of bamboo.



The Hawk in flight. Pilcher made hundreds of glides including one of 270m.

Pilcher was one of that small group of 19th century aeronautical researchers who not only preached but practised the ideas that before sustained flight is possible, the pilot must learn to fly and that the best vehicle for the purpose is a simple lightweight glider.

Aeronautical Inspiration

Pilcher's education included six years in the Royal Navy, four years as an apprentice in the shipbuilding yards at Govan near Glasgow and an engineering degree at London University. His aeronautical inspiration came mainly from Lilienthal, whom he visited twice in Germany. There he flew one of Lilienthal's gliders. He was closely associated with Hiram Maxim's experi-



Percy Pilcher. The photographs illustrating this article are the copyright of the Science Museum.

ments and as a member of the council of the Aeronautical Society of Great Britain he met many of the aeronautical researchers of the period. For example, in May 1899 Lawrence Hargrave read his famous paper on box-kites, which later influenced the design of many successful early aeroplanes. Pilcher was in the chair at that meeting and incorporated some of the features of the Hargrave box-kites in his triplane glider which was still unfinished when he died.

The Hawk was a Success

His first three hang gliders, the Bat, the Beetle and the Gull, all had considerable drawbacks – too much dihedral or too heavy or too much surface area to be manageable. However, the Hawk was a success. Built mainly of bamboo, easily transportable, the wings were stayed by steel wires from the two vertical masts. The tail consisted of two triangular surfaces, also stayed from the masts and it was one of these guy-wires which snapped causing the collapse of the tail support, which brought about Pilcher's fatal accident. At the bottom of the vertical masts wheels and spring shock absorbers provided the world's first practical undercarriage.

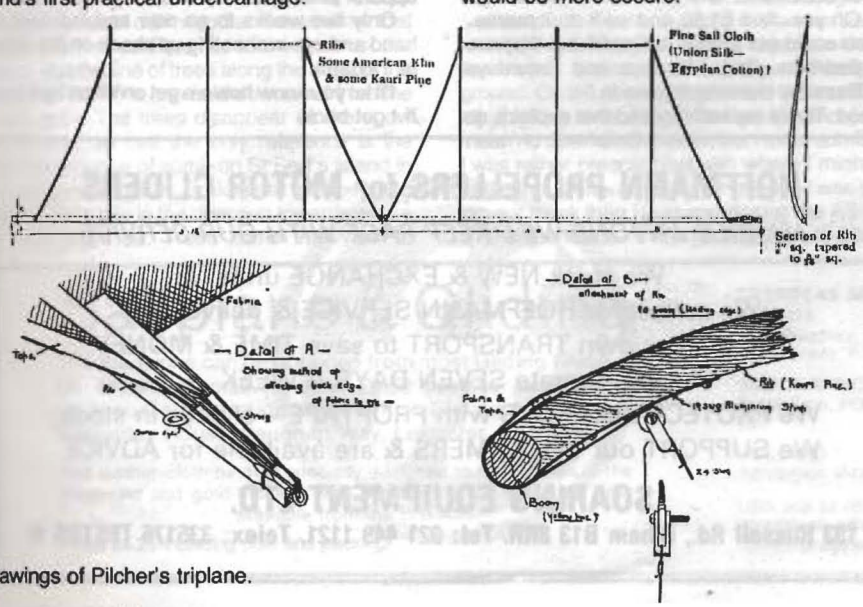
His early experiments took place near Cardrose on the banks of the Clyde, and later with the Hawk he made hundreds of glides near Eynsford in Kent, including one of 270m, which constituted a sort of world distance record at the time. He became adept at landing on his frail undercarriage, rounding out and holding off just as our gliding instructors now teach us. He introduced the winch launch and the "auto" tow (although the "auto" was a horse). He hoped that high tows would give him access to the vertical air currents which he was convinced existed higher up, and so prolong his flights and give him more time to learn to fly. He did not find any thermals, but we don't always connect today, even in our high performance sailplanes. In anticipation of those elusive long flights he introduced the hang glider seat, still used today to reduce pilot fatigue.

Two Years' ahead of the Wright Brothers

No assessment of his contribution would be complete without the reminder that he actually built and flew gliders at a time of great scepticism. At a time when the aeronautical world was interested mainly in balloons and dirigibles; at a time when the great Lord Kelvin wrote, "I have not the smallest molecule of faith in aerial navigation other than ballooning." That his enthusiasm and energy were an inspiration to the Wright Brothers there is no doubt. His name crops up repeatedly in their correspondence.

Percy Pilcher was one of the first pioneers of gliding and aviation and he was Britain's first heavier-than-air casualty. The Hawk still exists in the Museum of Flight in Edinburgh.

At the time of his death he was building a lightweight petroleum engine for his triplane glider and he was planning to install it after having learned to fly the new machine. He was thus about two years' ahead of the Wright Brothers and about six years' ahead of the rest. Even if he had failed to achieve the remarkable results of the Wrights, he would almost certainly have equalled those of the European experimenters around 1905 and his place in aeronautical history would be more secure.



Drawings of Pilcher's triplane.

CHARITY GLIDE

This has been a summer for sponsored flights and in terms of money raised Steve, a Bronze C pilot from Lasham and a former National Hunt jockey, had one of the most successful in a Std Cirrus.

STEVE JOBAR

Attempting a sponsored glide was my idea to raise a few hundred pounds for charity which would bring gliding some beneficial publicity (achieved with mentions in various local papers, two nationals and a television interview) and give me a good excuse to fly. The International Spinal Research Trust was an appropriate charity and with the Great British Push on at the same time, I was to add the money raised to their fund.

The first thing was to find a major sponsor and Mecca Bookmakers were pleased to step in, for in line with the Injured Jockeys' Fund this was an appropriate charity for them to support. Most of the other support came from private individuals not connected with gliding.

I was to be sponsored per mile that I flew. My flight could be in any direction, a triangle, O/R or just a straight glide, whichever would give me the most miles.

The earliest starting date was May 17 from Newbury Racecourse so the BBC could cover the launch and show it during racing that afternoon, also relaying the progress. Unfortunately this was not to be as the 17th was a complete wash-out.

I now had to wait for the next good soaring day and because I could only then declare my intentions to fly once (and then fly no matter what the weather did) I had to choose very carefully.

June 18 looked right. I declared before 10am to my sponsors and the press and was launched by 11am. The promising cumulus had now flattened out with very low tops but though I found the lift weak it was reliable.

I set Llanfair Caereinion as a TP to give me something to aim for but by 4pm I had scrubbed that and headed for the Long Mynd, scratching away from chosen fields twice on the way. Encountering strong sink at the Mynd, I was prepared to land there, but after a low climb I told

base I was turning back. I now had the wind behind me and a higher cloudbase though the day was getting late. I was down to 500ft at Cheltenham but a very slow climb got me back to cloudbase and by 7pm I was leaving Swindon with enough height for Newbury Racecourse. Another climb before Newbury set me off for Lasham, but with Lasham getting ever higher on the horizon I settled for a field 5km short of home. It was 8pm and a surprised Sam Mummery answered my call from the Vodaphone in the cockpit (a useful instrument when landing out) and by 9pm we were back in the clubhouse after 9hrs flying 240 miles with £5000 to collect for Spinal Research.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Sam Mummery for loaning me his treasured Std Cirrus (DFY) for the flight and the previous weeks, also to Dot at The Five Bells, Wickham, for all her support. Now in between collecting I will be trying for my Silver C.

EXCUSE ME OFFICER

The tannoy announcement was clear. One brave pilot had fluffed it yet again. I hitched up the trailer and Kevin, a hyperactive nine year-old, was crew chief on this epic mission to retrieve his dad, Norman.

Norman had landed in a field near Aylesbury chosen by two other gliders that day. One had been collected. It had been parked beside Norman's K-18 and a derigging area was clearly visible with footprints in the burnt brown field which was quickly adopted by Kevin as a ready made play area while we got on with the more serious task of pulling a glider apart.

No one paid much attention to Kevin. He was soon to change his state of neglect. All work on the glider came to an abrupt halt as innocent Kevin lifted an object above his head.

"Look", he declared as he threw it between my feet, "a grenade!" With the instincts of a petrified pilot, I froze on the spot and covered my ears. If I was about to die I didn't want to hear the bang. Minutes passed and my legs were still attached to my body. This was sufficient encouragement to dare to look between my feet. There it was, a grenade with the pin corroded out. Kevin was read the riot act by his dad as I picked up the grenade which felt ominously heavy. It was definitely not a toy.

It was said I looked like a neurotic ballerina as I tiptoed the offending object to a safe distance in the middle of the field. The glider was hastily derigged and put into its bomb shelter.

The passing policeman hesitated for a considerable period before replying to Norman's request, "Excuse me officer, I have flown into this field and found a grenade, what should I do?" The astute officer thought immediately of getting away from the field but then approached the centre of the explosive storage area, placed his hat over the grenade and announced that everything was okay now. We decided not to stay to greet the bomb squad.

LIAM McERLEAN

TRIP TO AOSTA

In early September Ivor and a party from the South Wales GC set off for an expedition to Italy, but first they had to get an Italian gliding licence

It was pouring with rain when someone said: "I'm thinking of organising a trip to Aosta."

"Werrsat?" came a voice from a pile of old woollies and one gumboot.

"Northern Italy," said another pile of woollies . . . this time with two wet feet.

"Anybody coming? Let me know," said the first voice. And so the seed was sown.

No wonder the idea grew. I mean the planting conditions were ideal: damp, low cloud, no wind and the summer approaching.

Actually, when the summer did come (you remember 1986?) I spent the entire day in the Italian Embassy office in Cardiff.

We soon discovered that in order to glide at all in Italy one has to have an Italian gliding licence. As this is virtually impossible to get in Italy you need to have your whole gliding history authenticated by the Italian authorities.

After finding out that the nearest Iti – sorry – Italian office is in Cardiff I rang on at least six occasions with no reply so I resorted to trying the Birmingham one.

"Oh yes," said a voice in a thick accent. "We can do it for you here. Bring two photostat copies of your documents and yourself with the originals. Oh yes. And £1.50 and we'll do it *pronto*.

"You could get it done in Cardiff but they are only part-time. Only Mondays and Saturdays with Thursday morning thrown in."

Good. That's my half day and that explains no answer on the phone. Being a Monday I rang straight away and hey presto! arranged an appointment.

It was at least a 300km day by the look of the clouds on my way to the Embassy.

I threaded my way through countless doors in a warren of corridors following the green, white and red tricolours painted with loving care in all the right places. Finally, *The* Door, all red white and green, and I found myself lost in a sea of attractive dark skinned women wearing dark blue denim apparel which looked suspiciously like a uniform.

After overhearing countless hard luck stories in Italian *via* the open door, I speak Italian like a native (of Wales), my turn finally came.

Bang. Bang. Bang. Wallop. Thud. Crunch. The *officio* stamps thundered on my poor gliding certificate (It's a fragile No. 266 you know) and valuable foreign stamps were stuck on.

"That will be £9." Lucky I don't get paid on Friday, I thought, and out I came clutching my documents with his (the Consul's) warning ringing in my ears.

"It is very dangerous gliding there. The thunderstorms come very quickly."

When the rest of the party discovered I was now *"Officio Italiano"* several eagerly sought details and raced off to the Cardiff Embassy on the first available part-time day and tried their luck.

No luck was forthcoming. It could only be done for approximately £90! I've heard of inflation but this is ridiculous! Less than a week had elapsed!

However, as there were a few early solo pilots in the party, we wanted a two-seater. We were taking five gliders in all but I wasn't taking any. Bad back, sold PIK, back fixed, no glider, unhappy-go-Aosta.

And so it was I rang Nigel Palmer. He was most helpful and would be in Aosta during our stay. Sure he has a two-seater and was picking up a "very nice Welsh lady" from Geneva on the Sunday.

And so we are all set. Early morning coach to Gatwick and heavy baggage *via* the road party. I note Nick Hackett's advice regarding flying apparel (S & G) so I'll invest in a new floppy hat.

Only two weeks to go now and I've kept my hand and eye in shooting up sheep on the slopes of Talgarth.

I'll let you know how we get on when I get back. If I get back.

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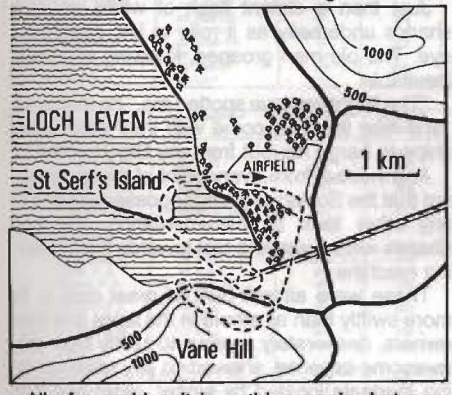
ANOTHER WINTER STORY

Mike completed a difficult flight successfully but felt he should have been more aware of the risk of a sudden heavy snow shower

A snow showery day, February 25, 1986, 1500hrs in Edinburgh. Perhaps it's worth seeing if the Portmoak winter Tuesday group is flying. I would have gone earlier, but work has a habit of interfering with my flying. Knowing my luck they will be just packing the hangar. Half an hour later driving along the road past Loch Leven, one of our landmarks, frozen and snow covered, I can see a K-13 on approach to the launch point, so they aren't finishing yet.

Everybody has flown and the K-8 is free, so I have the next cable after the K-13. Within five minutes of arrival the parachute is on; checks are done; it is a bit grey ahead, but clear; "all out" and pull off at 1200ft just below cloudbase. There is a little north in the mainly easterly wind, so I head south to see if there is any reduced sink over Vane Hill – I have this tendency to try to spread my launch costs over as many flying minutes as possible, even on a winter circuit and no, I'm not a Scot.

But there is nothing, so it is 800ft and time to go home. The odd snowflake flies past the canopy and the vario gives a 5 up kick (the K-8 vario, calibrated in m/sec, always was optimistic!), and a circle or two takes me back up to 1000ft. I fly faster to keep in lift without climbing into cloud.



All of a sudden it is nothing again, but now relating to visibility rather than lift. The odd snowflake has become a blizzard and I am at the high key in a white-out. Airbrakes out in an attempt to restore visual contact with the ground. Occasional glimpses of dark woodland remind me that a large block of conifers lies to the south of the airfield, and the line of trees along the edge of the loch (what loch?) is one field downwind from the launch point. The trees disappear as the snow gets thicker, so that the only reference is the brownish smudge of scrub on St Serf's Island in the loch 6-700ft below. Brakes still full open and heading generally in the direction towards where the field might be. Trees come into view at 3-400ft in about the right place, then the field to be crossed, then cars at the launch point, some with scarcely visible lights. Round-out, touch down. That was exciting! Eight minutes from "all out" to touch down, and the last four probably the most demanding I have flown. Two or three minutes later it had stopped snowing.



Portmoak airfield with Loch Leven in the foreground and Bishop Hill behind. *Photo:* Mike Richardson.

I was pleased with myself that what had become a very difficult flight had been completed successfully and tidily. But should I have been? I should have been more aware of the risk of a sudden heavy snow shower, even though they had been infrequent. Opening the brakes sooner would have got me down more quickly, with earlier visual contact with a very camouflaged ground. On the other hand it would have reduced my thinking time. No downwind leg should not mean no downwind checks, but I must admit that I was rather preoccupied with where I might be, and although it was not helping much I was looking out more than I was monitoring the ASI and chanting checks – it is a good job the K-8 has a fixed wheel and no flaps to bother with. It is also a good job that there was only a light wind – no gradient to cause added problems, no windsock visible and difficult to judge drift over a hardly visible snowscape. Snow may not settle on the wing like rain, but it certainly alters the leading edge profile.

On reflection, therefore, with my ability and experience (middleaged Bronze C, 90hrs total, 40hrs last year, and 5hrs from December to February), I was probably lucky. One or two additional work load problems and the outcome might have been different. I will never know, but at least that experience will, I hope, stand me in good stead when the pressure is on again. There is no substitute for flying, winter or summer, to improve ability, and I hope my argument (formulated especially for family and bank manager) that the more I fly the safer I become has more foundation than the one which suggests that the more I fly the greater the chance of me becoming an "accident".

Sailplane & Gliding

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TERRY HURLEY

THE OLD MAN AND THE SKY

– a towering epic of poverty and rape set against the majestic backdrop of the East Midlands – (with apologies to Ernest Hemingway and several other gentlemen)

He was an old man who flew alone in a Bocian from Husbands Bosworth and he had gone eighty-four months now without finding a thermal.

In the beginning a student had been with him but then he had gone solo and bought into a glass-fibre syndicate which had flown several 300km triangles during the task week, so now the old instructor flew alone.

Each morning as the wind came at dawn he rose from his rumpled bed in the bunkhouse to seek the express relief promised by the manufacturers of a proprietary indigestion tablet. Later, after a frugal breakfast of baked beans eaten direct from the tin, he trudged to the cold hangar to begin the heavy work of rigging his elderly Bocian. Age and much misuse has warped the aeroplane into an alarmingly unaerodynamic shape and with its worn, patched fabric it looked like a monument to Permanent Unserviceability.

On the line the old instructor waited, scanning the perimeter track with his faded blue eyes, hoping against hope that the day would bring a student in need of instruction, or a passenger – any one who was prepared to pay the price of an aerotow. But, as always, there was no one with money who wished to fly with him, so the old man was forced to approach the tug pilot and once again ask for credit to go to 2000ft.

"Man," said the pilot awkwardly, keeping his hands firmly in his pockets, "but you owe the club for three such tows from last week and also 15p for the hot chocolate from the machine which dispenses these beverages. The 15p," he added, "you owe directly to me."

"It is a debt of honour," said the old man with dignity, "and will be repaid."

"When?" said the pilot, attempting unsuccessfully to feign disinterest.

"When I locate the Big Thermal," the old man told him. "After that, students will flock to me again and it will be like former days when I was not just an old man, but East Midlands Open 15 Metre Championship runner-up! Twice," he said.

The pilot spat thoughtfully onto the metal cowling of his Chipmunk. It sizzled.

"Okay, old man," he said resignedly, "my motor is still warm, We go."

The old man climbed into the rear seat of the Bocian – he had long ago forgotten how to fly from the front, or paying, seat – and after placing a knotted handkerchief upon his head he strapped himself to the machine. This represented a considerable act of faith in view of the fragility of the strap mountings.

A few minutes later, and after much wing-waggling on the part of the Chipmunk, the old man pulled the release and floated freely above the Shire.

"By refusing to pull off immediately the wing-waggling commenced," he told himself gleefully, "I gained another hundred good feet. This will aid me as I now search for the Big Thermal."

He swung the blunt nose of the Bocian in an arc across the sky until it pointed into wind in the direction of that place which men know as Oadby but which the old man thought of as "that dump". As always he flew with great precision, gaining direct and sometimes painful knowledge of the shifting currents of air through the hard uncushioned seat.

"The young men," he mused aloud, "fly with audios and even with wireless. But I fly as I have always done, feeling the wind on my face as it howls through the holes in the fabric."

"An audio would be better," he thought privately.

Just then there came a bump from beneath his seat.

"Not another bloody collision!" he said loudly. "Why don't they look where they're going."

He peered down through the scratched and yellowing canopy but saw no familiar spectacle of debris fluttering like confetti beneath him.

Nothing but the rattling of unlatched inspection covers and the sound of his own laboured breathing

"I may have encountered lift," he thought, heaving the ponderous bulk of his aeroplane into a slow, wide turn. For a few moments as he circled there was nothing but the rattling of unlatched inspection covers and the sound of his own laboured breathing as he strained to hold the patched ailerons against the wind. Then the bump came again but stronger this time.

"Enough!" cried the old man. "This is indeed what I have been seeking. This is the Big Thermal!"

And the Bocian surged soggily upwards like rising dough.

"Truly this is the big one," the old man told himself happily. "See – already we have broken through the layer of traffic fumes that forms the permanent summer inversion in latitudes south of Leicester, and now we are drifting with the wind above the dry yellow patch, like a canker on the earth, where once was Naseby reservoir before the Anglia Water Authority determined to effect improvements to it."

He breathed on the perspex in a vain attempt to clean it sufficiently to see into the distance.

"That cloud of umber smog must be Northampton." he thought. "Soon I shall be out of sight of HusBos and, therefore, lost. I wish the student was with me. Being younger he comprehends the motorway system, which anyway does not appear on my charts, and by studying it now could tell me where I am."

The Bocian continued to climb into the cloud dappled summer sky and to drift down the wind.

"I am now truly lost," the old man thought gravely, "but I will not leave this great thermal into which I am centred. This is my destiny."

Just then a distant flash of white, as of a shark's underbelly as it rolls to kill, caught his eye. The old man groaned, knowing what was inevitable.

"The blighters have spotted me," he muttered, "and now they will come with their posh glass ships to barge me out from my Big Thermal."

And indeed, from every point of the compass, not that the Bocian any longer possessed one or any other form of instrumentation, the lean shapes were swooping fast towards the lumbering machine.

These were aircraft built at great cost to fly more swiftly than all others in the skies and their owners, desperately anxious to justify their truly awesome expense, showed no pity when entering thermals located by lighter, older and less prestigious machines.

So it was in the old man's Big Thermal. Above him the sky darkened with the sleek forms, their wings long and slender like sword blades, their pilots greedy for height. From all directions, regardless of Rule 6 Para 10*, they pressed in around him until finally, threatened and overcome by proximity, he skidded out of the lift and into Awful Sink.

Worn out by his efforts and resigned to his fate the old man began the familiar, nerve-wrenching task of selecting a field for an out-landing.

"When I was young," he remembered with sadness, "one encountered fields of innocent grass lying fallow by the year, but now all farmers have become accountants and, desiring subsidies, stuff their lands with crops which nobody needs but which all must pay for.

"Now then, old man," he said aloud, to bolster his courage, "show them that despite your great age you still have the true talent."

And so saying, he crossed his control then, as a reflex action, himself, and aimed his aircraft at a wide green field. A few feet above the greenery he realised with horror that he was landing amidst that spectacularly beautiful, but appallingly uneconomic crop – rape.

(Continued on p297)

REGIONALS' RESULTS

INTER-SERVICES REGIONALS, Middle Wallop — August 5-14

Open Class

Pos.	Pilot	Sailplane H'cap	Day 1.5.8 164km ▲	Day 2.8.8 310km ▲	Day 3.9.8 155.8km ▲	Total Points
1	Miller, A. S.	114 Ventus B	949	852	885	2486
2	Morris, B. C.	106 ASW-20	886	842	675	2403
3	Hutchinson, S. M.	106 Janus C	872	712	655	2239
4	Jones, P. R.	114 Ventus	804	655	736	2195
5	Lincoln, A. K.	104 PIK 20a	897	359	636	1892
6	Spotiswood, J. D.	104 Discus	834	560	487	1881
7	Jones, S. J.	114 Ventus	863	580	381	1824
8	Young, J. R.	114 Ventus B	827	340	644	1811
9	Jones, R.	130 Nimbus 3	766	320	714	1800
10	Nash, S. R.	104 PIK 20c	860	386	473	1719
11	Saundby, R. P./ Davey, G.	104 Janus B	785	344	576	1705
12	Pobjoy, M. A.	106 Nimbus 15c	801	297	600	1698
13	Murray, M. J.	108 Mosquito B	876	201	585	1662
14	Purdie, P. G. H.	118 Nimbus 2c	733	341	551	1625
15	Crouch, R. J.	130 Nimbus 3	678	232	652	1562
16	Stewart, D. R.	114 Ventus	868	0	676	1544
17	Sherlock, C. C.	108 Nimbus 15	675	267	378	1320
18	Steiner, P./ Richards, E.	106 Janus C	905	261	148	1314
19	Richardson, J. L.	114 Ventus	659	255	334	1248
20	Hogg, A. J.	114 Ventus	195	504	537	1236
21	Lenz, N.	106 LS-3a	193	337	656	1186
22	Harmer, P. M.	112 Kestrel 19	539	120	518	1177
23	Law, M. J.	112 Kestrel 19	542	280	347	1169
24	Spiller, R. W.	108 Nimbus 15	407	273	409	1089
25	Kosak, J. G.	106 PIK 20	455	337	179	971
26	Watson, B. B. C./ Watson, Trish	118 Nimbus 2a	29	296	384	709

Sport Class

Pos.	Pilot	Sailplane H'cap	Day 1.5.8 131km ▲	Day 2.8.8 310km ▲	Day 3.9.8 124.8km ▲	Day 4.13.8 96.8km ▲	Total Points
1	McAndrew, G. E.	103 Pegasus 101	592	988	580	173	2333
2	Billy, J./Clad, B.	103 LS-4	700	870	511	186	2267
3	Mitchell, K.	98 Std Cirrus	703	494	677	256	2130
4	Logan, M. W. B.	97 Astir CS	511	693	565	215	1984
5	Watson, A. J./ Watson, J.	101 DG-300	677	369	763	129	1938
6	Hancock, A. R.	97 Astir CS	522	393	735	190	1840
7	Lee, M. E.	103 LS-4	630	466	571	172	1839
8	Hardy, M. F.	100 SHK 1	572	555	664	0	1791
9	Gildea, C. J.	100 SHK	473	764	490	0	1727
10	Smart, A. M. B.	97 Astir CS	564	575	570	0	1709
11	Mitchell, T. M.	102 ASW-19b	625	389	661	10	1685
12	Quick, G. G.	98 Cirrus 75	593	188	741	78	1598
13	Armstrong, P. W.	97 Astir CS	506	467	613	0	1586
14	Dean, M. J.	98 DG-100	512	371	643	38	1562
15	Bould, A. D.	97 Astir CS	516	467	521	0	1504
16	de Jong, M. B.	98 DG-100	392	480	453	139	1464
17	Davis, C. M.	99 Astir 77	447	435	506	40	1438
18	Barley, P. R.	97 Astir CS	545	297	584	0	1426
19	Dobson, J. B.	97 Astir 77	475	237	532	172	1416
20	Amall, R.	97 Astir CS	564	251	525	48	1388
21	Reed, I. B.	103 Pegasus	592	279	441	15	1327
22	Hibberd, G. P.	99 Std Astir	538	361	395	0	1314
23	Barnfather, B. J.	97 Astir CS	52	500	631	121	1304
24	Trueleve, O. J.	99 Astir 77	345	246	503	197	1291
25	Matyear, A. D.	97 Astir 77	341	435	383	70	1229
26	Cooper, E. M.	99 Astir 77	303	425	345	119	1192
27	Bambrook, E. J.	97 Astir CS	451	383	290	0	1124
28	Jenkins, J.	103 DG-300	271	234	436	0	941
29	Ashcroft, J. P.	102 ASW-19b	37	222	557	15	831
30	Batchelor, A. M.	99 Astir CS	0	411	361	0	772
31	Tribe, A. D.	97 Astir 77	128	286	341	0	755
32	Moules, K. A.	103 LS-4	128	0	0	0	128

Club Class

Pos.	Pilot	Sailplane H'cap	Day 1.5.8 97km ▲	Day 2.8.8 228km ▲	Day 3.9.8 124.8km ▲	Total Points
1	Smith, J. L. J.	82 Pirat	456	994	840	2290
2	Pobjoy, D. E.	86 K-18	377	1000	901	2278
3	Somerville, S.	95 K-21	480	582	883	1945
4	Cunningham, G./ Winter, A.	95 K-21	521	534	853	1908
5	Knowles, J. A.	96 Sport Vega	415	577	908	1900
6	Boyden, M./ Claughton, N.	95 K-21	608	281	922	1811
7	Norman, L.	86 K-18	302	669	833	1804
8	Stonebanks, N.	88 K-18	466	479	790	1735
9	Becker, P. G.	84 K-6cR	500	570	664	1734
10	Williams, P. R.	88 Dart 15	331	905	490	1726
11	Alkin, C. J.	95 Viking	424	416	862	1702
12	Mathews, G. V.	86 K-18	317	602	444	1363
13	Ellis, C. A. P.	94 Dart 17R	385	333	623	1341
14	Kirschner, P. M.	90 K-6e	291	596	440	1327
15	Sturgess, G. W./ Bradley, J.	95 K-21	473	240	490	1203
16	Beringer, J.	96 Twin Astir	366	277	535	1178
17	Plummer, J. A.	95 Grob 103	405	387	346	1138
18	Foster, N. A.	86 K-18	332	271	529	1132
19	Quirke, N. S. P.	86 K-18	320	281	480	1081
20	Johnson, A. S.	95 Acro	139	492	423	1054
21	Andrews, P. W.	76 K-13	98	548	396	1042
22	Kelly, L. W.	94 K-23	309	135	406	850
23	Brannan, P. A.	94 K-23	0	375	289	664

NORTHERN REGIONALS, Sutton Bank — July 26-August 3

Open Class

No.	Pilot	Sailplane H'cap	Day 1.26.7 170km O/R Alt TPs	Day 2.1.8 300km O/R Alt TPs	Total Points
1	Austin, D.	103 DG-300	702	847	1576
2	Gaunt, T. R. F.	112 Kestrel 19	574	982	1556
3	Walsh, A.	111 ASW-20L	574	958	1532
4	Hunt, S.	103 LS-4	421	1000	1421
5	Murphy, T. J.	108 ASW-20	369	988	1357
6	Baker, P. E.	106 ASW-20	640	666	1306
7	Austin, T.	112 ASW-20BL	619	614*	1233
8	Ramsden, P.	112 Kestrel 19	299	910	1209
9	Luke, J.	112 Kestrel 19	502	575	1107
10	Mortimer, R.	112 Jantar	723	284	1007
11	Moules, K. A.	103 LS-4	0	922	922
12	Bell, J. G.	112 Kestrel 19	607	311	918
13	Smith, R. W.	108 LS-3	439	153	592
14	Thompson, M.	100 ASW-19	0	464	464
15	St. Pierre, A. H. G.	106 DG-200	5	303	308
16	Marlow, T./ Fairman, M. C.	102 ASW-19a	0	—	—
17	Nash, Jane	104 PIK-20	0	244	244
18	White, M. D.	112 Kestrel 19	0	229	229
19	Young, M. A.	103 LS-4	0	174	174
20	Carr, S.	111 ASW-20L	0	163	163
21	Ashworth, N. J.	114 Kestrel 19	0	DNF	0

*—Photographic penalty: DNF—did not fly.

Sport Class

No.	Pilot	Sailplane H'cap	Day 1.26.7 170km O/R Alt Tps	Day 2.1.8 200km O/R Alt TPs	Total Points
1	Atkin, P.	90 K-6E	659	986	1645
2	Payne, R. D.	98 Std Cirrus	622	1000	1622
3	Dale, G./ Rees, A. J.	96 Libelle	581	— / 876	1457
4	Fox, R. L.	96 Cobra	329	978	1307
5	Sheffield, R. J.	97 Astir	622	626	1248
6	Taylor, K. R.	100 SHK	661	472	1133
7	Maskell, R.	97 Astir CS	98	929	1027
8	Brook, M. F.	100 SHK	290	650	940
9	Stott, B./ Norrison, P.	90 K-6E	336	— / 277	613
10	Barker, D.	84 Skylark 3	0	605	605
11	Jones, G.	82 Olympia 463	143	399	542
12	Marks, P.	100 SHK	0	500	500
13	Jones, B.	94 K-23	0	477	477
14	Beardsley, G.	74 Bergfalke 3	0	398	398
15	Stewart, K.	97 Twin Astir	5	388	393
16	Holland, P.	98 DG-101	37	148	185
17	Griffin, B. J.	78 Skylark 2B	0	91	91
18	Taylor, C. G.	98 ASW-15	55	DNF	55
19	Bond, M.	96 Cobra	39	DNF	39

ENSTONE REGIONALS – August 16-25

Open Class

Pos.	Pilot	Sailplane H'cap	Day 1.16.8 298km▲	Day 2.17.8 102.5km▲	Day 3.19.8 252.5km▲	Day 4.20.8 259.5km▲	Day 5.23.8 250.5km▲	Day 6.24.8 270km▲	Total Points
1	Tanner, L. E. N.	106 Vega	784	236	995	1000	857	800	4672
2	Metcalfe, I. J.	112 Kestrel 19	798	253	978	776	944	904	4653
3	Costin, M. C.	118 Nimbus 2c	248	308	855	*930	1000	887	4228
4	Wright, R. H.	108 Mini Nimbus	470	178	757	917	871	1000	4193
5	Hawkins, P. S.	106 Mini Nimbus	392	197	823	940	913	837	4102
6	Cumner, G. M.	106 ASW-20	580	131	771	824	841	758	3905
7	Reed, J. R.	106 ASW-20	734	0	808	782	795	777	3896
8	Brisbourne, R. P.	106 DG-200	749	0	1000	388	826	709	3653
9	Thick, M. G.	112 ASW-20BL	279	67	931	*799	822	691	3609
10	Corbett, G.	111 ASW-20L	187	120	780	881	819	742	3509
11	Ellis, J.	110 DG-400	590	173	734	769	435	707	3408
12	Kennedy, A./ Dransfield, J.	112 Kestrel 19	397 / —	— / 192	670 / —	— / 708	473 / —	438 / —	2878
13	Russell, F. K.	116 Glasflügel 604	643	180	118	804	780	328	2853
14	Wise, B.	111 ASW-20FL	673	223	961	35	192	735	2839
15	Bridges, R. C.	116 ASW-17	269	136	618	*511	904	325	2763
16	Nash, J.	104 PIK 20b	264	9	680	537	424	562	2476
17	Gardiner, D. K.	112 Kestrel 19	39	0	823	598	194	674	2328
18	Millar, K.	107 Ventus B	305	0	866	*515	468	*136	2090
19	Snow, A. R.	106 Mini Nimbus	120	0	162	*148	805	662	1897
20	Docherty, T.	130 Nimbus 3	552	309	915	—	—	—	1776
21	Appleyard, C.	106 LS-3	186	0	311	*306	432	134	1371

Sport Class

Pos.	Pilot	Sailplane H'cap	Day 1.16.8 213km▲	Day 2.17.8 102.5km▲	Day 3.19.8 180.5km▲	Day 4.20.8 198km▲	Day 5.23.8 206.5km▲	Day 6.24.8 214.5km▲	Total Points
1	Chaplin, B. M.	101 Pegasus	1000	336	898	882	959	856	4931
2	Dale, G.	97 Libelle	825	163	999	985	672	740	4584
3	Cowderoy, R. I.	103 Pegasus	584	419	1000	808	681	916	4487
4	Parker, S. J. C.	103 LS-4	987	299	524	838	900	*706	4254
5	Stuart, T.	101 DG-300	411	226	753	1000	855	855	4245
6	Lucas, A.	97 Astir	744	357	786	721	690	783	4081
7	Warren, J. R.	96 Std Cirrus	964	85	406	588	922	805	3770
8	Kingerlee, J.	98 Std Cirrus	546	—	653	903	629	1000	3731
9	Palmer, G. D.	98 ASW-15	397	216	735	814	833	612	3607
10	Jordy, M.	94 IS-29D	746	0	825	875	682	611	3539
11	Edwards, D.	98 Std Cirrus	407	96	542	815	698	972	3530
12	Payne, R.	100 Std Cirrus	610	245	512	789	643	572	3369
13	Day, M. T.	101 LS-4	490	113	795	708	388	742	3216
14	Craig, G.	98 Std Cirrus	397	0	0	722	860	882	2861
15	Copeland, D. D.	98 Std Cirrus	546	218	406	559	527	383	2639
16	Newland-Smith, M.	97 Libelle	172	289	557	286	603	302	2209
17	Ilett, E.	102 Cirrus	359	50	*855	523	0	591	2178
18	Kevern, P./ Wilson, T. G.	90 SF-27	80 / —	— / 0	237 / —	— / —	258 / —	— / —	760
19	Tapson, B.	98 ASW-19b	230	12	0	635	88	690	1655
20	Day, P. A.	101 Pegasus	0	0	210	291	595	470	1566
21	Bogdiukiewicz, S.	92 Pilatus B-4	386	0	0	381	605	3	1375
22	Evans, A. D.	97 Libelle	77	96	0	*103	662	*226	1164

*—penalty

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CHRIS GARTON

EXTENDING OUR HORIZONS

The use of radio to gain access to airspace otherwise closed to gliders

The views expressed are those of the author and should not be taken to represent BGA policy. The advice on liaising with air traffic control is based on pilot experience and impressions.

British airspace legislation is a veritable maze and cross-country glider pilots must surely welcome any synopsis that simplifies the rules into a summary of where they can and cannot fly. Yet such simplifications are not without their own drawbacks. The survey in the August issue "Gliding and UK Airspace", by Chris Nicholas, p180, takes as its starting point the assumption that gliders are either not fitted with radio, or are equipped with a radio in which only the gliding channels are installed. In this respect it follows the pattern of previous articles in S&G and the **Gliding Yearbook** dating back over many years.

Such an assumption may have been valid fifteen or even ten years ago, but this can no longer be true. 720-channel radios now cost less in real terms than did 3-channel radios in the sixties, they are lightweight and economic in their requirements of power supplies and panel space. Many pilots have fitted 720-channel already and, since there appears to be little alternative for a pilot fitting out a new glider other than to buy second-hand, their numbers are certain to continue rising. The growing awareness of the relentless pressure on our remaining unrestricted airspace can only fuel this process.

Yet the growth in ownership of multi-channel radio appears not to have been matched by a spread of knowledge of the advantages accruing from its use, a point that became apparent during the recent Upper Heyford debate. Myths abound over the airspace regulations themselves and the legislation relating to the carriage of radio and its use.

This survey has been compiled in the hope of exploding some of these myths. It attempts to indicate to glider pilots those types of airspace in which they may be able to use their multi-channel radio to advantage, and those categories in which no such facility exists.

Radio and Licences. In order to use a radio in an aircraft, a pilot needs the following documentation:

A licence for the radio station (its correct title is an Aircraft Licence) which is issued by the Department of Trade & Industry's Radio Regulatory Division upon confirmation that the radio is of a type approved by the CAA. If the approved radio is a 720-channel then all of those channels may be used though of course only for the purposes for which they are notified, *eg* only the allocated gliding channels may be used for communications within the gliding movement; but a glider pilot is not constrained from using other channels for contacting Air Traffic Control units when necessary.

Approval of the installation. In a powered aircraft this forms part of the C of A and since gliders are exempt from the legal requirement to possess a C of A, there is no mechanism for approval in the case of a glider. In fact there is a quite specific exemption in the Air Navigation Order (Article 14, para 5) that releases a glider from the need for installation approval. Note that this exemption does not depend on radio use being confined to gliding channels.

A Flight Radio-Telephony Operator's Licence, or an R/T licence as it is commonly known. Glider pilots are exempted from this requirement provided they use only the approved gliding channels (and, temporarily, the Upper Heyford MRA frequency); therefore an R/T licence is necessary if a pilot wishes to use his radio for any other purpose such as entering regulated airspace. Furthermore it is not necessary to hold a power flying licence before the R/T Licence can be used, a misconception generated by a misleading sentence printed on the R/T Licence itself.

The summary of the above considerations is that the only extra piece of documentation that a glider pilot is likely to need to enable him, quite legally, to contact an ATC unit for clearence is an R/T Licence. This is neither difficult nor expensive to obtain; many flying clubs give tuition and conduct the examination. The fees vary from club to club, so glider pilots should be prepared to shop around.

Airspace Regulations. First, we must understand the distinction between controlled airspace and Special Rules Airspace, since the rules relating to them are different and hence the VMC exemption which gliders use in order to penetrate certain of these areas is a dispensation from differing requirements. For the non-radio glider, the distinction is academic only – the airspace is either "gliders permitted" or "gliders excluded" – but it is essential knowledge to the owner of a 720-channel radio, since it is the key to whether or not he is entitled to seek ATC clearance to enter.

Controlled Airspace. This is subject to Rule 21 of the Rules of the Air & Air Traffic Control Regulations, which stipulates that any such notified airspace is subject to permanent Instrument Flight Rules, whatever the actual weather may be. In order to fly IFR in controlled airspace a flight plan must be filed, the aircraft must be flown in accordance with ATC clearances on a specified route or under radar control, the pilot must possess an instrument rating and there is a specified standard or radio and navigational equipment.

Rule 21 airspace comprises the airways, including the Daventry and Worthing CTAs, the London TMA, and the London Heathrow and Manchester CTR's (control zones).

The dispensation for a glider to cross an airway in VMC amounts to an exemption from all the afore-mentioned requirements, with which a glider clearly could not comply. This means that even with a 720-channel radio, a glider pilot is not entitled to obtain entry clearance from ATC into any Rule 21 airspace; he can only enter, non-radio, those areas subject to a glider VMC exemption. If and when that exemption is withdrawn, such controlled airspace will be completely closed to gliders unless some new, special arrangements can be negotiated.

Special Rules Airspace. Special Rules Airspace is of a less restrictive nature than controlled airspace, being accessible, subject to various weather limitations, to any aircraft fitted with a radio capable of contacting the designated ATC unit.

The "Special rule" of interest to most glider pilots is Rule 36, applying to some 22 listed aerodromes, and requiring a pilot wishing to enter the nominated airspace to:

(1) Contact the ATC unit and pass details of the flight
(2) Obtain entry clearance
(3) Remain on the frequency whilst in that airspace
(4) Comply with any ATC instructions

It is essential to appreciate that nothing in the legislation prohibits a glider from entering any Rule 36 airspace, provided it complies with the above requirements. Of these, the only one that might create difficulties is obeying ATC instructions, and then only under limited circumstances – a point we will return to later.

The "VMC dispensation" for gliders in Special Rules Airspace is thus different from that applying in Controlled Airspace. It is contained in para (3)(c)(i) of Rule 36, and simply exempts the glider pilot from the need to contact ATC and obtain clearance provided he can remain "at least 1nm horizontally and 1000ft vertically away from cloud and in a flight visibility of at least 5nm." Note that for the purposes of this exemption, the same definition applies whether or not the glider is above 3000ft.

Some SRAs and SRZs are notified as allowing this exemption (*eg* Lyneham), others are not (*eg* Brize Norton). In the past the BGA has interpreted this as meaning that gliders are excluded from the latter category on the historical assumption that gliders could not be fitted with suitable radio to obtain the necessary clearance. The present day reality is that all SRAs and SRZs are accessible to gliders, but in some ATC permission is required.

A further consideration is that a glider pilot may wish to transit Rule 36 airspace in which a VMC exemption exists, but is unable *eg* to remain

1000ft clear of cloud. By contacting ATC and obtaining clearance, he could then operate "clear of cloud, in sight of the surface and in a flight visibility of 1nm" while below 3000ft. He may also be able to fly to these limits when above 3000ft if ATC afford him the status of a "Special VFR" flight, though here it must be said we are in the grey area of the applicability of VFR and IFR to glider flight.

Special Rules Airspace which gliders may penetrate in VMC without ATC clearance:

Aberdeen, Bournemouth, East Midlands, Leeds/Bradford, Lyneham, Newcastle, Southampton, Southend, Stansted (except the portion between 3500ft and FL65 between Stansted and Luton), Tees-side. Scottish TCA above 6000ft (subject to Rule 40); Cross-Channel SRA (Rule 38).

Special Rules Airspace in which gliders need ATC clearance at all times:

Birmingham, Blackpool, Bristol, Brize Norton, Edinburgh, Glamorgan, Glasgow, Liverpool, London (Gatwick), Luton, Prestwick. Sumburgh, Stansted (the portion listed above). Manston Cross-Channel SRZ (Rule 38).

(Note: Rules 38 and 40, referred to above, are similar in their effects on a glider to Rule 36. Likewise, the Scottish CTR and TMA below 6000ft, and the Manchester TMA, though not subject to special rules, permit gliders in VMC without the need for ATC clearance.)

Restricted Airspace. The only Restricted Airspace established on a permanent basis that can be entered with ATC permission by a glider is Scampton. The controlling authority is Waddington, and the restriction is solely for the purpose of protecting the Red Arrows practices – normally not more than two periods of 20-30 min/day.

Other Restricted Airspace is often established for the duration of major air displays, notably Famborough, but also in recent years Greenham Common, Middle Wallop and Fairford. Local gliding clubs usually negotiate limited access routes to and from their sites which enable non-radio gliders to continue operating, though sometimes subject to severe restraints. But the restriction, *per se*, does not prohibit a glider from flying elsewhere in the restricted area; like any other aircraft, it may do so if it contacts the ATC unit designated by the NOTAM as the controlling authority.

Purple Airspace. As far as possible, purple airspace is established within the confines of existing controlled or regulated airspace and any glider VMC exemption is cancelled. At times purple airspace may be established elsewhere and although a controlling authority may be nominated, since all purple airspace is considered to be subject to Rule 21, there is no facility for a glider to penetrate it by requesting ATC clearance.

Danger Areas. A Danger Area Crossing Service is available for certain Danger Areas, in which crossing clearance can be obtained when available from a nominated unit. The DACS of most interest to glider pilots is likely to be that obtainable for the Salisbury Plain ranges (otherwise prohibited by the Military Lands Act) from Salisbury Plain Control.

A Danger Area Activity Information Service is also obtainable in the case of other Danger Areas. This should be viewed purely as a means of establishing the state of activity of a Danger Area at a particular time, not as a clearance to cross it. Pilots are advised to assume the area is active if no reply is received. Weston-on-the-Green status can be checked with Brize Norton. A convenient summary of these two services, and the ATC units to contact, is printed at the foot of the 1:500000 series CAA charts.

Aerodrome Traffic Zones. Despite the change in legislation (April 1985) which limited the possession of an Aerodrome Traffic Zone to certain categories of airfield (see the legend at the foot of the 1:500000 charts) there remain many airfields protected by ATZs through which glider pilots may wish to fly or in which they may wish to land. Although some airfields maintain a relaxed and friendly attitude to gliders that drop in unannounced, it is technically illegal to enter the ATZ and land at airfields such as Kidlington, Staverton and Sywell without ATC permission. Glider pilots should also remember that airfields within Special Rules Airspace still have an ATZ, in which the VMC exemption does not apply.

Further, some civil airfields are listed in the **Air Pilot** as "PPR to non-radio aircraft", or even "not available to non-radio aircraft". In all the above cases, the glider pilot can legalise his situation by a radio call to the airfield's ATC unit to obtain the requisite permission.

Landing at Military Airfields. Under normal circumstances, a civilian powered aircraft cannot obtain permission to land at a military airfield simply by calling the airfield's ATC unit. "PPR" for military airfields means filling in and submitting forms with numerous details of the proposed flight. The exception is when the civilian aircraft "declares an emergency." A glider seeking permission to land may be considered to be, if not in a state of emergency, at least in difficulties, and landing clearance is unlikely to be withheld.

But the matter does not stop there. A landing at *eg* a USAF nuclear base is likely to provoke a strong reaction from the security authorities, regardless of the fact that landing clearance had been given for flight safety reasons.

Therefore the BGA's general advice to avoid military airfields holds good, but if a glider pilot nonetheless feels constrained to land at a military airfield he should obtain ATC clearance, and should not enter the ATZ without it. More pragmatic considerations should only be allowed to overrule where gliding is actively taking place from the airfield in question!

ATC Clearances for Gliders. Two important questions will have occurred to the glider pilot contemplating requesting ATC clearance to enter regulated airspace.

- Notwithstanding that the regulations allow him to seek ATC entry clearance, will permission be refused?
- Will the nature of any such clearance be such that a glider cannot comply, and is thereby excluded?

The answer is almost certainly no in both cases, provided of course the glider pilot is not proposing a flight path that may bring him into conflict with aircraft taking off or landing, or in the unlikely event of the airspace being already saturated.

It will be apparent from the preceding description of the rules that the requirements for flight in Special Rules Airspace are quite minimal. Although this form of airspace is established on the basis of numbers of air transport movements, a high proportion of traffic using it consists of light aircraft involved in recreational VFR flights.

Control of this traffic does not usually involve a strict regime of altitude and heading assignments of the kind that would be issued to IFR traffic in Rule 21 airspace. VFR flights will be warned of other traffic nearby, and may be given heading and altitude changes to avoid a potential collision. Often more generalised instructions may be issued, *eg:*

- Remain east of a line through (place).
- Cross (place) not below 3000ft.

It can be seen that a VFR flight may often proceed through regulated airspace with little or no ATC adjustment to its flight path, and the same in many instances can be expected to apply to a glider.

Obviously the situation may arise where a glider pilot considers he is unable to comply with an ATC instruction, either because it is outside the performance capability of the glider (*eg* maintaining level flight) or because it will direct the glider into unsuitable weather. It should be remembered that the function of ATC is to provide for the safe separation of traffic; the overall responsibility for the glider's safety remains that of its pilot, and if the likely outcome is the risk of a premature landing, the pilot should inform ATC that the clearance is unacceptable. The controller will probably come up with an alternative – in fact the glider pilot can assist by suggesting options. What he should not do is ignore an instruction and say nothing.

General Advice

1. There will always be the possibility that a glider flight through regulated airspace may be subject to various restrictions, hence this possibility has to be weighed against the penalty incurred by remaining clear of the airspace thus following a more circuitous route in perhaps less favourable soaring conditions.
2. The glider pilot will increase the chances of troublefree transit if he can arrange his flight so as not to conflict with circuit traffic and the arrival and departure procedures for IFR flights, in particular, avoiding thermalling in those areas.
3. Some glider pilots may not feel sufficiently confident of their soaring abilities to take on the additional workload of ATC communications (though frequently that workload will be far less than they would expect). The best advice to these pilots is to remain clear unless absolutely necessary. In fact penetrations of regulated airspace by ATC clearance are likely to remain the province of the more experienced cross-country glider pilot, who should be able to transit such area expeditiously.
4. Although stories are told of controllers who appear to take an unnecessarily repressive approach towards light aircraft and gliders, that (in my experience) is not true of the great majority of air traffic controllers who I believe perform their duties in the spirit intended, that of helping the flow of air traffic, not hindering it. That includes recreational flying, and I believe the glider pilot who shows himself to be responsible and sensible should not hesitate to make reasonable requests of ATC when it is in his interest to do so.

BRITISH TEAM

The British team for the 1987 World Championships at Benalla, Australia in January has been selected as follows:- Andy Davis (Discus), Chris Garton (Discus), Brian Spreckley (LS-6), Dave Watt (ASW-20B), Martyn Wells (LS-6) and Justin Wills (Discus). Alister Kay is first and Bernie Fitchett second reserve.

Well did you make the same selection from the British team squad published in the August issue, p172? The voting panel was 31 pilots, the team squad plus the top five pilots in each Class of the Nationals who were not already in the squad. The voting was secret but the scrutineers told us that it was "very consistent".

Those who just missed a place will feel sad. On the other hand it is nice to have two newcomers in Chris Garton and Dave Watt. Six pilots is 50% more than we have ever had before. Happily one comes from Lasham but will we ever hear the last of the Booker boy racers filling half the British team?

And what about the Open Class? This *is* a sign of the times. We are pressing for a seventh place and if successful of course Al Kay will fly his ASW-22. However the pilots have the right in voted order to choose the Classes they prefer; and the voting produced five 15 Metre pilots out of six.

The first three chose 15M so Justin and Chris had to choose Standard or Open. Somewhat naturally they chose Standard, not least because in Australia the blue conditions make it likely that "team" flying within a Class will be of great mutual assistance. Chris and Justin had to borrow gliders which gave us some anxious moments until Glyn Bradney lent his Discus to Chris and Justin tracked another down in Switzerland.

The other piece of marvellous news is a team sponsor in the surprising form of Orenstein & Koppel. Oren . . . who? O&K for short; they haf vays of making us happy with £10000 no less. They are a German manufacturer of a wide range of earth moving equipment and also of ships with subsidiary companies in the UK and OZ.

The introduction was made by David Roberts of Aston Down whose company buys quantities of their machines annually. O&K's management, based at Watford (Gap) village off the M1, are splendid people to deal with and of course their German parents need no introduction to gliding. We've already turned their cameraman pale green from photographing Brian Spreckley's LS-6 (plastered with O&K stickers) from an open Chipmunk.

Ben Watson, *British team manager*

BGA COMPETITIONS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

The 1987 Competitions Calendar to date is as follows: June 20-28, **Open Class Nationals** plus **Regionals** at Lasham; June 27-July 4, **Competition Enterprise** at Aboyne; July 4-12, **Western Regionals** at Nympsfield; July 18-26, **Standard Class Nationals** plus **Regionals** at Booker; August 1-9, **15 Metre Class Nationals** at Husbands Bosworth and the **Northern Regionals** at Sutton Bank; August 15-23, **Enstone Regionals.**

The **Inter-Services Regionals** (Sport and Club Classes) has been provisionally booked at Bicester from August 4-13 with the Open Class venue and date still to be decided.

Nationals entry forms are available from the BGA office. The Competitions Committee is very concerned about the number of late cancellations received in 1986; too late for reserves to make arrangements in some cases. Accordingly, the entry procedures will be modified this time – details on the form. The cut-off date for receiving entries at the BGA will be January 31 as before.

The form will also define qualification for the 1988 European Championships, which will be based on Nationals results. We are working with Lasham GC on a bid to host this event, to be presented to CIVV next March.

Claims for the BGA annual awards (see the June issue, p136) must be sent to the BGA office not later than January 15. Now is the time to check through your logbooks – we can't!

John Taylor, *chairman*

A RED DEVIL JUMPS FROM A BLANIK





These dramatic photographs were taken at the Surrey Hills GC when a member of the Red Devil's parachute team, Neil Dixon, jumped from a Blanik piloted by Tony Richards on September 22. It all started in July when the club had two gliders on static display at the Bexley Show. Some of the Red Devils, who had been giving a display, were interested in the gliders and Gillian Suter, field ops secretary of Surrey Hills GC, persuaded them that one of their team should jump from the Blanik to coincide with the club's annual fund raising effort for the RAFA Wings appeal.

"Everything that followed was of course easy – apart from the fact that, on paper, you're not allowed to do it," reported John Faulkes, the PR officer. "So within weeks, we had our deputy CFI, Peter Poole, talking to the BGA and the CAA to allow us to first despatch the parachutists from our Blanik, and secondly to allow us into the TMA – 2000ft above Kenley Airfield – for the duration of the jump.

"It was also realised that we'd have to have an aerotow – no-go at Kenley – to make sure of the height," he continued. "Our friendly contacts at Kent GC secured us their Jodel with our Blanik, canopy removed, being towed from their base.



Tony Richards with Red Devil Neil. *Photos:* Andy Bushby.

"On the 22nd, in bright sunlight, at 1.30pm, with CFI, Alex Wright, plus our photographer, Andy Bushby, buzzing round in an Ogar motor glider, the Jodel hauled the Blanik into view, to the cheers of the crowd. Neil calmly climbed out and dropped to earth.

"A first for us, a first for the Red Devils and an excellent charity event. We finished the day with trial instruction flights and some aerobatics for the Red Devils, again courtesy of our young instructor, Tony Richards," added John.

NATIONAL LADDER WINNERS

Dave Nunn of Lasham heads the Open Ladder to win the Enigma trophy with Mike Cuming of Booker winning the Club Ladder and the L. du Garde Peach trophy.

The National Ladder steward, Ed Johnston, said the best single flight of the year was by Roy Pentecost, Cotswold GC, who collected 3000pts for a 519km triangle in his Cirrus. Essex GC seemed to get Diamonds every day

during their stay at Aboyne, amongst them Tony Manwaring and Mike Jefferyes, though Ian Stromberg from Yorkshire with a 30600ft gain is still the best that Ed knew off.

"But," he summed up, "for my money Peter O'Donald's total of over 1970km in four flights was most impressive. However, it was Dave Nunn's speed over a 506 and a 470km which put Peter behind him in the end."

Open Ladder

Leading pilot	*Club*	*Flts*	*Pts*
1. D. Nunn	Lasham	4	8868
2. P. O'Donald	Cambridge Univ	4	8116
3. R. Pentecost	Cotswold	4	8004
4. J. Bridge	Essex	4	7918
5. M. B. Jefferyes	Essex	4	7549
6. F. J. Shephard	Booker	4	7298

Club Ladder

Leading pilot	*Club*	*Flts*	*Pts*
1. M. F. Cuming	Booker	4	6011
2. K. Barker	Bristol & Glos	3	3834
3. D. Taylor	Yorkshire	4	3360
4. G. McAndrew	Booker	1	2257
5. J. Ellis	Coventry	4	1825
6. A. Sheridan	Yorkshire	2	1500

RAFGSA FATALITY

The Rev (Sqd Ldr) Michael Parkyn, a member of the RAFGSA Bannerdown GC, was killed at RAF Hullavington on August 9 when the Eagle he was flying solo crashed after a winch cable break. On going to press the accident investigation was not yet complete and no further details were available.

OBITUARIES

Ken Fripp



Ken Fripp died suddenly on October 4 after returning with his wife from a visit to their youngest son in Canada, where they had spent three happy weeks.

Ken was born 70 years ago in Catford, where his father was a distributor of cigarettes and confectionery. Whilst still a schoolboy at Alleyn's College, Dulwich, he built his first flying machine, a biplane hang glider. There exists a photograph of it being towed behind his father's car on Dulwich Common, but it is not clear whether it actually flew. After leaving school, his first job was that of confectionery salesman, at which he was not particularly successful because he was already infatuated with aviation. In consequence, he frequently wandered in the direction of airfields, sustained by his samples. He soon found his true vocation by getting a job with Short Bros at Rochester, where he worked on the half-scale model of the Stirling.

When the war came, he enlisted in the Royal Air Force, finding plenty of scope for his talents for repair and modification. He was fortunate to survive, for on one occasion, he was travelling in a Dominie which went gently aground on a Scottish hill in thick weather, leaving its inhabitants totally unscathed. After the RAF, he went to Airspeeds, in charge of the final inspection of Oxford/Consul conversions and later working on the Ambassador. It was at this time that, with Ron Clear (Airspeed's chief test pilot) and Bert Parslow, he started the Portsmouth Gliding Club where he flew his greatly beloved Kite I, although he had indulged in a certain amount of illicit gliding during the war and had instructed at the ATC school at Portsmouth airfield. He was also active with the Southdown Gliding Club, then flying from the Seven Sisters site.

After Airspeeds, he went to F. G. Miles, to work on the Sparrowjet and then on Hugh Kendall's two-seater K-1 glider, otherwise known as "The Crabpot". Ken was building the wooden fuselage, which was to be fitted with wings made of "Durestos". When it became apparent that these wings posed insurmountable problems, the whole project was moved over to Elliott's of Newbury, to be fitted with wooden wings.

In 1959, with the active encouragement of Philip Wills and Sir Charles Dorman, he set up Southdown Aero Services at Lasham, for the maintenance, repair and occasional construction of gliders. With his eldest son, Mike, and Bert Parslow, it was a happy team. Initially, the gliders were, of course, wooden but diversification came rapidly with Sir Peter Scott's order for the first HP-14 to be built in the UK. This all-metal machine was a beautiful example although the type was never much of a success. Other one-offs included a magnificent replica of Sir George Cayley's flying machine. This was based on Sir George's original sketches and writings, as interpreted by John Sproule and Ken, and was originally flown by Derek Piggott for an Anglia Television programme. Quite recently, it was retrieved from the museum to which Anglia had lent it, received an extensive overhaul, and took the air again for Francis Thompson's Imax film on the history of flight. So Ken helped to confirm, in the most convincing fashion possible, Sir George's title as the father of aviation.

Meanwhile, the expertise of the firm had expanded to deal with motor gliders and modern materials. A conversation with Harald Penrose (former chief test pilot of Westlands), who had become enthused by the possibilities of microlights, caused Ken to investigate the French Pipistrelle. The upshot was Southdown Aerostructure, set up to manufacture the machine in the UK, relying on the parent company's skill in working with GRP. There was then a long pause, mainly occupied with restressing the machine to satisfy BCAR Section S, but at least Ken saw the first sales of the Southdown Pipistrelle.

This brief account of his career does little to indicate the immense pleasure he took in "messing about with flying machines", whether they were sailplanes, motor gliders or replica SE-5s in Ireland. He was a competent glider pilot, but found little time to practice. Nevertheless, until a few years ago, he would test fly any extensive rebuilds. Nor were his interests solely confined to aviation: he built his own boat and enjoyed sailing too. But, again, his tendency to turn up at Lasham almost seven days per week – even with the rather thin excuse that somebody had to feed the company cat – kept the utilisation of the boat very low.

He had a delightful sense of humour and was very good company. Above all, he was a craftsman who loved beautifully made things, and he lavished his talents on re-builds and replicas of vintage gliders. And he was kind and charming, and deservedly enjoyed a very large circle of good friends extending almost wherever gliding is practiced.

It was his good fortune to spend most of his working life doing things which he enjoyed and in helping others to enjoy their flying. But his greatest fortune lay in his family: his love for Dot was plain for all to see and it sustained him up to his last moments. He is survived not only by Dot but by eight children, 23 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

It was a privilege and a pleasure to have known him and to have worked with him: he is sorely missed.

F. G. IRVING

Michael Richard Carlton

Michael Carlton and his wife were killed in an accident in Zimbabwe on August 30 when the aeroplane in which they were passengers crashed soon after take off. He was 43 years-old.

He had considerable success as a businessman and a lifelong interest in flying which started with gliding in the RAFGSA. He gained his A & B certificate on August 12, 1959; a date that in later life would have presented him with a conflict of interests. Once he

1987 BGA CONFERENCE

The Annual General Meeting, dinner-dance and conference weekend next year will be Saturday, February 28, and Sunday, March 1, and the venue once again will be the Old Swan Hotel, Harrogate, Yorkshire.

We have asked the Yorkshire Club to repeat their successful hosting of the event earlier this year and hope to attract even more members next time. Full programme and booking forms will be available shortly and please contact the Leicester office if you would like to have a copy posted direct to your home.



had started his business career he qualified as a power pilot and quickly gained experience to the extent that the aeroplane was preferred to the motor car as a means of transport.

After his return to gliding he soon showed his aptitude as a pilot and his extraordinarily competitive nature. In October of 1973 he re-soloed in gliders at Portmoak and completed his Bronze C in the same week. Soon afterwards he made plans to fly his King Air to Australia at the time of the World Championships in January 1974. However, the fuel crisis stopped that plan but Michael went anyway; a sign of his generosity was that he took his then gliding instructor with him.

In Australia his progress was rapid. He completed the Silver C from Benalla in a Libelle and a few days later flew a 300km O/R for his Gold distance and Diamond goal. He bought a Kestrel 19 and a Caproni Calif to enable him to take further instruction. That September he completed the Gold C with one Diamond.

His next gliding adventure was a trip to South Africa taking both the Kestrel and the Calif to the National Championships. During this visit he gained Diamond distance and went on to get a UK National record by flying a 750km triangle; the first time a task of this size had been flown in South Africa. The flight, which was for a time a world record at a speed of 109.8km/hr, still stands.

He completed all three Diamonds in October 1979 and became thoroughly involved with record flying and competitions. He gained the single-seater 500km, goal-and-return record in 1980 and currently holds eight of the 12 British National Multi-seater records. He went on to manage and to give considerable financial support to the British Team at two World Championships in Germany (1981) and in the USA (1983).

Having achieved so much in a relatively short time he needed the stimulus of a new interest and as well as flying helicopters he turned to the preservation of "vintage" British jet aircraft of which his first was a Hawker Hunter. The collection, all of which were in flying condition and frequently demonstrated at displays, eventually included another Hunter, a Gloucester Meteor and two Jet Provosts with a Sea Hawk to be added this year. Needless to say he was qualified to fly all these aircraft himself.

The untimely death of Michael is not only a tragic loss to those who knew him but also to aviation in general. The drive, energy and enthusiasm he had for everything he did will ensure that his memory lives on.

W. G. SCULL

AT DUXFORD ONLY NOW

Cambridge University GC no longer operate from Cambridge Airport, Marshalls, and visiting pilots are advised not to land there but are welcome at Duxford, provided circuits and landings are on the south side – the north is for powered aircraft.

GLIDING CERTIFICATES

The one thousand five hundredth Diamond goal on the BGA register goes to D. J. Phillips, well known as "Phil", the manager of Lasham Gliding Society since 1982.

The first badge leg to be gained in a self-sustaining sailplane is a Diamond height from Sutton Bank by John Cadman in his Turbo Ventus. This is the third Diamond for John, who has been gliding 40 years and gained Silver Badge No. 154 in 1948 in the days when gliding certificates were inscribed "British Empire" on the cover.

Although many badge claims are returned to applicants for proper completion of the documentation or for further evidence, very few are rejected in the end. Most of these are cases of optimistic claims when the performance actually falls just short of the requisite distance, time or height gain, and the claimant usually accepts the rejection with good grace.

The remainder of the rejections arise because some essential evidence is missing, whereupon sometimes the claimant indignantly complains that the "BGA doesn't believe I did it!" On the contrary, it is acknowledged that numerous genuine badge flights (and records) do indeed go unrecognised, and remain for the personal satisfaction of the pilot, because FAI awards can only be made on the principle that to receive public recognition of a soaring performance, you have to produce evidence that would stand the test of public scrutiny.

Gordon Camp, *FAI certificates officer*

ALL THREE DIAMONDS

No.	*Name*	*Club*	*1986*
213	K. J. Cadman	Coventry	7.9

DIAMOND DISTANCE

No.	*Name*	*Club*	*1986*
1/332	Gillian Spreckley	Booker	18.6
1/333	G. R. Davey	Bicester	24.8

DIAMOND GOAL

No.	*Name*	*Club*	*1986*
2/1489	T. B. Sargeant	Norfolk	17.7
2/1490	B. M. Nicholson	Lasham	3.7
2/1491	J. L. Richardson	Four Counties	24.8
2/1492	J. G. Wright	Bicester	24.8
2/1493	J. D. Peck	Bicester	24.8
2/1494	P. A. Green	Lasham	18.6
2/1495	T. H. Brown	Bicester	24.8
2/1496	C. J. Shawdon	Booker	24.8
2/1497	M. P. Ellis	Burn	31.8
2/1498	G. P. Hibberd	Portsmouth Naval	31.8
2/1499	Geralyn Macfadyen	Cotswold	9.9
2/1500	D. J. Phillips	Lasham	9.9
2/1501	R. Palmer	Avon	9.9

DIAMOND HEIGHT

No.	*Name*	*Club*	*1986*
3/729	M. B. Judkins	Imperial College (in Italy)	10.7
3/730	K. J. Cadman	Coventry	7.9

GOLD BADGE

No.	*Name*	*Club*	*1986*
1161	T. B. Sargeant	Norfolk	17.7
1162	G. L. Pratt	East Sussex	18.7
1163	J. P. Galloway	SGU	20.7
1164	A. E. Gee	Lasham	16.7
1165	Diana King	Midland	24.7
1166	D. A. Booth	Coventry	25.7
1167	B. C. Connolly	Deeside	26.7
1168	J. L. Richardson	Four Counties	24.8
1169	J. D. Peck	Bicester	24.8
1170	C. J. Shawdon	Booker	24.8
1171	M. P. Ellis	Burn	31.8

GOLD HEIGHT

Name	*Club*	*1986*
A. E. Gee	Lasham	16.7
D. A. Booth	Coventry	25.7
W. Gordon	Fulmar	20.7
B. C. Connolly	Deeside	26.7
Allison Symon	Deeside	1.9
D. N. K. Symon	Deeside	2.9
D. Jones	Ouse	5.9
G. C. Millar	SGU	7.9
C. T. McNeill	Fulmar	20.9
A. J. W. Bauld	SGU	20.7

GOLD DISTANCE

Name	*Club*	*1986*
T. B. Sargeant	Norfolk	17.7
G. L. Pratt	East Sussex	18.7
J. P. Galloway	SGU	20.7
Diana King	Midland	24.7
J. L. Richardson	Four Counties	24.8
B. M. Nicholson	Lasham	3.7
J. G. Wright	Bicester	24.8
J. D. Peck	Bicester	24.8
P. A. Green	Lasham	18.6
T. H. Brown	Bicester	24.8
C. J. Shawdon	Booker	24.8
M. P. Ellis	Burn	31.8
G. P. Hibberd	Portsmouth Naval	31.8
D. J. Phillips	Lasham	9.9

SILVER BADGE

No.	*Name*	*Club*	*1986*
7263	S. W. Larkin	Essex & Suffolk	20.7
7264	Veronique Vroege	Two Rivers	16.7
7265	S. A. Adlard	Midland	4.8
7266	S. Noad	Kent	5.8
7267	M. A. Hayes	Bicester	8.8
7268	S. Pugh	Booker	24.7
7269	C. W. A. Wheeler	Anglia	8.8
7270	Vanessa J. Mayo	Cotswold	9.8
7271	W. A. Cresswell	Wyvern	9.8
7272	M. D. Bullard	Newmarket & Notts	9.8
7273	W. R. MacIsaac	SGU	20.7
7274	R. Gay	Booker	15.8
7275	A. E. Boyle	Cambridge Univ	16.8
7276	C. S. D. Law	Essex	16.8
7277	S. Wilson	Wrekin	10.8
7278	D. J. Greenhill	Imperial College	18.6
7279	M. C. Pierpoint	East Sussex	17.7
7280	M. B. St Clair-Gribble	Cotswold	8.8
7281	P. G. Codd	Essex & Suffolk	5.8
7282	J. A. Lloyd	Lasham	9.8
7283	C. Croall	Burn	9.8
7284	R. F. Jones	Shropshire	17.8
7285	P. J. Gill	Staffordshire	17.8
7286	P. M. Lenex	Norfolk	16.8
7287	S. J. Boyden	622 GS	18.6
7288	J. Young	Nene Valley	27.8
7289	S. Reynolds	Cambridge Univ	24.8
7290	B. M. Bentley	Cotswold	20.8
7291	G. W. Letts	South Wales	24.8

1986 NATIONALS PRIORITY LIST

PRODUCING THE LISTS

At the end of the competition season the Nationals qualifying lists for the next season, to decide the order of eligibility if any of the Nationals are oversubscribed, will be compiled and utilised according to the following procedure. First two lists are compiled:

Priority List

1. For each pilot competing in the Nationals a performance index is calculated by dividing the number of competitors in the Class by the pilot's position in that Class.
2. Performance indices are similarly calculated for British pilots flying in foreign competitions approved by the Competitions Committee as equivalent to British National status, and for British pilots flying in World Championships (if any that year).
3. A list is then compiled, commencing with the British Team pilots in order of their World Championship performance indices (if relevant) then all the other pilots are added in descending order of their performance index from the various National status competitions. Any ties are resolved in the first instance by giving British Nationals preference over foreign competitions, remaining ties being resolved in favour of the Class with the greatest total of daily winner's point. Foreign competitors are then deleted plus all except the highest position of any pilots who appear more than once.
4. Finally the previous year's Priority List is merged alternately from position 26 onwards. Again where pilots appear more than once only their highest position is retained. Entries resulting from the merging of the previous year's priority list are also deleted if their presence on that list was due to a carry forward from a previous Priority List and not a direct Competition performance.

Regional Promotion List

1. From the final handicapped results of each Regionals Class pilots are listed in descending order of their positions. Any pilots in the top 20 of the Priority List are annotated accordingly, and they are given a performance index calculated as described above. Other Regionals pilot's performance indices are calculated as though any top 20 pilots who beat them had not flown in the competition.
2. Pilots are listed in descending order of performance index. Those appearing more than once retain only their highest position. The previous year's Promotion List is merged alternately from position 26 onwards, with duplicated names retaining only their highest position. Entries resulting from the merging of the previous year's Promotion List are also deleted if their presence on that list was due to a carry forward from a previous Promotion List and not a direct Competition performance. Finally any pilots who are in the top 28 places of the Priority List are deleted from the published Promotion List but retained on file for merging in the following year.

Allocation of Places

If any of the following year's Nationals has more than the prescribed 40 applicants, 28 places will be allocated to the 28 applicants who are highest on the Priority List. Up to 12 places will be allocated to pilots in the top 100 places on the Promotion List in order of that list. Any remaining places will first be allocated to any applicants from the Priority List and then to applicants below 100 on the Promotion List in order of those lists.

We are still waiting for one club to send in their Regionals results for July! The Promotion List will appear in the next issue and will also be circulated *via* the BGA newsletter.

J. D. BENOIST,
BGA Competitions Committee

1	Spreckley, B. T.	(15)	24	Throssell, M. G.	(15)	47	Hutchinson, S.	(S)	70	McAndrew, G.	(15)	93	Clarke, M. A.	(O)
2	Wells, M. D.	(S)	25	Gorringe, J. P.	(S)	48	Norrie, A. J.	(O)	71	Batty, C. J.	(QL)	94	Cox, T.	(S)
3	Kay, A. E.	(O)	26	Pozerskis, P.	(O)	49	Jefferyes, M. B.	(QL)	72	Smith, M. J.	(S)	95	Woodford, J.	(QL)
4	Wills, T. J.	(15)	27	Murdock, M.	(15)	50	Redman, S. J.	(15)	73	Ellis, J.	(O)	96	Cook, P. G.	(O)
5	Watt, D. S.	(S)	28	Smith, E. R.	(S)	51	Innes, D.	(QL)	74	Farmer, A. T.	(15)	97	Reading, P.	(S)
6	Glossop, J. D. J.	(O)	29	Davis, A. J.	(QL)	52	Rowland, C. D.	(O)	75	Starkey, C. G.	(QL)	98	Scott, T.	(QL)
7	Garton, C.	(15)	30	Davies, F. J.	(O)	53	King, P. A.	(15)	76	Boyden, M. V.	(O)	99	Tapson, B.	(O)
8	White, S. A.	(S)	31	Jones, R.	(QL)	54	Williamson, J. S.	(S)	77	Ashdown, I.	(15)	100	Caunt, D.	(QL)
9	Hartley, K. J.	(O)	32	Dall, R.	(15)	55	Moulang, A. P.	(QL)	78	Benoist, J. D.	(QL)	101	Keogh, B.	(QL)
10	Fitchett, B.	(15)	33	Bally, J. D.	(S)	56	Brown, H. F.	(O)	79	Brice, P. F.	(O)	102	Weston, J.	(15)
11	Foot, R. A.	(O)	34	Roberts, D. G.	(O)	57	Jones, P.	(15)	80	Zealley, T. S.	(15)	103	Cunningham, G.	(QL)
12	Young, M. J.	(15)	35	Forrest, B.	(QL)	58	Aspland, W.	(S)	81	Cole, R. A.	(QL)	104	Camp, G. W. G.	(S)
13	Campbell, D. R.	(S)	36	Sheard, P. G.	(15)	59	Buckner, K.	(QL)	82	Hayes, D.	(S)	105	Charlotte-Greem, J. A.	(O)
14	Metcalf, G. C.	(S)	37	Hood, L.	(S)	60	Lyttleton, C. C.	(O)	83	Hamill, E.	(15)			
15	Edyvean, J.	(O)	38	Cook, I.	(15)	61	Stingemore, G.	(15)	84	Docherty, T. P.	(O)			
16	Morris, G.	(15)	39	Rollings, C. C.	(S)	62	Cooper, B.	(QL)	85	Whitehead, P.	(QL)			
17	Cardiff, J. D.	(S)	40	Stuart, T.	(15)	63	Macfadyen, T. E.	(15)	86	Langrick, J.	(S)			
18	Lysakowski, E. R.	(O)	41	Delafield, J.	(QL)	64	Joint, T.	(S)	87	Alldis, C.	(QL)			
19	May, R.	(15)	42	Stewart, K.	(S)	65	Fleming, A. M.	(O)	88	Baker, R. J.	(15)			
20	Smith, D. A.	(S)	43	Hill, D. J. M.	(15)	66	Bastin, J.	(15)	89	Tull, V. F. G.	(O)			
21	Taylor, J. R.	(O)	44	Pozerskis, A.	(O)	67	Webb, M. J.	(O)	90	Gaisford, P.	(QL)			
22	Elliott, B.	(15)	45	Kay, W.	(QL)	68	Hawkins, Pam	(15)	91	Dawson, M.	(15)			
23	Durham, M. W.	(S)	46	Watson, A. J.	(15)	69	Smith, G.	(S)	92	Clarke, A. J.	(S)			

S = 1986 Standard Class Nationals; 15 = 1986 15 Metre Class Nationals; O = 1986 Open Class Nationals; QL = 1985 Nationals results.

7292	B. A. Hutchins	Cambridge Univ	16.8	7310	A. Foxon	Coventry	24.8	7328	P. Aitken	Kent	20.8
7293	D. Lees	Cambridge Univ	20.8	7311	R. Priborsky	Surrey & Hants	20.8	7329	D. Winser	South Wales	4.9
7294	M. Cuming	Kestrel	15.8	7312	D. Hoolahan	Kent	24.8	7330	R. S. Johns	Devon & Somerset	31.8
7295	B. Sedgwick	Herefordshire	24.8	7313	M. R. L. Rowland	Oxford	23.8	7331	J. Bell	Borders	24.8
7296	C. Liddiard	Surrey & Hants	9.8	7314	G. D. D. Campion	Buckminster	5.8	7332	A. K. Carver	Bath & Wilts	31.8
7297	J. Bell	Booker	16.8	7315	N. G. Rhind	Bicester	24.8	7333	C. S. Oakes	Oxford	4.9
7298	M. H. Gagg	Wrekin	17.8	7316	M. Round	Avon	24.8	7334	C. S. Broad	Oxford	7.9
7299	D. H. Smith	Avon	6.7	7317	S. A. Crust	Trent Valley	31.8	7335	S. P. Brooks	Wyvern	7.7
7300	R. L. F. Darby	Peterboro' & Spalding	23.8	7318	J. W. Scott	Avon	31.8	7336	J. Hanlon	Oxford	3.9
7301	B. J. Gage	Devon & Somerset	16.8	7319	T. C. Doyle	Two Rivers	13.7	7337	A. E. Peel	Devon & Somerset	17.8
7302	D. G. Harris	Cambridge Univ	15.8	7320	Sheila Morris	Bristol & Glos	22.7	7338	M. Johnson	Northumbria	24.5
7303	D. J. Wetton	Bristol & Glos	31.8	7321	G. A. Maddox	North Wales	16.5	7339	P. J. Haseler	Avon	9.9
7304	D. Van Hee	Surrey & Hants	20.8	7322	R. W. Culley	Brackley	23.8	7340	A. C. Kingswood	Cambridge Univ	9.9
7305	A. Jelden	Booker	24.8	7323	M. P. Worster	Bristol & Glos	20.8	7341	N. P. Marriott	Portsmouth Naval	9.9
7306	R. Ellwood-Wade	Chilterns	23.8	7324	G. C. Keall	Buckminster	24.8	7342	A. J. Rooney	Dorset	7.9
7307	A. J. Miles	Lasham	20.8	7325	C. J. Stothard	Yorkshire	2.9	7343	J. E. Lambert	Kent	9.9
7308	J. A. Pain	Kent	24.8	7326	S. E. Room	Wolds	31.8	7344	A. C. Broadbridge	Avon	7.9
7309	R. M. Worth	Peterboro' & Spalding	23.8	7327	R. J. Brown	Kent	20.8	7345	S. Maddex	Newark & Notts	31.8

BOOK REVIEWS

The World's Vintage Sailplanes 1900-1945
By Martin Simons, published by Kookaburra Technical Publications. Details for ordering the book are given in their advertisement on this page.)

How timely that this beautiful book should await my return from the largest ever gathering of vintage gliders! But for that one word "vintage" this work could have been written forty years ago. That it appears now shows well the strength of interest in gliding history today.

Its researches have taken the author some twenty years, so his early efforts pre-date the current vintage movement, itself springing from the commemorative "Itford 50" meeting of 1972, out of which arose the following year at HusBos the Vintage Glider Club of Great Britain – around 90 gliders at Lasham all over 35 years of age! Nor, incidentally, will I ever forget seeing over forty of these in a single vast thermal directly over Lasham on August 5 – the very day my personal copy was inscribed by the author in Adelaide.

This book tells all. It tells in great detail the development of the aircraft, and thus our sport, over almost four decades; the very early pre-World War 1 gliders, the beginning of real hill soaring (Martens' Vampyr of 1921), on through Itford the following year, the Pruefling, the Storch and Darmstadt series – Groenhoff's great and beautiful Fafnir – the Grunaus, Kronfeld's mighty Austria, the Condor series, the Moazagotl, the Mus, Rhönsperber, Minimoa, Kranich, the legendary Hortens, Rheinland, Reiher – on through the D-30 Cirrus, which achieved a measured 1:37.5 at 77km/h in the *middle 1930s . . .!* It is all there with text both technical and anecdotal – and full of interest.

Hardly surprising, of course, the theme is German, but tribute is paid to Hungary (Nemere and Karakan), Poland (PWS series), the USA is represented with the RS-1 Zanonia (where is the RJ-5?) and various Schweizer types; Switzerland the Spyr and Moswey series, and included are a dozen or so English types representing our first true sailplane designer, Bill Manuel, and our foremost manufacturer, Fred Slingsby – and credit is rightly given to J. S. Sproule for his Kadet and Tutor; the Grunau derived Kite is there, and even the Cambridge 1 and 2 receive a mention – remember the well-known "Pons"?

All of this, some 80 basic types or series, running to hundreds of subtypes, modifications and variations are all brought together in a common style, each with a fine line three-view drawing – (Bless you, Martin, to a *common scale*, a boon to the modeller!) – each with some *extra* detail of interest such as airfoil sections, fuselage frames, airbrakes, individual modifications and so on.

The pages are not crowded, yet there is no wasted space; the text is accompanied by almost 250 black and white photographs, many, even to this "buff", hitherto unpublished. A novel feature is a "Drawing reliability code" – 100% accuracy is not claimed – but the (D) grades look pretty good and I cannot fault my (B) graded Petrel.

But those forty years have added the word "vintage" and the 16 superb pages of colour (65 plates) are evidence of how much remains today, for many of the subject aircraft were flying at Lasham.

There must be many now possessing Diamonds who have never flown a wooden sailplane. This book will tell you all, for it is a monumental piece of research; a glance at the acknowledgements and bibliography will show how much co-operation the author has enjoyed. It is beautifully produced on quality paper and is wrapped in a splendid jacket featuring, in colour, the graceful Hungarian Nemere.

So if I have a tiny regret it is that there is no mention of the great gliders of World War II; the Hotspur , Hadrian, Horsa, Hengist and Hamilcar; the CG-13A, the Gotha 242 and the miraculous Me 323 of my schooldays. Some were built in vast numbers, were tested and flown by gliding folk – (and I expect a few soared on occasions!) – and a flyable example of any I mention would be a vintage treasure now!

This book will only cost you a little more than the price of an aerotow, yet it will last you far, far longer than your slowest 500km. There may be a literal or two, but I've not noticed any, nor can I perceive any significant errors. Buy this book for your Christmas reading – you will enjoy your sport the more for the knowledge you will gain, and the context it will provide around your modern gliding.

Strongly recommended, this lovely book will take its place foremost among the great works on the history of gliding . . . what now, Martin, the *next* forty years?
MIKE RUSSELL

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Gliding by Derek Piggott, published by A. & C. Black and available from the BGA at £11.95 including p&p.

I have always looked upon Derek Piggott's **Gliding** as the definitive reference book and my copy is one of the original 1958 issue with a Skylark on the dust cover.

I first met Derek on an instructors' course at Detling in the early fifties when he was running the ATC gliding instructing school. I was impressed with the way he tackled the subject then and the latest paperback edition (fifth) of **Gliding** carries on this excellence.

But this is really a new book with only one or two of the original chapters. Small alterations were possible for the various editions and reprints, but Derek did not have the opportunity to re-write the whole book and re-illustrate it until this year.

This very comprehensive handbook covers the basic training right through to the author's latest ideas on thermalling techniques with a wealth of information on all aspects of soaring and cross-country flying.

Derek is one of those people who writes as he speaks with great clarity and an ability to put over the subject with admirable simplicity. Whatever your stage of gliding experience, you will find value in this book.

Beginning Gliding by Derek Piggott, published by A. & C. Black and available from the BGA at £10.95 including p&p.

Also published in paperback on the same day as the new edition of *Gliding* is its companion, **Beginning Gliding**. This is a much more basic training manual and is a must for *ab-initios* as well as for power pilots converting to sailplanes.

It is full of excellent diagrams to show how to enter (and recover) from spins, to fly properly judged circuits, to correct aerotowing faults as well as covering many other problems the inexperienced glider pilot faces.

Again it has the magical Piggott quality of getting the subject across on paper and even if you aren't new to gliding this book will be sure to sharpen your technique.
B. H. BRYCE-SMITH

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YOUR LETTERS

WHEN DO YOU NEED OXYGEN?

Dear Editor,

Dr Wilson's article on oxygen in the June issue, p122, gave cause for thought. His medical facts are impressive and ought to be remembered but my own limited experience does not bear out his conclusions.

He tells us that oxygen is recommended at 10000ft and mandatory at 12000ft. I am appalled to read that the BGA will not apparently accept a 3000m Gold C climb unless oxygen is used. (Oh dear, will my CFI be calling me over for a little talk?)

My first experience of altitude was over 50 years ago when I went up Pike's Peak, 14000ft. I was fine, my car hated it. On the summit I enjoyed the view with a few score other people of all shapes and sizes – and a steam funicular train. I ran 1000 yards uphill (I was young then) to see what happened. I pitched my tent a little below the summit to see the sunrise (I overslept!). There were no ill effects.

My Gold C height 40 years ago in America took me to 14500ft in cloud. No oxygen, no ill effects.

In a familiarisation flight at Waikerie, happily circling in a vast thermal under a small cu, my P1 suggested we should break off as we were at 14500ft without oxygen.

In April 1981 at the Long Mynd umpteen people went to 14 or 15000ft asl with oxygen. I turned on my own oxygen at 15000ft and climbed to 19000ft.

All this applies to flying in easy conditions. If I was in turbulence or had problems of any sort I would turn on oxygen sooner.

Acclimatisation for mountaineering, or living at high altitude, is something quite different and has no application to gliding. If you limit each day's gain of height, the blood will have a chance to grow more and more red corpuscles to pump the necessary quantity of oxygen into the system from the reduced supply available. Above a certain height (is it 21000ft?) the higher you climb each day the better – provided you descend to sleep *below* the critical height. Once you start sleeping above the critical altitude you will be living on capital, and sooner or later will be knackered and obliged to go down to base. Some mountaineers fail to acclimatise above a certain height: next year he may acclimatise well and reach the top.

Dr Wilson states that the process of acclimatisation takes weeks or months. It does not. I am not a mountaineer but I have trekked in the Himalayas and acclimatisation is taken extremely seriously by the trek leaders and Sherpas. They are concerned with acute mountain sickness; easy to cure – you go down; rarely fatal. The problem is oedema of the lungs or brain, *ie* retention of body fluid, but it won't help Platypus' problem.

At the age of 66 (and with bronchitis) I gasped and panted my way over a pass of 17900ft, very steep and rough and not nice at all. A couple of days later I enjoyed a stroll up a steep hill of 12000ft to see a marvellous view of Everest from the top at 18200ft. The outside temperature was not −20°C but more like −5°C.

None of this has much relevance to gliding. Where does all this reminiscence leave us? Answer – we are all different and sauce for the goose might turn out to be curtains for the gander.

If you are in good health and have no problems with heart and lungs or arteries you will probably come to no harm without oxygen at heights up to 15000ft asl. But remember, when you go high you are venturing into unknown regions. Watch out.

CHARLES WINGFIELD, *Bicton Heath, Shrewsbury*

GLIDING IN AUSTRALIA

Dear Editor,

I feel I must take issue with Justin Wills' comments to the BGA Conference, reported in the June issue, p118, about the constraints placed on gliding in Australia.

Justin claims these are "arguably the most unreasonable . . . anywhere": his arguments are weak at best, and his assumptions outdated. Allow me to comment, if I may, on the three areas of cloud flying, controlled airspace and mixed (power and gliding) operations.

Glider pilots, like all fliers of recreational aircraft and 98.7% of Australian PPL holders, are limited to flight in VMC. One reason for this is that there is no perceived need for an instrument rating by all but 1.3% of PPL holders, due to our generally good visibility and high ceilings (when cloud exists). No benefit accrues from flying in cloud unless a significantly higher altitude or faster climb may be achieved, and these are rare. Gold height is normally achieved in thermal below cloud, and even Diamonds have been won in thermal in some areas. In IMC it is accepted here that all traffic is known to the IFR pilot. I can only think of two occasions in the 13 years I have flown in Australia (a total of 1200 flights and 900hrs) when I would have wanted to cloud fly, and I was not disadvantaged in any way by remaining clear of cloud.

Commercial airports are **not** "surrounded by large chunks of forbidden airspace", though of course the international and major domestic airports – those served by RPT jets – have terminal control zones/areas. Until a few years ago (when traffic density no longer permitted it) Bacchus Marsh gliders were able to obtain a release of part of the Melbourne control area (=TMA) to 5000ft on weekends. I could not imagine Booker getting such treatment. With the introduction of jets to country centres we are developing procedures to grant either airspace release or airways clearances to gliders wishing to use their control zones/areas. Gliders have operated on occasions from Alice Springs airport with the full co-operation of Air Traffic Control.

The policy of discouraging mixed power/gliding operations, which dated from the early 1960s, was officially dismantled in 1984 after

LASHAM GLIDING SOCIETY

CHIEF FLYING INSTRUCTOR

Lasham Gliding Society seeks a **Chief Flying Instructor** to take over from Derek Piggott who retires in 1987.

To fill this prestigious and demanding post will require someone of wide instructional experience and considerable talent.

Candidates should preferably be CFIs already and should have the skills necessary to manage a professional flying staff of up to 6, as well as to monitor and control a pool of 115 full and assistant rated instructors.

The successful candidate, who will report to the General Manager, will be responsible for all aspects of flying at a club with 800 members and 140 gliders on site. It is unlikely that anyone under 35 will have sufficient experience or maturity to handle the work involved.

Applicants should send a brief CV to

The Chairman
Lasham Gliding Society
Lasham Airfield
Alton
Hants GU34 5SS

marking the envelope "Private and Confidential"

several years of gradual erosion: we now have an official policy which encourages development of parallel glider runways if traffic is too dense for operation from within the existing runway strip, while winch and autotow are also catered for. At Camden, in a General Aviation Control Zone, there were over 23000 movements by the gliding clubs last year.

In short, because our country is not littered with military aerodromes, low-level airways, and other restricted areas, we have a great degree of freedom without needing to cloud fly, cross airways without circling so long as we maintain VMC, plan tasks around military areas, etc. Gliding is treated by the Department of Aviation as a legitimate recreational flying activity, entitled to reasonable access to airspace and able to administer itself responsibly within the agreed delegations.

Of course, our climate does have its own constraints, and dehydration or heat stress is one of those. Pilots must learn to cope with the heat and dryness, and compensate by drinking enough to avoid dehydration. However, usable strong thermals down to 300ft are not found and if Justin is tempted to retain full ballast in a small rough thermal this low let him beware of the consequences!

Finally to the matter of the accidents at Benalla in January. The pilot of the DG-300 in the collision (a European pilot) was turning right to join the Discus's left-hand thermal and claimed he did not see the Discus. Racing in blue conditions requires especially good lookout and this is taught vigorously by the GFA. As to the low finish rule, both the French and Yugoslav pilots were attempting to *circumvent* the rule by planning a deliberate straight-in approach.

Ingo Renner's point is that whilst mountain soaring is a valid gliding activity, it is inappropriate to superimpose on it the risks incurred in cross-country racing for a World Championships – basically the reason why cloud flying was excluded from World Championships after Vrsac in 1972 and duration records ceased to be recognised after 1954. The cost in pilots and machines is too great. Explore, by all means, but not engage in competitive flying there.

I look forward to meeting Justin, and other old friends, at Benalla in January, or elsewhere in Australia at any time.

MIKE CLEAVER, *Inspector (Sport Aviation), Department of Aviation, Canberra, Australia.*

Justin Wills replies: I must admit to being pleasantly surprised that someone in the DoA actually flies gliders and reads S&G! Mike's argument in essence is that constraints on gliding in Australia, *eg* regarding cloud flying and penetration of controlled airspace, are justified because gliding cannot demonstrate a need for such freedom. The logical conclusion of this argument is that everything should be prohibited unless it can be proved to be necessary to the powers-that-be, *ie* the Department of Aviation. In this context the comment that DoA regard gliding as "a legitimate recreational-flying acitivity" may be considered perhaps to be of genuine importance rather than the cause for indignation that such a statement would produce in this country. However, my point was not to criticise the way gliding is administered in Australia – that is obviously for Australians to determine – but to point out how damaging this approach would be if adopted elsewhere.

RADIO AND AIRSPACE

Dear Editor,

The BGA made a supreme effort earlier this year to try and change the NATS proposals for the Upper Heyford Mandatory Radio Area. The most significant concession was that gliders were to be permitted to use the civil aviation frequency 128.55. In the event the poor soaring season has meant that many fewer penetrations have occurred than were expected. It may appear to some people that we have made a furore out of all proportion to the actual need.

Until the UHMRA was established our Association had avoided in every way radio as an access to otherwise sterile airspace. Indeed the use of radio itself was often used as part of the argument to deny the establishment of controlled airspace. The policy was established a long time ago. Just after the Second World War radio was barely an option for any but the heaviest aircraft. However the *Wills' doctrine for freedom of the air became our main guide from the late 1960s and the high cost of radio became an integral part of the argument.

The cost factor as an objection in its own right was embraced by gliding and the light aeroplane interests together. At that time the argument had merit, but today carries no weight with radio costs becoming smaller all the time. The Wills' doctrine in nearly every way guides the BGA today, and so it should, but have we overlooked the circumstances where costs are decreasing, changing the merit of the argument, while general aviation continues to increase its use of the radio.

Twenty years ago other sectional interests in aviation supported us against authority, Today we stand alone. We are the only group in step. In the meantime light aviation and others have joined up with authority. They have developed systems and procedures that suit themselves. No account has been taken of the special needs of gliders. Why should they be – we have excluded ourselves. Very few glider pilots have R/T licences. So 720 and 760 radios are installed in quite a proportion of genuine cross-country gliders, but it is illegal to use them except on the gliding frequencies. The cost of such equipment is lower as a proportion of the glider hull value than ever before.

If we begin to negotiate the proper use of radio in gliders tomorrow, it will take a long time to make an impression. If we wait until we are carried kicking and screaming into the radio age it will take for ever. The advent of UHMRA has opened a window which if used properly will help us into the future. We must not miss the opportunity.

Philip Wills once described the three gliding radio channels as giving gliders adequate communciation in normal flying circumstances. If he can hear us today he surely must be ashamed of the trivia, rubbish and competition gobbledegook which swamps these channels today. Yet at the same time the rest of aviation uses the balance of more than seven hundred channels, some devoted to aeroplane private clubs which are less than half the size of the London or Midland GCs.

We can no longer afford to live in the past. Radio is here to stay and the sooner we grasp the nettle the better.

VIC CARR, *Wrexham, Clwyd.*

*Wills' doctrine, see **Free as a Bird,** chapters 3 & 4.

THE SUCCESSFUL BAROGRAPH

Dear Editor,

Your correspondent Bob Rodwell takes me to task (October issue, p222) for advertising a barograph "that achieved successful badge flights". In my defence, I am sure that a swathe of instructors would be prepared to witness that I could not have achieved my Silver without *some* outside assistance. Perhaps the instrument had got into the habit of "staying-up" from previous and more competent owners.

Moreover the continuous ring of my telephone suggests to me that you have many readers only too eager to sample its special powers.

FRANCIS à COURT, *Blandford Forum, Dorset.*

MORE ON WINCHING

Dear Editor,

Nobody will dispute M E Newland-Smith's assertion (see the last issue, p222) that if a glider fails to gain adequate speed on take-off the pilots only option is to pull off. The stalling speed is increased by the weight of the cable but this is low (140lb for a 2000ft launch) compared with the pull on the cable (1100lbs).

When these are added the wing loading is more than doubled. A K-13 climbing at 50kt is between Min sink and best glide making manoeuvres such as correcting for drift safe.

Pilots and drivers have a lot to learn when a club moves to a powerful winch. If wing rocking is undesirable at 50kt then please use radio and have frequent discussions between the two ends of the cable to shorten the learning curve.

The van Gelder with its torque converter and speed controlling governor, Supacat with fluid coupling and torque control and yesterday's underpowered winches require totally different driver and pilot inputs. It is unwise to think of general principles: specific training is essential.

We would like to hear from any club using torque control. Why for example did the RAFGSA abandon its trial?

"Higher Launches" (August issue, p173) was only the start of discussions not the end of the argument. In five years time I will be surprised if it is not the method of choice by clubs who want to thump up the toughies without frightening off the delightful 463s or going to the expense of a professional winch driver.

GORDON PETERS, *Wellington, Somerset.*

WELDING PIANO WIRE

Dear Editor,

The rough surface of our strip, Templeton, requires the use of a solid/piano wire launch cable.

Our winch often finds difficulty in digesting the reef knots we use to repair breaks, thereby causing extra time, frustration and appalling language. We hear rumours of a system of butt welding. The BGA has nothing on file but has also heard tell of it.

We should be most grateful to receive any information and could arrange to visit any club using the system to study the technique and equipment involved. Information please to Swan Cottage, The Paddock, Penally, Dyfed, or Tel 08344225.

TONY COWLEY

THE MORTALITY OF GEL COATS

Dear Editor,

George Thelen has written a lengthy article (see the last issue, p226) which draws on his experience of shower stalls and sunburn, but before he jumped to his "high tech conclusions" he might have referred to the manufacturers and the German Airworthiness Authorities, who have no doubt been well aware of these problems for many years.

Thousands of FRP boats have been written off due to osmosis so the cause and prevention of these problems is well known. One of the snags he might have mentioned is that Kevlar has a high coefficient of expansion but that of graphite is zero, so a mixed laminate reduces itself to shavings after thermal cycling. There is no doubt that if you look after your glider like a Stradivarius it will last much longer, so in a sense everything he states is true, however this advice is already supplied by the manufacturer with the handling notes. So what's new pussycat?

BRENNIG JAMES, *Marlow Common, Bucks.*

A TASTE OF SUFFOLK

Dear Editor,

In a recent Inter-Club League competition I had to land in a stubble field in Suffolk. In seconds a house owner, who lived on the edge of the field, ran across and said "I heard a swoosh and saw you just missed my chimney pot." (There was at least a 100ft clearance.)

He took me to his telephone to ring for my crew. I then returned to my K-6E and was sitting serenely in the field when the farmer appeared. I made my apologies and he said "Well thas OK, but thas a good job you dint land in this field yesterday, cos we hant cut it." I hastily agreed with this profound statement.

COLIN SMITH, *Essex & Suffolk GC*

TO SOAR EARS

Dear Editor,

I couldn't agree more. (See October issue, p223).

FRUSTRATED K-8 PILOT

PROGRESS

A young gliding club, Dartmoor, holds its first course and proves its potential

Three years ago a group of dedicated men met in a pub (where else other than a church do dedicated men meet?) and a gliding club was formed. We had nothing except the cash in our pockets. A friendly farmer, Brian Bickell (now our president) rented us a huge chunk of almost virgin moorland (Dartmoor at its best or worst depending on whether you are a hairy legged walker or potential glider pilot). Some of us are both.

Captain Ivor Phillips, a retired Jumbo jet pilot, undertook for his sins to teach a motley collection of middle-aged ex-RAF, ex-matelots, ex-paratroopers, ex-submariners and even some young men how to take-off, fly and most important land a glider on this rather unwelcoming terrain.

Two full flying seasons have passed. We are still not all good pilots but as navvies we are unsurpassed! This year after surviving two nasty crisis (one was Ivor's serious illness) we decided to risk organising a course. By now our fleet of club gliders had grown to three, a T-21, K-7 and Swallow. The moor was now a rough but safe mile long runway and glory be we finally finished our cross runway. Our home built winch was as good as it ever would be. Our tractors, car and vans were mechanically sound, even if lumps of metal occasionally dropped off our older vehicles.

Tim Parsons of Devon & Somerset GC (like Ivor perhaps wishing to atone for his sins) offered to take the course. Eight of us turned up one bright Monday morning and did circuits and bumps, then Dartmoor fed up with our antics hit back. It rained, it rained and it rained. Our beautiful field was literally a lake. The next day was worse but on Wednesday Dartmoor forgave us.

For the next three days a near gale force easterly wind and baking sun produced conditions glider pilots dream about. Thermals abounded over newly harvested hay fields. A fantastic wave appeared along Dartmoor's west flank. For anyone who wanted a rough ride the turbulence over the Tavy valley made the most modern fairground ride seem tame. One record established for our field was a winch launch of 2600ft. We joked about "bus rides" to North Devon on the Dartmoor wave – one hour return to Okehampton.

One local farmer asked me what they "Nawsy Parkers" were doing over his fields circling for half an hour at a time and apparently only going upwards. "Wuz they spying on en?"

We were left with the knowledge that our site potential had been proven

Just as we were all assimilating the techniques of thermalling, wave flying, eyeballing, landings and remembering to "go to the hedge" (a local euphemism that) before what promised to be a longish flight, it was all over. We were left with a lot of happy memories and the knowledge that our site potential had been proven.

The steady flow of pilots from neighbouring clubs confirmed something we always knew, but perhaps could only be discovered in the intensive flying conditions of a course. Thank you Tim and the Devon & Somerset GC and our volunteer helpers Brian Cordier, John Bolt and Tom Richards.

LEARN TO FALL CORRECTLY

Dear Editor,

With reference to your article in the August issue, "Goodbye 284", p167, parachute landing falls are easily learnt. If any BGA member who wears a parachute would like instruction to learn the correct way (completely free! and will take only a few hours) at our centre – East Coast Parachute Centre, Oakington Barracks, Longstanton, Cambridgeshire (contact 'phone No. 0245 268772) please just ring to arrange.

Being a parachute centre we are occasionally asked to repack glider pilots' parachutes and are often amazed (and appalled) at how long has elapsed since the previous repack. Manufacturers of glider parachutes do recommend a repack cycle which should be adhered to, if known, The British Parachute Association's repack cycle for reserve parachutes is 90 days at the moment. I believe your members should be alerted to this fact (or reminded of it!).

V C SLATTERY, *BPA Instructor, Chelmsford, Essex*

"THE ARCHERS" HAVE NEGLECTED GLIDING

Dear Editor,

As a regular, but not besotted listener to "The Archers", it occurs to me to inquire why no gliders have ever landed out in their fields. Perhaps liaison with the Beeb could achieve some publicity for a plot variation – the unfortunate pilot could end up in the clutches of Joe Grundy or – even worse – Elizabeth Archer.

On a more serious note, the inconclusive results of the inquiry into last year's Optica crash have just been released. From the newspaper reports it would seem that this aircraft is designed to operate low and slow – therefore did the pilots have adequate training in this?

The CAA appear mystified but is it not possible that had the pilot had adequate training in gliders he would have more fully understood the dangers, particularly appreciation of any wind gradient and its possible effects?

J NEIL KELLY. *London*

CLUB NEWS

Copy and photographs for the February–March issue of S&G should be sent to the Editor, 281 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge CB1 4NH, telephone 0223 247725, to arrive not later than December 2 and for the April–May issue to arrive not later than February 10.

GILLIAN BRYCE-SMITH
October 8

ANGUS (Arbroath)

The club fleet is back to full strength with the welcome return of the Bocian.

We wish Ron Davidson, an instructor who has barely missed a flying day over the last ten years, a speedy recovery. Murray Hackney has given up instructing due to the pressure of business and we thank him for his service to the club.

Three members spent ten days at Camphill and returned full of praise for their enthusiasm and organisation.

Brian Morris, Martyn Davies and Ron Smith have their Silver heights.

M.M.K & R.J.S.

BANNERDOWN (RAF Hullavington)

Our first instructing year with two K-21s has been a great success. With three new retrieve trucks and three bus winches we are superbly equipped and the introduction of strops of different breaking strain has given very reliable launches.

In spite of this there were few soaring high spots, except in "away" competitions. Martin Durham (Ventus) and Mel Dawson (Std Cirrus) came 1st and 2nd on the last day of the 15 Metre Nationals and in the Inter-Services Regionals Keith Mitchell (Std Cirrus) came 3rd and club members filled three other places in the Sport Class. The Std Cirrus popped up again at the Standard Nationals, flown to a creditable 7th place by Martin Durham, the highest placed RAFGSA entry.

Congratulations to Colin Masters and Vanessa Butt on becoming instructors; to Scott Harris on his 5hrs and Silver height and to Al Beedle on finally completing his Silver C, in the course of which he sampled several fields, one recently spread with muck!

The September *ab-initio* course resulted in 300 launches and two first solos. Autumn brought us a new CFI, Keith Earnden, replacing J.C.G., who we thank for so much unstinting work.

Tragedy struck in the midst of our successes when Mike Parkyn received injuries in a launching accident in an Eagle from which he died. (See also BGA News.) Mike was padre at Hullavington and with Jill his wife was an active club member and one of our keenest early solo pilots. The whole club shares Jill's sorrow in her loss and we admire her courage in continuing with her children to keep in touch with us.

D.C.F.

BATH & WILTS (Keevil Airfield)

We have a sad Silver leg story. Graham Callaway flew his Skylark 3 50km but forgot to tell the photographic developer not to cut his film into individual pictures.

Congratulations to Dave Strange on winning the annual cup for the best restoration of a vintage glider; to Alan Carver on completing his Silver C; to Karen McBride on resoloing and to Jim Hook on his first solo.

We have a novel way of collecting extra funds – a daily launch point draw for an aerotow. In three months we have made a profit of more than £100.

We have achieved very good publicity through inviting reporters and photographers from the local free papers to have instructional training flights which they have written about, not forgetting to mention names and telephone numbers.

T.K.

BICESTER (RAFGSA Centre)

Congratulations to all new solo and Bronze C pilots and also well done to Trevor Brown, John Wright and Ginge Peck on completing their 300kms. Also to Jed Edyvean and Roger Crouch who flew a 100km triangle at 107km/h in the Janus, hopefully to gain the UK two-seater record.

Sadly in September we said farewell to Bob "Bruno" Brown (posted to Germany). We thank him for all his work and wish him every success.

We welcome another four instructors who completed the September course – Dave Aknai, Trevor Brown, Ginge Peck and Rachael Whittingham.

Our hangar is back in full use now that the roof repairs have been completed.

C. & G.

BLACK MOUNTAINS (Talgarth)

August soaring was a washout but the now traditional Bank Holiday barn dance was a success, thanks to catering supervised by Mike Evans.

Bill Morgan achieved a personal best duration of 7hrs on September 7, largely due to his Pegasus's airbrakes jamming shut! Also during September expeditions from Oxford, Lasham and Bedford enjoyed full weeks' soaring with frequent wave days to 11 000ft.

The club fleet has recently taken a hammering but with the return of the IS-30, RF5 motor glider and an IS-29 single-seater demonstrator, we are back up to strength.

W.D.M.

BLACKPOOL & FYLDE (Chipping)

Congratulations on going solo, most in the same week, to George Bedford, Gareth Logan, Dave Bishop, Jennifer Philpot, Graham English, Arthur Jones, Paul Davies, Mike Steel, Don Wilkinson, Mark Walker, Matthew Wilkinson and Ken Roberts. They are now busy stabbing each other in the back for the club Swallow.

A new venture this summer was a cross-country week and although it would be embarrassing to declare the number of kilometres flown, there were 14 successful outlanding. Considering the weather, this was quite an achievement.

V.H.

BORDERS (Milfield)

At last our hangar looks like being erected after many months of negotiation with planning permission etc. We are flying regularly at Galewood, our new site, and find much less wear and tear using a grass strip.

Some quite good summer soaring conditions gave Jim Bell the opportunity to complete his Silver C. The courses have been quite successful bringing in some much needed revenue and our thanks to those who run them.

T.P.

BUCKMINSTER (Saltby Airfield)

A poor season ended with Gary Keall completing his Silver C, Phil Walsh going solo and an influx of new members.

The AGM brought news that after 13 years at Saltby we finally have a signed secure lease, largely due to the efforts of Bill Munns. Several new faces have joined the committee and two old ones, Steve and Gail West, were lured to a surprise farewell party at the club before emigrating to Australia. Damian D'Lima, our resident tug pilot, has also left, to join the RAF. We wish them all well and thank them for their efforts.

R.N.C.

BURN (Burn Airfield)

After a poor summer, we had a good September with thermal or wave every weekend. Martin Ellis set a new club record with 20000ft. New solo pilots are Giles Huby (shortly after his 16th birthday), Sarah Forshaw, Marilyn Dean, Gary Moss, Adrian Bagnell, Phil Hartshorn, Ian Gutsell, Peter Guaukrodger, Tony Flannery, Andy Wright and Andy Toon.

Our tea bus does sterling service and its profits have bought a new windsock.

Joe Millward resigned as chairman at our AGM and we thank him for his long spell in office as secretary and then chairman. John Stirk is now chairman with Colin Croall as secretary.

J.A.S.

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY (Duxford Airfield)

The annual Long Mynd camp in early September gave Penny Minnitt Gold height in wave; a Silver height for Richard Lockwood; a duration for Ian Baker and Noel Stealey; a complete Silver C for Andy Kingswood and Quentin Laidlaw went solo. At Aboyne John Evans gained a Diamond height to give him all three Diamonds with Gold heights for Sue Bell and Alyson Lee while at Portmoak Steve Foster claimed a Gold height.

Back home, Ron Wingham and Gary Hunter went solo with Silver distances for Brian Hutchings, David Harris, Alan Boyle and Iain Baker.

A.N.

CHANNEL (Waldershare Park, Nr Dover)

Karen and Jim Edwards, founder members, toil away every weekend but were never able to afford their own glider. But when they were married in August members clubbed together and gave them a share in a Swallow. When they returned to the site immediately after the ceremony Karen burst into tears and Jim's grin still hasn't worn off.

Congratulations to Anthony Ford, Karen



Karen and Jim after their marriage.

Edwards, Paul Abson, Aidan Waters, Dave Watson, Dave Hellier and John Inglis on going solo and to Jeff Owens on his PPL SLMG.

We have taken on some more land to the north of the strip to give us an extra 300 yards in length.

We enjoyed a visit from the new Hobbyliner motor glider and were impressed with its ability to aerotow.

L.S.

COTSWOLD (Aston Down)

We have had many new members this summer, especially after our successful open day in August, and have been joined by two T-21s.

Recent achievements include Chris Brown and Diane Parris going solo and Robin Atkinson, Jon Brace and Frazer Wilson completing Bronze Cs. In September Geralyn Madfadyen achieved Diamond goal, Frazer Wilson and Dave Williams Silver distance and Robin Atkinson and Bernard Bentley their 5hrs. We won the Rockpolishers League and came equal 2nd in the Inter-Club League final. Congratulations to all concerned.

Our seven-day operation over the summer went reasonably well, thanks to some dedicated volunteers, and we are now back to weekends and Wednesdays.

L.M.B.

COVENTRY (Husbands Bosworth)

Midweek flying throughout the winter can be arranged for members and visitors. A K-6E has been added to the club single-seater fleet.

The end of season has been better than previous years for cross-country flying with quite a few kilometres in September. Congratulations to Malc Guard on his Diamond height at Sutton Bank and to John Cadman on completing all three Diamonds.

The "new" winch is to have an overhaul having done 10000 launches. On September 27 40-50 members helped to erect the door of the new hangar followed by a happy hour in the bar with beer at half price.

On a personal note, I would like to thank all well-wishers following my gliding accident in July. I am now out of hospital and back on my feet but temporarily suffering from broken wings!

D.L.S.

Obituary – Walter Mason

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of our dear friend, Walter Mason, I introduced him to gliding in June 1958 with a passenger trip in the T-21 at the Northamptonshire GC. It was an open day where he met our guest Peter Scott. He was hooked and we became firm friends, gliding at Twinwood and Cranfield where we both gained Silver C legs.

After this our gliding paths moved apart and Wally joined the Rearsby GC where he became an instructor and made many friends, as he did everywhere. It was here with the encouragement of Vic Carr he developed his love for cross-country flying. After 14 years at Rearsby he joined HusBos where he subsequently gained his Gold C and two Diamonds with the help of his trusty K-6CR.

He was particularly pleased to see the picture of us both in the IS-29B in the current HusBos brochure.

He will be sadly missed by his gliding friends over the years and very much at HusBos.

John E. Baker

CRANWELL (RAFGSA)

Congratulations to Liam McErlean on his Silver C; to Sue Montgomery, Helen Cumberland and Derrek Murray on going solo and to Laurie Tremdle, Gary Livings and Julia Shearwood on their Bronze legs.

We fared well in the Inter-Services Regionals with Simon Hutchinson 3rd in the Open Class, as well as being top RAFGSA pilot in the Standard Class Nationals. Mick Lee achieved a personal best and Phil Becker and Norman Quirke completed two of their three tasks.

We await news of our hangar move and possible accommodation.

S.J.H.

DARTMOOR (Brentor)

We have now passed the 1500 launch mark with both runways in use all season. Our best autumn day produced over 90 launches. As members improve in expertise and in local knowledge, longer flights are becoming more commonplace. The rough moor on which we started navvying three or so years ago is now a serviceable airfield, albeit with a few holes which need to be filled in from time to time when Dartmoor reminds us that it still really wants to remain a peaty bog!

One of the more amusing incidents of late was aerotowing from Folly Gate, a wartime emergency field near Okehampton, to Brentor. The villagers turned out *en masse* and the local constabulary (three of them).

If our field becomes unusable during the winter we shall no doubt fly at North Hill and Perranporth and thank both clubs for extending their facilities.

F.G.M.

DEESIDE (Aboyne Airfield)

A few weeks of wonderful wave have once again proved that Aboyne is Europe's No. 1 wave site. Several Silver distances, durations and Diamond heights have been achieved in a variety of wind directions.

On one spectacular day, September 30, with a clear sky and temperatures up to 20°C, 14 Diamond heights were gained. The two-seater height record was broken by Mike Jefferyes (see Essex) and the women's was **not.** Jan McCoshim went to 30000ft without a barograph! It shouldn't happen to a vet! The celebrations and sorrow drownings have been many and varied with the queues at the bar being matched by the queues at the oxygen trolley.

We hope the vast amount of flying will enable us to increase the facilities again so that more of you can enjoy the splendid opportunities Deeside has to offer.

L.E.N.T.

DEVON & SOMERSET (North Hill)

The club diary indicates that summer was better than we thought, or perhaps the badge seekers are more switched on or desperate than the rest of us. Cross-countries have been limited to the few reasonable days, usually weekends, with four tasks in our second task week.

Silver claims have been made by John Pursey and Barry Gage (duration), Alan Peel and Phil Talbot (distance) and Ron Johns (two heights – the first got blasted off his barograph foil in an enthusiastic fixing fit). Des Firth and Carl Tharme have Bronze Cs and Les (R.G.) Hill a Bronze leg. Bert Hirst, David Maitland, John Cole, Mike Robinson, Malcolm Chant, Keith Lawrence and Lisa Brummitt have gone solo. Lisa's subsequent bid to fly the K-8 ought to be referred to the Monopolies Commission. Well done, all.

Only one task, a 86km O/R, was achieved during our "gloom in June" task week. A visitor from Perranporth suffered some handling damage to his Grunau Baby but consoled himself by taking a K-6 homeward for Silver distance. The Austrian expedition enjoyed better weather.

The August task week conditions were better and Colin Watt and Jonathan Smith flew the Club Astir into top place. Jonathan has also completed an instructors' course before his 18th birthday.

In late August a home-built Monerai was test flown by Roy Proctor.

I.D.K.

EAGLE (Detmold)

We said farewell to our chairman, Tony Evans, who has departed for England and welcome our new chairman, Ross Skingley.

Our midweek trial instruction flights have been well supported and we have run three successful one week *ab-initio* courses. Congratulations to Paul Greener on his Silver height and distance; to Mac Thompson on his duration and to Dave Hicks on going solo.

D.M.C.

EAST SUSSEX (Ringmer)

We have all been shocked and saddened at the loss of our chairman Mike Kitson, but are now even more determined to achieve what he set out to do. We feel that a suitable memorial to Mike for all the work he did in securing the field, would be to call our site after him, and we are going through the formalities to name it Kitson's Field.

The clubhouse is now finished and furnished and this winter will see an increase in our social activities. A membership drive has been successful and we may have to have a waiting list. Hugh Grenham, tug master for many years, has handed over to John Morris. Christine Vanderberge is now our chairperson and Fred Bishop vice-chairman.

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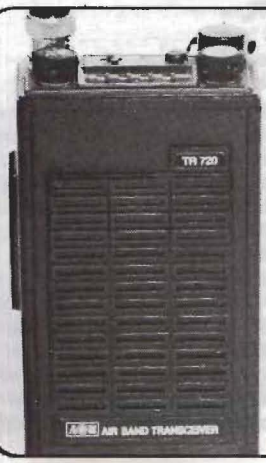
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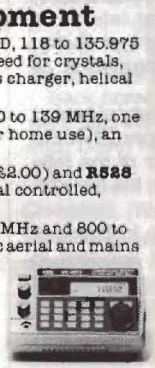
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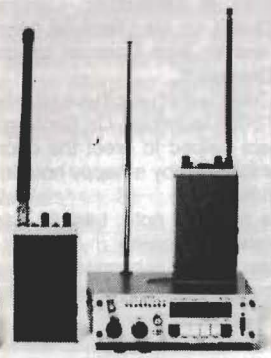
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Jason Shergold who went solo on his 16th birthday.

A number of vintage gliders are being restored by members. Air Traffic Controllers from Gatwick and Shoreham have been our guests this year and we have been invited to see them at work in the new control tower at Gatwick.

We congratulate all those achieving badge flights and especially Jason Shergold who is the first member to go solo on his 16th birthday. He has been awarded the Fred Head cup for the most promising young member.

J.S.

Obituary – Mike Kitson

Our very good friend Mike Kitson died on August 30 following serious injuries in a gliding accident on August 12.

He was a terrific personality and during the time he was chairman achieved a great deal, taking on the position when the club was going through a difficult period. For many years our field has been leased from a farmer but had no security of tenure. When the owner wanted to sell the land, the club was in the impossible position of having to raise £80000. (Mike described how this was achieved in an article he wrote for the February issue of *S&G*, p18.)

Only a person of Mike's calibre could have accomplished all this. Then we needed a more reliable winch to ensure we had a steady income but hadn't the money. Mike found the winch and the money and we now own one of the best in the country.

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This was the character of Mike and when he did retire he devoted a great deal of time to the club; it was very much part of his life. He still found time to take life-saving lessons and become a qualified swimming-pool attendant, to play a little golf and enjoy his family.

It was his aim to establish a permanent gliding club in this part of the country and that facilities would be available for the future generations of glider pilots and he was well on his way to achieving this.

He was a good leader, being firm but fair, with the ability to set himself a goal and achieve it. He was a gentleman, both on and off the field, and for those of us privileged to know him he was a thoroughly nice guy.

Joe Sutton

ENSTONE EAGLES (Enstone Airfield)

Our negotiations to continue flying at Enstone are still proceeding but not helped by having to deal with the two separate bodies. Nevertheless our numbers are increasing with some thirty short course members, joining from open days and judicious advertising, becoming full members.

The open days have been very successful as was our Regionals directed by chairman Ken Sparks who reports a considerable number of bookings for 1987. Our congratulations to Geof Dixon on becoming a full Cat.

R.J.P-B.

ESSEX (North Weald)

Our courses finished in September when we again said *au revoir* to our course instructor, John Mitchell.

Our annual expedition to Aboyne was one of the best ever with wave every day. Ralph Hawtree, Peter Molloy, Ken Davies and Gill Bull climbed to Diamond height whilst Hermann Somersell, Geoff Lynch and James Forrester gained Gold height. Mike Jefferyes and Hermann are claiming the UK two-seater height record with a climb to 29450ft in the Silene while Guy Corbett and Tony Manwaring flew 303km in wave.

Our thanks to Sheila Corbett for again producing our flying statistics for the National Ladder.

P.B.

ESSEX & SUFFOLK (Hadleigh)

We held two separate flying weeks this year but the first had only one good flying day and the second none at all.

Congratulations to Kevin Rust, Stephen Brooker, Mike Farr and John Amer on their Bronze Cs. Kevin has also flown Silver distance and John achieved his duration. Well done also to Peter Codd for completing his Silver C and scraping round our club 100km triangle with Mike Haynes.

Several post Bronze C members have visited the Norfolk GC to practise field landings in their Motor Falke – this has been met with great approval and enthusiasm by those wishing to embark on cross-country flying.

I am sure everyone will be pleased to know that Eric Richards is up and about again after his hip replacement operation. The club just hasn't been the same without him!

V.H.

HUMBER (RAF Scampton)

We have a new CFI, Kevin Atkinson, who is also our treasurer, John Jenkins having resigned.

Deanna Rooke, Andy Mitchell and Mike Kelly have two Bronze legs. Paul Johnson, one of our Malcolm Club award members, went solo after only six weeks flying during the best September in years.

Chris Gildea came 9th in the Inter-Services Regionals and Paul Armstrong and John Jenkins held up their end.

K.M.G.

KENT (Challock)

We were all well pleased when our team won the Inter-Club League Final at Parham this year; a wonderful effort especially in this our 30th year. (See report in this issue.)

Our task week went well with too many Silver distances to mention. The weather was kind and we had quite a lot of cross-country flying.

The annual excursion to Aboyne was tremendous with wave on six days – we collected seven Diamond and five Gold heights. Our grateful thanks to Deeside for their hospitality.

Congratulations to Christine Bell, Liz Buckeridge, John Holmes and Stafford Lintot on going solo; to Roy Gilbert on his Bronze C and Davina Hoolahan, Jim Lambert and John Pain on completing their Silver Cs.

J.G.

LAKES (Walney Airfield)

Paul Thomas and David Hannan have gone solo. September 7 saw club machines littered over the countryside – Roy Jones flew Silver distance to Caton near Lancaster and Neil Braithwaite to Settle in Yorkshire. Keith Butterfield, modest as ever, settled for Kirkby-in-Furness.

Our thanks to all those who helped Peter Lewis with the courses, especially Pauline Reeve, the course cook.

M.S.

LONDON (Dunstable)

After much wrangling, the committee has agreed to allow one DG-400 self-launching sailplane to be based at Dunstable for a trial period of one year.

After a most disappointing season, we are looking forward to an active winter programme involving lots of flying in addition to the usual lectures and talks to which visitors are most welcome.

A.T.G.

MARCHINGTON (Marchington Airfield)

Sunday, September 21 became a landmark in our operations with the re-introduction of winching made possible by further landscaping of the field and by the dedicated efforts of George Edge and Cliff Marsh on the equipment – our thanks to all concerned. Making members aware of the safety aspects of operating winching and aerotowing together is now a prime concern.

Some good weekend weather saw numerous attempts at 5hrs with successful claims to be confirmed.

P.A.W.

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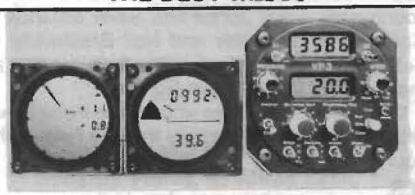
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EVENINGS

MENDIP (Weston-Super-Mare)

Dave McFarland and Martin Horn went solo, Martin on his 16th birthday in July. Philip Hogarth went to the Booker Regionals with the junior training squad selection with John Williamson.

When Weston had its annual air day on the sea front we had a static display for the first time which created a lot of interest from local people and holiday-makers, so we could have boosted membership around the clubs as well as gaining a few ourselves.

Our thanks to North Hill for their hospitality during our club week. Although the weather wasn't kind, Simon May got his second Bronze leg in his Swallow between the showers, but "one Swallow does not a summer make . . ."

C.T.

MIDLAND (Long Mynd)

Recent visitors have enjoyed some superb wave flying and next year we plan to extend our season to Christmas to attract more aspiring wave pilots to our ridge.

The clubhouse is being extended to include a new shower block adding to such recent improvements as double glazing and central heating.

We are about to beat last year's record number of flying hours yet again and our single-seater fleet is being modernised.

We are claiming a first for an occasion recently when two instructors, without conferring, sent Richard and Derek Platt solo within an hour of each other. We think this may be the first time that a father and son have soloed on the same day.

Congratulations to Doctor Vedge on completing her Bronze C and joining a syndicate.

N.B.

NORFOLK (Tibenham Airfield)

In spite of hurricane Charlie washing out our harvest task week we have been quite busy. A group had a wonderful time at Sutton Bank – Brendan Sargeant flew four times for a total of 22hrs. Our thanks to Yorkshire for their hospitality. We are thinking of keeping a glider there over the winter.

John Ayers and Terry Cooper did some instructing in Aosta, Italy, and are planning a club expedition there for next spring. Falk Bost and Harold Koch flew in from Germany in their club SF-27. The weather was perfect for the excellent end of season barbecue organised by Eric Radcliffe.

Our short runway, 27-09, is now much shorter though still adequate if there is any wind. Thankfully we aren't likely to lose any more.

M.J.R.L.

NORTHUMBRIA (Currock Hill)

The last Sunday in our club ladder year brought wave, giving distance claims and height gains of over 13000ft.

Ron Davies and David Moss have successfully completed their instructors' course. Gary Oldfield and Michael Mordue have soloed, Michael on his 16th birthday. Keith Bell, Steve Eyles and Roger Winley flew their 5hrs at Portmoak.

Two teams entered the Wolds GC two-seater competition, which was enjoyable despite the poor weather, and we intend to enter next year.

S.M.H.

PETERBOROUGH & SPALDING (Crowland Airfield)

Recent soloists include Margaret Crosse, Bob Gibbard and Don Trafford with Bronze for Peter Wilson and Richard Kilham (Richard missing Silver distance by a few hundred feet) and Silver Cs for Rachel Worth and Richard Browne.

Our thanks to HusBos for the loan of a tug whilst ours were ill. We have a K-6 with a new syndicate and the Rallye syndicate are thinking of selling up. It's in full working order but the prop is out "on loan".

P.N.W.

PHOENIX (RAF Brüggen)

After a very busy year we are slightly down on launches but have doubled our kilometres and hours.

Thanks to the Malcolm Club awards we have had some new members. Congratulations to Gail Lindop, Mel Ingram and Martine Marinus on converting to the K-18; to Sue Cavener on her instructor rating and to Kim Dove-Dixon and Terry Holloway on going solo, Terry in only 14 launches and on the same day he converted to our Astir.

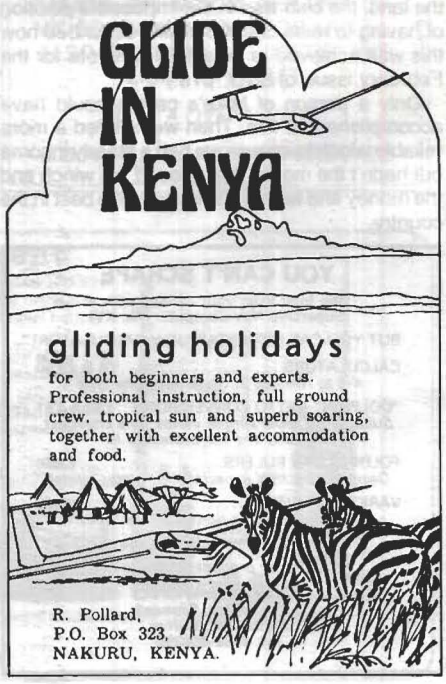
Our thanks to Dave Pratt for all his work in getting our new bus winch under way.

P.M.

RATTLESDEN (Rattlesden Airfield)

Having won through to the Inter-Club League finals we were more than pleased with our efforts at Parham and look forward to next year with great enthusiasm.

Rob Smith and Dick Histed are on an instruc-



tors' course – much needed additions to our small instructor force.

Congratulations to John Aldridge and Roy and Roger Firmin on going solo; to Dave Dowling for Silver distance and height and especially to our up-and-coming pundit Mark Taylor who, apart from winning his day at Parham, gained his first Diamond with a climb to 20000ft at Aboyne.

R.W.

SCOTTISH GLIDING UNION (Portmoak)

Summer arrived at the end of August and since then we have had some superb hill, thermal and wave days and numerous visitors and course members have enjoyed the scenery whilst whiling away 5hrs aloft.

Peter Treadaway, our course tug pilot, popped up for a Gold height one evening while the course was having tea. Other achievements are Silver Cs for Alan Bauld, Ross McIsaac, Joe Hall and Mike Richardson and a Bronze C for Donnie Caldwell.

Dave Clempson's away-day to the Bridge of Earn could be a candidate for the next selection of Rhoda Partridge's anecdotes (see the June issue, p116). His unobtrusive field landing was seen but misinterpreted by a passing driver and he was quickly joined in the field by a rescue helicopter from Leuchars!

M.J.R.

SHALBOURNE (Rivar Hill, Nr Hungerford)

We were visited by our new president, David Mitchell MP, Minster of State for Public Transport. Weather prevented flying, but he was interested in our progress and we think we have a good friend in him.

During our visit to Portmoak in September the only badge legs were collected by David Maleham (Silver height and duration), but the party enjoyed generally good flying.

There have been plenty of solos, Bronze legs, conversions from the K-7 to K-8 and we have several promising new members.

R.S.

SOUTH WALES (Usk)

Although the weather has been dry and dull with few good soaring days, B. Mills, L. Chicot, D. Winser and G. Letts have their Silver Cs. Congratulations to them and our competitive couple, Mr and Mrs Bennett, who started gliding together and then soloed, gained Bronze legs and good heights on the same days. We also have a record number of women solo pilots – seven.

Suffering a little with the soaring fees has helped up pay off most of our mortgage on our field after only one year.

Our Aosta, Italy trip was thoroughly enjoyable though not successful in terms of badge gains, but we hope for better weather for our return visit in April.

K.A.B.

SOUTHDOWN (Parham Airfield)

The Inter-Club League Final held at Parham was a great success. (See report in this issue.) Well done Kent for keeping the trophy in the South East League! We hope the competitors and crews enjoyed their stay as much as we enjoyed having them.

We welcome David Clews as our newest instructor. Congratulations to Dave Wright, Graham Walker and Chris Winfield (on going solo); Sue Hill (Bronze C); Mary Dixon and Chris Stothard (Silver distance); Les Blows (Silver height); Derek Kitchener (Silver height and duration); Bernie Littler, Bob Jeal and Richard Beecham (Silver Cs) and Jim Heath for his Gold height at Portmoak.

The Tuesday and Friday evening courses ended the season on a high note with some exciting cross-country ridge soaring in the late evening.

M.C.

STRATFORD ON AVON (Long Marston Airfield)

A steady stream of very enthusiastic members is encouraging, particularly at this time of year. Special congratulations to Dave Tarbun and Chris Mead on going solo.

The new winch is giving very creditable launches even in crosswinds that would have defeated our previous reverse pulley system. A new control caravan donated by Teagle/Gaunt has been refurbished ready to shelter the winter pilots.

H.G.W.

STRUBBY (Strubby Airfield)

We say farewell and thanks to our retiring CFI, Jim Aitken, and welcome Phil Becker as our new mentor.

Congratulations to Paul Hunter on his 5hrs; Roman Seikierkowski and Phil Trevethick on Silver height; John Kitchen on his Bronze legs and Colin Watmough on going solo.

Many thanks to HusBos for answering our emergency plea for a Bocian tyre.

P.J.T.

SURREY & HANTS (Lasham Airfield)

A rash of good days at the end of August and in early September brought a little cheer to an otherwise disappointing season.

On August 20 Alan Purnell clocked up yet another 500km while Dave Nunn (LS-4) flew 470km and Mark Thompson borrowed the Guernsey Nimbus 3 to achieve the farthest outlanding of the year at Rufforth Airfield, during a valiant attempt on York Minster O/R.

August 23 dawned with a moderate north-easterly and the promise of a good soaring day. Chris Starkey launched at 0900, ridge soared the South Downs to complete 150km by the time the thermals started at 1100, but flew only 400 of a 750km due to unforecast cirrus. However, the flight illustrates the potential for long cross-countries using the Downs.

September 9 was another good day. Graham Gilkes collected the Lasham/Dunstable plate, flying back with it after landing there. Our manager Phil Phillips finally made it round a 300km and Andy Lincoln completed Diamond distance with the aid of a few stubble fires to eke out the dying tail end of the day.

C.G.S.

TRENT VALLEY (Kirton-in-Lindsey)

The soaring season was a disappointment with a hard core of members battling with mechanical problems on our two old winches. After a lull in recruitment we have gained some fresh faces.

Congratulations to Dick Pike, Alex Bogan, Mike Davey and Patrick Holland on going solo, Mike some 43yrs after his powered solo flight. Patrick, showing his potential as a pundit, flew the K-13 for over an hour on his third solo.

Steve Crust and Brian Guest completed their Silver Cs whilst their syndicate Pirat was airborne for about 14 hours this July at Portmoak, thanks to SGU and "Pete the Tug" dragging himself out of bed to launch them before breakfast.

A creditable performance gave us 2nd place overall in the Inter-Club League final – and many of our pilots were flying wooden ships, one of which is 30yrs old.

L.W.

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TWO RIVERS (RAF Laarbruch)

The club cross-country ladder has spurred on some very fast triangles and contributed to our record number of kilometres this year.

The private fleet is much reduced now the Sagitta, Cirrus and K-8B have moved on. An ASW-20 could be the next addition to the club fleet.

Barry Elliott has retired as CFI after two years of unselfish effort. "Porky" Conyers has taken the reins.

Congratulations to Tim Doyle and Veronique Vroege on their Silver Cs and to our latest solo and Bronze C pilots.

P.J.S.

VALE OF NEATH (Rhigos)

The field is now ours! The final stages of purchase are in motion – further news in a future edition.

Congratulations to all the achievers from Gold legs to A badges. Graham Hall retired as CFI at our AGM, and we thank him for his unstinting hard work and welcome Brian Mellin as our new CFI.

D.C.E.

VECTIS (Sandown Airport, Isle of Wight)

The summer has seen some of our best achievements. Ken Taylor has Silver height; John Galt his duration with two Bronze legs for Tony B and legs for John P, Penny P and Mike M. John Nixon has gone solo and Lesley T and Maurice C gained their Bs.

The star event was the arrival of a T-21 from HusBos. On the publicity front we exploited Ken's Silver, the local Garlic Festival and Jenny Pragnell's splendid Glide Aid effort in the local press to good effect.

A party is off to Talgarth led by Neil Watts.

A.H.B.

WOLDS (Pocklington)

We have had a successful holiday season with member utilisation midweek showing a marked increase.

The acquisition of our Pawnee tug has had a dramatic effect on our aerotowing rate with no complaints from our locals. The general opinion is that overall it is quieter than our old Condor.

Has any other club got an astronaut as a member? Dr Don Lind flew with us after becoming an honorary member.



Don Lind compared flying in the Shuttle Challenger, the world's biggest 'glider', with the Wold GC's K-10. He told instructor Mike Munday it was interesting and enjoyable. *Photo:* Hull Daily Mail.

We are hoping to buy the remaining runway together with some other land.

D.B.

WREKIN (RAF Cosford)

The recent improvement in the weather has seen our crop of new solo pilots progress with many Bronze legs and several Silver heights. Congratulations to Mike Gogg on completing his Silver C with a 120km flight in his Oly and to Jon Arnold on gaining Silver height and duration.

Our new A/C member Ian Hewitt, helped by "Rupert", was kept busy before the Comps with repairs to our Astir which he finished only hours before it left. Again we have suffered winch problems – hopefully the Beaver will soon be ours (when we've finished it). The AGM is on December 5.

We are celebrating our 21st birthday with a party at the end of February. So that we can get an idea of numbers would all past members and any RAFGSA members wishing to come please write to Sgt Mick Boyden, 10D3 RAF Sealand, Deeside, Clwyd, Cpl Eric Parsons, 510 Hangar, RAF Cosford, Wolverhampton, W Midlands or Sqd Ldr Mike Osborn, ARTS RAF Shawbury, Shrewsbury, Salop. If you have the names and addresses of any past members of WGC, please include them in your letter so that we can contact them.

J.A. & M.B.

WYVERN (RAF Upavon)

Graham Browning, Justin Lavender and Stella Hamblett have gone solo. Peter Bradley has gained both Bronze legs while Pat Hemsley has completed his Bronze C and converted to the Astir. Alan Cresswell has his Silver C and Ephy Darnbrook has become an assistant Cat. Eric Smith came 12th in the Standard Class Nationals flying the Std Cirrus and Roy Gaunt (Kestrel 19) came 2nd in the Northern Regionals Open Class. Congratulations to them all.

A successful *ab-initio* course was held at the beginning of September with reasonable weather conditions!

D.B.

YORKSHIRE (Sutton Bank)

Ian Stromberg (Nimbus 3) climbed to 32 000ft asl from the hill on yet another record wave day late in September. This is just a new site record and the best climb in the UK this year. On the same day Dick Stoddart (Kestrel 19) completed a declared 310km triangle in wave. Lot of visitors have flown badge heights during the last few weeks of wave.

P.L.

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OVERSEAS NEWS

FIRST MEDITERRANEAN COMPETITION

The first International Mediterranean Competition was held at Rieti, Italy, from August 2-12 with ten contest days and 61 pilots, 27 from foreign countries.

The Open Class was won by R. Manzoni (Italy), 8182pts, 2 F. Blätter (Switzerland), 8025pts, 3 P. Bourgard (Belgium), 7849pts, all flying Nimbus 3s. The 15 Metre Class winner was A. de Orleans-Borbon (Spain), ASW-20, 8361pts, 2 E. G. Peter (W Germany), Ventus, 8239pts, 3 L. Avanzini (Italy), ASW-20L, 7336pts, M. Gavazzi (Italy) won the Standard Class with 8615pts, H. Nietlispach (Switzerland) came 2nd with 8361pts and L. Brigliadori (Italy) 3rd with 8151pts, all flying a Discus. R. Monti (Italy) won the Two-seater Class in a Janus C.

EUROPEAN CLUB CLASS/ ITALIAN NATIONALS

The European Club Class Championships and the Italian 15 Metre Class Championships were held at Rieti from July 2-12.

The weather was good and there were ten contest days. The winner, Ivo Simenc of Yugoslavia, scored 8174pts. A Yugoslavian, I. Kolaric, also took 3rd place behind Klaus Ohlmann of W Germany.

M. Gavazzi, already the Italian Standard Class Champion, used the 15 Metre Championships as practice for the Mediterranean Competition, coming 1st with 7463pts. S. Ghiorzo was 2nd with 7373pts and G. Galetto 3rd with 7342pts.

RUDE AWAKENING

An innocent citizen of Stuttgart has apparently been roused daily from his sleep recently by dawn telephone calls from glider pilots wanting to know about dewpoints and wind-velocities. He has been given the number previously allocated to the recorded gliding weather forecast. His response to these calls is not recorded by *Der Adler*.

LUCHON

The "Grand Prix International de Vitesse en Planeur" held at Luchon in August attracted many spectators and was blessed with fine weather. The event was won by former World Champion Baer Selen (NL) but Justin Wills achieved the fastest recorded time over a 9.5km triangle – 211.7km/h.

(Continued from p272)

As if in slow motion he felt the Bocian drawn down into the embrace of the octopus-like fronds which, with an awful strength that even the copious applications of glue over many years and the very biggest of big nails could not withstand, whipped about the wings and taiplane dragging them, ripping them away from the worn fuselage until the remains slid to rest in the far hedge like a downed partridge.

Wearily the old man clambered out and surveyed the wreckage. The greater part of his aeroplane lay behind him in fragments amongst the crop, their locations marking his passage.

Raising one arm he shook his gnarled fist in terrible fury at the sky.

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* ***Laws and Rules***



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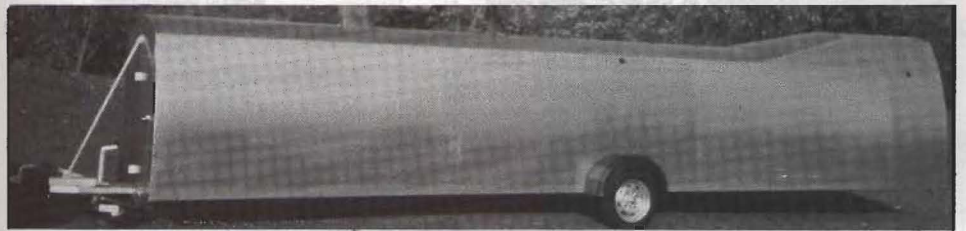
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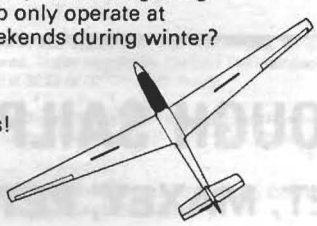
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