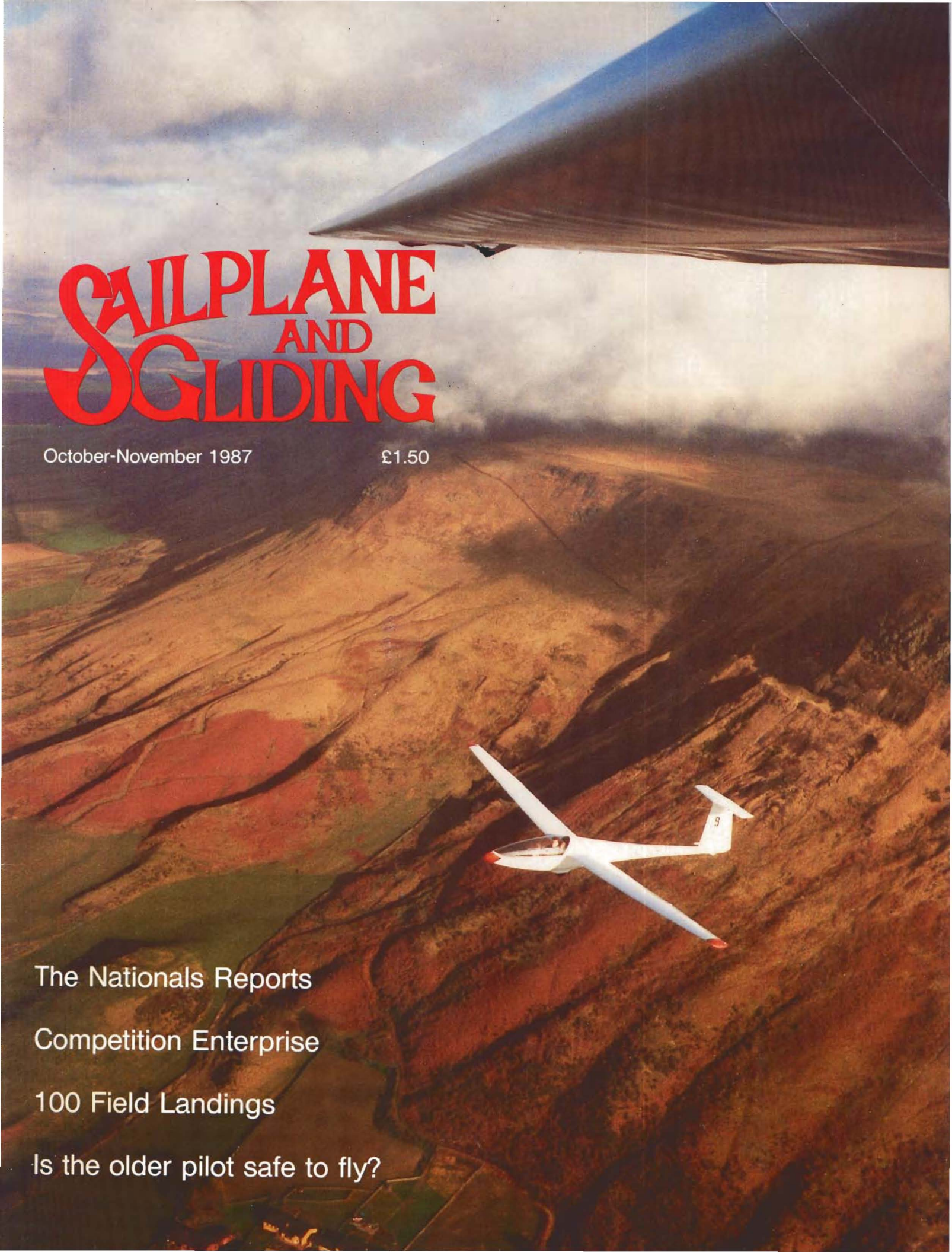


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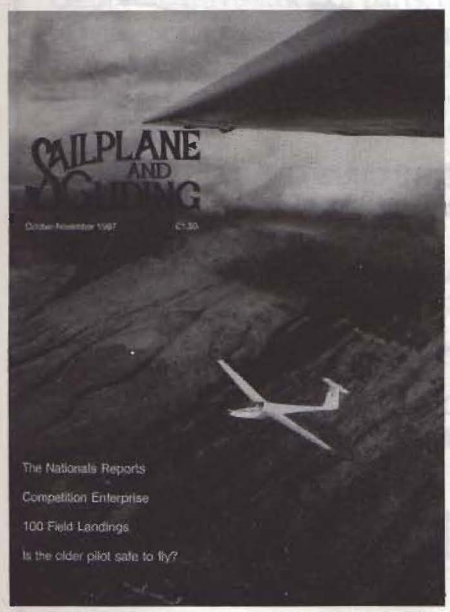
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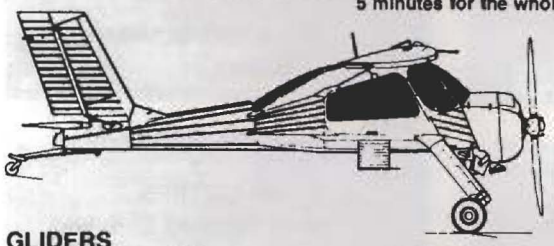
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TAIL FEATHERS

Rain, rain go away, you're booked to come another day

I hate to admit it but weather forecasts are getting better. The weather itself is getting worse, but the glad tidings of yet another



Getting worse.

washout are coming to us earlier and more accurately. For this privilege we can thank first the satellites and other data-gathering systems and secondly computerised forecasting models. "What's the @*!? use of that?" you ask gloomily as the 1987 definition of a Good Day slides from the five-knot-thermals-for-eight-hours dream to the long-enough-intervals-between-showers-to-derig-without-getting-soaked reality. Well, with better information we can squeeze better tasks out of the pathetic British climate. And again, if it's not going to be soarable at all the sooner I know the happier I am, because I can arrange to do something else with my valuable time, like mangling Chopin's B flat minor Scherzo on the Yamaha (not the motor-bike, silly, the grand piano), tasting the contents of my cavernous cellar (the Bulgarian Red Infuriator in the toolshed), playing with the floppy in my Macintosh (steady on, family mag and all that. ED) or even, as a last resort, writing something for this column ahead of the official deadline. (That'll be the day. ED)

In newspaper columns half-baked science hacks gleefully predict that man will soon be controlling the weather. What an appalling idea! We could no more control the weather than a drunk could control a juggernaut on black ice on a winding road in the pitch dark without lights at 80mph. We could certainly *affect* the weather but that's not the same thing at all.



Continentals blame us.

Even now the Continentals blame us for all the filthy weather they get – jokingly, of course – but if they thought we were doing it on purpose they'd go to war with us, targetting three inch hailstones on all our sporting events for openers. Then imagine an EEC Commission trying to decide how to allocate Europe's rain and sunshine: it would make the squabbles over the Common Agricultural Policy look like a triumph of harmonious statesmanship by comparison.

"... just have to fight it out with the other Regionals organisers for what falls off the table."

BUT – how different it would be if instead of trying to affect the weather we were simply able to forecast it a year ahead with perfect accuracy! Would that not be ideal? You would then have known that the first half of July 1987 was going to be delicious. So the BGA could have called the Bristol GC and said "Sorry, lads, but we want July 4th to the 11th (eight glorious contest days, yummy, yummy!) for the Racing Class Nationals, and if there's any good weather left we need it for the Open Class and the Standard Class, so you'll just have to fight it out with the other Regionals organisers for what falls off the table.



Picket the BGA.

That's funny, the line's gone dead ..."

Furious deputations of Bristolians then picket the BGA offices, demanding "Give us back our eight days!", "We won't be second-class citizens!" etc, etc, threatening they will secede from the movement and stage unofficial, pirate competitions in the best weather, so there. Then you'd find all the air displays were booked into the best weekend days and we'd be warned off flying near any of them. With these events,

"The Tower of London would be full of glider pilots whose self-restraint had cracked ..."

not to mention Henley, Ascot and other grand occasions, all being scheduled in the few sunny days, the Royals would be helicoptering frantically from one place to another to fulfil their arrangements, so that Purple Airways would scythe through the serried cumulus, rendering vast areas of lift unusable. The Tower of London would be full of glider pilots whose self-restraint had cracked – after all, any system of radar, satellites and computers that can predict the weather perfectly would have no difficulty trapping and putting wing-clamps



Soon people would have to draw lots.

on errant soarers, would it? In the predicted good spells roads would be jammed; caterers, hoteliers and gliding clubs would have to charge treble prices to compensate for the dearth of bookings the rest of the year.

"... clubs would spin a roulette-wheel to get their contest dates."

Soon people would have to draw lots to decide when they were allowed to go on holiday; clubs would spin a roulette-wheel to get their contest dates. Finally, to dampen the rage of the losers and lessen the risk of riot and civil commotion, not to mention a thriving blackmarket in sunshine, the gathering and publishing of such forecasts would be made a punishable offence. Then we'd be right back where we are now, not having the faintest idea what Mother Nature has in store for us when, full of renewed hopes that This Year Really Is Going To Be Different, we send off our deposits. Oh bliss.

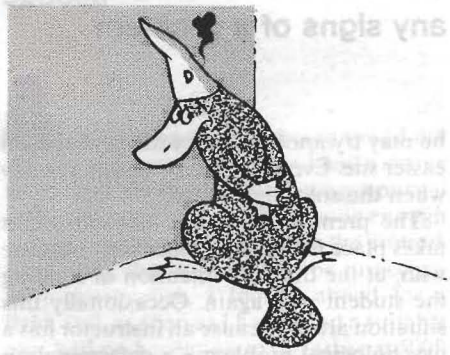
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Knows nothing about what goes on.

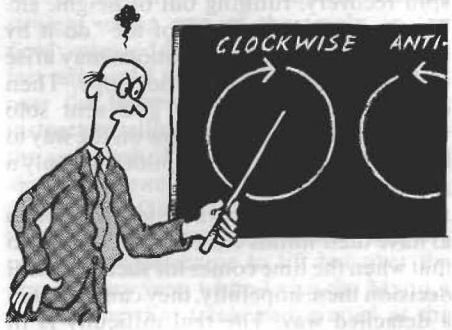
on under the bonnet of his car (that is to say almost any man, if his male pride allows him to be honest) is to be found in women's magazines. No woman feels insulted if the writers assume she is automotively illiterate, so these magazines set out in simple Noddy-language the five basic things to do if, for instance, your car won't start of a morning. Her husband then takes a quick look, and, between sneers, actually learns something he didn't know before. In the same way Tom Bradbury has cleverly addressed his splendid piece in the last S&G, "A Met Guide for Beginners", to the aspiring Silver C pilot, when in fact it ought to be read, studied and pinned to the wall of the briefing room by triple-Diamond pilots. I have my full complement of gold-mounted rocks, but if I'd sat a written exam on the content of Tom's article before reading it this morning I'd have been lucky to have scraped a pass: more likely I'd have been sent off for a remedial



Sent off for a remedial course.

course in soaring meteorology - probably in some distinguished company:

"This piece of cardboard, gentlemen, represents a cumulus. No, Mr Platypus sir, hold it *fluffy side up*, please. All together now, after me, cuu-muu-luss, cuu-muu-luss!" *Disorganised chanting by 20000 hours' worth of Open Class pilots, who only know to circle when their Cambridge computer tells them to.* "Cor blimey, what a shower - pay attention at the back there, if you want those leg-irons removed before teatime - in this part of the world cyclones go anti-clockwise and anti-cyclones go clockwise.



What d'you mean, you don't know what clockwise is?

Easy isn't it? What d'you mean, you don't know what *clockwise* is? I see, you're all using those naff digital watches. Well, this here is a clock, and you'll see it's got a big hand and little hand . . . if you don't pass this part of the test you'll all have to fly Standard Class" - *shrieks of abject terror* - "and sit the Bronze C written examination." *Utter panic: one escapee is dragged back by a Doberman: trusties (those who can tell Upwind from Downwind in the practical test) manacle the victim to the wall.* "Now, how to detect Signs of Decay: you lot should be pretty good at this . . ."



Expensive health farms.

Well, it'd be no worse than going to one of those expensive health farms. But the best and cheapest solution is to read and digest Mr Bradbury's article. Thanks, Tom.

STEPS WERE TAKEN . . .

The Ulster GC's orchestral violinists (and newest soloists) Adrian and Robin Willis introduced a new variation of the old "glider on safari, mainpins at home" crisis when the club broke new ground by mounting a live classical musical recital in the hangar at Bellarena recently. Unloading a superb baby grand from their custom-built trailer, the brothers were dismayed to find that one - or the other - had left one of its three legs behind in Belfast.

"A two-legged piano is something unknown to music," deputy CFI Mervyn Farrell reports. "With only about 90 minutes to curtain up, a 150-mile round trip drive to Belfast was clearly an impossibility. So steps were taken - from our bunkhouse bus to be exact. A set of steps, laid on its side, was the precise height, almost to a thou'.

"The musical qualities weren't affected at all, but one or two of our concert-goers did ask why one piano leg was tastefully drapped with a clubhouse curtain, to hide the somewhat unorthodox support." - *Robert Rodwell.*

OLD PILOTS- BOLD PILOTS

Is the older pilot safe to fly? Is gliding a safe sport to take up in retirement? Bill Scull, BGA director of operations, looks at the data and accident records to see if there are any signs of a problem

As the saying goes "there are old pilots and bold pilots but there are no old, bold pilots." Age is relevant to learning any skill and gliding is no exception. Older pilots may not account for a particularly high number of accidents but then we don't know the proportion of the gliding population in a particular age group.

Very few clubs can provide data on the age of their members (if you have any please let us have it!) but samples indicate an average in the order of 40 years and increasing at the rate of 0.75 years/year. On this evidence, and with relatively better health, the average age will be 65 by the year 2020! My subjective impression is that with a trend towards earlier retirement more older people are taking up gliding and this raises some problems.

Old Pilots. Old pilots who have been flying for many years don't present too much of a problem. I suspect their experience, airmanship and steadily increasing instincts of self-preservation combine to make them fly well within their capabilities and they probably become slightly more selective as to when they fly. However, there is a problem. With increasing years the individual is not necessarily aware of the decline in eyesight (particularly accommodation), reaction time and awareness of what is going on around him. Others may perceive this deterioration and perhaps be concerned for the individual in question. Possible problems aren't necessarily related to actual age: an active 80 year-old may, in performance terms, be a much better bet than a relatively decrepit 65 year-old.

If a pilot doesn't know when to stop flying someone will have to tell him

The critical consideration is that if the old pilot doesn't know when to stop someone, probably a CFI, will have to tell him. At best such a decision is a subjective one and may well affront the pilot who thinks that he is a better pilot than the CFI anyway!

Old Students. These present a different problem altogether. In most cases training to solo standard will take much longer and there is a problem in the marginal case – marginal meaning either of an adequate standard or consistency of standard. For instance, a club with a difficult site may decide that they will never send a particular student solo and if he is determined he may try another club with, perhaps, an easier site. Eventually there comes the day when the solo flight is on.

The premise on which this solo flight takes place is that it is a once only exercise with, at the time, no intention of sending the student solo again. Occasionally this situation arises because an instructor has a psychological problem – a determination never to be defeated in getting one of his students off solo. It may be that there is no other instructor in the club who would send this student solo again. If so, the student will eventually realise the situation or an instructor will tell him and he or she will go away or accept the limitation and only fly dual.

Supposing the solo is not a once only exercise but is followed by further solo flights. For some time these will always be preceded by dual checks which establish whether he can fly a circuit. Too often such dual flights do not include much continuation training or testing of the pilot's ability to deal with the more usual emergencies – cable breaks, launch failures, stall and spin recovery, running out of height, etc. The basic ability will be of the "do it by numbers variety" and situations may arise with which the pilot cannot cope. Then comes the day when he gets sent solo without a check and he's now on the way to becoming an "off-checks" pilot – it's only a matter of time!

A Philosophy! It is desirable for instructors to have their minds clear on this subject so that when the time comes for such a critical decision then, hopefully, they can view it in a detached way. The real difficulty is in making such a decision which materially affects a person's quality of life on the basis of perceived risk. It is not an easy equation to solve.

Accident Data

In the BGA year 1985/6 accidents related to pilot age were:

20 to 29yrs — 30
30 to 39yrs — 44
40 to 49yrs — 47
50 to 59yrs — 29
60 to 69yrs — 13

Perhaps this indicates that there is no significant problem for the over-sixties but, as said before, unless we know the overall age distribution of pilots we cannot be sure. Of the 13 accidents the proportion of "substantial" accidents is the same as the overall figure at 38%. The average experience was 756hrs with a range from seven to 3480hrs; only three of the pilots had less than 50hrs and all were flying K-8s. The latter figure perhaps refutes the suggestion made earlier that there are more older people taking up gliding or that they are a greater risk.

Accident Categories. Is there any indication that older pilots have a particular type of accident? Again the answer appears to be "no" with the following distribution of 13 accidents (taken from **Accidents to Gliders 1986**):

Accident Category	Accidents Over-60s	Total
Failed winch launch	1	20
Failed aerotow launch	1	9
Airbrakes open unnoticed	1	3
Poor soaring airmanship	1	10
Faults in field landing	2	28
Faults in circuit planning	1	10
Faults in approach control	2	15
Instructor failed to take over in time	2	15
Motor gliders	1	11
Accidents excluded from analysis	1	21

The numbers are too small to get any real indication but there does not appear to be a problem of the scale that has caused dif-

ficulties regarding insurance cover for older pilots.

The Actuarial Risk. The determination of risk is a specialist field but one can't help but suspect that any decision to refuse insurance cover for the older pilot – typically this appears to be set at over 65 – is based on the subjective impression that the older pilot is more at risk either of having an accident or suffering some serious physical incapacity. There is not much to support this view in the accident data and probably not much more in the medical records. How many pilots with a PPL, or a higher licence, have suffered a heart attack or similar in spite of a recent medical, including an ECG? The likely answer is very few and the indications are that a declaration of physical fitness endorsed by a doctor is just as effective a screen.

How many accidents caused by old pilots?

I have heard it said by the medical authorities that a PPL medical for a pilot over the age of 70 is worth no more than the paper it is written on. Even if this is true the most significant consideration is how many accidents are there to third parties which are caused by old pilots? Once again the answer is few – or possibly none.

In Conclusion. There appears to be little or no evidence that the older pilot is any greater risk than his young colleagues although the case cannot be proven statistically for lack of data on the age of pilots. If clubs or individuals want to avoid limitations on their insurance policies or the withdrawal of cover altogether then we must get an adequate sample of age distribution to prove, hopefully, that the older pilot is as safe as any other. Can any clubs with a computer give us the data we need?

Gliderwork
C of A OVERHAULS
and REPAIRS
By L. GLOVER senior inspector



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A THOUSAND HOURS, A HUNDRED FIELDS

While some pilots studiously avoid landing in a field the Arm-Chair Pilot has become an expert in sampling the open spaces

A few weeks ago I was being towed out of Duxford in my Astir when I had a strong sense that there was something unusual about the feel of the rudder, strong enough to make me want to be back on the ground. Reasoning that turns might be unnecessarily provocative, I looked ahead for a field, and, as soon as I had found a suitable one, had no hesitation in releasing at 500ft and going straight in. It was a false alarm, but good evidence of how happy I am to do field landings. Perhaps the reason is that, as I discovered on entering it in my logbook, it was my hundredth one. They have taken me thirty years, at the rate of one every ten hours flying.

The first entry carries the laconic comment "One mile undershoot", and happened on only my second day of flying solo at the Long Mynd, during a Cambridge University Club camp. I was blown away in an Olympia by a fresh north-westerly. From cloudbase I tried to return, knowing in those days only that one should fly faster into wind, but not by how much. I flew at 70kt. The Olympia came down, and the Mynd came up. I found myself heading straight along one of the tracks in the newly-planted forest, with trees one or two feet tall, and I was clearly not going to get over the fence. Then I remembered my instructors telling me to put the speed up for the approach. As I levelled out, a glance at the ASI showed 90kt (it is etched on my mind). The Oly eventually settled thankfully on to the track and a crew of burly undergraduates came to lift her over the fence. Every year, when I visit the Mynd, I walk along that track and marvel at the height of the trees. I plan to do my last outlanding there after the trees have been felled.

I have been learning ever since, only once breaking anything in the process. That was a Skylark 2 which I was trying to perch on the top of Priest's Crag during the 1958 Crossfell expedition. At the critical moment, with the brakes half open, I moved the lever in the wrong sense and overshot on to some rough ground which damaged the fuselage aft of the wheel. Ever since I have never liked having half-open brakes, and the experience led me to adopt the all-or-none technique of approaching with no brake until the moment when full brakes will serve nicely, and then banging them open and diving for the landing spot, all in one fell swoop. It was a splendid method in the old wooden gliders, and there's many a time I have wedged a wooden ship into a tiny corner using it. Out with the brakes, aim at the base of the near hedge, hop over it, and thump! – you're down. But you can't treat a plastic ship like that, so please don't try.

What else have I learnt? On my third field landing I learnt the altimeter lesson. The trouble with us Cambridge pilots in those days was that we inhabited, and were taught about, two distinct worlds, the Fens which were flat and the Mynd which was hilly. But nobody told us that these two worlds actually joined up in a tiresomely-rolling country called the Midlands, and it was only then when I became adventurous and tried to fly from one world to the other (a feat I managed many years later in an Oly 463) that I discovered that an altimeter which reads 500ft does not mean 500ft above *Ampthill.*

My next lesson was on another attempt to fly to the Mynd, and again it was not "thinking" hills which caused it. A desperate blue day with a strong north-easterly, and John Pringle had already driven off with the trailer. Next thing I knew was that I was scraping a thermal off

the Luton runway. Happy days! From the top of the low inversion I headed off in a vaguely westerly direction over unknown territory. Soon too low to map read, I passed behind the Dunstable Downs without realising that over the hill was the London Gliding Club (then unfamiliar to me). I pressed on into the Dagnall dip, thinking to get a bit more air under my skid that way, but of course the curlover made sure that I just followed down the shape of the hill. There was a very hurried landing at the bottom.

Soon after that came the scale lesson. I tried to land on Malvern College playing fields, and as I threaded my way through the royal radar aerials on the approach (more happy days!) I suddenly realised that the row of poplar trees by which I had subconsciously been judging the scale of the whole scene had only just been planted. More rapid adjustments, and a mental note to be much more careful about the size of things in future. It is no use thinking that a *relatively* large field will do - it may still be far too small.

I have never had difficulty with slope or wind direction or crop because the importance of these factors was drummed into me in infancy. Judging crops comes with practice, and I suppose I was lucky in that there was much more grass around in my learning-curve days. I have never landed in corn of any description, though a farmer once berated me for not having done so after I had deliberately squeezed my 463 into the only pasture for miles around, a tiny ridge-and-furrow affair full of cattle. He actually stood in the lane and tried to wave me off to another field as I approached, but needless to say I did not understand his signals in that moment of tension. After I had landed he drove me round his farm and told me that if from the air you can see the ground through the crop then no farmer can justifiably claim that you have damaged it.

I may never have misjudged the direction of the wind, but I certainly misjudged its speed horribly one day. It was during a Husbands Bosworth competition, and the wind was so strong that some of us lesser fry were stuck at the TP. Finally, in desperation, I decided to glide it out into a field. This did the trick, for on the approach I at last met a thermal strong enough to cope with the wind. I climbed in it to cloudbase and straight on up to 9400ft, at which point I lost it and headed on into wind on a compass course. It was rather rough in cloud, so I flew a little faster, and finally broke through into a uniformly grey countryside. There were plenty of fields, and because the wind was so strong I didn't even bother to choose one with an overshoot. I flew a good fast circuit in the rough air and popped my 463 over the hedge in characteristic fashion. But once down she seemed to accelerate like a startled rabbit, bounding across the meadow. At the far end of the field was an embankment. I hauled on the wheelbrake. Nothing happened. I threw the stick forward, and the 463 slithered to a stop with a very muddy nose. That's odd, thought I, and climbed out. There was not a breath of wind. As I held a wetted finger out to the still grey sky I realised that I had just flown through a front. And what had been my last words to my crew that morning? "I couldn't make the wheelbrake work on the DI, but I never use it anyway".

"If you are used to flying from an airfield you will be especially liable to make too small and cramped a circuit."

I once rolled through an electric fence after touchdown, but without any damage, and on another occasion (in Denmark) I had to abandon a field after the last turn because I was about to fly through a farm aerial that had suddenly materialised. There is little one can do about obstacles which do not declare themselves on the preliminary circuit of the field, except to be constantly alert for the unexpected. I soon learnt that a preliminary circuit is very important, because only by stalking your field from varying viewpoints will you learn about its slope and surface. Then take yourself several fields away before joining a large circuit. If you are used to flying from an airfield you will be especially liable to make too small and cramped a circuit.

But I mustn't start a lecture. Field landings are fun, almost ends in themselves (like bungy launches). Farmers are invariably welcoming in my experience, but then I have never done any damage. There was even an occasion when one waved me to a good field,but I managed to climb away. (I cannot tell the story now because the flight did not end in a field!) I've been forced into a field by an airship, and on another occasion by an RAF controller who wouldn't let me use his grass even though his airfield was closed for runway resurfacing.

The airfield was Wattisham, and the incident many years ago when the RAF didn't usually mind gliders. It was late in the season, and a downwind dash to a declared goal would put me top of the local Ladder. I rang up Wattisham before take-off only to learn that the airfield was closed and that the controller on stand-by duty had gone to lunch. I did not want to delay my take-off, so I asked my wife to telephone him after his lunch and say that I would arrive shortly and circle the control tower looking out for signals. This I duly did from a height of more than 2000ft, only to be met by a red Very light, which my crib told me meant "Do not land, await permission to land."

I hung around in a bit of lift only to be rewarded by another red Very. Do not land, await permission to land. Lift was getting harder to come by when the controller took another post-prandial shot at me, a third red. I realised that three in a row meant "clear off" whatever the book said, and settled down into a nearby meadow. After telephoning my crew I rang up the controller and asked him why he would not let me land on his grass. "Because we did not inspect it this morning", he said. "But did you inspect the grass in the field your action forced me to land in?" Pause. "I think you had better take this up with the Station Commander". I did, as a matter of fact, because it seemed to me that aviators should not treat each other like that.

Perhaps the best welcome I ever had from a farmer was in 1981 when I was blown away from the Mynd again. But at least this time I was on a deliberate, if undeclared, cross-country. To cut a long story short, at half-past three one afternoon in the middle of September I found myself over the A5 north of Wolverhampton, thirty miles downwind. An hour-and-a-half later I was abeam The Lawley, just six miles short, when my luck ran out and I had to put down in a large grass field at the bottom of the hill. On finding the farmer I explained that I was a Cambridge pilot on camp at the Mynd who had just failed to make it back. He looked me straight in the eye and said (as his first words) "Do you want a bath?"

Unbeknown to me, I had landed on the farm of Tim Corbett, a Midland Club member, who knew all too well that the club would be a waterless dustbowl at the end of the long dry spell. I was so astonished at the welcome that at first I said "no", but soon thought better of it and accepted the offer of what turned out to be a palatial bathroom.

Finally, in answer to the question you are all dying to ask, no, I have never been lost and have always known to within a mile where I have ended up. And by some quirk of fate I have yet to land at the bottom of the west side of the Mynd, in spite of all sorts of antics halfway down the hill. Now the east side, that's another story . . .

TOO MANY TO TOT

Another piece of nostalgia which makes modern retrieves seem rather tame

In the days of yore we used to glide from what is now a major west country airport. There were few thermals, due to something called a sea breeze, and a C required a trip to the Mynd.

Optimism was never short among the great pundits who flew the exalted Oly 2B. We of the spoilered Tutor, or even lower types on the uninstrumented Cadet 2, had yet to cope with the Grunau before being allowed to even polish the hot ship Oly.

Trailers were one per club, a sort of fit-all design, and rarely used. The tow vehicle was an elderly Ford V8 shooting brake. I thought the V8 powered everything – it certainly did our winch, towcars etc. Any gliding type could strip a V8 fuel pump in his sleep and they seemed to run OK on paraffin too. However, like most ancients, I digress.

On one notable day a cloud appeared over the site. Derek S leapt aboard the Oly and disappeared, clutching a barograph and shouting "Silver distance". Such was the excitement that flying was abandoned for the rest of the day and we repaired to the bar and 'phone.

"... a retrieve was always so exciting we drew lots for inclusion and crowded as many aboard as we could ..."

After one hour a retrieve crew of Mike H, Pete E, Pete H and yours truly set off downwind. All cross-countries were downwind then and a retrieve was always so exciting that we drew lots for inclusion and crammed as many aboard as we could, not saving a place for the pilot as he would probably be in the local hospital anyway (no field landing training).

After two hours on the road about twenty miles from the site we phoned back. A voice said "B ... Gliding Club". We pressed button B, got our money back and continued downwind. At the next stop we got the magic words, "L ... here". We pressed button A and got the startling news "Newbury racecourse, owners enclosure." We collected him, somehow packing the Oly in the trailer and celebrated in the local (no drink driving rules then, in fact you needed a few to get the courage to drive, no MOT certificates either) and off home.

Progressing through a slumbering Wiltshire village we were overtaken by a car with flashing blue lights which pulled in rather sharply, forcing us to stop. A friendly but stern face came through the window, saying to the driver, Mike, "May I see your licence please?"

Offence 1 "This licence is a week out of date Sir," quickly followed by a comment from the second officer who was shining a torch on the windscreen, (offence 2) "Your tax is a year out of date."

It seemed we had problems, but they were only starting. "What speed were you doing Sir?" Ever honest Mike said "I don't know, the dashboard light doesn't work". Offence 3, non illuminated speedo. Offence 4 it seemed was 60mph at which we all protested. Even downhill the old girl wouldn't do that.

Requested to reverse back and park closer in to the side, Mike complied. Wrong! Offence 5, inefficient trailer brake. He was asked to step out of the car, which we all did for moral support. The constable walked us back up the road some distance behind the trailer and on turning round we saw offence 6, the nearside sidelight was out.

"What is the registration of your trailer Sir?" We all entered into the spirit of it then, as the chalked figures were indiscernable at that distance and we chorused the number of the Brake. Wrong again, offence 7. There were different numbers on the car and trailer. Offence 8 was an inadequately illuminated number plate.

By that time I was wondering how long one got for aiding and abetting. Silence reigned as the constable got up to date in his notebook, which was getting rather full. "Right Sir" (terribly polite in those dates), "How long is the trailer?" – not the usual question of "What's in it?" mark you.

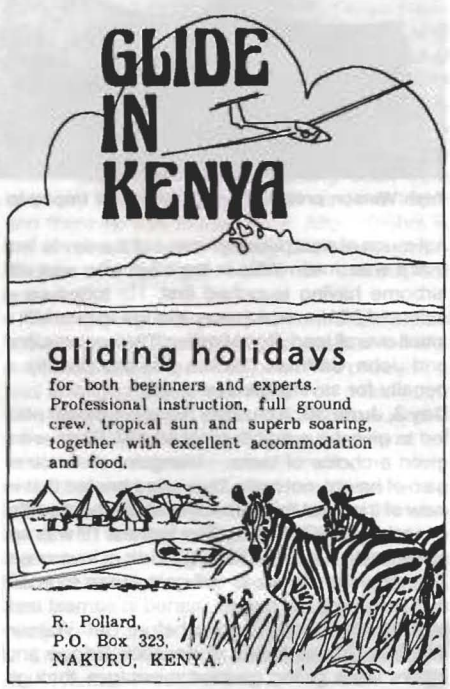
A puzzled chorus of "Half the span of an Oly" didn't amuse the constable who produced a tape measure and pronounced it to be 20ft 11½in. This is forever engraved on my soul because this was offence number 9.

"Don't you realise that it is an offence to drive a trailer on the road over twenty feet without notifying the police in advance of your intended route so that they can provide an escort?" Someone muttered that the BGA had a concession. Derek got all technical and referred to something called the Indivisible Load Act while the rest of us fell about laughing at the idea of giving advanced notice of what at that time was an annual event, and the idea of a pilot knowing where he was going before he took off. The constable, not amused, had never heard of the BGA let alone an Indivisible Load Act. We would be reported etc.

We then had the problem of who was going to drive. Derek volunteered but was told by the constable that if he did he would be reported for eight offences, "Why not nine?" he asked, "Well at least your licence is current".

Accepting this we moved off. The outcome? Well believe it or not nothing, unless you count a very polite letter from the Chief Constable to the club saying that there did appear to be some gentlemen's agreement with the BGA and as he didn't want to test this point in court, all the charges would be dropped, but would we ensure in future etc, etc ...

We did, well almost. It was a good job it wasn't the same constable who stopped us the next month when we returned at night from our site with Pete E lying on the mudguard pouring jam jars of petrol in the air intake because the fuel pump had packed up. The flames were something to behold, still that's another story. ■



BONNY ENTERPRISE

Aboyne, June 27-July 4

Competition Enterprise, the story of a moveable TP, soaring the banks of Loch Ness, scraping low enough to herd sheep, 474km from a 1630 take-off, a 10½hr K-6E flight, 11½hrs in a Silene . . .

Competitive gliding is a challenge which is taken up by many glider pilots as they gain experience but over the last few years the impression is gained that narrowing the tasks into closed circuits in the best part of the day has taken away much of the fun and much of the expertise required to exploit soaring weather to the full. Reports of the recent World Championships tend to reinforce that view when five minutes might mean the difference between winning and being nowhere. Gliders are no longer seen to be colourful and some of the colour has gone from competition. The best stories are often those of uncompleted races or the epic cat's cradle task.

For those who savour the delights of unexpected wave or sea breeze and want the colour back there is relief. It is, simply, Competition Enterprise.

The last Competition Enterprise at Aboyne in 1983 had provided soaring of a quality and quantity that must rate as a benchmark in gliding weather. That quality was going to be difficult, if not impossible, to live up to, even by Aboyne's legendary standards and as we all know the weather this year in May and June was enough to dampen the spirits of the most ardent devotee of gliding. But looking back at 1983 there had been six weeks of daily rain before Enterprise.

Would the pattern be repeated? With great confidence in the power of prayer, participants were told that the good weather was being saved for the Competition week. Now judge for yourself!

The Comp was opened on time by the chairman of the Scottish Sports Council, Mr P. Heatly, and the rain stopped just after briefing.

Many pilots were out of practice and as the weather was improving only slowly and a belt of rain was forecast for the evening no task was set. A few pilots launched in the afternoon and managed an hour or two of local flying.

The evening barbecue started and on cue so did the rain, but spirits were high in anticipation of the week ahead.

Day 1, June 28. A fresh SW wind was blowing and the clear air was expected to give thermals and some wave throughout the day. TPs were set at varying distances to the west to give some degree of pilot choice for an O/R task. An innovation was the use of a **moveable** TP in case of cloud cover. This was the Kyle of Loch Alsh ferry which has a journey of about 2km between the mainland and the Isle of Skye. The most popular TP proved to be the lighthouse at the southern end of Loch Ness, a round trip of 226km. The wooden wonders won the day in the shape of the SB-5 and the K-6E flown by Ron Davidson and Chris Nicholas respectively. Ron said he had been ridge soaring the banks of Loch Ness (a watery end if you don't stay up!) and had been low enough to herd sheep! Charles Owles in the designer Dart 17 had the unfortunate experience of choosing the next Loch to the SW of L Ness by mistake and so did not score very highly despite a battling 6½hrs in the air.

Day 2, June 29. Scotland was still in clear air while cloud and rain persisted further south. Winds were southerly with patchy cu, under and in a medium cloud layer. A multiple O/R task was set using about seven designated TPs. Some cloud flying proved to be necessary and it was not much of a surprise at the end of the day to find that it was Justin Wills in the LS-6 who was still airborne having launched first. He totted up a splendid 351km which was enough to give him a small overall lead. Rob Harding (Discus) was 2nd and John Cadman (Ventus BT) 3rd despite a penalty for saving retrieve costs!



Trish Watson presenting the Enterprise trophy to Justin Wills with Lemmy Tanner looking on.

Day 3, June 30. A blustery SW wind was expected to give wave and thermal all day. Pilots were given a choice of tasks – triangular distance or gain of height, not both. They were briefed that in view of the wind they would need plenty of bottle, especially the O2 variety. The furthest TP was set at the bridge over the Beaulay Firth at Inverness. The day was slower to get going than forecast and launching did not get started in earnest until after lunch. It was not long before Ben Watson (Nimbus 2) was heard at Kessock Bridge and others were giving garbled messages through oxygen masks. Four pilots, Tony Smallwood (Libelle), Maurice Clarke (ASW-20L), Charles Owles and David Breeze (SHK) gained Diamond heights and at 10pts/1000ft must have thought that they had it made – 190pts for just going **up**? Justin arrived on the airfield late after an abortive fishing expedition and launched in mid-afternoon. At 1930 he was back having flown 210km, surely a winning margin.

A check on the log revealed that Chris Nicholas (K-6E) was still airborne. An hour passed, no news. Then at nearly 9pm there he was in the circuit. A dogged persevering flight of 6½hrs for 181km gave him top place for the day but Justin just maintained the overall lead.

Day 4, July 1. A warm front to the west produced another wave and thermal mixture but the north-west area was likely to be too cloudy for useful gliding. A variety of TPs aligned NE-SW were set

allowing plenty of scope for ingenuity on the multi-O/R to Aboyne task. This was a difficult day and demanded a lot of patience and perseverance again. Several pilots failed to score despite going to over 15000ft in wave. Justin had launched twice (and scored) but was either dissatisfied or greedy for more flying, so launched again at 1630. Charles Owles had been heard going round Loch Tay but the air above the Glen Livet whisky distillery went to his head and he succumbed to the Bonny Braes at just after 8pm for 179km. The best so far. At 10pm the scorer was getting agitated; no news from Justin and the cows were beginning to want the airfield again for manoeuvres! At last he was persuaded to talk. Had he been round any TPs? "One or two" was the laconic reply. At 10.30pm No. 1 flashed past the clubhouse at speed, pulled up in a lazy chandelle and landed. The canopy opened up and a very crumpled map emerged followed by an equally crumpled Justin. The TP list that followed added up to an amazing 590km! Could this be true? It wasn't - not quite! One of the TPs had been on the earlier flight so the scoring distance was **only** 474km! From a 1630 take-off! His lead was now very large but business would prevent flying the next day so the others would have a chance.

Day 5, July 2. There would still be cloud in the NW so tasks would be over much the same area as on the previous day. A choice of tasks again, this time duration at 20pts/hr or speed round any course at 1pt/km plus speed points. If you took off you were bound to score although in Nick Gaunt's case (Kestrel 19) even that was questionable after the previous day's efforts!

Several flights of over 7hrs were done but Chris Nicholas made the most of his chances and achieved 261km. For all this effort there were only six speed points and despite the conclusive day-best-score Justin was still in the lead.

Day 6, July 3. Met said there would be no wave today only thermals. They were not quite right about the wave but it was mainly a thermal task in warm air. The task was distance round any triangle starting and finishing at Aboyne with eight TPs to choose from, 1pt/km for Landing out or 1.5pts/km for a completed triangle.

A lot of unscheduled cloud made life difficult but nonetheless most pilots made it round one TP and six got back having completed triangles. One of these was Aboyne based Dave White in the Vega who won the day from the SHK flown by David Breeze/Tony Housden combine who covered more distance but landed out. Justin was still absent and his lead was in danger, but the one pilot who needed to score to catch him ran out of steam today and failed to get away!

Day 7, July 4. If you have read so far you will realise that we have now had six task days in a row and some pilots have over 30hrs flying already. How about that? There is more to come.

The forecast was for a stronger wind than on Day 6 with wave predominating over thermals, but some of each. The task setter had run out of ideas so just changed the date on the task board. Launching began at about 1030am and pilots were soon reporting good wave lift. The wind though was very strong making progress difficult. Enterprise task setters John Fielden and myself took a break from watching from the ground and flew to 10000ft to see how things were going. Gliders were passing to and fro overhead in brilliant sunshine, and Bill Longstaff, flying his blue and white Dart, photographed the Capstan while passing Aboyne. Shortly after this Justin was heard to be landing out! Gillian made a swift retrieve:- from landing 20km away to take-off only 40min! No. 1 was back at 8pm having flown 176km in 2½hrs.

It was 8.30pm and still no news

Prizegiving was scheduled to be at 8pm so there were no great problems. But there were doubts. That Essex K-6E was still airborne and had been very quiet all day. Bill Longstaff landed back. Nine hours flying for 243km and possible 1st place for the day. 8.30pm. Still no news. The Silene flown by Mike Jeffereyes was still airborne as well. Shortly after this Mike and Chris were heard chatting. Chris was coming back from Loch Tay high up and with a tail wind - 9.15pm and there he was in the circuit. After 10½hrs in the air a surprisingly spritely Chris emerged - 266km and a flight worthy of the highest praise.

The computer was put to work. Had Chris done enough to win? The 250pt gap was just too big, but what a challenge it had been. The prizegiving was arranged and prizes set out on a table outside the new hangar where the barbecue was in full swing. Still we had to wait. The Silene was not yet back and as he had only been airborne 11hrs and there was plenty of wave about we would have to be patient. At last Mike landed. 11½hrs flying with enough daylight left to have prizegiving in evening sunlight after another memorable Competition Enterprise. Thanks to all who took part.

Leading results: 1. Justin Wills (LS-6), 1524pts; 2. Chris Nicholas (K-6E), 1474pts; 3. John Cadman (Ventus T) 1065pts.

THE CLUB HORSE

The reminiscences of a pioneer glider pilot - Harold was the ground engineer at the Yorkshire GC from 1934-39.

From 1937 onwards aircraft movements over the landing area were much increased with the result that the heather roots were cut to pieces in a wide strip where the two main winch routes occurred. The top soil blew away and miniature dust bowl conditions prevailed for many years. This was caused by using chains on recovery vehicles in wet weather and of course very few aircraft had wheels. In an attempt to minimise this a horse was obtained for retrieving.

Here a mistake was made. Instead of obtaining a tough little pony used to pulling in harness, the committee obtained a tall saddle horse from a riding school who retrieved at a brisk canter leaving the wingtip man behind.

The person who first suggested using a horse, Mr William Sharpe, rode him over from Bradford, a distance of some 50 miles, taking two days for the journey. His biggest problem was getting accommodation for the night, not for himself but the horse.



Harold seated on a Dagling primary glider at Sutton Bank in 1937.

The horse, known as Major, was a good tempered animal and was learning his job when Rex Stedman, who should have known better, side slipped the Kite 1 on top of him, knocking him unconscious. After that Major had only to hear a bit of cracking ply and he departed at high speed, irrespective of whether he had a machine in tow or not.

Major never forgot his rough treatment and sadly he was sold to a farmer. Up till then members had been encouraged to practise side slipping as a means of losing height but after that it was realised that there were limits. Almost certainly the real cause of the mishap was the new enlarged rudder which was more effective than any previous Slingsby type. Rex had been warned about it and should have paid more attention.

LOOKING BACK

A Day in the Life of Orville Wright

So far we have looked back together at Penaud, Pilcher, Biot and Chanute. Where in my scheme, you may ask, are the real giants, Cayley, Lilienthal and the Wrights? My answer would be that, because they achieved so much, I cannot devise a way of compressing any of them into two pages. Instead, I propose a vignette.

The Wrights, for example, come right at the end of the heroic period in gliding history – the era of the glider as a means to an end, as the vehicle *par excellence* with which to learn to fly before adding an engine and inventing the aeroplane. The period to which we are looking back in this series.



The Wright brothers with Orville on the left.

The Wright brothers also inaugurated the beginning of the second period, the era of the glider as an end in itself – the sport *par excellence*. This second period will, I hope, be the basis of another series of articles.

For my vignette, I tell the story of one day in the life of Orville Wright: October 24, 1911.

Return to Kitty Hawk

For the Wrights, fame came quickly and fortune slowly, but by 1911 both were assured. Aeroplanes had by then achieved speeds of over 100km/h; straightline distances of nearly 200km; durations of 8hrs; heights of 4000m. Inspired by the Wrights' example, home-made gliders were appearing everywhere, built by enthusiasts to gain air experience.

Orville decided to return to Kitty Hawk, the scene of the early gliding experiments (1900-1903), taking with him a new glider in order to experiment with an automatic stabiliser on which he had been working for some time. He chose Kitty Hawk for the same reasons as before: for its windy sand dunes and to be away from prying eyes. The brothers had already had enough of long court cases, trying to enforce their patents both at home and abroad, and Orville hoped that at Kitty Hawk he would be able to experiment without being watched and photographed and eventually copied. He was disappointed. The word had circulated among the journalists and on arrival with a few friends he was met by the press.

The wings of the new biplane glider were similar to those of the 1902 glider, which had given yeoman service in the early experiments. However, the pilot was now sitting upright, instead of prone; the forward elevator was moved to the back and a double rudder was mounted on the end of an open framed fuselage. It had a span of 32ft, chord of 5ft, wing area of about 300sq ft, and weighed 170lbs (including 12lbs of sand ballast), nearly 60lbs more than the 1902 glider.

Two Major Prangs

Wilbur was unable to accompany his brother to Kitty Hawk, because he was away on yet another court case.

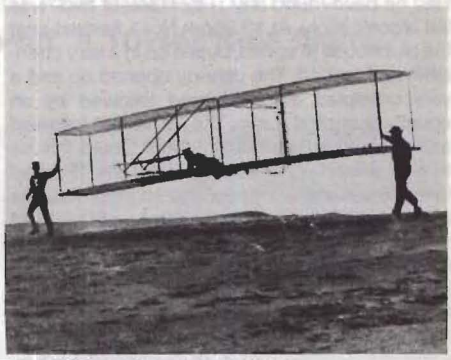
On October 10 the party arrived at Kill Devil and started work on restoring the old camp buildings. They measured the slopes of Kill Devil Hill and West Hill, stocked up with provisions and rigged the glider. Gliding started on October 16 and continued until the 27th, interspersed with modifications to the control surfaces and repairs after two major prangs.

The technique was the same. The glider was carried to a spot near the top of the hill, set down facing the wind, and the pilot took his place. Two assistants, one at each wingtip, raised the glider and took a few steps forward until they felt the lift take the weight, then they let go. The pilot flew straight into wind or in a very gentle curve down to the bottom of the hill. No attempt was made to make figure eights or sharp turns, so the only way to stay airborne for more than a few seconds was to fly in winds strong enough to permit hovering over the "sweet spot" on the hill.

Nine Minutes 45sec: World Record

By the 24th about 20 glides had been made, the best being one of about 600ft for a duration of 23sec. Here is what Orville had to say about Tuesday, October 24 in his diary:

"Sunshine. Wind 20-25 (mph) on ground. Wind at top (of) hill as high as 40 miles at 6ft (above ground), 50 miles (at) 12ft. Just below top, 35 miles at height of 6ft, 22 miles (at height of) 6ft at bottom and 30 miles at height of 12ft. Made about 20 glides ranging from one (minute) to 9min 45sec. (Two of) 7min 15sec (and) 5min 29sec more than 50ft above top hill. Measured a space of about 40 yards over which machine seemed to glide without any loss of speed at angle 6°. Hung 8lbs sand 7ft out."



The 1902 glider being launched.

(Eight pounds of sand refers to ballast which was hung on a rod 7ft in front of the top wing, later increased to 12lbs 8ft out.)

Busy with the Levers

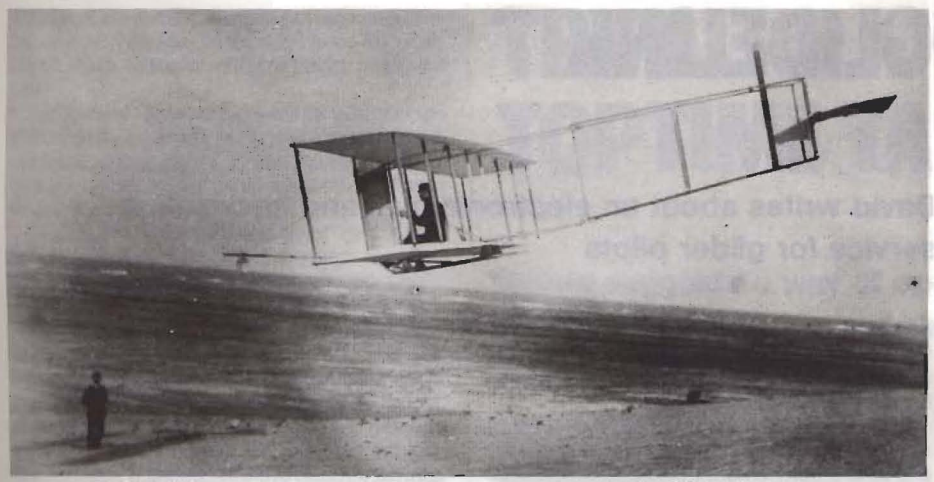
Over the next three days about 60 further glides were made, but the record of 9min 45sec was not beaten. The automatic stabiliser system was never fitted, probably because Orville found that the control movements in the strong winds and gusts were sometimes more than he could manage and would certainly have been too much for the flimsy "automatic pilot" that he had invented. Orville later wrote to friends describing these flights:

"Flying in a 25m/sec wind is no snap, and I can tell you that it keeps one pretty busy with the levers. I got caught in one whirl of wind that turned my machine completely around and drove me into the hill. I didn't receive a scratch, but the machine needed the doctor pretty badly. I found that in order to fly in such winds a greater control than has ever been put on any power machine would be necessary. It was not the velocity of the wind, but its sudden changes in direction that made the flying difficult."

"In many cases we landed at a higher point than the one from which we started. I see no reason why flights of several hours' duration cannot be made without use of a motor. But, of course, these flights must be made in rising trends of air – a condition required by all birds for soaring flight."

Press Reports

The event was reported sensibly and respectfully in the aeronautical journals and rather more sensationally in the popular press, with Orville being quoted as saying one day a motorless



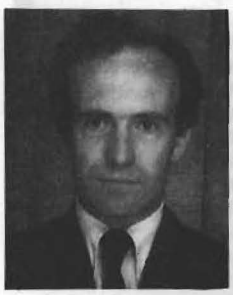
The 1911 glider. Photo by courtesy of the Smithsonian Institute *via* the Science Museum.



Oops! A false start with the 1911 glider.

plane would make a 1000 mile trip without landing! Some famous aviators dismissed the whole story by saying that it was impossible to stay up even nine minutes without an engine! Despite its wide circulation the story of October 24, 1911 made little impact. The public wanted aviation – higher, farther and faster, with plenty of spills and thrills. Aviation was a heavily subsidised sport and its aces were the current idols. If it had been anyone other than the Wrights, the exploit would not have been noticed at all. Nevertheless, the performance stood as a duration record for ten years, and as an inspiration to those who believed in gliding as a sport.

SOMETHING SPECIAL



Robert is an instructor with the East Sussex GC, though the flight he describes was in 1975 when he was living in the north. He started gliding in 1971 with the Northumbria GC while studying physics at Newcastle University.

I arrived at Currock Hill, home of the Northumbria GC, under a completely grey sky, not expecting anything of the day. There were mutterings of "wave" and upwind breaks were visible in the otherwise unbroken layer of cloud.

It was rather turbulent on tow in my syndicate Skylark 2, but at 3000ft it suddenly became much smoother. I pulled off at 3200ft but the lift, at 1kt, wasn't as good as I had thought. From my two previous wave flights I anticipated better as I climbed towards the cloud edge. By flying as slowly as possible and pointing straight into wind the extremely smooth airflow made it possible to sit there apparently motionless. Later I increased speed and tracked along the cloud edge to Consett where I arrived with 4500ft. The lenticular cloud came to a gradual end and I was joined by other pilots. One of these, in a Pirat, flew further south-west and was soon well above me. Following him I reached 7800ft over Tow Law.

Then I was alone and feeling more adventurous I decided to explore the wave system further upwind. The next lenticular cloud was much higher and I believed the lift in front of it must be much better, but how could I get there? Nature provided the answer. A bridge of cloud had formed where the wave was breaking down. By following this I found an area of weak lift about half way towards my goal, still with 6300ft. I pressed on and flew into the strong sink I had expected. I was quite anxious as I flew under the trailing edge of the cloud. The brown and purple moorland below me did not seem to have any useful landing places. Then the sink subsided under the cloud and eventually my efforts were rewarded with a 4kt climb.

I was soon passing cloudbase with small puffs of cloud forming immediately below and in front of me. The cloud appeared to me like a wall with layers protruding at various heights rather like a stack of inverted oval plates. Still climbing at 3kt at 11 000ft the view upwind was outstanding. The horizon lay between two layers of lenticular cloud, the primary wave, with further upwind a bubbly layer of cloud below them that had a golden tinge from the afternoon sun. I considered flying to the primary but I had already enjoyed the flight more than any before, the view ahead was enough, and this time nature did not provide a bridge for me to follow.

At 13000ft I could see downwind over the hump of the cloud. Far below the ground appeared rather dark and features were difficult to distinguish but I believe I was over Haydon Bridge. Then I turned downwind over the top of the cloud and noticed even higher wispy cloud with a lenticular form. If only I had had oxygen and a barograph. I had only just begun to notice how cold I felt and my exposed skin was prickling lightly all over, especially my lips and nose. I felt it was definitely time to go down; perhaps one of my syndicate partners could experience and enjoy this wave flying as I had.

An uninviting wall now appeared

Over the trailing edge of the cloud I was sinking very rapidly but was soon in the zero sink in front of the next wave cloud. This also now appeared as a wall with, at its base, a dark narrow gap into which I had to fly in order to regain the field. It looked very uninviting. To lose height I carried out some aerobatics, loops, chandelles, spins, and at 3500ft flew into that dark misty space.

I found it much more turbulent and the wind strength was obviously much higher than at take-off. Once on the ground I had to wait for help before I could get out of the glider and none of my syndicate partners were able to make a similar flight after all. My own flight had lasted 2.5hrs, covering about 85km and for it I was awarded the club's wave trophy.

ROBERT GREY

You can cut a dash on the airfield this winter with a magnificent blue and white umbrella (golf size) which has eight panels, four decorated with glider silhouettes. The price – £14.95 including p&p from the BGA sales department.

GLIDELINK

David writes about an electronic mail and information service for glider pilots

A lot of information passes between gliding clubs, the BGA, outside bodies such as the CAA and the Met office, and individual glider pilots. Glidelink uses state-of-the-art technology to make this exchange of information easier and faster, and hence cheaper and more efficient. Using an ordinary telephone, virtually any computer, and the Telecom Gold System, you can have instant *interactive* access not only to the unique Glidelink services but also to standard international Telex and Electronic Mail.

All the information listed here, and more as the system grows, will be available whenever you want it:

Forecasting. In any gliding situation, the first thing you need is accurate weather forecasting. Glidelink provides a daily forecast direct from the Meteorological Office, specially tailored to gliding. Several regional forecasts will be available early each morning during the soaring season and, since Telecom Gold can transmit satellite photographs, we hope to provide these as well.

NOTAM Reminders. These will not replace the CAA NOTAM service, but will give you a quick check on anything which might affect your day's gliding. Urgent messages will also be highlighted on an electronic banner.

Competition and Ladder News. Regional and international competition results will be available within minutes of the last competitor crossing the finishing line. Telecom Gold is part of an international data system, so if Glidelink had existed at the time, news of the World Championships in Australia could have been available here instantaneously! Or if you're a "ladder buff", Glidelink will inform you instantly of any new threat to your position!

Subscribers' Noticeboard. Inclusive of the subscription, Glidelink provides users with an electronic noticeboard with categories for various types of information. For example you could use it to place small (or large) ads, which will be available to other users within seconds, or indeed to scan other people's ads for that hard-to-find instrument or service - or glider! And you can do this instantly, not just once a quarter. Clubs can "noticeboard" information about their activities, new equipment, forthcoming events, competition vacancies or anything else they want to say. Any information will be accepted, and new noticeboard "categories" will be opened as demand dictates.

Database Information. Glidelink's own database will be very useful. Among other things it will contain a full list of BGA associated clubs with addresses, 'phone numbers and names of CFIs, and so on. If you want information about a particular club, you simply type the name of the club, and command the Telecom Gold computer to make a search: the system will display all the information registered. Technical information on gliders and related equipment will also be stored, as well as an electronic version of the **British Soaring Year Book.**

These are just examples, and we imagine that Glidelink subscribers will make their own suggestions for additional database facilities.

Electronic Mail. Electronic Mail (often known as "E-mail") has revolutionised many businesses, and the gliding world will benefit in the same way. E-Mail is a form of electronic letter writing by which a letter is addressed by one user to another individual or a group of users. Each user has his private "mailbox" which only he can access with his own password.

Many clubs have a considerable quantity of correspondance with their members, the BGA and others, and hence incur large postage bills. With E-mail it is as easy **and** as cheap to communicate with a large group of people as with an individual: effectively it is an electronic mail-shot. Club newsletters can be distributed in an instant with a huge saving of office time, stationery and postage. BGA items such as CFI's Newsletters can go out as E-mails and private owners can contact their partners, both with equal ease.

Through Telecom Gold, Glidelink can also give you a Telex terminal in your home or clubhouse, without the normal high costs of renting and using standard Telex equipment.

WHAT YOU NEED

A Computer. This can be almost any home machine from the humble Sinclair Spectrum up. It should have an RS232 or RS432 port. If (improbably) it doesn't, one can usually be fitted. Alternatively, you can buy a small electronic typewriter which does the job just as well and also gives you immediate, permanent "hard copy" of all the text you receive or transmit.

A Printer. Not vital, but useful if you want to post a weather forecast on the club noticeboard or maybe keep a copy of your personal mail. If you already have a computer-compatible typewriter, this will be an excellent alternative.

Communications Software. Many excellent software packages, which run on all the main systems currently in use, are available at modest cost. We can also advise you if you like.

A Modem. This makes the connection between your computer and your telephone line. It translates the computer's signals into a form which can pass down the telephone line so that your computer can talk to the Glidelink Telecom Gold computer. There are two main types, which connect in different ways:

Plug-in: This has a lead with a plug which fits the new BT sockets.

Acoustic: This has a pair of rubber cups into which you push the ends of the telephone handset. There is no electrical connection: data is passed acoustically using the telephone's microphone and earpiece.

Acoustic models are cheaper, but plug-in ones are better because they produce fewer transmission errors.

A Phone Line: Your exising line will do, but make sure you have a new-type BT socket if you're using a plug-in modem. BT install them at quite a low cost.

A comfy bed: because you'll be able to spend longer in it! If you have the right software and modem, you'll be able to get your computer to dial the Glidelink number an hour or so before you get up, collect the forecast and your mail, disconnect, and then print everything out for you to read over your morning tea!

OPERATING GLIDELINK

This is very easy, especially as Glidelink provides you with a comprehensive manual to help get started. A session on Glidelink might go like this:

Switch on the computer and load the software. Dial Glidelink, tell it who you are by typing in your Glidelink ID and personal password which prevents anyone else using your private mailbox. This is known as "logging on", heaven knows why. Type "info weather" to get the gliding forecast and transfer it to a disc file. Type "mail" and transfer your incoming letters to disc. Send out your mail, probably prepared beforehand to save the computer's time (and your money!). Read the noticeboard, store anything of interest, then "log-off". Print the files you've saved and read them at your leisure.

WHAT IT COSTS

There is a monthly £5 service charge and a charge for time spent connected to the Glidelink computer. The time charge exlusive of VAT is:

Cheap rate: (19.00-08.00 and Satuday/Sunday) 3.5p/min.

Peak rate: (08.00-19.00 Monday to Friday) 11p/min.

In London you can dial the computer direct. Elsewhere you ring it up *via* a local call, using a system called PSS. There is an extra charge of 2.5p or 3p/min for doing this, depending on the rate at which your system communicates, and this is of course far cheaper than making a long distance STD call.

Getting a weather forecast takes about two minutes which, in the cheap rate period, would cost about 12p with PSS or 7p on a local call, plus the normal cost of the 'phone call. Glidelink will supply a full list of PSS 'phone numbers throughout the country so that you can use a local call pretty well wherever you are.

WHEN YOU PAY

You pay us monthly on receipt of our invoice.

OUR COMMITMENT

The Glidelink team all have considerable experience in advising customers about the use of

Telecom Gold and the necessary equipment. We are also active glider pilots and hence know all about areas where customers might need our help

Also behind Glidelink there will be a 24hr helpline to use if you run into problems. Meanwhile we will be happy to visit you at your home or club to give you a free, no-strings demonstration of how Glidelink can help you.

GLIDELINK is a subsidiary of ARTSLINK INTERNATIONAL LIMITED. For further information and a demonstration please contact: David Starer, 8 Green Lane, Watford, Herts WD1 4NJ. Tel: 0923 23420 (or c/o London Gliding Club, Dunstable) or Artslink International Ltd, 39 Islington Park Street, London N1 1QB. Tel: 01-359 5400 Tlx: 265871 ref MUS001.

* * *

Max Bishop, a member of the BGA Executive Committee, was given a demonstration of Glidelink and now assesses its potential. If, like mine, your knees go wobbly at the merest mention of RAMs, floppies and modems, you will be tempted to dismiss Glidelink as yet more hi-tech hype, irrelevant to the everyday concerns of the average coarse gliding club. But like it or not it is only a matter of time before the electronic communications revolution sweeps through the gliding movement and makes redundant all those grubby bits of paper with which we conduct our business. Used intelligently, these new tools could perhaps be the means by which we break down the barriers between individuals, clubs, the BGA and the public at large, barriers which are commonly seen to be a major weakness of our movement.

The electronic mail facility in Glidelink could be a great time and money-saver; no more stuffing of envelopes with circulars (which the majority of recipients will "bin" with scarcely a glance); great savings on postage and staff time; a guarantee that you are targetting the particular individual – club official or whoever it may be – who needs to read your message.

As for the information service, it offers an ideal way of communicating the kind of constantly updated information that glider pilots need – weather, airspace, NOTAMs etc. Naturally, the system is only of any use if the information on offer is accurate and current. The challenge for Glidelink is to negotiate appropriate agreements with the Met office, the CAA and other custodians of information for access to their sources. The onus will also be on various sources within the gliding movement to ensure that the data-base is kept up-to-date.

The operating costs of Glidelink are quite modest and clubs will already possess some of the equipment required (cheap computer, phone line, printer perhaps). Most clubs (or individuals of course) would however have to buy a modem and a communications software package. I understand that Glidelink will be demonstrated at the next BGA Conference. By then, several clubs will have accumulated experience in using the system and will be able to give a fuller account of its potential. I can only confirm from firsthand experience that the system works, is easy for the computer-illiterate to use and answers a real need in the gliding movement for better communications. ■

TRY A TOPTIME TASK

Maurie suggests a way of opening up cross-country flying and possibly reducing gaggles in competitions



Maurie has been the manager, CFI and chief tug pilot at Waikerie, Australia, since 1971, flown in four World Championships and as well as flying in countless competitions has been forecasting and task setting for 16 years.

For quite some years I have been trying to create a variation on our usual gliding tasks that would be easy enough to lure some Sunday pilots out from the immediate environs of the airfield, and still be challenging enough for the experienced pilot.

For this I felt the task needed to be flexible in the selected route. So many times have I seen a beautiful cumulus sky everywhere but where the task is set. This suggested a cat's cradle type of task. I have never liked this task. Despite woolly thinking to the contrary, it is a race to the last gasp of the dying day. Distance tasks are really open ended speed tasks. It also has the problem that it inevitably forces an outlanding. In competition the circumstances of this can be highly dangerous. A tired pilot after a long hard day landing in poor light – or even after dark.

In international competitions certainly, and national competitions often, even conservative pilots push themselves to a point where they rely on luck rather than skill. Competitions at this level can become a very sophisticated form of Russian roulette – very much "who dares – wins". Not the type of result I had in mind. The problem was to allow the flexibility of route and to avoid the inevitability of outlanding.

The way to do this was to limit the time so that at some point while still airborne the task would be finished.

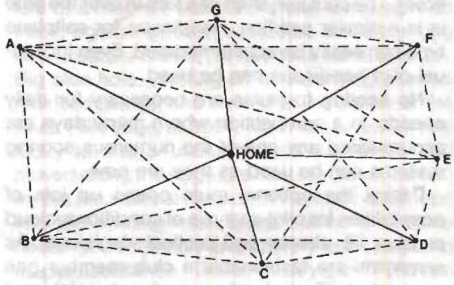
Having examined quite a lot of possibilities I have come up with a task that satisfies the requirements. While it was intended as a club task, it equally can become a competition task.

For the club task I have set my time at 2hrs. To achieve this the pilot could easily be airborne for three or more hours. I have selected that relatively short time as I find that a flight of 2½-3 hrs is very refreshing despite the high concentration needed for fast cross-country. Shorter flights are not very satisfying and longer ones more taxing. At national and international levels 3hrs would be a sensible minimum and 4 or 5hrs more likely.

I have set up to seven TPs relatively equally spaced around a home base start point. Because of my selection of 2hrs, I have put them between 29 and 43km away. I feel they should be short enough so that more than one O/R is necessary. For longer times another set at a greater distance out would be better.

One variation from the cat's cradle is that the home base may be used any number of times but each TP only once. This is once again to force the use of more than one leg or one line, but still allow the home base to be used as a TP *and finish point* if desired. It also allows the timid pilot (remember it was for club use primarily) to bite off bits at a time in a series of O/Rs.

We have a flying arena with all the possible 49 legs like this:



It is not too difficult to calculate all the distances and have them on file. Actually with fortunate positioning of suitable TPs five would be enough, but any number would do. They need not be symetrically spaced, if it does not suit the terrain.

It is necessary to have a time imprinting camera. The only ground facility needed is a declaration board – permanently set up, film development and verification. Once again this is easy to use in the club scene. People just fly the task and hand in their film. With on site development, the results can be established that day – or held over for a monthly result.

All tasks are speed tasks.

The race starts when a start photograph is taken of the home base. This can be either along the line of the first leg or a specific feature from over a control point. The most suitable will depend on the particular site and TP layout.

In order to eliminate a myriad of possible sectors and make TP identification easier, all periphery TP photographs will be taken back towards the home base. If the home base is used it may be back along the leg just flown or a specific point/control point line. The race finishes at the last TP after the set time (2hrs) has elapsed. The pilot may then fly where he likes at leisure. Back home if he has used a distant turn.

If the home base is used as a last turn - in order to use a final glide - the photo is the nearest boundary taken from *above 500ft.* This creates a difficult one to verify. In club use I believe it's no real problem, but in competition it may be difficult. Perhaps a selected finish point 2km away with appropriate emergency landing areas may be better in this context. Putting the height up a little (apart from the safety factor of having gliders come into a sometimes busy club circuit) is to go part way to equalising the home finish compared with the TP finish. If at least some TPs have airfields this would help too.

While some may think having to take a TP photo at 500ft is a bit of an overload, my experience is otherwise. I have been using timer cameras since 1980 and always take finish line photographs as a way of checking up on the official times. In some 200 finishes I forgot only once - and then it wasn't a real requirement.

After verification, the distance can be totalled up from a table of legs flown. The time from start to last turn can be estimated from the film. This will allow a speed to be calculated.

If a pilot lands out in less than the set time, then he is credited with the distance of *completed* legs only and the set time (2hrs for my task). Thus the pilot who flies very fast but drives himself into the ground just short of the time will be at some disadvantage by not being credited with the part leg flown. The pilot just short of a turn in over the time is in a similar position. Handicaps for sailplane type can easily be accommodated. Even individual pilot handicaps can be used.

No scoring formulas are necessary for daily speeds. In a competition where many days are accumulated any one of the numerous scoring systems can be used as they are now.

I think the optional route opens up lots of possibilities for pilot analysis of conditions, cloud or blue lift streets and tactical decisions. As acronyms are fashionable a club member has suggested "Top" for turn optional point and "Time" because it is specifically limited. Others might like to give it a more euphonic name?

Each site would need to look hard at its own unique possibilities. With some fine calculation perhaps one could set a 1hr 49min task that would encompass a world record breaking 300km triangle as a possible task.

So far I have only used the task twice. Once using the home base as a finish point and once using a TP.

One simplicity of the task is that it can be permanently set up as a club task to be flown any day at any start time. It has enough variations to be flown all season - or even all competition without becoming dull.

I suggest that clubs could try it - or some variation to suit their own situation or perceived shortcomings. It gives us a chance to break out from the fixed task, start gate games that is stiltifying sailplane racing.

In my club we have made a permanent declaration board for a 2hr task and plan a monthly best speed winner. Also, I'll have an opportunity to see it in competition use in our Orange Week Spring competition (September-October) and Summer Competition (December).

Experience may reveal the need for changes. If so I think they will be minor. I do think the concept can go a long way to opening up cross-country flying a little more and possibly reducing the gaggles in competitions.

MARY AT THE REGIONALS

Flying a Pegasus in the Lasham B Class

My first Comp. Strapped in. Ready to go. On the grid at Lasham. With the canopy closed down the steam begins to rise. Inexorably, moving down the line, one by one the tugs roll up and remove the pundits up front, the walking delegation of time keepers, officials, observers, crew and lookers-on is getting closer and closer. Nobody left in front now. That's *my* tug, that rachitic looking Rallye. That's *my* tow rope they're bringing round now! HELP! I'm ready as I'll ever be but I don't feel well at all. Paul Brice, my crew, has clipped on the ring; he's on the wingtip now, full of cheerful best wishes, encouraging smiles. I feel sick! I really feel horribly sick, my hands are sweating, my vision is blurred. Rolling now. Bounding along after the Rallye. Flying on automatic pilot, because the brain is not working at all.

Look at all those guys up ahead, a procession of one, two, three, four, five gliders on tow. All heading for the same drop-off zone. I wallow along miserably, but the fresh air streaming in the vent is beginning to help. By the time we get to 2000ft, I am sufficiently recovered to realise that the tug would like me to depart . . . he is waving his wings in a most pre-emptory manner. So I pull the plug and join the others. Hundreds of them! Round and round, spiralling upwards, watch out! That one is right on my level! And so is that one, keeping your eye on them. Round and round. I'm not going to do anything original at all, just keep station and slowly but ineffectively climb to 3000ft.

I realise at last that there are other places to go, other clouds under which only two or three gliders are turning, instead of this overcrowded merry-go-round. Maybe I can hack this after all! Downwind of the start zone, climb back up to cloudbase and make a plan. Where is that warty little slab of concrete they want us to take a picture of? Some sort of oil pumping installation, on the NE corner of the airfield. Must be over there, under that aerial scrum. Scrum is the word, too. Fifteen or twenty gliders, scuffling and scrabbling for position. The ether is full of short sharp messages. "Five-zero-five, started at twelve fourteen." "Nine seven, started at twelve fourteen." Nine zero nine, started at twelve twenty one." I think I'll wait a bit and take my starting photographs when they're not so busy.

So I waited until everybody had gone streaming off, and I took four or five shots of the warty slab of concrete from various angles - one of them was bound to be right! and announced my starting time. "Right, Nine-eight-seven" control answered right away. Good, my radio worked.

I set off on track, and being a late starter, had the advantage of the line of lift being clearly marked by climbing gliders. Hey, this wasn't so bad, a luxury one seldom enjoyed on a solitary cross-country flight. However, not every glider that was turning under a cloud was necessarily turning in the best lift. I found that out later. Got as far as the radio mast at Kingsclere, and the clouds were getting darker and heavier; the way ahead looking positively sinister.

"Hey, this cloud is raining on me!" I remarked on the radio. "Put it in your next book" somebody replied. I decided to try another cloud off track that didn't look so wet. This is when I learned that just because a cloud has a glider under it doesn't mean there's anything there but sink! How about that small bonfire, try that! I was getting low! I was getting very low! I would have to pick a field if things didn't improve rapidly. Not much to choose from this time of year, late June. But a ploughed field appeared opportunely, so I set up a circuit, and just turning base, found two up! Scraped away, got to 2000ft, turned around, and there was Lasham, right behind me!

As the day was not improving, I decided to return, wait for conditions to get better, and try again later. This seemed a good idea, but I didn't get anywhere on the relaunch, and by the time I had a third go it was half past three in the afternoon, and I never found a thing. The only gliders that landed back at the airfield that day were the sole finishers, John Delafield in the Nationals, and Ian Cook in the Regionals, and *me!* I had done a Kingsclere O/R For some obscure reason the computer credited me with a 2.5km and a score of zero. Zero didn't look so bad when a lot

of guys who went out and drove into the mud ten miles down track scored only 12pts!

I handed in my films to control, who sharply told me that wouldn't do at all, they wanted camera intacta, and next time would I please take a picture of the number on the tail. As my score was zero I was uncertain whether or not they would actually deduct from the zero a photographic penalty, leaving me with minus twenty or so on my very first day, but the powers that be decided zero was as low as I could get and that was my score, sharing 23rd place with Jane/Tony Watson's DG-300.

When we went to derig 987 that evening, one of the twin bearings in the self-connecting tailplane came to bits. We had noticed two days before that one of the bearings had a hairline crack, and so ordered new ones. "Sure, and they'd be there Saturday". We rung up Booker. "Had my bearings arrived?" "What bearings?" "Well without a new bearing I can't fly Sunday in the Lasham Regionals." "We'll send Mark Holmes down with them if they get here." Sunday morning I drove up to Booker, intending to kidnap a bearing from the other club Pegasus, 318. They wouldn't let me, not on Sunday, because they needed to use the glider that day, but I could remove it Sunday night. "Fair enough," I said, resigned to my fate. "In that case, I'll fly 318 today at Booker!" After all, I'm not going to win the Regionals so it really doesn't matter.

"I began to think the reason why people fly Comps is it feels so good when you stop!"

Old Shep towed me up at Booker, and in the blue, at 300ft just off the end of the runway, the crafty old pilot found a stinker of a thermal, and cranked it in. By 1000ft I had to agree that it really was a beauty, and I pulled off tow and climbed up to find a day that was just beginning to be absolutely superb. Weathermen got it wrong again. With my car keys in my pocket, no batteries, no radio, no trim (US) and a barograph in the back with yesterday's pathetic burps still recorded (and I forgot to turn it on as well), I did Bicester-Didcot, and enjoyed every moment. There were plenty of gliders *en route*, the task was Bicester O/R for the Regionals at Lasham. I thought I recognised some of them buzzing round. Outclimbed them, too. No pressure, you see. I began to think the reason why people fly Comps is it feels so good when you stop!

When I landed back at Booker, Ron Hone came up and said "Hello, Mary, why aren't you down at Lasham?" I told him why, and he said "But I got your bearings yesterday! They're in the office!" They were, too. Poor Chrissy was nearly in tears. "I didn't know what a bearing looks like" she sobbed. "The little envelope had Paul Brice's name on it, and I was going to give it to him next week!"

Bearing up under the strain very well, I did not lose my sense of humour. I had flown Bicester-Didcot better than ever before. As a pilot I am not a complete wally. I *can* beat some of those guys! At least one or two of them!

The next two days the weather was lousy. We played bridge and went shopping. Wednesday, June 24, didn't look all that good in the morning, but Tom Bradbury thought it would turn out better and he was absolutely right. He drew his diagrams on the board at briefing promising thermals all afternoon, with a bit of interference from wave. The task set for the Regionals was Salisbury, Frome, and some obscure little road junction near Avebury.

I felt really good, confident. I was flying for pleasure. I tracked from one big fat cloud to the next, meandering along, enjoying the view. You could see the Solent and the Isle of Wight. I found the radar dish at Chilbolton, the vast grass field at Middle Wallop, and just where it was supposed to be, Salisbury and the Cathedral. Heaven sent a beautiful thermal just over the spire. A photograph including Old Sarum in the background must be in sector, and I followed the railway line down past Warminster to Frome. It got a bit edgy near Frome. I had to sit over the ridge for quite a while before anything looked good over the town, and what I was supposed to photograph in Frome I wasn't exactly sure, so I took lots of different angles. and there, below, on the ground, in a very small field, was **another glider!** I couldn't help it. I know that you are not supposed to do that sort of thing. But for the first time I realised that I was **no longer last!** Said something to that effect on the radio. "Nine eight seven is still airborne over Frome, and there's somebody else **on the ground!**"

The ether positively crackled with disapproval.

I shut up and began to wend my way toward Avebury. It ought to be on a line behind the Marlborough White Horse. I couldn't find it. Not only couldn't find it but I was beginning to descend. It was beginning to look like I was not going to get back to Lasham. Contemplating a field where they were cutting silage, I noticed to the north a simply enormous airfield. 987 could get to that all right. Straight in final glide. No traffic at all. Couldn't be Brize Norton. Couldn't be Greenham. But I didn't know what it was - never mind, land at an airfield if you can and it is less likely to bend the glider. So I slid in nicely, sussed out the surface - excellent! and good grass too. Rolled to a stop next to the only vehicle, and the chap came over and said "This is the Science Museum at Wroughton. You can't land here!" I confessed I didn't know I wasn't allowed to land there and furthermore I didn't exactly know where I was. He sharply told me that they flew model aircraft there every evening and all the local gliding clubs had been told they were not supposed to land at Wroughton.

What a waste! The most beautiful field near Swindon. Why can't it be used by the Swindon Club for gliding? How much of a runway do you need for a model aircraft? I think they've got their priorities confused. Never mind. The naval engineers cadets marched out, two squads, and pushed 987 to the verge leaving plenty of black greasy fingerprints. The kindly Warrant Officer gave me cups of tea and phoned my crew. Paul Brice was exceedingly pleased with me. "You've at least finished in the top ten, Mary!" How on earth? Turned out a lot of gliders fell down right at the start. Sure enough, I ended up **sixth** for the day! I even beat Derek Piggott! (I'm sure he won't mind!). I beat 18 other pilots, because Wroughton was in the photographic zone for that obscure TP near Avebury and so I got round 3pts! Oh boy. Was that satisfying!

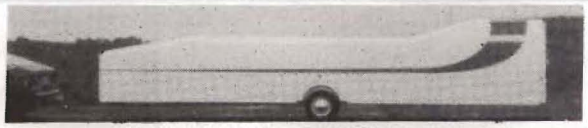
"Life is a lot easier when your CFI has proved he's number one"

Had to wait out two more days of bad weather before flying again. Friday, 26 June. Very iffy sort of day. Tom Bradbury promised we'd have some thermals mid afternoon till about six or seven in the evening. I wanted to wait until 1430 to launch, and that is the actual time the grid rolled away, but I fell down at once and came back to relight. What a treat to have a crew like Paul Brice! He was there in a flash. Took all the fuss and worry away, having a good crew. Graham McAndrew had pulled out of line, gone to the back, and lost his cool when they began to relaunch from the runway intersection. It didn't take the edge off his performance, he won the day, and he won the Comp, which as he is now our boss at Booker is just as well. Life is a lot easier when your CFI has *proved* he's number one.

I got a super relight. Photographed the startboard again and so was permitted to go straight off tow without dipsying around that warty concrete landmark. Towed straight into a lulu of a thermal, down the cloud street right on track, bouncing, everybody else already strung out. Great stuff! South of Newbury came unstuck. Big blue hole. Waffling around the fringe, took a reckless plunge and arrived at the corner of the Rivar Hill Ridge, at 800ft. Nowhere to go, so very lucky to find a useful thermal just there, and moved along the ridge to a nice big cloud. Time to try out the artificial horizon? Why not! I ascended into the swirling mist. Came out on a westerly heading. Completely and utterely lost. I began to ask for assistance. "Does Pewsey (our TP) have a lot of factory buildings?" "Negative, 987". "I'm over an airfield with concrete runways and a running track, can anybody tell me what it is?" My crew was listening, and came back with the suggestion it might be Thruxton. Thruxton? How the heck did I get over Thruxton? Well, it was Thruxton, all right. I crept from there to Netheravon, Upavon, and **finally found Pewsey!** And took lots of pictures of the wretched place.

All that beautiful start frittered away. The day was getting dark. Went on a bit past Rivar Hill, but nothing looked landable, so came back and landed at Rivar Hill. Somehow ended up eighth for the day. which was the end of the Comp as it turned out. I've got the bug now. Going to sign up again for the Lasham Regionals. The cuisine is superb down there! (thanks to Mike Evans, even those rolling in late from a retrieve can count on a splendid dinner!). And there's lots to do on rainy days. And I still haven't found out what it feels like to cross the finishing line!

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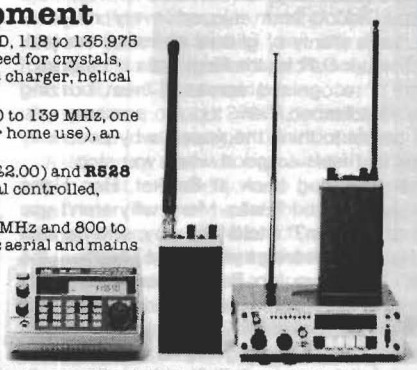
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MILITARY LOW LEVEL FLYING

All general aviation pilots will be well aware that there is a marked difference between flying at weekends as compared to flying during the working week. The ingredient that is usually missing at weekends is the military low level aircraft. Whilst this natural division between weekday and weekend leisure activities largely serves to keep the military fast jets and the pleasure flyers apart, the quite rapid development in many areas of sport aviation and the changing nature of the traditional working week and available leisure time means that these two very diverse groups of aviators are now, occasionally, finding themselves in positions of apparent conflict when using the Open FIR.

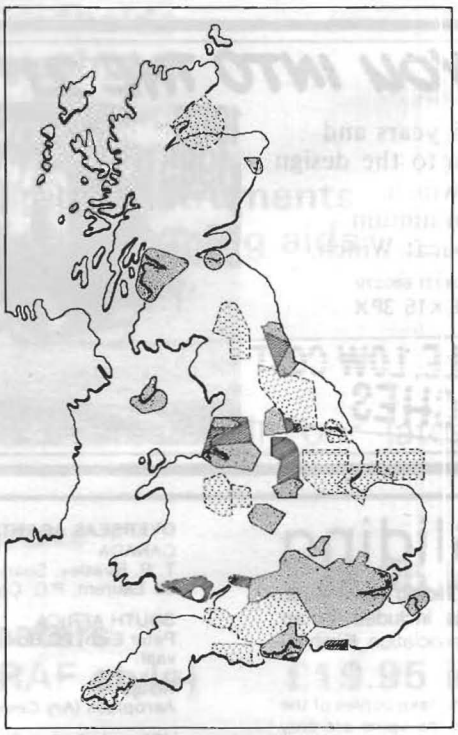
"OK", you say, "there appears to be something of a problem developing but what can we, the aviation community at large, do to prevent it from getting out of hand?" Well, first, let us consider the component parts. On the one hand, we have the military aircrew, working hard to learn and maintain the very exacting skills necessary for low level high speed flight so as to give them a fighting chance of penetrating a potential enemy's defences and thus to ensure that we, as a nation, have a credible means of defence through retaliation. On the other hand, we have a very wide variety of general aviation operators and sports aviation enthusiasts. The former are involved in everything from crop-spraying and flying training to off airways transit flying. The sport aviators probably have the best time of all, flying for pure pleasure by gliding, microlighting, paracending, hang gliding, etc.

Some might argue there's stacks of space up there

Oh! and yes; the final component is the airspace over the UK or, at least, that part of it which falls outside controlled airspace and is generally referred to as the "Open FIR". "But surely," some might argue, "there's stacks of space up there; so why not separate military fast jet and slow speed civilian activities by designating specific areas for each type of flying, thereby making the see and avoid principle easier to abide by?"

Well, that is the suggestion most frequently put forward, by all types of operators. So frequently that it is the inspiration of this article based on information provided by the RAF Sqd Ldr charged with the management of the military low flying system in the UK.

So, why not sub-divide the lower airspace between military and civilian operators? Well, to a large extent, we already have. A glance at the chart (reproduced from the **Air Pilot**) shows that there are large areas of the country over which fast jet military low level flying does not normally take place. This is principally in the dark shaded areas from ground level to 200ft agl and in the light shaded areas between 100ft and 200ft agl. These two types of area are known as "avoidance" and "transit" areas respectively and, although the general aim is to disperse military low flying as widely and, therefore, as thinly as possible, these areas have been established to



A map showing where there is intense aerial activity and the avoidance areas.

afford a measure of safety and noise protection for our large conurbations. It follows that all of these avoidance areas contain some form of controlled airspace associated with at least one local airport.

That brings us to the next type of avoidance, the ATZs. These are far too numerous to depict on the chart; however, both the civil and military ATZs are normally "off-limits" to military fast jet aircraft. We then have the areas of intense aerial activity, shown on the chart by the broken lines. The nature and intensity of the military activity in some of these areas has been assessed as not being fully compatible with normal fast jet operations. Therefore special procedures exist for their use. If you now mentally superimpose the many ATZs onto the chart it is evident that the military fast jet is pretty well hemmed into that part of the country, Eastern England, where sound strategic sense has positioned the majority of the permanent airbases. The corollary of this situation is that, although fixed low level routes were abandoned many years ago and crews now normally plan their sorties on an individual basis in order to dilute the aggravation to the general public as much as possible, these many avoidance areas tend to cause concentrations of activity in several areas where the fast jets, in effect, are being funnelled through on their way to and from the less congested and sparsely populated areas such as south-west England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. These transit legs have immeasurable value in terms of accurate navigation training and the cost of transiting at high level would be prohibitive in terms of largely under-utilised effort.

Civil pilots advised to avoid the height band of 250 to 500ft agl

Can anything be done to reduce the risk to the aviator in the Open FIR? Clearly, the answer has to be yes. The **Air Pilot** already advises civil pilots to avoid the height band of 250ft to 500ft agl whenever possible, and where this is not possible as, for instance by crop sprayers, the Civil Aviation Notification Procedure (CANP) has been in existence for the past 10yrs to enable those civilian operators who have a need to fly at very low heights to notify details of their operations to the military through a Tactical Booking Cell at LATCC (Mil) on Freephone 2230. This is a particularly successful scheme and, although voluntary, over 7000 civilian crop-spraying movements were notified under CANP in 1985. However, since Freephone 2230 is not in continual use, the military actively encourage the sport aviation fraternity to use it to let them know of your activity. This means that, given a minimum warning time of, say, 5hrs, the military pilot should have your activity marked on his chart. Whilst not being a 100% protection scheme, since civilian participation is voluntary, it greatly enhances the "see and avoid" principle under which we are all obliged to operate in the Open FIR. The military would, of course, like to hear from fellow users of the lower airspace (under 200ft agl) wherever they are since a close encounter in a Welsh valley is just as disturbing, for both parties, as one in the East Midlands.

As a final contribution to flight safety, it is perhaps pertinent to say that in those parts of the country where avoidance area funnelling inevitably takes place, the cautious civil pilot would do well to avoid flying below 100ft agl whenever possible and to make use of a radar service, if available, whatever his altitude. The intensity of military activity in these areas does vary depending on factors such as weather conditions and major exercises. However, if an obvious funnelling-gap is less than, say, 15 miles wide, then flight below 100ft is best avoided at all times.

Reprinted from the **Flight Safety Bulletin**

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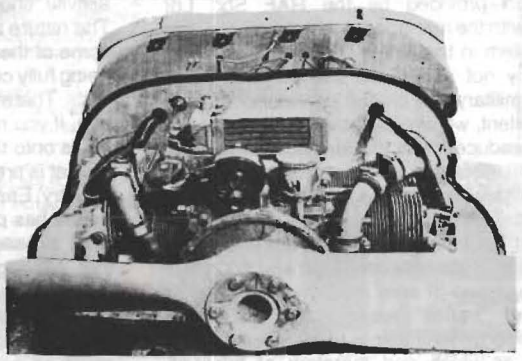
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Access

VISA

MIKE EVANS

GEC AVIONICS OPEN CLAS

Lasham from June 20-28

This has been a strange competition season with extreme... Standard Class Nationals to the seven day success of the ... having to settle for four.

After a lapse of a year due to airfield levelling, the Open Class and its sponsors, GEC Avionics, returned to Lasham for the Nationals, run concurrently, as usual, with the Lasham Regionals, Classes A & B.

Once again the June weather proved typically fickle with the additional problem of finding landable fields. There were four competition days with many trailers taking to the road. Happily there were no accidents other than one or two minor mishaps.

The outcome was close, Ralph Jones (Nimbus 3) finally beating Robin May (ASW-22) by 49pts, the margin between almost the same as after the first day. Ralph was in the first three every day and he and Robin each had the satisfaction of beating the other twice.

John Delafield (Nimbus 3) had one of his typically successful flights in difficult weather on Day 1 (Saturday, June 20). Rain showers put 20% of the field down on the first leg and more on the second. John went very carefully and was achieving 70:1 on the downwind second leg, from Bath to Market Harborough, at 65kt with maximum water on board. He was the only one to make it round the 403.4km course at an average speed of 74.3km/h. Next were Frank Pozerskis (ASW-22) and Ralph with 426.4km.

Martin Logan (Ventus) phoned in for wellies, waterproofs and a change of clothing. "How much clothing?" asked the lady in Control. "Down to my shreddies" came the reply. Meanwhile a herd of bullocks were licking the glider and covering it in hair. The farmer kindly helped derig, carry the bits out of the field and lay them gently at the roadside.

Sunday, Day 2, didn't promise well but proved quite good for racing, catching out the task setters who dared only a 208.5km to Woburn Sands *via* Thame. This was Robin's day at 83.5km/h. Ralph, second again, said he gave too much attention to Robin and paid the penalty.

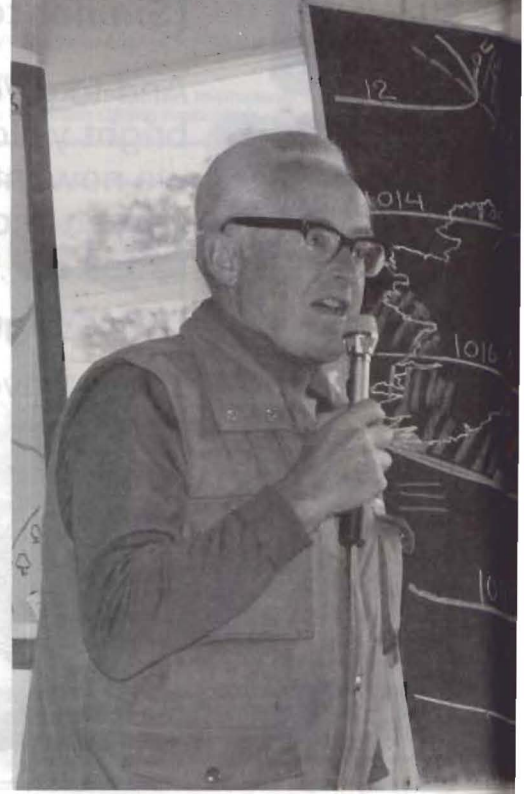


Glyn Bradney (Discus) who won Day 1. Photo: Mike Evans.

Following two wet days, Wednesday (June 24) brought an expertly judged 316.8km task, round Sherborne and Birdlip, as there were 21 finishers out of 38. Ralph achieved 84.2km/h, beating Robin by 2km/h, attributing his success to going early to avoid the sea breeze and being able to use the last of the lift on the third leg. There was considerable merriment as Ralph stepped up to collect his prize as *The Times* that morning featured his photo with the description "The man in a baggy sweater... with a hangdog expression!"

Friday (June 26), the fourth and final competition day, was difficult. The task was only 189km to Bryanston and Shaftesbury and Dave Watt could achieve no more than 66.7km/h in his ASW-22. This was 5km/h better than Robin and

Below, Tom Bradbury, the Met man, with the forecast fr... Evans.



FINAL RESULTS
Open Class

Pos	Pilot	Glider	Day 1.20.6 403.4km ■ Pewsey, Bath, Market Harborough			Day 2.21.6 208.5 dog leg O/R Thame, Woburn Sands, Thame			Day 3.24.6 316.8km ▲ Sherborne, Birdlip			Day 4.26.6 188.9km ▲ Bryanston School, Shaftesbury			Total Points
			Speed (Dist)	Pos	Pts	Speed	Pos	Pts	Speed (Dist)	Pos	Pts	Speed (Dist)	Pos	Pts	
1	Jones, R.	Nimbus 3	(264.2)	=2	277	82.4	2	980	84.2	1	1000	57.2	3	200	2457
2	May, R.	ASW-22	(219.1)	9	226	83.5	1	999	82.1	2	980	61.9	2	203	2408
3	Watt, D. S.	ASW-22	(229.0)	8	237	78.7	3	918	76.3	3	922	66.7	1	205	2282
4	Innes, D. S.	Nimbus 3T	(233.9)	7	243	77.4	4	a875	75.9	4	919	54.3	4	199	2236
5	Delafield, J.	Nimbus 3	74.3	1	444	60.5	20	607	74.1	5	901	(118.9)	6	111	2063
6	Edyvean, J.	Nimbus 3	(198.3)	14	202	75.0	5	855	73.5	6	895	(99.9)	=7	89	2041
7	Thompson, M. H.	Nimbus 3	(161.1)	22	160	73.8	7	833	69.7	10	858	(99.9)	=7	89	1940
8	Pozerskis, A.	ASW-17	(188.3)	=18	191	69.1	12	754	72.0	7	880	(78.0)	=17	65	1890
9	Moulang, A. P.	ASW-20L	(172.5)	21	173	67.3	14	724	66.5	=14	826	(57.8)	24	42	1765
10	Jones, P. R.	Ventus	(34.7)	37	17	71.8	8	799	70.7	9	868	(81.8)	14	69	1753
11	Norrie, A. J.	Ventus	(159.7)	=23	159	67.2	15	722	64.2	16	803	(76.3)	=20	63	1747
12	Ashdown, I.	Kestrel 20	(188.3)	=18	191	67.9	22	p584	71.3	8	874	(78.0)	=17	65	1714
13	Findon, D. E.	Nimbus 2c	(194.7)	=15	198	71.7	9	798	54.2	21	705	(20.7)	=35	1	1702
14	Davies, J. F.	Kestrel 19	(208.0)	11	213	60.3	21	604	61.0	19	772	(51.3)	=25	35	1624
15	Logan, M. W. B.	Ventus	(235.5)	6	245	57.9	24	565	61.5	18	777	(28.9)	=29	10	1597
16	Szulc, B. J.	Ventus B.	(147.2)	=28	144	59.4	25	p540	67.1	12	832	(51.3)	=25	35	1551
17	Cardiff, J. D.	ASW-20L	(261.9)	4	274	73.9	6	838	(198.0)	31	351	(83.4)	13	71	1532
18	Glossop, J. D. J.	ASW-17	(194.7)	=15	198	61.0	19	616	(305.6)	22	564	(99.9)	=7	89	1467
19	Corbett, G.	ASW-20L	(201.1)	=12	205	65.5	17	693	(272.4)	24	498	(80.8)	15	68	1464
20	Boydon, M. V.	Ventus	(156.8)	=25	155	66.4	16	709	(268.2)	=25	490	(89.5)	10	78	1432
21	Cooper, B. L.	ASW-17s	(148.7)	27	144	45.5	35	353	63.0	17	791	(135.7)	5	129	1419
22	Knowles, J.	Kestrel 19	(9.7)	39	0	62.8	27	p497	68.8	11	649	(51.3)	=25	35	1381
23	Lee, M. E.	Ventus	(156.6)	=25	155	56.5	33	p436	60.2	20	764	(17.6)	=37	0	1355
24	Throssell, M. G.	Janus C.	(238.0)	5	247	55.0	26	515	(260.9)	27	476	(76.3)	=20	63	1301
25	Ellis, J.	DG-400	(40.3)	33	23	50.1	34	p381	66.4	=14	826	(79.9)	16	67	1297
26	Russell, F. K.	Glassflügel 604	(188.3)	=18	191	52.3	29	469	(268.2)	=25	490	(66.0)	23	51	1201
27	Hood, L. S.	Janus C.	(192.6)	17	196	51.9	30	461	(283.6)	23	520	(21.2)	=35	1	1178
28	Roberts, D. G.	LS-6A	(147.2)	=28	144	58.5	23	573	(246.8)	28	448	(19.9)	=37	0	1165
29	Joint, T. A.	Janus	(147.2)	=28	144	67.4	18	p625	(213.3)	30	382	(28.9)	=29	10	1161
30	Lyttelton, C. C.	ASW-20BL	(38.5)	=34	21	70.5	10	779	(192.2)	32	340	(27.9)	32	9	1149
31	Foot, R. A.	Nimbus 3T	(208.6)	10	214	(3.7)	=37	0	67.0	13	831	(78.0)	=17	65	1110
32	Walsh, A. P.	ASW-20L	(201.1)	=12	205	69.3	11	758	(38.4)	35	36	(85.5)	=11	73	1072
33	Taylor, J. R.	ASW-20FL	(38.5)	=34	21	68.8	13	748	(128.3)	34	214	(67.5)	22	53	1036
34	Edwards, D.	ASW-17	(31.8)	38	13	56.5	33	390	(244.5)	29	443	(3.7)	=37	0	846
35	Wise, B. R.	ASW-20FL	(41.8)	32	25	57.7	=30	461	(175.7)	33	307	(25.2)	33	6	799
36	Johnson, P. A.	Kestrel 19	(156.7)	31	133	53.0	28	480	(15.2)	=36	0	(28.9)	=29	10	623
37	Tull, V. F. G.	Kestrel 19	(159.7)	=23	159	45.7	36	p206	DNF		0	(24.5)	34	5	370
38	Pozerskis, P.	ASW-22	(264.2)	=2	277	(3.7)	=37	0	(3.7)	=36	0	(85.5)	=11	73	350
39	Bell, J. G.	Kestrel 19	(38.5)	=34	21	DNF		0	(3.7)	=36	0	(51.3)	=25	35	58

p = photographic penalty; a = administrative penalty; DNF = did not fly.

NATIONALS

fortunes from one day for the
Metre Class, the Open Class

9km/h better than Ralph, pulling him up to 3rd overall. David Innes (Nimbus 3T) was the only other finisher and 38 pilots couldn't make 100km.

So Ralph carried off the Open Class Championship for the third time while son Philip (Ventus) just missed the 15 Metre trophy presented by GEC which went to the consistent Tony Moulang (ASW-20L) – by a mere 12pts.

Ralph paid his own tribute to the organisers: "Although I criticised them, I couldn't do it myself!" More generally, he added: "Gliding has given me a terrific lot in my life" and he also complimented the sponsors, GEC Avionics, who he said "have bought a faint air of respectability". And as a parting shot he left us with the words: "Thanks for coming along to be beaten, chaps!"

The Regionals A Class was won by Edward Richards (Ventus) with Graham McAndrew (Pegasus) winning the B Class.

June 21 which was followed by two wet days. Photo: Mike





The Open and Standard Class Champion, Ralph Jones. Photo: Mike Evans.

Competition director George Metcalfe and his team did a fine job, the ladies of control having some late nights, even 1.45am once, and the scorer up until 3am on the Sunday morning. The only problem seemed to be pilots' lack of experience with the new starting procedure. As George pointed out, there's no advantage trying to take photographs close to the start marker as the startline is at right angles to the course line.

It is amazing how good the pilots are at staying up and competing on days when most of us wouldn't even open the trailer doors. We have to record though that some are pretty clueless once they are back on the ground! For example "I'm at the right turn on the hill between Alton and Basingstoke". Or: "I'm under the "o" in Boscombe Down." The best of all was: "Tell my crew I'm in the same field as Saturday." Trouble was, he didn't have the same crew on Saturday!

Of course pilots sometimes have problems when they land out. Lofty Russell landed his Glasflügel 604 at Membury Airfield and damaging a wing on a ground obstruction requested a road retrieve. His crew rolled his car and trailer so he had to have an aerotow after all, damaged wing or no. Vic Tull and his crew got back to Lasham at 3.30am on Sunday after carrying his Kestrel (those big wings!) over a quarter of a mile.

Peter Hearne, director of GEC Avionics, summed up the event with the view that it had been a great success for GEC and he looked forward to their being at Lasham again, hopefully in two years' time.

JOHN WILLIAMSON

STANDARD CLASS NATIONALS

Booker from July 18-26

MET MAN – 8; NATIONALS – 1

I wonder what the 15 Metre Nationals will be like! Nineteen eighty seven is definitely *not* a vintage year so far! Lasham was poor, but Booker . . .!

Sixty-four of us converged on Booker for the Regionals and Standard Class Nationals. Everything was ready. Peter Bayliss had arranged his meteorological gadgets. An impressive display of technology. Just as well! It was the only bit that was going to work all week.

Peter had his tail up. The forecasts for the first four days were brief, confident, immaculate. "Hopeless!" "No chance!" "Impossible!" "Grot!" A deep depression had decided to go island-hopping. Skye, Man, Wight, the Frisians off Holland.

On Monday Peter told me confidentially, as though he didn't really want to believe it himself, that there may be – just *may* be – a chance that he would lose his 100% record on Thursday. And Thursday was the chief marshal's birthday so we went out on the grid just to please him. He got us into position, sheltering them while beneath a large black umbrella! Peter had won again.

Many pilots had left their gliders on the grid overnight so on Friday we did it again but this time it wasn't actually raining. Peter was beginning to crack. Just that the far boundary of the airfield was lost in the mist. Friday was scrubbed when it was apparent that the little helicopter was the only thing that would fly out of Booker that day.

Now Peter lost his nerve. Saturday was interesting and at last flyable. We had by now realised that the dates had been muddled up by the Comps Committee and *this* had always been intended as the first day. In strong north-westerly winds we were to go to Leicester and home again via Enstone. Peter, in a last ditch stand, mentioned wave interference and wished us luck, like the gentleman he is!

We needed it. When they were good they were very, very good. When they were bad . . .! From noon onwards 64 pilots shuttled around between three or four thermals in the near vicinity of Booker for several hours. Someone counted 35

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Dave Watt just before launching in Mike Fountain's LS-4 pats Mike's dog Rufus, but the mascot didn't bring him luck as he finished 38th. Photo: Mike Fountain.

in one thermal. It looked, and occasionally was, dangerous, especially when one idiot forgot where he was and went round the other way. The thermals were strongest just downwind of the airfield and we could climb to the maximum permitted 3000ft without difficulty. But upwind -nothing! We probed forward under a dark, promising looking cloud time after time and most of us crept back low from around Chinnor. Eventually two brave souls were tempted by the bright sunshine beyond to burn their boats, and landed at Thame!

"By 1600 the clouds were better organised and looking more like real cumulus"

I think I was next to go, at 1430, and at the fourth attempt. I had good but very turbulent thermals at regular seven mile intervals, confirming Peter's wave theory. But the wind was slackening, thus shortening the wavelength and the gaps. I couldn't get higher than 3500ft and landed near Husband's Bosworth at 1630. Dave Watt started out from Booker at about 1600 by which time the clouds were better organised and looking more like real cumulus. By staying well west he made it almost to Leicester. With no prospect of getting to Y he looked ahead into impenetrable gloom and decided to go home instead. Most others landed out. Some didn't even get away. No contest. Peter had won!

But he didn't win the Regionals that day. Brian Spreckley, flying the demonstrator Marianne, also kept well to the west and climbed to 8000ft near Banbury, from where he could fly to the Draycott Water TP and back to Bicester to earn 111pts. Nine others scored.

And so to the day when 39 pilots lost the Nationals! Sunday. Peter's last weapon was an active warm front which he had planned for 1500hrs at Booker. But it held off until 1700 so he lost - we won. What a lovely day! One hundred and eighty kilometres *via* Membury, Headington and Silverstone. Strong thermals, streets, no problems. thirty-eight completed and Ralph Jones won at 91km/h, to take his second Nationals title this year, having won the Open Class at Lasham already. There was little to say at the How-I-dun-it. The bulk of the field started between 1210 and 1225 and roared round in two large gaggles in about two hours.

The Regionals pilots also went to Membury and thence to Bicester, and home for 147km. Chris Evans won at the best speed of the day, 96.3km/h, with Gill Spreckley close behind at 94.5km/h.

It was fun. It was good. What a pity it was the last day already! At the prizegiving Ralph accepted the Champion's pot but didn't feel like a Champion. Brian Spreckley won the Regionals, with Gill 3rd. But they had slipped away before Al Kay, as chairman of the club, announced Brian's retirement from Booker. He and Gill were already on their way for three months' sailing, before setting up home, and running a soaring centre, at Le Blanc, in France. *Au Revoir*, Brian and Gill.

FINAL RESULTS
Standard Class

			Day 1.26.7 179.9km polygon Membury, Oxford, Silverstone	
Pos	**Pilot**	**Glider**	**Speed (Dist)**	**Total Points**
1	Jones, R.	Discus	91.7	784
2	Rollings, C. C.	DG-300	88.7	747
3	Lysakowski, E. R.	Discus	87.6	733
4	Kay, A. E.	Pegasus	86.6	721
5	White, S. A.	Pegasus	83.3	681
6	Hutchinson, S. N.	Discus	83.0	678
=7	King, Sally	Discus	82.9	676
=7	Smith, E. R.	LS-4	82.9	676
9	Smith, M. J.	LS-4	82.7	674
10	Aldis, C. J.	LS-4	82.5	672
11	Marczynski, Z.	LS-4	81.3	657
12	Bally, J. D.	Pegasus	80.6	648
13	Miller, A. S.	LS-4	80.4	646
14	Pozerskis, A.	ASW-19s	80.1	642
15	Young, M. J.	Pegasus	79.7	637
16	Stuart, T.	DG-300	78.1	618
17	Metcalfe, G. C.	ASW-19	77.6	611
18	Hartley, K. J.	Discus	P82.3	591
19	Cuming, M. F.	Pegasus	74.6	576
20	Harding, R. W.	Discus	P77.3	569
21	Starkey, C. G.	Astir CS	73.4	560
22	Hayes, D. M.	ASW-19s	72.7	552
23	Smith, G. N. D.	LS-4	71.7	540
=24	Chaplin, B. M.	Pegasus	P73.3	520
=24	Smith, D. A.	LS-4	P73.2	520
26	Buckner, G. G.	Pegasus	P72.9	515
27	Wells, P.	ASW-19c	aP74.0	509
28	Williamson, J. S.	ASW-19s	69.0	507
29	Dall, R. N.	Discuss	68.9	506
30	Walson, A. J.	DG-300	68.6	502
31	Camp, G. W. G.	DG-100	67.6	490
32	Cox, A. N.	DG-100G	67.5	488
33	Spencer, J. D.	Libelle	P72.4	470
34	Mitchell, K.	Std Cirrus	64.5	452
35	Fox, R. L.	Cobra 15	58.9	383
36	Webb, M. J.	Discus B	P61.9	381
37	Langrick, D. J.	Std Cirrus	55.1	337
38	Watt, D. S.	LS-4	(156.2)	192
39	Aspland, W.	ASW-19s	(131.2)	158
40	Brice, P. F.	Pegasus	P63.7	129

P=photographic penalty; a=administration penalty
On going to press we learned that Ken Hartley's photographic penalty was removed bringing him from 18th to 11th place with 669pts.

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EVENINGS

15 METRE CLASS NATIONALS

Husbands Bosworth from August 1-9

At last the weather came good for the third Nationals and in fact gave one of the most concentrated, varied and challenging competitions for some years. This wasn't classic racing weather, with the exception of one day, but a combination of Mike Garrod's weather interpretation and Frank Davies' skill at task setting worked well to extract the maximum out of the seven consecutive days' flying.

Task lengths ranged from 200 to 300km and there were no finishers on two days, three finishers on a difficult showery day with the majority back on the rest.

The three competing members of the last British team were in the first three places, lead by Martyn Wells, with Justin Wills 2nd, both flying LS-6s, and Chris Garton 3rd in a Ventus.

For the second time this year Ralph Jones was flying in competition with one of his sons – Philip in the Open Class and now Stephen.

Day 1, Saturday, August 1. *Task: 197.7km ▲, St Neots, Grantham.*

A stiff westerly breeze and a fair amount of cloud cover had most of the competitors landing out on the second St Neots to Grantham leg of the task. Even some reasonable climbs were insufficient to make much progress against the strong wind and patience and hard work gave the day to Ted Lysakowski (Ventus) who rounded the second turn.

Day 2, Sunday, August 2. *Task: 252.1km ▲, Tuxford rail crossing, A1/A604 Huntingdon.*

A late start on a typical English racing day with varied cumulus cloud gave Ralph Jones 1st place at 92km/h. In general those pilots who stayed high made good time with six failing to complete.

Day 3, Monday, August 3. *Task: 263.1km ■, A1/A46 Newark, M1/A4509 south of Northampton, Kineton Church, Gaydon.*

> ***"Most of the field had problems in this area and the individual solutions were varied"***

A forecast of a risk of showers at the first TP proved to be accurate. Most of the field had problems in this area and the individual solutions were varied, Ralph Jones and others chose to go north-west from the turn to remain airborne, whilst Stephen Jones (Ventus) and the majority went a long way south-east on the second leg. Stephen and myself (ASW-20) identified landmarks some 20 miles east of track on this leg.

Mike Throssell's early start in his Ventus proved significant in that he beat the shower activity to the Newark TP and gained 1st place for the day at 91km/h, nearly 14km/h faster than 2nd place. Certainly, in company with several gliders in rain at cloudbase, I felt no particular course of action was obvious. In such circumstances luck inevitably plays a significant part.

Trevor Murphy (ASW-20) kept the finish line observers from their supper and arrived at 1930hrs, but Mike Throssell's time prevented any speed points for his 43.5km/h.

Day 4, Tuesday, August 4. *Task: 204.2km O/R with alternative TPs, Bath racecourse or M4 rail crossing, south of Gloucester.*

A forecast of heavy showers, in the task area resulted in an alternative TP O/R task to the south-west, and once again Mike Garrod was right. Three pilots led by Mike Throssell struggled long and hard to complete the task. Leigh Hood in 3rd place had to land in a thunderstorm and was forced to stay in his LS-4 for ten minutes until the rain eased.

Even the revised rule requiring only one pilot to pass Y failed to allow more than 148pts for the winner. Scoring zero for an outlanding while attempting to return for a further start, I can only say I approve! Mike this time credited his win with starting late!

Day 5, Wednesday, August 5. *Task; 265.1km ▲, Didcot power station, A14/A45 Caxton Gibbet.*

The first leg to the south was straightforward in good conditions but after turning Didcot some long gaps were evident which slowed most pilots down and required diversions to north or south of track. At the second TP it appeared that a cloud street would bring eveyone neatly home. But it rapidly over-developed. Several pilots in the increasing murk were forced to survive how best they could with weak stubble fires and this resulted in a number of very marginal final glides. Martyn Wells came straight through to win the day at 86.2km/h. Perhaps the most unfortunate pilot was Mike Throssell who elected to climb to 9000ft after rounding the second turn, some 3000ft more than should have been necessary, and yet still fell short by three-quarters of a mile having flown through extensive strong sink alongside the cloud street. This cost him his overall lead.

Day 6, Thursday, August 6. *Task; 301.3km ■, M5/M50 Tewksbury, Blakehill Farm aerial, Swindon, Newbury racecourse.*

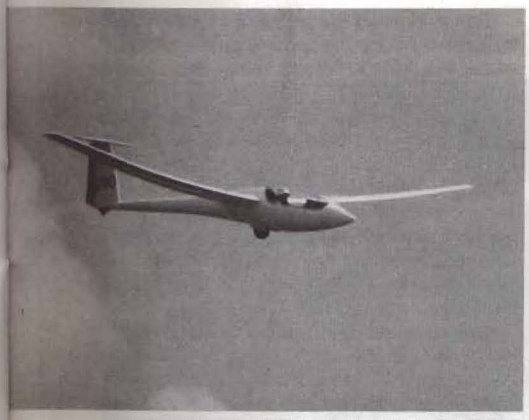
This was an excellent racing day with pilots claiming average climb rates of between 6 and 8kt. Perhaps Chris Garton (106.8km/h), Justin Wills (105.7km/h) and Martyn Wells (104.6km/h) thought they were still in Australia. Ted Lysakowski also completed in excess of 100km/h. Ken Hartley's run of bad luck continued with a landing in his Ventus some 5km short under the spread out that covered the last part of the leg.

Day 7, Friday, August 7. *Task; 218.6km O/R, M5 rail crossing, south of Gloucester.*

A strong north-westerly wind together with total cloud cover on the track line and at HusBos created yet again difficult conditions on what proved to be the last day of the competition.

Although the airmass was unstable soaring conditions at the start were difficult. A number of

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John Glossop flying Mike Russell's ASW-20. Photo: Des Burgess.

pilots landed back to launch again and go straight from tow after the startline opened. Others tiptoed away being drifted well south of track by the wind. A third group waited several hours hoping for a miracle. Those on route found conditions improving slowly, particularly well south of the track line. Many competitors made use of the facility to penetrate the Upper Heyford MRA with considerable co-operation by the controllers.

As the day progressed it became clear that some gliders had rounded the TP and were on their way back. Conditions remained poor on track and much improved well downwind to the south creating a tactical problem. Sixteen hundred hours saw me once again penetrating the Heyford area on route to land at Bicester, but a weak thermal prolonged the flight and a rough stubble fire just downwind of the airfield gave me sufficient height to glide to a landing north of Towcester at 1730 - the last landing of the 1987 15 Metre Nationals. The efficiency of competition director Claude Woodhouse and his team was well illustrated when my retrieve crew arrived in the field with the day's provisional score sheet.

The strength of the wind and the resulting deviations from track clustered the landing pins in a wide radius close to HusBos. On closer inspection Chris Garton won the day with 205.9km with Dave Smith (LS-4), who did not fly for several days through illness, 2nd and Martyn Wells 3rd.

After the competition weather of the last two or three years, it was good to fly seven successive contest days.



John Bryan, of the Liddington Beer Agency, presenting a clock to Chris Garton *via* Brian Spreckley. Various firms gave 20 prizes for the last day and daily prizes were donated and presented by T. L. Clowes. Photo: Laurie Watts.

FINAL RESULTS

15 Metre Class

Pos.	Pilot	Glider	Day 1.1.8 197.7km ▲ St Neots, Grantham			Day 2.2.8 252.1km ▲ Tuxford, Huntingdon			Day 3.3.8 263.1km ■ Newark, Northampton, Kineton			Day 4.4.8 204.3 O/R alternative TPS Bath, Gloucester			Day 5.5.8 285.1km ▲ Didcot, Caxton Gibbet			Day 6.6.8 30.1.3km ■ Tewkesbury, Swindon, Newbury			Day 7.7.8 218.6km O/R Gloucester			Total Points
			Speed (Dist)	Pos	Pts	Speed (Dist)	Pos	Pts	Speed (Dist)	Pos	Pts	Distance (Speed)	Pos	Pts	Speed (Dist)	Pos	Pts	Speed (Dist)	Pos	Pts	Distance (Speed)	Pos	Pts	
1	Wells, M. D.	LS-6	136.1	11	523	81.9	2	857	76.1	3	877	64.3	18	31	82.2	1	1000	104.6	3	970	204.3	=2	627	4885
2	Wills, T. J.	LS-6	155.3	=2	610	68.2	=24	663	72.2	8	*795	174.2	4	108	78.0	9	909	105.7	2	986	192.0	=8	585	4656
3	Garton, C.	Ventus	155.3	=2	610	75.1	8	762	75.7	4	874	58.1	=21	27	58.8	23	692	106.8	1	1000	205.9	1	632	4597
4	Jones, R.	Ventus	140.6	10	543	92.0	1	1000	61.6	17	*707	58.1	=21	27	71.9	14	839	95.9	=9	851	189.1	10	575	4542
5	Cardiff, J. D.	ASW-20	117.6	20	439	74.4	10	752	65.6	9	791	(73.8)	2	147	83.6	3	971	88.3	28	720	193.5	4	607	4427
6	Edywean, J.	Ventus B	84.0	34	288	76.5	13	*731	57.0	15	720	40.7	=33	14	78.0	10	908	98.1	6	882	194.3	6	593	4136
7	Sheard, P.G.	Ventus A	149.0	5	581	73.3	11	735	75.5	5	872	65.6	=15	32	83.3	4	968	99.0	5	894	0.1	=29	0	4082
8	Lysakowski, E. R.	Ventus B	165.5	1	655	81.5	3	852	60.1	11	745	83.1	6	44	67.9	19	794	100.7	4	917	22.9	28	10	4017
9	Glossop, J. D. J.	ASW-20	106.1	=26	388	69.4	=21	681	57.3	14	722	18.7	=35	0	70.9	15	828	88.3	=22	748	187.7	=11	570	3937
10	Young, M. J.	Pegasus	122.4	=18	461	70.4	20	695	(239.9)	21	565	77.1	=7	40	56.4	24	684	96.5	8	859	192.0	=8	585	3869
11	Bastin, J. C.	Ventus B	132.3	13	506	75.6	7	768	(186.3)	26	428	49.0	30	20	63.3	20	742	92.9	15	811	192.8	7	587	3862
12	Hood, L. S.	LS-4	125.7	17	476	72.9	14	730	58.9	13	735	(63.2)	3	145	74.6	11	870	88.4	21	749	62.0	19	143	3848
13	Hutchinson, S. N.	Discus	87.8	33	305	67.3	26	651	(184.5)	28	423	62.8	=19	30	85.7	2	995	95.5	11	846	187.8	=11	570	3820
14	Kay, W. M.	Mosquito	122.4	=18	461	42.4	15	723	(111.3)	=31	235	0.1	=35	0	78.1	8	910	97.6	7	875	196.2	=5	599	3803
15	Clarke, A. J.	Ventus B	148.8	=6	580	68.7	23	671	60.4	10	748	58.1	=21	27	68.7	=16	803	95.4	12	844	46.8	22	91	3764
16	Campbell, D. R.	Discus	134.7	12	518	76.3	6	779	59.7	12	742	71.9	=12	36	(255.7)	28	494	82.9	31	673	171.7	17	516	3756
17	McAndrew, G. E.	ASW-20	110.9	=23	409	70.7	19	699	49.6	19	659	57.2	28	26	72.9	13	851	71.9	36	523	171.5	18	515	3682
18	Morris, G. D.	ASW-20L	148.8	=6	580	70.8	18	701	77.8	2	891	46.8	=31	19	(259.0)	26	501	94.9	13	838	29.9	26	34	3564
19	Throssell, M. G.	Ventus	151.7	4	593	69.4	=21	681	91.0	1	1000	(77.3)	1	148	(262.6)	25	509	79.7	34	629	0.0	=29	0	3560
20	Spencer, J. D.	LS-4	114.3	21	425	54.3	32	468	56.8	16	710	72.1	=9	37	60.2	21	707	79.1	35	622	180.8	14	547	3524
21	Baker, R. J.	ASW-20	111.9	22	414	76.4	5	780	(33.3)	38	34	62.7	=19	30	78.9	7	918	92.1	16	800	176.8	16	533	3509
22	Zealley, T. S.	ASW-20	94.0	31	333	72.3	16	721	74.4	6	863	66.6	=14	33	4.0	=37	0	91.6	18	792	186.6	13	566	3308
23	Redman, S. J.	ASW-20C	148.8	=6	580	72.1	17	719	(191.7)	24	441	76.9	=7	40	63.4	22	*693	88.9	20	755	9.1	=29	0	3228
24	Elliott, B.	Ventus BT	41.2	37	95	66.5	27	640	(218.9)	23	511	58.1	=21	27	83.1	5	966	93.7	14	822	0.1	=29	0	3061
25	King, P. A.	Mini Nimbus C	126.8	15	481	65.2	28	621	(57.2)	37	98	47.0	=31	19	(253.6)	=29	490	90.3	19	775	179.0	15	541	3023
26	Morris, B. C.	ASW-20	110.9	=23	409	(233.8)	33	323	(251.8)	20	596	73.1	=9	37	73.7	12	859	83.8	30	687	0.1	=29	0	2911
27	Stuart, T.	DG-300	148.8	=6	580	74.6	9	754	(173.8)	30	*346	65.1	=15	32	(229.0)	35	438	88.3	=22	748	0.1	=29	0	2898
28	Bally, J. D.	Pegasus	106.1	=26	388	(207.9)	36	284	73.6	7	857	66.4	=15	32	253.6	=29	490	85.0	26	703	39.8	=23	67	2821
29	Murphy, T. J.	ASW-20	110.9	=23	409	(13.3)	=37	0	43.5	22	*525	55.0	29	24	80.6	6	937	87.3	29	733	56.3	21	123	2751
30	Lyttelton, C. C.	ASW-20	105.3	30	384	(221.6)	35	305	(183.7)	29	421	70.9	=12	36	68.7	=16	803	91.6	17	793	9.1	=29	0	2742
31	Jones, S. G.	Ventus	23.2	38	14	76.5	12	*732	55.9	18	*661	58.1	=21	27	(231.3)	34	443	87.9	24	743	39.8	=23	67	2687
32	Jefferyes, M. B.	ASW-20	106.1	=26	388	77.4	4	794	(111.3)	=31	235	89.1	5	49	(233.4)	33	448	87.8	25	741	0.1	=29	0	2654
33	Cumner, G.	ASW-20	130.3	14	497	64.9	30	618	(93.5)	36	*139	72.6	=9	37	(257.5)	27	498	81.8	32	659	33.5	25	46	2494
34	Hawkins, Pam	Mini Nimbus	126.3	16	479	(226.4)	34	312	82.8	33	161	0	=35	0	(245.8)	32	474	86.9	27	729	29.3	27	32	2187
35	Smith, D. A.	LS-4	106.1	=26	388	68.1	=24	663	(189.3)	25	436	DNF		0	DNF		0	DNF		0	204.5	=2	627	2114
36	Murdoch, M. L.	ASW-20	64.6	36	201	0	=37	0	(80.4)	34	155	58.1	=21	27	68.1	18	796	95.9	=9	851	0.1	=29	0	2030
37	Hartley, K. J.	Ventus	90.8	32	319	64.4	31	*511	(185.5)	27	425	58.1	=21	27	(248.7)	31	480	(294.1)	37	263	0.1	=29	0	2025
38	Cuming, M. F.	Vega	76.1	35	253	75.9	28	*623	(74.5)	35	140	40.2	=33	14	(38.9)	36	40	85.2	33	*655	56.9	20	125	1850

We are grateful to Specialist Systems Ltd for supplying the results of the three Nationals.

GOODBYE TO JOHN



Photo: Michael Bird.

Readers will be sorry to hear that John Williamson, a BGA national coach for eight years, is leaving the UK in October to become the manager of operations at Benalla GC, Australia. We are sure everyone will join with us in wishing him every success in his new career and environment.

John came to the BGA after 33 years in the RAF, leaving as a Ft/Lt. And he brought with him a very distinctive and valued style, having a flair for teaching and a way of getting the very best out of potential instructors and soaring pilots, drawing on his own great experience as a competitive pilot.

In fact he looks back over his years with "great pleasure, especially the soaring courses. They are something to cherish." John added: "I have enjoyed the eight years tremendously and never regretted becoming a coach.

His great gift as a communicator will be missed this side of the world but we hope that once settled in Australia he will continue to write for *S&G*. He also hopes that the increasing number of British pilots planning Australian holidays will come and see him at Benalla.

John intends to continue selling his calculators, dolphin netto conversions etc and will give details of how these may be ordered in the next issue.

JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIPS

At the CIVV meeting in March a number of countries described how they organised special gliding competitions for young pilots aged from 15 to 25yrs. Such competitions are regular, well-established features in all the major European gliding countries such as Germany, France, Poland etc. In Britain we have no such competition. It is true there are Inter-University task weeks, which serve a very useful purpose, but they are not true Championships and not open to all young glider pilots.

The BGA Competitions Committee is thinking about copying the example of our European neighbours with a trial Junior Championships in 1988 for pilots under 25yrs.

We are aware that there are already a few young pilots in our Regionals and Nationals but many are inhibited from entering because of the cost.

The current thinking is that rivalry between gliding clubs should be a factor so clubs might be asked to select one or more of their most promising pilots and sponsor them by letting them have the use of club gliders at low or zero cost and helping them with self-financing retrieve crews etc. The winning pilots would then bring reflected glory on to their clubs.

It is also hoped that one of the larger clubs will provide the venue with specially low entry fees and aerotow charges. It is possible a commercial sponsor might be found.

Some readers may be aware that HRH Prince Andrew, the president of the Royal Aero Club (of which the BGA is a leading member), is particularly concerned to increase air-mindedness amongst young people. He has recently approved a new annual RAeC award available to all air disciplines for the most outstanding pilot under 25yrs. Furthermore the RAeC is planning to make 1988 "Youth in the Air" year. A Junior Gliding Championships in 1988 would be in tune with the times.

We would be pleased to hear from anyone who has constructive ideas about arrangements.
T. S. ZEALLEY, *BGA CIVV delegate*

NATIONAL LADDERS

OPEN LADDER

Leading pilot	*Club*	*Pts*	*Flts*
1. N. Hackett	Coventry	6870	4
2. T. E. Macfadyen	Cotswold	5070	4
3. G. Smith	London	4684	2
4. G. Corbett	Essex	4454	4
5. M. Randle	Oxford	4077	3
6. G. Metcalfe	Surrey & Hants	3989	3

CLUB LADDER

Leading pilot	*Club*	*Pts*	*Flts*
1. E. Hamill	London	4019	4
2. C. G. Starkey	Surrey & Hants	2865	2
3. J. Waker	Coventry	2558	4
4. R. Partridge	Surrey & Hants	2100	1
5. P. Johnson	London	2029	3
6. E. Downham	London	1927	2

FATAL ACCIDENTS

There have been seven fatal accidents this season involving six glider pilots and one tug pilot.

Two Yorkshire GC pilots were killed on Sunday August 16, as a result of a mid-air collision at Sutton Bank. They were Dick Stoddart (Kestrel 19) and Alistair Sheridan (DG-101).

On the same day Sue Cavener of Phoenix GC, based in Germany at RAF Brüggen, died when the Astir she was flying in a mini competition from RAF Laarbruch crashed in the Laarbruch area. The cause of the accident, which is being investigated by the RAFGGA, is not yet known.

Sue worked in Germany for the Services Sound and Vision Corporation and gained her assistant instructor category at Bicester last year.

On Friday, July 31, Val Nicholson, a 26 year-old, was killed flying the Norfolk GC's Condor tug.

BEWARE ICE FORMATION

Frost and ice can form easily on the upper surfaces of GRP gliders during the winter. When the air temperature falls below 0°C, frost (rime ice) can form rapidly on the upper surfaces and canopy in a moist atmostphere, even on otherwise fine gliding days. This is aggravated when the wing covers haven't been fitted overnight.

Simply parking the gliders in the sun doesn't by itself produce the answer because, being white, the surface reflects rather than absorbs the sun's heat.

Consequences. The loss of performance to a GRP glider flown with ice on the wings and the tailplane is very significant with the rate of sink often being doubled. The stalling speed can increase by 10-20% above that for a clean glider in similar conditions. The problem can become all too apparent on take-off when it is possible to lose control if one wing stalls as the glider becomes airborne.

Precautions. GRP gliders must not be launched with ice on the wings or tailplane. Ice can be removed before launching by covering the surface with dark soft material such as an old blanket and parking the glider for maximum exposure to sunshine.

Don't attempt to scrape off the ice as it will reform and there is a danger of damaging the gel-coat. Don't try to use any form of localised heating as you can damage the glass-fibre structure.

(Extracted from the Air Cadets' safety bulletin.)

MIND THE BIRDS

There is a new hazard for glider and tug pilots, especially those towing gliders out of fields without permission. You may be fined heavily for disturbing nesting birds.

The warden of a bird reserve complained last year that nesting birds had been seriously disturbed by a helicopter flying low and landing and taking off a number of times within the reserve. Although this isn't an offence under the Air Navigation Order, a number of civil offences appear to have been committed.

Apart from trespass, it seems it was a breach of the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981 which, *inter alia*, makes it an offence to disturb wild birds whilst on or near a nest containing eggs or young. The penalty for conviction could be a fine not exceeding £2000 per bird! Apparently the Royal Society for the Preservation of Birds will prosecute where there is sufficient evidence.

SANDOR ALDOTT

We were sad to hear of the death of Sandor Aldott who, with his wife Dita, has been a good friend to us. They have been leading portrait, ballet and sailplane photographers for more than 25 years and their superb work has been much admired in S&G, giving us some of our most spectacular and artistic covers as well as centrespreads. We send our deepest sympathy to Dita.

NEW ROLLADEN SCHNEIDER AGENT

Martyn Wells has been appointed sole UK agent for Rolladen Schneider, manufacturers of the LS range of gliders. He holds the agency for sales and spares and already carries an extensive range of LS parts.

He moved to a new purpose built workshop in September to increase repair facilities and the spares department and may be contacted on 060 884217 (evening callers are welcome) or at The Lenticulars, Ascott Road, Whichford, Shipston on Stour, War.

OBITUARY— W. L. Manuel



Bill and the "new" Crested Wren at Lasham during the 14th International Vintage Rally last year. Photo: Phil Collins.

It was with heartfelt sadness that we learnt of the death of Bill Manuel in July. He was over 80 years-old.

Not only was he a link with gliding history from the period before the BGA was founded when he built his first glider, a biplane in 1926, but he was a great character who made a considerable impression on the British gliding fraternity. He finished his last glider only one year before he died.

While serving with the RAF at Hawkinge in 1931, he designed and built the glider type with which he will forever be associated, the Wren. At that time he was involved with the first aerotowed launches and the Daily Mail Sponsored Cross-Channel Glider Race which was won by Kronfeld in his Wien. In 1931, he flew his Crested Wren, the first of the Wren series, which Jack Dewsbury and Sebert Humphreys described as delightful to fly. In the hands of the above pilots, the Crested Wren in 1933 and 1934 made what were among the first cross-country flights by a British designed and built sailplane, although Eric Collins may have taken away a BAC 7 before this.

In 1932, Bill was the Channel Gliding Club's instructor. In 1933, he established a small workshop at the London GC, Dunstable, which was known as the Wren Works ... and he built the second Willow Wren there. At that time, he advertised complete Wrens at £90 and primary gliders at £45 each! Amateur groups built Wrens from the Willow Wren's plans and so there were the Blue Wren (1934), the Golden Wren and the White Wren, etc.

In January 1935, he joined the Dunstable Sailplane Co and built a developed Willow Wren known as the Dunstable Kestrel. These were also built in Australia and New Zealand. One of the Australian Dunstable Kestrels is being restored in 1987. In January 1968, he retired as chief planning engineer for AC Cars, having already designed the Hawk, which he then built at Fairoaks Airfield. During his retirement, he designed and built the Hawk, Condor, two ultralights, Gnat and his 1931 Crested Wren again.

The Condor was the result of him being asked by a group of aeromodellers for a hang glider. "Don't be silly", he said, "I will design you a real one". A side-by-side two-seater nacelled primary, a little reminiscent of the ancient Poppenhausen, then saw the light of day.

The Gnat was perhaps his greatest offering to the modern gliding world. This was the end product of all his years of glider design experience. Here is a delightful to fly, super cheap to build, sailplane using a modern Wortmann wing profile.

Finally, announcing that his "First would be his Last" he started building a new Crested Wren, his great success of 1931, sponsored by Barbara Reed and Chris Duthie-James. The

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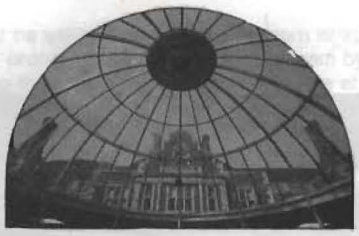
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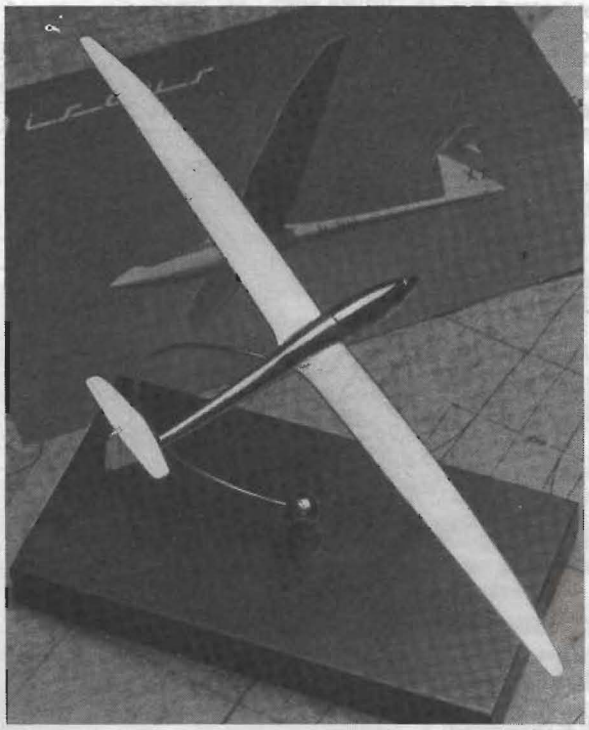
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work was carried out in his flat at Kingston on Thames and on Brooklands Airfield. During the summer of 1985 he became severely afflicted with arthritis. All through the cruel winter, he worked finally hardly being able to complete the job. Nevertheless, it was finished in time for him and the Crested Wren to be present at the VGC's 14th International Rally at Lasham last year.

Of all the Wrens and Kestrels built (perhaps eight), only three survive. The Willow Wren, with RUSSAVIA, the "new" Crested Wren, and the Dunstable Kestrel in Australia. In all his newer gliders, the techniques and finishes of the 1930s, with modern innovations, are evident.

Bill will remain, as he is now, a legend among British glider pilots. We shall remember his former upright figure and forthright character and humour.

His first and second wives did not outlast him but our sympathies go to his relations and friends. The Vintage Gliding Movement is particularly sad to have lost him.

CHRIS WILLS

DANGER OF CRACKING

A warning has been given by William Dirks of Glaser-Dirks, that there is a danger of cracking on all FRP sailplanes with a polyester gel coat finish. It is brittle at low temperatures and the danger seems to increase if the glider has been stored at high humidity. Carbon fibre gliders have an even higher risk as the difference in co-efficient of thermal expansion between coating and fibre material is the largest.

William Dirks says that when at altitude the outside air temperature should be taken and flights should not be made below −20°C (−4°F). The gel coat is likely to crack at these temperatures and wouldn't be covered by the guarantee. (See also George Thelen's article in the last issue, "Cold Flopping Wings and Other Things", p194.)

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BGA ACCIDENT SUMMARY –

Compiled by JOHN SHIPLEY, Chairman, BGA Safety Panel

Ref No.	Glider Type	BGA No.	Damage	Date Time	Place	Pilot/Crew Age	Pilot/Crew Injury	Pilot/Crew Pl/Hrs	Summary
PHASE OF FLIGHT - LAUNCH - WINCH OR AUTOTOW									
49	K-7	2306	N	1.4.87	Ringmer P2	47 32	N N	430 –	P2 signalled "too fast" on a winch launch, but failed to compensate for the crosswind. The cable broke at the weak link and the 'chute etc drifted on to a nearby shed roof, after crossing a road. The main cable fell short of the road.
50	K-13	1753	M	2.5.87	Chipping P2	39 36	N N	1036 35	P2 flew a cautious lift-off until at 20ft the cable 'chute opened and flew over the wing. P1 lowered the nose and landed ahead, the cable damaged the wing and brakes. The 'chute opened due to the flat attitude of the glider. **A smaller 'chute with a larger apex hole will now be used.**
56	Ventus	2816	S	21.4.87 1430	Lee-on-Solent	80	N	3690	On a winch launch this glass glider wing dropped and caught in the long grass alongside the runway. The pilot was unable to lift the wing and the glider yawed, lifted off and swung through 90°, dropped back on to the ground from about 3ft breaking the fuselage. The grass is now cut and **no glass ships are being winch launched.**
63	Kestrel 19	1990	M	3.5.87 1545	Kirton in Lindsey	53	N	1200	The cable broke during a winch launch and the pilot landed straight ahead. However during the ground run the port wing dropped, caught in 5in high grass and the glider groundlooped damaging the tailplane. The cable break occurred at a knot. **The grass has now been cut.**
69	Kestrel 19	1944	M	4.5.87	Winthorpe	37	N	500	A winch launch was attempted after a "too slow" abort at 200ft. It was again slow but continued to 4-500ft to enable a 180° turn and a downwind landing. An overshoot looked likely, so the pilot turned to land on the peri-track. Seeing a post the pilot turned again and groundlooped whilst landing in crop by the runway. **Slow launch due to picking up a 2nd cable.**
70	Pirat	2364	W/O	13.5.87 1728	Kenley	73	F	7	This was a **fatal** autotow accident. After a period using a winch the club reverted to autotow. All pilots were checked out prior to solo and this pilot had had three check flights. After changing runway ends and shortening the cable by 100ft the launch started normally but the glider rolled slowly to the left until inverted then crashed nose first.
76	K-23	2997	M	26.5.87 1510	Dunstable	35	N	14	On a winch launch the pilot thought he was too slow to climb, he released 3ft above the ground. The glider dropped into a gully damaging the mainwheel structure. Observers felt that the glider could have been gently climbed through the wind gradient. **Pilot to be given further dual flights prior to re-solo.**
77	K-7	1287	N	25.5.87 1730	Brent Tor P2	65 –	N S	128 (3rd party)	At about 900ft P1 released due to low speed. As he did so, a bang was heard from behind, as the weak link broke under tension and the strop hit the aircraft. Below a trainee winch driver, who had been standing outside the cage, was badly cut by the flailing cable. **Winch safety procedures have been reviewed.**
78	Olympia 463	1379	W/O	13.6.87 1610	North Hill	64	M	146	After a cable break at about 400ft the pilot decided to do a short circuit and then tried to stretch the glide back to the normal landing area. On encountering sink over the ridge a turn was started towards the field. The glider entered a full spin and the pilot recovered as a wing hit a tree at the bottom of the ridge taking most of the impact.
79	K-13		N	24.4.87 1500	North Hill	45	N	0.5	The early solo pilot was about 150ft on a winch launch when the canopy flew open. After pulling it closed the nose was lowered. While releasing the cable it opened again. The pilot held it shut with his left elbow during the landing, thus allowing him to use the brakes and make a normal landing.
80	Dart 17R	1250	S	9.6.87 1710	Feshiebridge	27	N	137	After two fast launches, a third was attempted with the winch in a higher gear. The glider accelerated rapidly until at 45kt a climb was started. At 75ft the speed decayed quickly and the pilot **held on too long before releasing.** The nose was then lowered too far, and a full roundout was not made in time to prevent a heavy landing.
87	K-8	2307	S	23.5.87 1149	Weston-Super-Mare	43	N	2	At "all-out" on the winch launch the wing man let go as soon as the glider started moving. In about 20yds the wing started to drop and could not be stopped before it caught in the grass. The glider pivoted and the nose rose about 10ft before dropping, seriously damaging the glider. **Wing man now to run with tip.**
88	Fauvett	2679	N	28.6.87 1115	Strubby	19	N	16	On a hot day the canopy was left unlocked during the pre-flight checks. Just before launch the pilot was distracted. On the winch launch the pilot signalled "too-fast" and the canopy opened and slid off its hinges. The pilot managed to hang on to it and made a single handed landing in a field. Airmanship training to be given.

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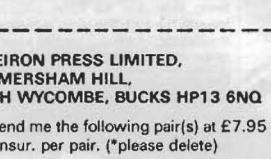
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Ref No.	Glider Type	BGA No.	Damage	Date Time	Place	Pilot/Crew Age	Pilot/Crew Injury	Pilot/Crew Pl/Hrs	Summary
PHASE OF FLIGHT - LAUNCH - AEROTOW									
55	K-7	1157	M	25.4.87 1415	Lee-on-Solent	24	M	0 (First solo)	After two check flights the student was sent solo. During the early part of the aerotow a bump was hit. The glider was over controlled and bounced. **The pilot was quick to release before the tug was upset,** but the glider landed heavily after yawing through 70°. Pilot was very nervous about first solo, even after a week's course flying.
59	K-6E	2227	M	28.4.87 1545	Husbands Bosworth	55	N	500	The pilot had resumed flying after a six month lay-off. Two weeks after a dual check the pilot flew an unfamiliar glider after a briefing from a non instructor. **During the launch she got out of position,** had trouble finding the release which was obstructed by a cushion and groundlooped the aircraft during the landing.
61	DG-100	2125	N	4.5.87 1148	Parham	37	N	140	At 500ft, whilst on tow in a gusty wind and strong thermals, the glider drifted out of position to one side of the tug. Correcting this, **the pilot lost sight of the tug** and decided to release. In a very nose high attitude she had difficulty reaching the release. The tug was pulled sharply tail up before release. Both landed OK. **Belly hook and a light pilot were contributing factors.**
83	Vega	2682	M	20.6.87 1608	Challock	59	N	128	After the glider lifted off the aerotow rope became bowed as the glider drifted to one side due to weathercocking whilst balanced on the mainwheel. The rope caught in the grass, back released and the pilot made a heavy landing ahead after failing to monitor his airspeed.
86	DG-100	2342	M	13.6.87 1500	Keevil	32	N	168	After a slow aerotow the tug pilot was asked to try a higher speed on the next flight. At 100ft the pilot knocked the RH canopy catch. This was not noticed in time to stop the canopy opening and smashing on the fuselage. The pilot released and landed ahead in a field. Handling was not affected. **Canopy probably not locked in pre-flight check.**
PHASE OF FLIGHT - OFF CIRCUIT (including field landings)									
48	Astir CS	3172	M	4.5.87 1625	Nr Ludlow	34	N	69	On a cross-country flight, the pilot flew on to a ridge which was not working, so a field was selected. On nearing the field phone wires were seen across the downwind edge so the glider was flown over these. The glider was too slow for a full roundout on the up slope of the field and a heavy landing was made. On removal of the seat further damage was found.
52	DG-200	2482	S	10.5.87 1300	Currock Hill	36	N	850	On a cross-country flight the pilot had to make a field landing. The field selected was large and slightly up-hill on a hill top. The approach was normal until at about 15ft when the wind gradient resulted in a stall from which the glider landed heavily, causing substantial damage. Ground profiles of area caused a larger wind gradiant than expected.
58	ASW-20L	-	M	2.5.87 1450	Stratford on Avon	50	N	788	On a cross-country flight the pilot decided to land in a small field with trees on the downwind edge and a hill on one side. After a ½ brake approach the pilot found severe turbulence and lost speed. A heavy landing resulted, and the glider groundlooped. **Late field selection was thought to have been a factor.**
60	DG-202	2869	S	5.5.87 1630	Nr Wellingborough	40	S	2350	The pilot had to land in a field due to adverse weather. Inspite of reducing flap he found he could not make his field and changed to a crop field below. After pulling airbrake to get into the field he noticed power cables across it. He decided to fly under these but forgot to lower flap, misjudged the flare and landed heavily.
64	DG-300	3187	S	22.5.87 1600	Nr Talgarth	62	M	220	Ridge flying, the pilot decided to fly under an approaching squall, maintaining visibility by flying below ridge height. Enveloped in cloud he descended and decided to make a hurried field landing. Poor circuit and the field chosen led to a crash into trees. Water ballast controls and canopy headrest supports badly cut the pilot.
65	Skylark 4	1210	M	24.5.87 1330	Nr Ringmer	36	M	12	Local soaring five miles downwind a pre-Bronze C pilot decided to return at 60kt. On encountering sink at 1800ft he decided he could not reach the airfield and selected a field. On the downwind leg a pole was seen in the middle of the field and more were seen whilst on finals. Turning into another field the glider undershot into a fence and bank.
66	Astir CS	2186	M	25.5.87 1330	Nr Raglan, Gwent	35	N	10	While local soaring the pre-Bronze pilot found she could not make the airfield. Whilst landing in a field the glider was groundlooped to avoid overshooting into the hedge. This was the pilot's first enforced field landing, with only five previous flights in this type.
73	ASW-20L	2520	M	20.5.87 1215	Dunstable	56	N	420	The pilot found himself outside gliding range of the field in sink. A landing was made across a gently sloping field during which the upslope wing caught in crop and the glider groundlooped.

GLIDING CERTIFICATES

Congratulations and welcome to Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Beavis on joining the ranks of Silver Badge holders (No. 7523).

Sir Michael, who retired from the RAF earlier this year, has nearly 6000hrs on 60 varied types of military aircraft. During his career he captained the first non-stop flight from the UK to Australia, by flight-refuelled Vulcan bomber in 1962, and he was the first CO of the RAF's VC 10 squadron.

Sir Michael's last appointment was deputy commander-in-chief, Allied Forces Central Europe, and it was during his penultimate post as commander-in-chief RAF Support Command, when he was honorary president of the RAFGSA, that he found time to take up gliding in 1981.



ALL THREE DIAMONDS

No.	Name	Club	1987
224	Munro, A. J.	London	26.5
225	Brown, T. H.	Bicester	2.7
226	Nash, S. R.	Kestrel	8.7
227	Parker, S. J. C.	Bristol & Glos	2.7
228	Crowden, A.	Booker	8.7
229	Hyett, C.	Yeovilton	8.7



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Ref No.	Glider Type	BGA No.	Damage	Date Time	Place	Pilot/Crew Age	Injury	Pl/Hrs	Summary
74	K-23		M	24.5.87 1720	Dunstable	38	N	26	After drifting too far downwind the pilot was forced to make a field landing while returning to the airfield. A heavy landing in a small field damaged the glider. This early solo pilot had been briefed to stay within gliding range after a previous unauthorised out landing.
75	K-23		M	13.5.87 1605	Dunstable	29	N	18	Five hour duration attempt while soaring a ridge near the airfield at 600ft a shower was seen approaching. The pilot moved to the end of the ridge, away from the airfield. As the shower passed the wind changed and he found he was too low to return. At only 300ft a field was selected and a heavy landing was made on rough ground.

Accident Summary Database: Since this review of accidents has reappeared in S&G it is mainly due to the endeavours of David Wright (a Parham K-18 pilot). David uses database software running on a micro computer to record accident details together with a précis of the discursive reports. Customised sub-routines enable the summary to be printed ready formatted for publication.

DIAMOND DISTANCE

No.	Name	Club	1987
1/345	Munro, A. J.	London (in Norway)	26.5
1/346	Brown, T. H.	Bicester	2.7
1/347	Nash, S. R.	Kestrel	8.7
1/348	Parker, S. J. C.	Bristol & Glos	2.7
1/349	Crowden, A.	Booker	8.7
1/350	Hyett, C.	Yeovilton	8.7

DIAMOND GOAL

No.	Name	Club	1987
2/1525	Welsh, S. J.	Wyvern	16.5
2/1526	Thomson, Dorothy	in USA	10.5
2/1527	Chapman, C. J.	Surrey & Hants	12.6
2/1528	Davis, C. M.	Heron	14.6
2/1529	Craven, P. D.	Lakes (in USA)	13.5
2/1530	Nash, I. R.	Lasham	1.7
2/1531	Loraine, D. D. A	Anglia	3.7
2/1532	Webber, P. G.	Lasham	3.7
2/1533	Hey, R. I.	Bristol & Glos	2.7
2/1534	Bishop, G. C.	Bristol & Glos	2.7
2/1535	Pickles, A.	Lasham	3.7
2/1536	Rochelle, J.	Southdown	8.7
2/1537	Mills, J. N.	Shalbourne	8.7

DIAMOND HEIGHT

No.	Name	Club	1987
3/799	Owles, J. C. G.	Norfolk	30.6
3/800	Breeze, D.	Cotswold	30.6
3/801	Maskell, R.	Cambridge Univ (in Italy)	21.4
3/802	Clarke, M. A.	London	30.6

GOLD BADGE

No.	Name	Club	1987
1201	Welsh, S. J.	Wyvern	16.5
1202	Thomson, Dorothy	in USA	10.5
1203	Declancy, D. V.	Two Rivers (in France)	29.3
1204	Chapman, C. J.	Surrey & Hants	12.6
1205	Davis, C. M.	Heron	14.6
1206	Logan, M. W. B.	Bannerdown	24.6
1207	Loraine, D. D. A.	Anglia	3.7
1208	Hey, R. I.	Bristol & Glos	2.7
1209	Bishop, G. C.	Bristol & Glos	2.7
1210	Pickles, A.	Lasham	3.7
1211	Mills, J. N.	Shalbourne	8.7

GOLD HEIGHT

Name	Club	1987
Cavener, Susan	Phoenix (in France)	12.4
Robertshaw, S. P.	Derby & Lancs	5.5
Declancy, D. V.	Two Rivers (in France)	29.3
Smith, R. A. V.	Yorkshire	4.7

GOLD DISTANCE

Name	Club	1987
Walker, P. B.	Bristol & Glos	16.5
Welsh, S. J.	Wyvern	16.5
Thomson, Dorothy	in USA	10.5
Mason, P. M.	Coventry	31.5
Chapman, C. J.	Surrey & Hants	12.6
Davis, C. M.	Heron	14.6
Logan, M. W. B.	Bannerdown	24.6
Nash, I. R.	Lasham	1.7
Loraine, D. D. A.	Anglia	3.7
Hey, R. I.	Bristol & Glos	2.7
Bishop, G. C.	Bristol & Glos	2.7
Pickles, A.	Lasham	3.7
Rochelle, J.	Southdown	8.7
Davidson, J. W. L.	Bristol & Glos	8.7
Mills, J. N.	Shalbourne	8.7

SILVER BADGE

No.	Name	Club	1987
7475	Wheeler, T.	Two Rivers	17.5
7476	Owen, M.	Phoenix	17.5
7477	Thomson, R. D.	Avon	16.5
7478	Spanknebel, F.	Phoenix	9.5
7479	Hirst, A. T.	Booker	16.5
7480	Williams, R. A.	Midland	31.5
7481	McDermott-Row, H.	Ouse	31.5
7482	Bragg, R. C.	Southdown	28.5
7483	Phillips, J. A.	Wrekin	31.5
7484	Brown, P. D.	Portsmouth Naval	31.5
7485	Downham, E. H. C.	London	16.5
7486	Claxton, C. W.	Booker	16.5
7487	George, A. M.	Lasham	16.5
7488	Cline, G. W.	Wolds	31.5
7489	Annett, Patricia	Deeside	15.11.86
7490	Bevan, R. V.	Bath & Wilts	31.5
7491	Henson, Rosemary	Midland	10.5
7492	Kinch, P. C.	Swindon	31.5
7493	Wolfson, S. J.	Dorset	14.6
7494	Duerdon, S. F.	Pegasus	7.6
7495	Holloway, T. M.	Phoenix	7.6
7496	Turner, J. P.	RAE	13.6
7497	Callaway, G. J.	Bath & Wilts	16.5
7498	Davis, E. R.	Kestrel	14.6
7499	Westwood, D. J.	Coventry	31.5
7500	Langdon, D. W.	Midland	24.6
7501	Caswell, T.	Shropshire	27.6
7502	Bracewell, J. C.	Burn	21.6
7503	Salt, M. E.	Channel	1.7
7504	Egan, K. P.	Bicester	30.6
7505	Angell, A. M.	Fenland	3.7
7506	Wylde, M. H.	Coventry	4.7
7507	Parker, R. G.	Trent Valley	4.7
7508	Woollard, T.	Trent Valley	4.7
7509	Moore, P.	Imperial College	5.7
7510	Bowman, R. N.	RAE	5.7
7511	Summers, K.	Inkpen	3.7
7512	Darragh, G.	Devon & Somerset	13.6
7513	Pattemore, A. R. C.	Dorset	21.6
7514	Hallum, A. D.	Booker	8.7
7515	Piper, G. A.	Lasham	14.6
7516	Taylor, N. J.	Fenland	5.7
7517	Pitchfork, G. R.	Cranwell	4.7
7518	Jacobs, A.	IBM	4.7
7519	Elford, S. B.	Anglia	8.7
7520	Lawson, P.	Booker	2.7
7521	Marsden, C. R.	Pegasus	10.5
7522	Abrahams, R. W.	Norfolk	1.7
7523	Beavis, M. G.	Bicester	2.7
7524	Brown, Ruth	Bicester	8.7
7525	Webber, P. G.	Lasham	1.7
7526	Butler, P.	Kent	3.7
7527	Hill, Susan	Southdown	9.7
7528	Mountain, A. R.	Fenland	12.7
7529	Morgan, M. J.	Booker	8.7
7530	Bull, I. O.	East Sussex	21.6
7531	Crooks, E.	Trent Valley	5.7
7532	Greenwood, M. J.	Booker	8.7
7533	Jessop, P. M.	Bicester	8.7
7534	Hodgson, Karina	Booker	8.7
7535	Curtis, K. J.	Two Rivers	12.7
7536	Cook, I. P.	Enstone Eagles	26.7
7537	Jones, N. S.	South Wales	27.7



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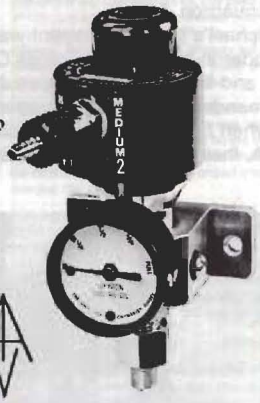
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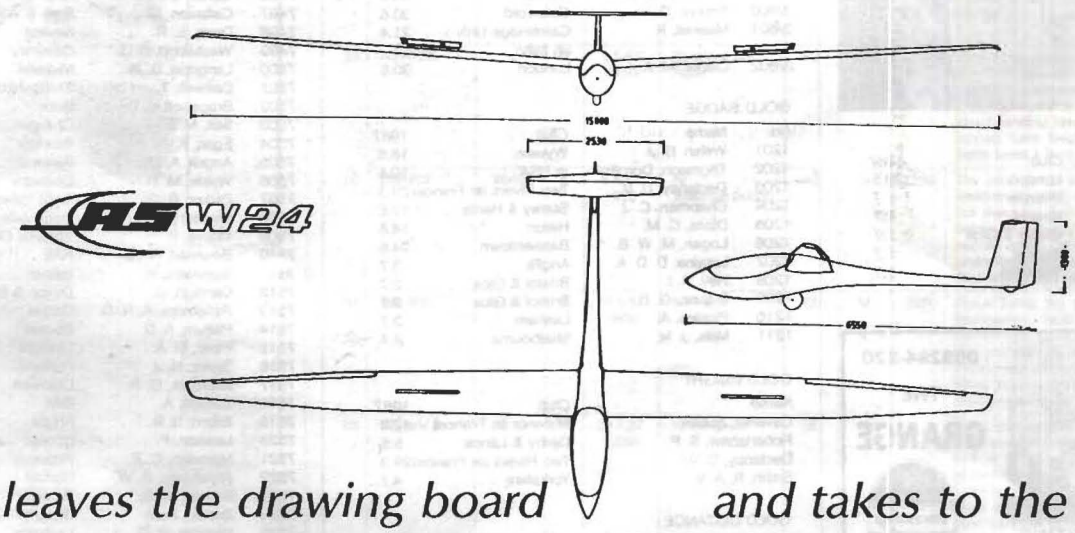
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YOUR LETTERS

THE FIRST DIAMOND HEIGHT

Dear Editor,

Some years ago I did some gliding and with the help of beginner's luck an Olympia took me in a thundercloud to 21 340ft, giving me No. 8 Gold C and No. 1 Diamond height. Incidentally, had the barograph needle gone 1/16in higher it would have jammed over the top of the barrel and the recording of the flight would have been null and void.

I thought perhaps some readers might be amused to hear the problem the Diamond created with the BGA Council as evidenced in the last paragraph of their letter, dated September 9, 1950. "Your claim to a Diamond is now recognised, but the Council has not yet decided the form of endorsement, nor the method of inserting the diamond, nor the fee, if any. The jewellers inform us that it is impossible to insert a diamond in our present form of badge without spoiling the enamel, and the method of insertion has therefore not been worked out."

I was prompted to write this letter after buying a copy of the June issue of *S&G* in which I was pleased to see plenty of progress in 37 years in British gliding with No. 1195 Gold C, No. 787 Diamond height and No. 1514 Diamond goal.

I made a long overdue visit to Lasham the other day and received a unique welcome when Wally Kahn's unexpected voice came over the tannoy in the Gent's saying "Welcome Bill Bedford coffee awaits you." It was good to see other "young", old familiar faces like Derek Piggott, Mike Gee and others who looked after me like a lost antique!

Having spent some three and a half years based in Indonesia as British Aerospace Regional Executive for south-east Asia, I'm now settling down in the UK and pondering whether to get involved in gliding again. The problem is it's a bit like a drug and it almost cost me a divorce in the fifties, so I know how dangerously enjoyable it can be!

BILL BEDFORD, *Esher, Surrey*

FALLING STANDARDS!

Dear Editor,

Is it true that you're only as good as your last competition?

DAVE WATT, *Watlington, Oxon.*

(Dave came 38th in the Standard Class Nationals.)

AUDIO INSTRUCTIONAL TAPE

Dear Editor,

David Millett, an instructor, has produced an interesting and useful 90min audio instructional tape (advertised in *S&G*) covering many aspects of elementary gliding. As is so often the case one wonders why it has never been done before, (or maybe it has?).

Side 1 is devoted to basic control functions and was compiled largely with the aid of an on-board tape recorder during actual instructional flights. The recording is thus a realistic recreation of events as they occurred, warts and all, which confers a sense of greater realism to the listener.

Side 2 covers various intermediate skills such as spins, launches, and choice of landing sites when on a cross-country. This part of the tape was produced on the ground and the author passes on several hints and tips acquired during what has clearly been many years experience in the sport of gliding.

As an introduction to the pastime, reassurance to would-be students wondering what to expect, or even as an aid to some instructors seeking to brush-up on the standard patter, it seems to me that this tape is a good buy for the price asked of £7. David Millett deserves to achieve many sales of his private venture production. Perhaps somebody will realise that a market probably exists for a competently produced video recording dealing with the same subject matter . . .

R. G. PRIVETT, *Croydon, Surrey*

LONDON GC's SCRAP BOOK

Dear Editor,

On behalf of the London Gliding Club I am producing a Scrap Book of events, gliders and personalities in connection with the club. I would appreciate to hear from readers of S&G as contributors, particularly from the period 1930-60. All documents, photographs, books and old S&Gs will be gratefully acknowledged and be returned. Contact me c/o London Gliding Club, Dunstable, Beds.

GEOFF MOORE

BOXING CLEVER

Dear Editor,

May I respond to Michael Bond's interesting article in the last issue ("Boxing Clever", p186). Whilst much of what he says is true some of his comments are, I believe, misleading.

Front wheel drive cars *are* not inherently more stable than rear wheel drive. According to *Caravan* magazine one of the most stable cars they have tested was an Opel Manta - real wheel drive. The reason that the Citroen BX wins "Towcar of the Year" is because of its hydro pneumatic suspension, not its front wheel drive. (The supermarket trolley analogy is wrong. A car is a rigid object and does not have castoring wheels.) With a 50kg or greater nose weight (some trailers do have this much) the front of the car gets lifted, the result being less effective traction on a front wheel car.

By all means take the tools out of the boot but if you want to carry them put them on the floor in the back. Adding weight in the car between the axles is good for stability.

On the subject of tyres, cross-ply tyres may not be the answer as they are rated for lower weights and speeds than radials. For instance the commonly used 560-13 tyre is only rated for 360kg (*ie* 720kg for a pair). Many trailers exceed this loading. Furthermore this rating is for speeds up to 50mph and many trailers can travel safely at over the legal limit (in UK) of 60mph. Correctly inflated radials give a better grip than cross-ply tyres and this can increase rather than decrease stability.

Finally I am very nervous about the idea of accelerating a swaying rig. The only times (so far!) that I have had swaying problems was when travelling too fast - either passing a lorry or bus or, through a lapse of concentration allowing the speed to build up too fast going downhill. Increasing speed on either situation would, I am sure, have caused an accident. I didn't touch the brakes, just decelerated and tried to steer slightly against the swing. This worked luckily.

GEORGE COPPEN, *London*

HIGH OR LOW TOW

Dear Editor,

Two points in response to Humphry Dimock's letter in the June issue, p147. First, propeller slipstream *converges* behind the disc - what Humphry's streamers were indicating was the flow field behind the wing itself.

Second, to answer his question, I had about 18 months gliding at Gawler, South Australia, where low tow - practised wall-to-wall - was standard. We took off in low tow, only climbing to high tow for release. I think low tow gives a steadier ride and height can be precisely controlled by sampling the tug slipstream with the fin.

The view you have of the tug's ailerons makes it less easy to distinguish a wave-off from random movements. The tug pilot can't see you, but would probably be aware of impending "upset" through his elevator load to which, of course, he will get an extra second or two to react. What low tow does for a tug pilot's triceps I never found out.

JOHN STONE, *Farnborough, Hants.*

TOWING THE AUSTRALIAN WAY

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the letter from Humphry Dimock on the comparison between high and low towing.

Low towing started in Australia as a result of an accident identical to the one described by Humphry (although I'm not sure whether the sun was a factor in ours). We have been low towing ever since, although whether this is beneficial on safety grounds is debatable. Our aerotowing accident rate is about the same as most other countries.

On the matter of the aerodynamic benefits of high tow I am inclined to agree with Humphry that it is a bit more efficient than low tow, although I'm not sure why. Perhaps it is an increase in trim drag on the glider in low tow, caused by so much down elevator to stay in station, in comparison with the relatively neutral position of the elevator (and trimmer) in high tow. The difference is definitely there. The last long tow I did was about 500 miles, in a Blanik behind a Lycoming-Auster, and we tried both positions (there's not much else to do).

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— Did you see Derek Piggott's letter in *Pilot* (Nov '86 p. 14) —

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The difference in cruise speed was about 10kt, to the detriment of low tow. Whether this argument reads across to the climb situation, as distinct from cruising, I don't know, but I see no reason why not.

Safety-wise, we see a mixed bag. The low-level tug upset is the obvious killer, as asserted by Bill Scull in his reply to Humphry. It is normal practice in Australia to go into low tow as soon as practicable after take-off, rather than wait until 200ft as Bill suggests. This "200ft" business is practised by only one club as far as I am aware, and it is the one club which has upset a tug at very low level (under 100ft), fortunately without fatal results.

Normally we wait until the tug has cleared ground effect and is established in a positive climb, then we move through the slipstream into low tow. I feel that it is this take off in high tow, then transmitting the slipstream, then stabilising in the low position, that accounts for some pilots finding that "the low tow was more difficult". When you've done it a few times you don't even think about it, but there is no doubt that it takes longer to teach the take-off and climb than to teach the same exercise in high tow, about three to four times in my opinion if the job is being done properly (this observation is based on 15 years' instructing in each of the two methods). Whether or not the longer teaching time is worth it in the long run is problematical.

Humphry recommends low tow to 500ft, then high tow. Strangely enough, there is a faction in Australia which would prefer the opposite - high tow until 500ft or so, then transit to low tow. This is based solely on increased obstacle clearance height on tree lined strips, especially in the high density altitudes commonly experienced in an Australian summer. This gives a better chance to turn back in the case of a launch failure - some of our strips are surrounded by totally unlandable terrain. But very few pilots, if any, are doing it, in spite of their argument that high tow in this situation is worth an extra 30 to 50ft.

One fact is inescapable - you won't upset a tug from the low tow position. With this in mind we have just started releasing from low tow. Previously we came into high tow to release, a procedure which effectively nullified any benefits the low tow position might have. All our accidents involving upset tugs in recent years were caused by gliders going too high behind the tugs. It is hoped that this change will have a positive effect on our tug upset accident rate.

MIKE VALENTINE, *national coach, Gliding Federation of Australia*

GLIDING FOR THE DISABLED

Dear Editor,

The Monica English Memorial Trust has been set up to provide a two-seater motor glider so that the physical handicapped may enjoy some gliding. Enough has been collected to make the scheme look possible but more is needed, both for the initial purchase and running expenses. (See also "Fund for Disabled Grows" in the last issue, p201).

May I appeal for pilots to do some sponsored flying in 1988. If only a quarter of the cross-countries in 1986 had been sponsored at 1p/km it would have raised more than £1500.

Sponsorship forms, preferably accompanied by a donation (say if you want a receipt) with cheques made out to The Monica English Memorial Fund, are available from me. Please enclose a sae.

MIKE USHERWOOD, *4 Mendip CLose, Huntingdon, York YO3 9RR*

BOOK REVIEWS

A Speck in the Sky by Peter Moran. Published by Blandford Press, Poole, Dorset at £7.95

To most glider pilots, wearing a parachute is a bit like carrying an umbrella in the Sahara. And then one day . . . But most of us never jump, and have to rely on the experiences of others to learn what it is like. In an age dominated by television it is refreshing to find that these experiences can still be successfully conveyed in print.

Peter Moran's evocation of his parachuting days is a welcome addition to a select literature. Beautifully written, with a scattering of good drawings contributed by John Batchelor, it is also attractively printed and priced. The author takes us through his Parachute Regiment training and on to the joys of free-fall and the accompanying alarms and excursions, and ends - rather tamely, it must be said - in the comforting cockpit of an EoN Baby.

Do not be put off by the exaggerated claims of the dust-jacket, which was evidently written by someone oblivious of the classics of gliding such as Terence Horsley's **Soaring Flight** or Philip Wills' **On Being a Bird.** Buy this little gem and enjoy it, and see if it leaves you, as it leaves me, glad to be a glider pilot. For are our machines not superbly efficient parachutes?

THE ARM-CHAIR PILOT

Another Icarus: Percy Pilcher and the Quest for Flight by Philip Jarrett, published by the Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, DC, at £16.50. (See advertisement in the last issue, p190.)

Icarus lived about four thousand years ago and the accounts of his exploit were not written down until two thousand years later. Percy Pilcher's aeronautical career covered the five years from 1894 to 1899 and we have waited nearly ninety years for an authoritative and well-researched account of it. At last we have a book on Pilcher which is worthy of him and his place in history. A surprising book, because it dispels many myths and misconceptions which have grown up around his name, and because it fully analyses his work despite the dearth of written records.

Philip Jarrett is production editor of *Flight International*, so you would expect the book to be well presented. It is pleasant to handle, to look at and to open and read. It is also a "good read", full of interesting and famous characters interwoven in the story; a hint of romance; the stage finally set with precision and sense of drama for the last tragic flight at Stamford Hall (near Husbands Bosworth).

Percy Pilcher was in the mainstream of aeronautical progress, following Cayley, Lilienthal and Chanute, and immediately preceding the Wright brothers, all convinced that the key to aeronautics was first, learn to fly on a lightweight glider and then add a motor and so invent the aeroplane. He was the first Englishman to design, build and fly a heavier-than-air aircraft and he was only the second person in the world to die in an accident to a conventional fixed-wing aeroplane.

Many intriguing questions have been left unanswered by the sketchy accounts which existed in magazine and newspaper articles. Why did the Hawk crash? Would it have flown if the motor had been mounted? Would Pilcher's new triplane glider have flown with or without the motor? What happened to his four principal gliders? What happened to his engineering company? Philip Jarrett at last answers these questions and many others. In particular, his investigation of the fatal crash nearly ninety years after the event is thorough and convincing. He has avoided the trap which awaits the historian who has spent many years studying a subject: the trap of idolatry and exaggerated claims. His assessment follows logically what has gone before:

"Pilcher made no revolutionary scientific or technical contributions to the advancement of aeronautics and his work follows in the footsteps of others . . . Nonetheless, Pilcher did make a contribution to the final achievement of powered flight . . . His persistence in pursuing the line which he had chosen was of greater value in what it failed to achieve than in what it achieved, for it was by studying the results of the experiments of Lilienthal, Pilcher, Chanute and Langley that the Wright brothers were confirmed in the initial direction of their own experiments . . . It was the devotion and sacrifice of Pilcher and his kind that blazed the trail."

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CLUB NEWS

Copy and photographs for the December-January issue of S&G should be sent to the Editor, 281 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge CB1 4NH, tel 0223 247725, to arrive not later than October 6 and for the February-March issue to arrive not later than December 1.

GILLIAN BRYCE-SMITH



A classic racing day at the Western Regionals held at Nympsfield, home of the Bristol & Gloucestershire GC, during some of this season's best weather.

ANGLIA (RAF Wattisham)

We have had a few problems during the last year - mainly losing three-quarters of the experienced club members and having to move the whole club (minus gliders) from one side of the airfield to the other.

We have had two Gold distance/Diamond goals, three 5hrs, three Silver heights, two Silver distances, numerous Bronze legs and seven solos, the most recent of the 300kms being Dave Loraine's on July 3 while on a course at Bicester.

The club fleet now consists of two K-13s, a K-8 and an Astir 77. Our thanks to all those who worked hard to get the new bar in "drinking" condition for the longest day.

If anyone wants to pop in for the weekend with a glider or just socially, please ring Needham Market 720631 ex 302 during working hours or on Wednesday nights and weekends.

D.D.A.L.

AQUILA (Hinton in the Hedges Airfield)

The arrival of our long awaited first glass glider, an Astir, has awakened new interest and we look forward to taking it on our expedition to Portmoak in October.

Congratulations to Keith Chichester on completing his instructor's course.

J.R.

AVRO (Woodford Airfield)

Congratulations to Keith Fisher, Scott Bird, Paul Cooper, John Bostock, Charlie Mollot and our latest "fledgeling" Charlie Hajou on going solo, Paul on his 16th birthday.

We have an IS-30, collected from Tibenham by Joan Cooper and Denis Hall, and the IS-28 completed its 1000hr check, thanks to the work of Steve Blundell, Ivor Corkell and helpers.

S.C.

BASSETLAW (Gamston Airfield)

Tim Holder is our first *ab-initio* solo pilot after 45 launches flown in 14 days. He obtained his B certificate on his second flight with 18min in the T-21. Congratulations also to Tony Bowness and Peter Turner on gaining both Bronze legs.

We now have the use of a member's Swallow and are applying for a Sports Council grant to buy another glider and to improve our facilities.

Our "mini" winch should achieve its 1000th launch before the end of August. It has launched the Swallow to 1500ft and regularly gives the T-21 1000ft.

Visitors are welcome at weekends but don't cross the airfield's main runway 03/21 below 1500ft. We operate on 16/34.

T.H.B.

BICESTER (RAFGSA Centre)

The weather has given little opportunity for outstanding achievements but congratulations to Trevor Brown on his 500km, Ruth Brown on her 50km and to Merri Head on going solo and gaining a Bronze leg.

The Van Gelder winch was on trial during June/July with excellent results.

As this is being written Bicester is hosting the Inter-Services Regionals and so far there have been three competition days. Congratulations to our competition pilots for their results this year, especially to Ted Richards who won the Lasham Regionals, his first competition.

C. & G.D.

BLACK MOUNTAINS (Talgarth)

We have had a busy summer owing to the success of the holiday and mountain flying courses.

Drier than usual weather has resulted in excellent soaring conditions but there have been few good cross-country days and wave has been limited to 8000 to 10000ft.

W.D.M.

BOOKER (Wycombe Air Park)

Karina Hodgson has her Silver C and Frances Allen her duration - both aged 16. The Marianne demonstrator has been on site, leaving the spare Puchacz up for sale.

Brian Spreckley, flying the Marianne, won the Booker Regionals as his last official duty as the manager at Booker, after which the ceremonial pick-axe handle and kid gloves were handed over to Graham McAndrews, our CFI. Dave Richardson is now responsible for tugs, fleet and maintenance.

M.F.C.

BORDERS (Galewood)

Although poor weather has reduced our flying, operating full time has provided a useful increase in income. The north hasn't been the only place to have bad weather - Andy Bardgett only just managed to get all the flying completed at an instructors' course at Lasham.

Members are becoming more competitive with Derek Robson flying in the Northern Regionals and Malcolm Parkes and Alastair Scott in the Wold GC's Two-seater Comp.

Our hangar now has superb sliding doors thanks to a few very hard working members.

A.J.B.

BRISTOL & GLOUCESTERSHIRE

The Western Regionals was one of the most successful ever held by the club with competition standard weather each day except for the one rest day - and even that turned out to be flyable eventually. There were eight contest days, six having 1000pts for both Classes. We even managed to win our own competition by taking first place in both Classes.

Andy Smith won the Open Class (on his birthday) and Steve Parker the Standard Class, both flying LS-4s. Many of the other relatively inexperienced pilots achieved their own "first" by greatly exceeding their own personal expectations with a high standard of competition flying. Thanks go to the many club members who helped to make the event such a success and, in particular, to Phil Andrews who as Comp director crisply pulled it all together.

Plans are being considered for a clubhouse

extension to provide improved accommodation and a much needed briefing/lecture clubroom.

M.G.W.

BURN (Burn Airfield)

Our annual dinner-dance is on Saturday, October 10 at Gateforth Hall. Murray Wilson retired after many years as treasurer (Derek Wilson has taken over) and with Sally and Keith Dudley (club fees and statistics) was presented with a gift at the AGM to show our appreciation for sterling work.

Congratulations to Steve Elliott on going solo; to Keith Weeks and Sarah and Hedley Foreshaw (father and daughter who are in competition for their Bronze C with the clever money on Sarah) and to Colin Bracewell on his Silver C.

Having run out of wine, the club expedition to Gap-Tallard, France is under way consisting of a PIK 20E, IS-28 and ASW-19.

M.P.E. & V.F.F.

CAIRNGORM (Feshiebridge)

This summer we have had barbecue evenings every week with the aim of recruiting new members from the local community and one newcomer, Andrew Harper, aged 16, went solo after 25 launches.

The club Super Falke has been flying seven days a week since June giving trial instruction flights for visitors and members.

Our excellent ridge has provided 5hrs for Andy Carter and visiting Dallachy pilots. We look forward to the wave season at the end of September when the BGA will be running courses here and the Avon Soaring Centre will be visiting.

S.M.

CLEVELANDS (RAF Dishforth)

After a poor summer for wave and thermals, Ben Benoist has decided that the frozen north does not offer enough soaring and arranged a posting to the south of England. Paul Whitehead has admitted defeat and started a two year search for Diamond distance in Australia.

P.W.

CORNISH (Perranporth)

A slightly better summer than last year has so far encouraged some cross-country attempts from our usually non-thermal site. Our expedition to the Long Mynd to do some real soaring, although enjoyable, did not produce any great achievements due to poor weather.

Congratulations to Denzil Corrigan on his 5hrs on the ridge and to Simon King and Brian Keer on going solo.

We have welcomed numerous visitors from other clubs who on seeing the K-13 gracefully flying the ridge have been unable to resist the temptation.

G.A.H.

COTSWOLD (Aston Down)

The club competition produced an enjoyable week, despite being marred by poor weather, with Malcolm Birch from Essex GC 1st closely followed by Terry Gardner and Stephen Ferguson in 2nd and 3rd places respectively. A handsome trophy, sponsored by Oldham, was presented.

Please make a note in your diary that the deadline for the February-March issue is December 1 due to Christmas postal difficulties and the holiday.

Howard Jones, flying his syndicate Bergfalke 4 with P2s Robin Atkinson and Doug Morgan (alternatively!) had a wonderful time at the Western Regionals and even got back on the last day. Congratulations to Ed Johnston on coming 3rd and to Terry "Reg" Gardner on his 5hrs during the contest - he flew over 40hrs that week.

Congratulations also to Sharon and Neil Wallace, Julian Ilett, Brian Hawkins and Tony Smith on going solo; to Robin Atkinson and Gerry Fellender on Silver heights to complete their Silver Cs; to Martin Burlock on Gold height to complete his "all at Usk" Gold and to Dave Breeze on Diamond height at Aboyne.

Our seven-day summer operation has enabled us to do lots of mid-week cross-countries and competition for the club ladder is hot.

G.M.

COVENTRY (Husbands Bosworth)

Our task week at the end of May only produced three contest days. The infamous HusBos T-21 appeared in its refurbished state with sunburst wings and was flown to Duxford by Lou Frank and Norman James in preparation for its flight across the channel!

Trophies were presented to: Open Class, Dave Booth (Carman); Club Class, Neil Jones (SB-5E); Two-seater Class, Dave Asquith and team (K-13) and Vintage Class, Norman James and Lou Frank (T-21). John Ellis was unfortunate in landing 5km short on a 200km task in the club Bocian.

Frank Davies took over as CFI from Dave Asquith at the AGM in April. Our dedicated two-seater soaring course in June caused a lot of excitement when ten gliders landed out in two adjacent fields - on thinking it was a new gliding club, a passer-by asked to put his name on the flying list!

Congratulations to Peter Mason who achieved Gold distance in the ASW-19 and to Jan Hurley who flew Silver distance in the K-8.

D.L.S.

CRANFIELD (Cranfield Airfield)

Mike Kingston now has a Std Cirrus, his Oly being inherited by Messrs Briggs and Warner. Both flying weeks suffered bad weather, with flying on only one day.

However, cross-country flying continues to increase. Congratulations to Werner Leutfield (Iris) on Silver distance to Crowland and to Ian Biggs (Pirat) on his Bronze C. Several have gained Bronze legs including Denis Carr and Phil Warner.

P.J.W.

DARTMOOR (Brentor)

We are enjoying a happy, relaxed period of consolidation as courses planned last year produce results. We have held three and with the fine weather reached a record eight solos in just over a month, the latest being Tamaris Kitchen, Peter Burton, Sue Wickett, Terry Roberts and Tom Richards. Our thanks to our first CFI, Ivor Phillips, our present CFI, Peter Williams, and Bill Evans, borrowed from North Hill, for such good results. Terry Roberts organised the courses.

We entertained the Royal Dockyard Orphanage in July which was an enjoyable experience for us all.

The cattle, including a docile bull, that stray into our area are always rounded up before flying but some did attend our barbecue in July.

F.J.M.

DERBYSHIRE & LANCASHIRE (Camphill)

The consistent winning performance of the Inter-Club League team means we are in the finals again, this year at Bidford.

We continue to expand with a Skylark 4 and Phoebus coming and another K-7/13 conversion joining our training fleet.

We had an excellent barbecue to celebrate Gill and Clive Wilby's marriage. Some members visited the twin town of Troyes in France for a get together hosted by their gliding club.

Congratulations to D. Martin, A. Leigh and M. Blackburn on their full Cat ratings.

C.W.

DEVON & SOMERSET (North Hill)

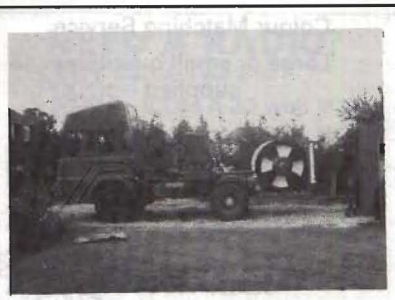
Our summer courses started in June with good weather and Arthur Wood, John Pritchard and John Schofield went solo during the first week under the watchful eyes of Gordon Peters and Les Hill.

The June task week had a good entry but indifferent weather with only three flying days. The visitors flew 792km and the club members 753km, the winner being Tim Gardner with Mike Lee from Rattlesden 2nd and Steve Reed from Usk 3rd.

With a fast growing membership instructors have found it difficult knowing the flying capabilities of pilots so in July a colour card system was introduced which should be easier than having to read through logbooks. Our thanks to our CFI and Mike and Vivienne Fitzgerald for working out the somewhat complicated details.

Congratulations to Tim Towers on his first Bronze leg and to Brian Way on going solo.

D.A.R.



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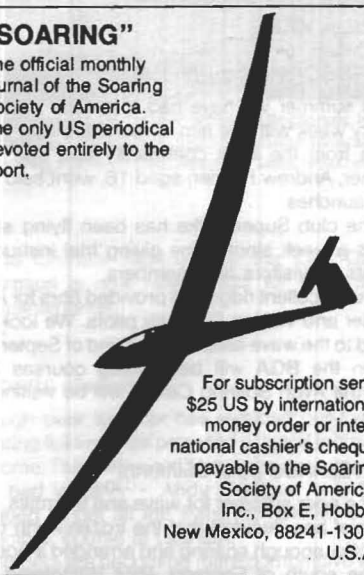
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A publicity photograph taken for Suzuki with the East Sussex GC's K-8 in the background.

EAGLE (Achmer Airfield)

On March 29 we moved from Detmold, our base for 25 years, to Achmer Airfield NW of Osnabruck. Jeremy Beringer was appointed CFI and given the unenviable task of setting up a full time Joint Service Centre.

The SF-34 was sold to make way for a Grob 103 and the fleet now also includes a K-13, K-8, K-6E, Astir CS, LS-3-17 and a Motor Falke. Four *ab-initio* courses have resulted in many new solo pilots, Gary Bleasdale and Lawrence Jones both gaining a Bronze leg and Silver height on their fourth solo flights.

The good soaring conditions at Achmer have provided numerous Bronze legs with Bronze Cs for Rick Fells, Simon Clark and Iwan Morris and Silver heights for Mick Short, Iwan Morris and Rick Fells.

We have planning permission for a new hangar and once completed the Motor Falke will be brought over from Detmold. We hope to have two representatives at the Inter-Services Regionals at Bicester and one at Roanne in France.

M.S.

EAST SUSSEX (Ringmer)

The poor summer has limited badge flights but training and courses have been a major part of our flying, especially since the club Skylark was damaged when landing out recently. However, membership has increased and newcomers are welcome with the two-seater lists not too long.

We were recently used as the setting for a publicity shoot for Suzuki motor cycles, starring the club K-8 with the new Suzuki 1400cc Intruder.

Our autumn season will include clubhouse lecture evenings on various ground subjects leading to Bronze C and general interest gliding topics.

F.H.

ENSTONE EAGLES (Enstone Airfield)

Our licence to use the main runway is already having a stabilising and beneficial effect. Another new instructor, Neil Edmondson, has joined and introductory course members, Mike Kalougin and Paul Noonan have gone solo. Ian Cook completed his Silver C with a dash to Aston Down and Pete Bailey and Robin Boby have their Bronze Cs.

The control tower has had a lot of effort spent on it. We are considering converting and refurbishing the K-7s to K-10s and investigating the viability of having a tug always on call to overcome poor launch days and give better value for money for our open day and trial instruction evenings now that we have the use of the grass strip in addition to the main runway.

Visiting pilots should note that all glider circuits are to the south with motor gliders and other power flying to the north to avoid noise over the village.

R.J.P-B.

ESSEX (North Weald)

The new Stansted/Luton airspace continues to dominate Essex gliding. Inevitably, transit through a three mile wide corridor has made cross-countries to the north more difficult but the Stansted ATCs have been very helpful, for which we send our thanks.

Our thanks also to John Rollason for organising the radio telephony course and to Brian Lovesay for his training. If anyone in Kent is wondering why so many Essex gliders have been flying in their airspace it's because it is now much easier to go south than north.

Congratulations to Dunstable for winning the Eastern League of the Inter-Club. This season they were always a little better than Essex, the runners-up.

One bright spot was the trip John Bridge organised to Sisteron in France. The weather was fantastic, the flying fantastic etc, etc. If anyone has forgotten why they started gliding then the French Alps will bring back the memories. We now look forward to our annual expedition to Aboyne.

J.F.

ESSEX & SUFFOLK (Hadleigh)

After tasks on both days in the Inter-Club League at Duxford we are now in 2nd position overall and are looking forward to hosting the competition this month, complete with barbecue.

Tug problems during June caused us difficulty in maintaining flying but our newly re-covered and refurbished tug, FE, is back after tremendous efforts by Mike Haynes, Jonathan Abbess and various helpers who burned the midnight oil for many weeks. Our thanks also to Stuart Hoy for the loan of an IS-30 while our K-13 was out of action.

Congratulations to Chris Nunn (going solo); Peter Nicholls and Wally King (Bronze Cs) and to John Gilbert, Mike Haynes, Vivien Haley and Paul Robinson (AEI rating).

Mervyn Gooch and Martin Field have replaced their K-6CR with a sleek navy and white SHK, causing great interest when the tail 'chute deployed.

V.H.

FOUR COUNTIES (RAF Syerston)

We have been represented in most competitions this year with mixed success.

The new bus is eagerly awaited as is confirmation that we are going to be the first RAFGSA club to swop our Janus for an ASH-25. With a one-piece canopy of course.

P.J.S.

HEREFORD (Shobdon Airfield)

Shobdon has seen an increase in activity with the good soarable weather. A significant improvement in flying hours on club aircraft compared with 1986 has enabled us to expand our tugging activities.

We are pleased with course bookings and played host to Avro GC who brought a variety of aircraft including an IS-30 and a Vega which Dennis Dalby took on his Silver distance - congratulations.

B.J.H.

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HERON (RNAS Yeovilton)

Our Capstan is back in service thanks to hard work by several members with particular thanks to John Light and Jeff Mayger. We hope to add a third two-seater to our fleet soon.

Congratulations to Clive Davis and Chris Hyett, Diamond goal and Diamond distance respectively.

By the time you read this we hope to have had our 25th anniversary celebrations to which we invited as many past and present members that could be traced. Have you flown with HGC more than 25yrs ago?

Many thanks to our retiring maintainer, Yvonne Davis. We hope your civvy business making cakes is a real boomer.

P.N.A.

HUMBER (RAF Scampton)

A year ago we were in a pretty sorry state but thanks to a great deal of work from members and unprecedented support from the station, the club is looking healthy.

Our clubhouse has been redecorated and refurnished, we have three serviceable winches with a fourth well under way and for airfield refreshments we have a new bus with excellent feeding facilities.

Several of our Malcolm Club award winners have gone solo. Despite the disappointing weather we are doing more flying than in recent years and attracting plenty of new members.

R.G.H.

KENT (Challock)

Our cheese and wine party was very successful with many of our neighbours and friends attending. This is our way of saying thank you to them for putting up with gliders in their fields.

Our expedition to Bidford was hampered by bad weather though Ray Smith flew home *via* Duxford! Nevertheless, we thank them for their kind hospitality - even though they beat us at cricket.

John and Davina Hoolahan have changed their faithful K-6E for an ASW-20. Good luck to Richard Gardner who soloed earlier this year and is attending a six week assisted flight training programme provided by the Douglas Bader Foundation - a charity concerned with sporting activities for the disabled.

Congratulations to Steve Riley on his Silver height and duration and to Bruce Nicholson on his Bronze C.

J.G.

LAKES (Walney Airfield)

The courses are going so well we are running an extra two. Our grateful thanks to the Falke syndicate for their help when we had a few problems recently.

Make sure of getting your copy of S&G by taking out a subscription. Details on p242.



The Midland GC's launch point caravan was a victim of a westerly squal with gusts up to 80kt. It took off successfully near the bungy point, then became inverted and crashed. The photograph confirms that Mynd winds have a kink, as has been suspected by many pilots over the years.

Congratulations to Martin Lewis on going solo; to Peter Craven for his Diamond goal in the USA and to Neil Braithwaite for a good gain of height.

M.S.

MIDLAND (Long Mynd)

We will continue operating full-time until Christmas to enable visitors to share our bungy launches, ridge and wave soaring and enjoy the benefits of a full-time cafeteria, central heating throughout the club and the luxury of extra new showers and double bedrooms.

There was flying on all nine days of our annual task week with tasks set on seven. Winds during the period were W to NW and gave excellent wave conditions on three days; on the first Paul Whitt made the best climb to 11 300ft asl, on the second Bob Rice achieved 15 000ft, six flew to above 10 000ft and Peter Turner gained Gold height to complete his Gold C. The next day, Simon Adlard achieved Gold height and David Titterton completed his Silver C in his newly acquired K-6E.

J.H.

NEWARK & NOTTS (Winthorpe)

We are negotiating to have mains electricity installed to replace the old generator. We have bought a small dumper truck to use as a retrieve vehicle thus giving us the choice of towing the aircraft back to the launch point or shovelling the bits in the skip for dumping behind the hangar. After years of service on the committee and as an instructor, Dave Foster has resigned to get married. Congratulations. Dave and thanks for your hard work.

Congratulations to Bob Grant for passing his GFT on the Falke, to Jim McAdam on converting to the K-8 and to Keith Dykes and Richard Thomas on their Bronze legs. Work proceeds slowly on repairing our second K-7 but it should be flying soon.

Mick Ward (SHK) continues to defy gravity by staying aloft on the flimsiest thermals for hours on end while his dog Oly provides launch point entertainment lugging tyres about for you and retrieving "lost" balls from the adjacent golf course.

R.M.T.

NORFOLK (Tibenham Airfield)

Congratulations to Tony Walsh on his 500km zig-zag flight in the Mosquito - Westbury, Dunstable, Didcot.

We are fortunate in not being under controlled airspace, although we are in a military low flying area which has lead to some alarmingly close encounters, particularly with A-10s from USAF bases at Woodbridge and Bentwaters. At the invitation of Dave Page, the USAF authorities sent their safety offer and a flight surgeon with a special interest in visual difficulties in flight to discuss the problem. This lead to a better understanding between us both and we don't think we will have any more "conflict" with A-10s.

We are all very distressed by the sudden and untimely death of Val Nicholson who was flying our Condor tug Victor November. She had only been with us a few days. Our deepest condolences to her father.

M.J.R.L.

NORTHUMBRIA (Currock Hill)

A crate of beer was the prize for the first flight from our site to Wolds GC, or *vice versa*, which was claimed on August 5 by Keith Bell who completed his Silver C in the process. John Graham and Ron Davies also finished their Silver Cs on the same day. Kevin Clements has his Bronze C; Kevin and Bob Mordue Silver height and Martin Fells and Tom Weatherill have gone solo.

The BGA Super Falke was put to good use during its visit to our site.

Gary Oldfield organised an excellent quiz night which is to be repeated by popular demand.

S.M.H.

OUSE & HAMBLETONS (Rufforth Airfield)

At our AGM in June, Paul Hepworth, Julian Bramhill and Gill Atkinson were elected on to the committee with Nigel Heaton and Howard McDermott-Roe representing the Hambleton contingent. The retiring members were thanked for their hard work.

On June 21 we held our longest flying day with 180 launches. Many people were up by 3am and the hangar doors closed at 10pm.

Congratulations to Paul Buckle, Ron Evans, Peter Sharpe and Julian Mark on going solo and to John Ellis on winning the Northern Regionals Open Class.

G.Z.A.

OXFORD (Weston-on-the-Green)

We are accumulating materials to build a clubhouse and workshop within our hangar which we hope to complete by mid-1988.

We won the Inter-Club League heats to take our place in the finals at Bidford.

Gerry O'Sullivan completed his Bronze C; Gordon Craig and Martin Hastings are now full Cats and Caroline Oakes an assistant instructor.

We are looking forward to our two August flying weeks.

C.S.O

PEGASUS (RAF Gütersloh)

The GGA expedition to Sisteron in March gave the club three Diamond heights, three Gold heights, two durations, two Silver heights, two Bronze legs, a resolo and a Silver C completed.

Congratulations to Simon Duerden (Silver C), Arthur English (Bronze C) and to Ginge Marsdon who went from solo to Silver C in six months before returning to the UK. The Astir is back and flying again.

T.L.S.

PETERBOROUGH & SPALDING (Crowland Airfield)

Congratulations to Johnathon Chapman on going solo. We have two evening classes starting in September in Boston and Peterborough run by the CFI and chairman, consisting of nine lectures on gliding topics finishing with a flying evening.

The water-pipe may be completed before the winter. The T-21 is looking resplendent in its new paintwork.

P.N.W.

RAE (Farnborough)

Our club fleet consists of a K-13, IS-28, K-8, Astir and Sport Vega, superbly maintained by a stalwart team lead by John Knowles. Our impressive fleet of syndicate gliders ranges from a Grunau Baby to Kestrel 19.

Membership is generally restricted to RAE employees and crown servants living within 12 miles of Farnborough. We have a thriving club with CFI Mick Wells leading a team of 16 instructors. We fly at weekends, Bank Holidays and many weekday summer evenings. Recent expeditions were to Bidford-on-Avon and Lasham with a possible trip to Aboyne later in the year.

Our annual "do" took the form of a barbecue with trophies presented by Sue Wells, wife of the CFI.

M.T.D.

RIDGEWELL OATLEY (North Essex)

The club has re-formed and the airfield is operational (the hay has been cut) for winching. New members will be welcome. Visitors from other clubs have already found us and with unrestricted airspace close by we hope to see more old friends from Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk.

We are looking for another two-seater trainer so if anyone has one available please contact us -tel: 0245 74136.

A.J.F.

SCOTTISH GLIDING UNION (Portmoak)

CFI John Henry has handed over to John Riley with Graham Smith as DCFI. Our thanks to John for his hard work.

Congratulations to Lawrence McPhillips on his Bronze C and to Caroline Russell on going solo a few days after her 16th birthday. Commiserations to David Hatton, who took a slightly too high tow on a not very good day and missed his 50km by a few metres.

Late April early June was a disappointment with poor visibility and persistent easterlies. Early July raised our hopes but in mid-July we were stuck firmly under another stationary and very wet depression.

We have a welcome influx of *ab-initios* and have restarted the early(ish) Saturday morning syndicate with Roddy McLean looking after six pre-solo pilots who have preferential use of an aircraft until they go solo.

M.J.R.

SHALBOURNE (Rivar Hill)

With the generous assistance of the Sports Council and Kennet District Council we now own a training fleet of two K-7s. These were put to good use at our open day which was popular with local inhabitants and club members and well covered in the local press, leading to several new members.

Congratulations to Jonathan Mills (Diamond goal); Carol Pike (Gold height); Dave Maleham (Silver C); Duncan Adams (Silver height and distance); John Garret (duration); Alan Pettitt (Bronze C) and Andrew Brind (solo).

We flew in our first Inter-Club League with enthusiasm.

S.C.O.

SOUTHAMPTON UNIVERSITY (Lasham Airfield)

Our Blanik was sold and any organisation or individual interested in becoming a partner so that we can buy a newer two-seater should please write c/o The Students' Union, The University, Highfield, Southampton.

We had a successful series of trial instruction flight days in October and spent a wet week at the Mynd in March, as well as our usual flying at Lasham - our thanks to everyone at both sites for their help and co-operation. We also had a barbecue, Christmas night out and annual dinner.

We had a mammoth charity dash in November when eight members visited eight sites in one day. The awful weather stopped us flying someone at every airfield but we made a profit for the SU rag appeal. Our thanks to all involved at the various sites.

A.P.B.

SOUTHDOWN (Parham Airfield)

The July course was a great success with soaring on all five days and several good cross-countries in the two-seaters. The annual barn dance was enjoyed by all with the catering and organisation by Maggie Clews.

Our trial instruction evenings, organised by Mike Wallace and Dick Dixon, were very popular. With a Skylark and Jantar coming, there will be 27 privately owned gliders.

Congratulations to Graham Brett, Andy Bushby and John Chadwick (going solo); to Barry Bartlett and Chris Winfield (Silver heights); to Sue Hill and Mike Creagh on finishing their Silver Cs with distance flights; to Les Blows for gaining his Silver C with a distance and duration and to Jim Rochelle on his Diamond goal and Gold distance at only his third attempt (in seven years!).

P.C.F.

SOUTH WALES (Usk)

The weather smiled on our open day (July 12) again and, with over 100 trial instruction lessons, displays of dual formation and aerobatics and parachute jumps, was a great success. Our thanks to all who helped, especially the indoor ones.

The annual expedition to North Hill for their task week was very enjoyable even though three days were unflyable. Congratulations to Steve Reed on winning on the only day he competed.

Recent good wave and thermals have led to a rash of Silver height claims with several 5hrs achieved, together with a 300km for Dave Jobbins. Our task week also brought three Gold heights, two for visitors.

Our course weeks have produced a number of new solo pilots and we look forward to the rest of the season with the acquisition of a Puchacz glass-fibre trainer.

L.R. & J.M.

STAFFORDSHIRE (Morridge)

John Williams and Bob Heath-Webb have gone solo, Bob in a remarkably short time.

The flying retrieve is undergoing commissioning trials and looking very promising. The old retrieve is still breaking down regularly, notably on the longest day when a combination of early moning clag and tractor retrieving made it seem a very long day. Thanks to Jean Timms and her caravan crew, the constant dispensing of coffee and sandwiches made it more bearable.

We have a closed trailer for our K-13 in time for the Sleap expedition - our thanks to Colin Ratcliff for building it so quickly. The July course was almost a complete wash-out.

M.J.P

STRATFORD ON AVON (Long Marston Airfield)

Two very successful summer courses produced a solo for Ian Lang, Bronze legs and Silver heights for recent soloists Edmund Thomas and Sharon Edlin and several new members.

Whilst staunch enthusiasm has kept us operating at Long Marston against a backdrop of "competing" activities including weekend drag racing and the site owners' penchant for cultivating our

landing areas, we have a healthier future. Planning permission has been secured on a new site in the Stratford area - with the help of the BGA and much consultation with local residents, planning officers, parish councils and countless others. We should be moving very soon.

C.M.

SURREY & HANTS (Lasham Airfield)

The season started well with an unusual number of north-easterlies allowing numerous ridge running flights on the South Downs in February and March.

May and June were disappointing though on June 12 John Chapman took our club Ventus to Hereford and back for Diamond goal.

The start of July produced a spate of good days with 500kms by Alan Purnell on the 1st and 2nd, and by Chris Lovell on the 3rd, 8th and 13th - the last being a 9hr epic ending long after the pubs had opened.

Chairman Ray Partridge flew the Ventus round Sherborne, Melton Mowbray for Diamond distance (the old way) on the 1st and Peter Webber took one of the Astirs round Diamond goal on the 3rd.

The expansion of the TMA did not discourage Roy Pentecost and Chris Starkey from attempting a circumnavigation in the Lasham Janus on the 12th. They found the south coast leg to Eastbourne straightforward with the aid of a sea breeze front, but increasing spread-out made progress through Kent and into Essex more difficult, eventually forcing a landing near Duxford at 1400hrs. Other "London" clubs are invited to compete in establishing a lap record for a task enclosing Stansted, Heathrow and Gatwick.

The Lasham competition was well attended by club entrants if not by the weather. Particular mention goes to Ray Partridge who flew creditably in his first Regionals. One of the Astirs also flew in the Nympsfield Regionals and the Standard class Nationals.

C.G.S.

SURREY HILLS (Kenley Airfield)

We now have a replacement two drum winch which is giving good service and considerably increasing our launch rate. We are still operating Monday to Friday from 9am until dark, weather permitting.

Visiting pilots and anyone wanting a trial instruction flight are very welcome but it is advisable to telephone 01 668 0010 to arrange a time.

M.J.B.

Obituary - Harry Lenard

We sadly miss our much respected friend, Harry Lenard, who was killed on May 13 in a Pirat (see the last issue, p198).

He left a wife Dot, who is well known and loved by us all, and a daughter Pat and son Roger.

Harry was a keen glider pilot since 1981, had flown at many UK clubs and was flying at Kenley before the formation of Surrey Hills GC. He will be greatly missed - and is much in our thoughts.

M. J. Abbot

TRENT VALLEY (Kirton-in-Lindsey)

John Rice and John Swannack (Kestrel 19) did extremely well to share 4th place in the Northern Regionals. Brian Griffin (Skylark) also did very well in the Sport Class. The club K-6 has again been damaged and seems fated to spend more time out of action than flying.

Congratulations to Robin Parker, Dave Collins, Tim Wollard and Ted Crooks on gaining Silver Cs, Ted completing his 5hrs the day after his daughter flew her duration at Lasham, and to Alex Bogan and Les Cooper on their Bronze Cs.

L.W.

TWO RIVERS (RAF Laarbruch)

The season started with an expedition to Sisteron, France, and despite some very wet weather Mick Morton and "Bam Bam" Burston managed Diamond heights, "DC" DeClancy Gold height and several gained 5hrs on the ridge.

Jim Brayford and Ian Pettman are now instructors and congratulations also to Phil Hutchinson, John Sullivan and "Taff" Williams on becoming full Cats.

The May courses were a success and brought two new members who have since gone solo. We congratulate our new solo, Bronze and Silver pilots with a special mention for Gary Livings who completed his Silver C in two flights on consecutive days.

D.T.

ULSTER (Bellarena)

At press time, Jeremy Bryson was sharpening his Twin Astir aerobatic routine for the expected 50 000 spectators at the Aldergrove Airfair on August 22. His turn is to immediately precede Concorde - if it can cope with his wake turbulence. The PIK 20E and tug are appearing statically too - part of a major promotion push after the disappointing response to this summer's courses.

A warmer response, however, has met our recently introduced weekend mini-courses.

The Phoebus has gone to a Camphill syndicate and the club Skylark 2 to the last resting place of gliders in the sky after arguing with the ridge. Alan Sands' Grunau Baby 2 rebuild is virtually complete and a leased K-6 has temporarily replaced the Skylark in club use.

With our main runway extension now in use, we are improving a SE-NW run for crosswinds. The Willis brothers, soon after their hangar recital, have introduced us to sand yachting with us racing over the endless sandflats of Lough Foyle. Great fun!

R.R.R.

VECTIS (Sandown Airport, Isle of Wight)

June saw a mass exodus to France taking the syndicate K-6E. The Saumur Club loaned another K-6E and the Thouars Club allowed the use of a Bi-Jave. Many thanks to the French clubs for their generosity - we were overwhelmed by their hospitality.

Pete Tuppen flew 50km in France (and Silver height in Australia) and he gained his AEI rating. Les Tuppen and Eric Fay gained their second Bronze legs and Nick Farnsworth went solo.

J.E.P.

WELLAND (Midleton)

Several members attended a BGA soaring course at HusBos, and learnt a lot and enjoyed themselves, despite the poor weather. Our thanks to Coventry GC and to the national coaches, John Williamson and Ken Stuart.

Our trial instruction evenings continue, thanks to a very small band of helpers, and have resulted in several new members.

Congratulations on going solo to Greg Taffs, Peter Strong and Scott Tidd, the latter coping admirably with a cable break on his first solo. Six members, including CFI Peter Andrew, have bought a T-21B which they hope to have flying very soon.

R.H.S.

WEST WALES (Templeton Airfield)

Mike Grange, Peter Harries and Graham Passmore have been attending galas, fetes and carnivals in the county to put their single-seater aircraft on display and answer questions about the sport.

The weather has been frustratingly poor but Geoff Stevens and Ray Rice have gone solo and Andrew Smith has rejoined and gained a Bronze leg. Ground engineer Brian Baker has handed over to Peter Harries and garage proprietor Jeff Johns has generously loaned us a car as a stopgap for the damaged cable retrieve vehicle.

R.R.

WOLDS (Pocklington)

We are arranging to hang doors and concrete the floor of our second hangar, the toilet side of the new block is now operational and we have an abundance of toilets and showers in time for our Two-seater Competition starting on August 16. The flowers and lawns are superb, thanks to Tom Brown.

The courses are fully subscribed, our longest distance customer being a sea-plane pilot from the Canadian lakes.

Since making the ex-members of 102 Squadron (based here during the war) honorary members we are delighted to see an increasing number returning, some even spending a week's (non-flying) holiday with us.

Whilst our treasurer, Gareth Jones, is assisting the Pilatus aircraft company in Switzerland, Francis Sheard is holding the fort beautifully.

D.B.

Valuable time is still lost each issue by contributors sending copy to the BGA instead of to the editorial office, 281 Queen Edith's Way, Cambridge CB1 4NH



The startline crew at the Northern Regionals, Sutton Bank, from left to right: Pat Lazenby, Jack Dent and Sue Kane with competitor Roger Mortimer.

WYVERN (RAF Upavon)

Mike Law has left for Germany and our thanks to him for his contribution to the club, especially on *ab-initio* courses.

Congratulations to our CFI Eric Smith on coming 7th in the Standard Class Nationals in the LS-4 and to Adrian Birch on his Silver C. Roy Gaunt and Adrian Malyear ran a successful course in July getting five off solo.

Tom Muncaster enjoyed his field landing when he gained the attentions of a scantily clad farmer's wife.

D.B.

YORKSHIRE (Sutton Bank)

The Northern Regionals were very successful giving competitors a testing yet enjoyable week. There were seven competition days in conditions ranging from good to tricky. John Ellis flying a DG-400 (engine off!) won the Open Class with Steve Nash (PIK 20b) a close 2nd. Jerry Langrick and Bob Bromwich took the first two places in the Sports Class, both flying a Std Cirrus. We suggest applications for next year are sent in early to avoid disappointment.

As the weather has at last begun to improve, there have been a number of first solos and badge flights.

Much of our famous gully has been filled in which will improve operations in a number of wind directions. The engine in our new winch has been uprated resulting in excellent launches for all types of glider, even in light winds. Some of the aerotow brigade will have to polish up old skills. There is an incentive - much cheaper launches.

P.L.

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The club is open to everyone.

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OVERSEAS NEWS

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RETURN OF THE RF-5

The French magazine *Aviasport* reported in June further details of the new production run of the RF-4 (single-seater) and the RF-5 (two-seater) motor gliders from René Fournier. (See also the last issue, p213.)

As already reported, these motor gliders will be produced in Spain because of lower labour costs in that country. An agreement has been reached between Fournier and the Societé Corparavia of Madrid. Production is expected to start in the very near future.

To begin with, both the RF-4 and RF-5 will be available in kit form only. According to René Fournier, the work required for assembly of the aircraft will be comparable with that demanded by a major service. Complete aircraft will eventually be for sale.

The RF-5 will be produced first, with a Limbach 2000 engine giving 80hp. The following versions will then be produced, depending on demand:

- RF-4 (single-seater) with a Limbach 1700 engine giving 60hp. This version has already received a German C of A and is of considerably higher performance than the original aircraft fitted with the 38hp Rectimo 1200.
- RF-7 aerobatic motor glider with a reduced wing span. (This will be available in kit form only and has not been granted a C of A.)
- RF-9 re-engined as with the RF-5 with an 80hp Limbach.

Distribution of the new RF production motor gliders will be handled in France by the new René Fournier Company which will also continue to provide after sales and maintenance services for the 600 or so RFs which are flying throughout the world. The address of the company is: Avions René Fournier, Aérodrome d'Athée-Nitray, 37270 Montlouis-sur-Loire, France, Tel 47 50 68 30.

FRENCH TO USE MOGAS

The French Aeronautical Information Service has announced the approval of the use of 4-star automobile fuel for use by single engined aircraft which have a compression ratio of less than 8-7. This effectively includes all single engined aircraft of up to 180hp.

One of the points made is that aerotows will become cheaper. In giving this authorisation, full attention has been drawn for operators to the risks inherent in using automobile fuel - Reported in *Aviasport*,, June 1987

CLUB CLOSES

Narromine Soaring Centre in Australia has closed down and John and Stephen O'Donnell, the recent owner/operators, are no longer associated in a professional way with gliding.

CLASSIFIED SECTION

Advertisements, with remittance, should be sent to Cheiron Press Ltd, 7 Amersham Hill, High Wycombe, Bucks. Tel 0494 442423. Rate 35p a word. Minimum £7.00. We can accept black and white photographs at £3.00 extra. Box numbers should be sent to the same address, the closing date for classified advertisments for the December/January issue is November 2nd 1987.

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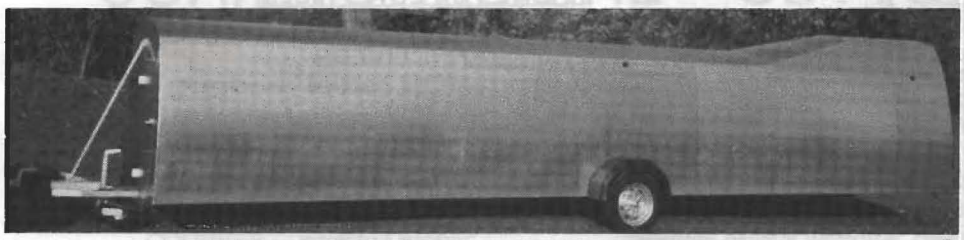
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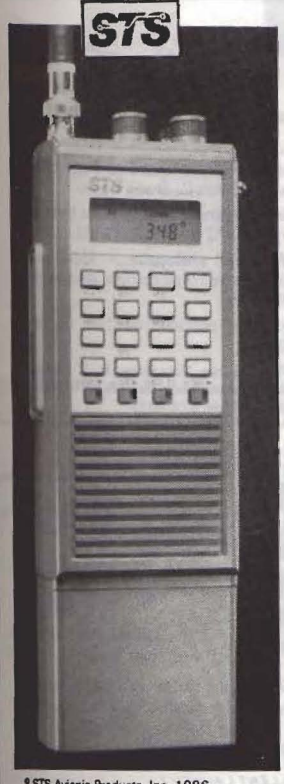
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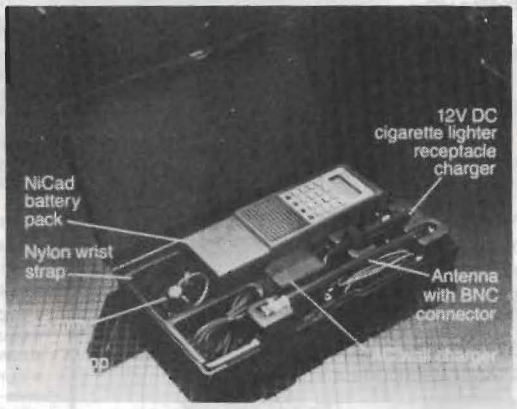
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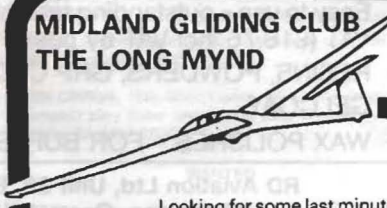
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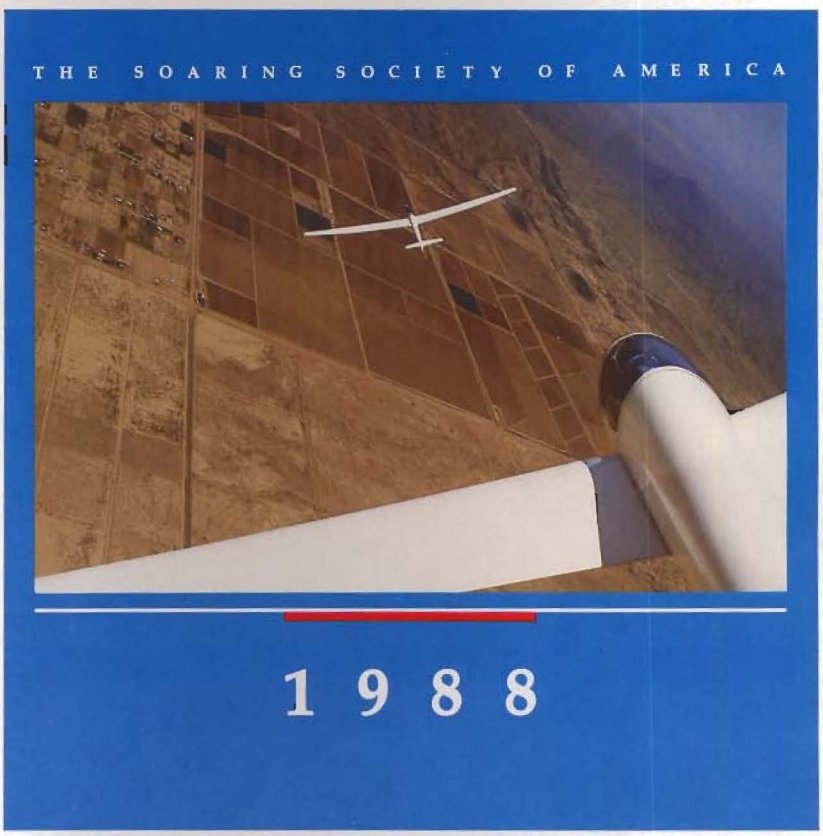
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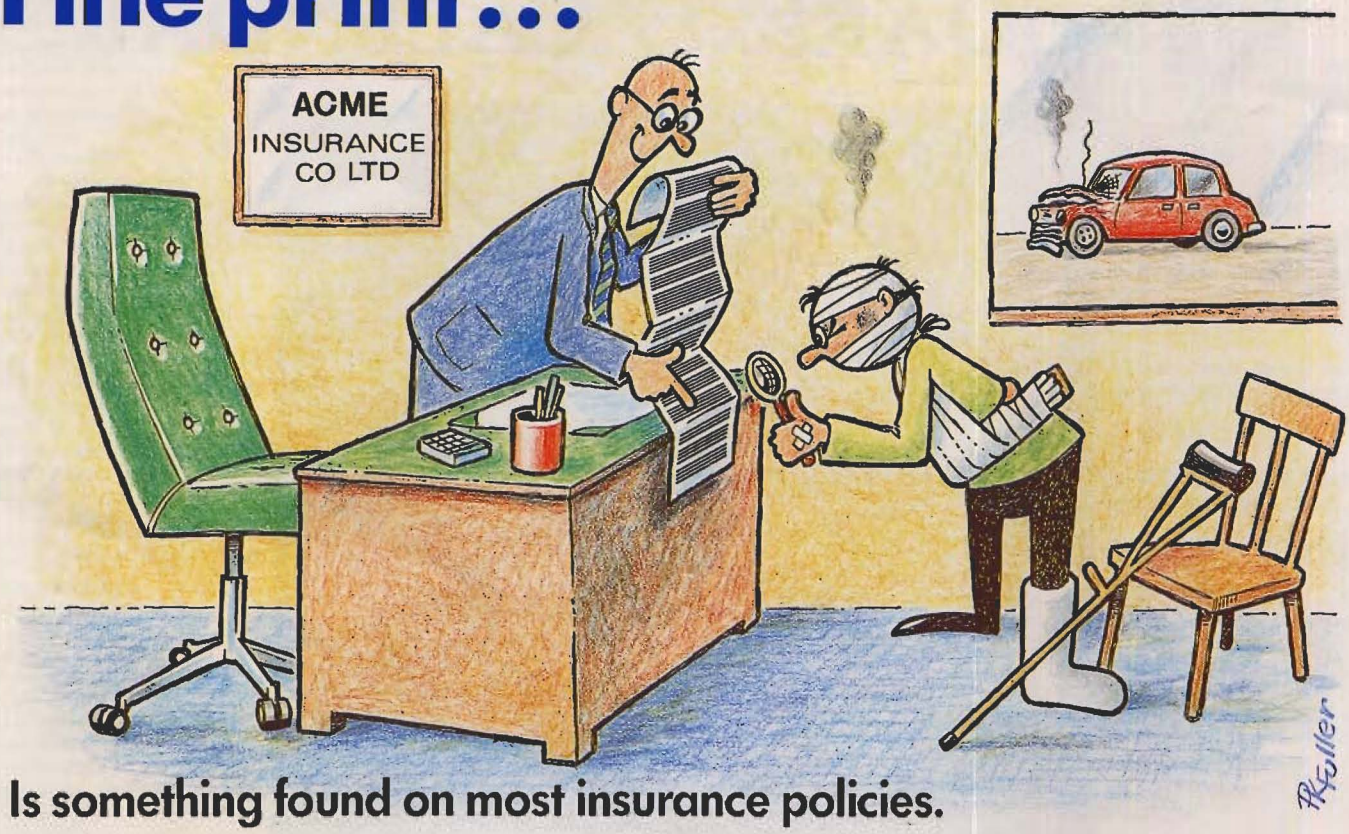
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