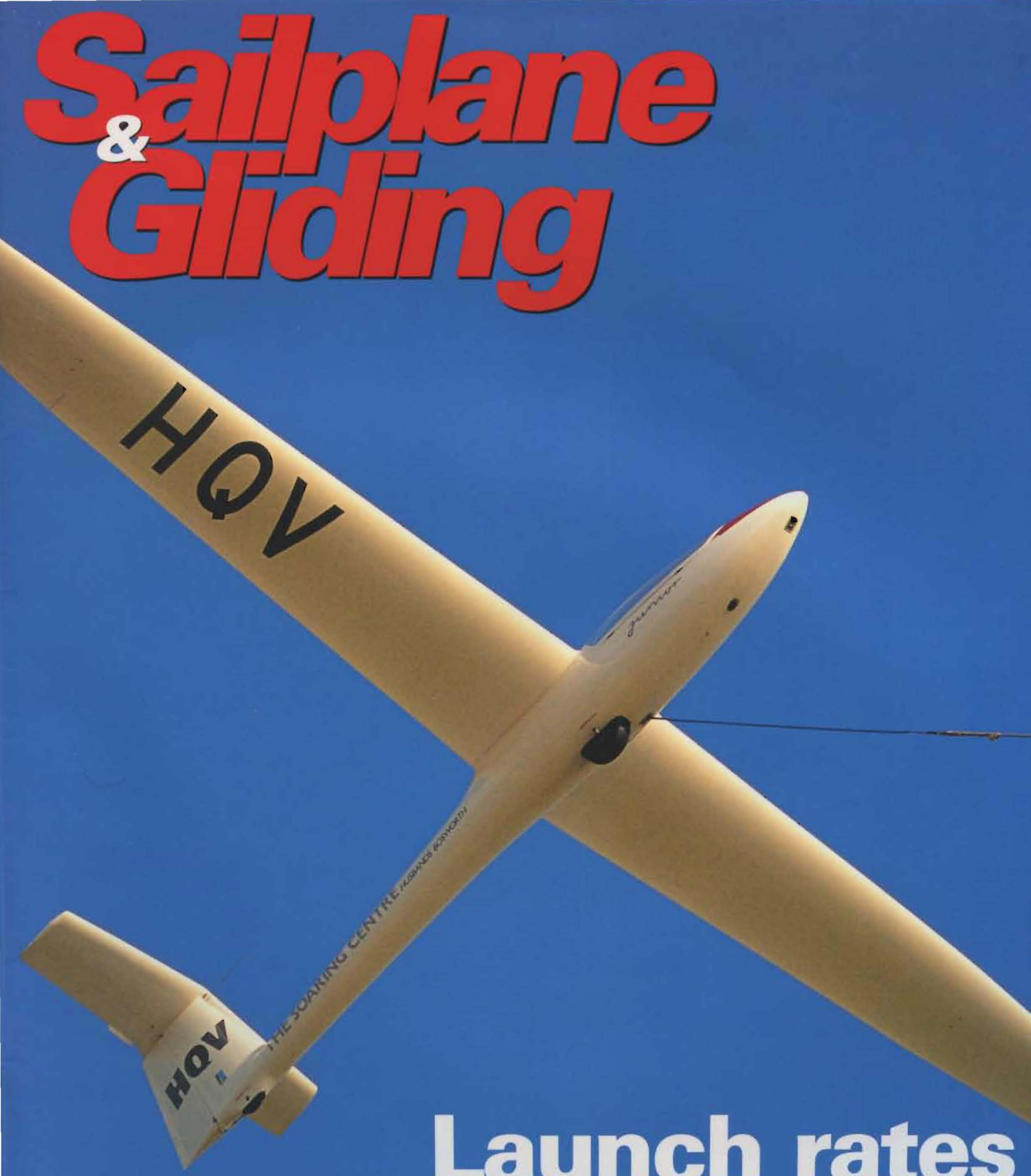
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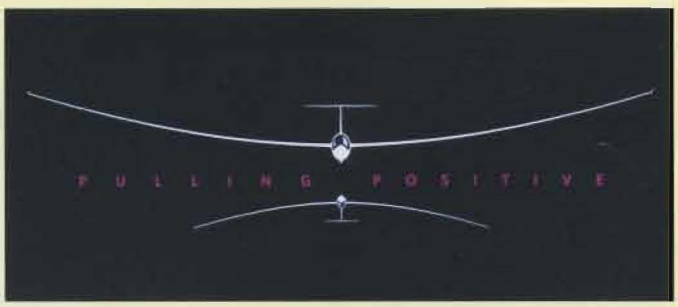
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August ~ September 2002
Volume 53 No 4

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October ~ November 2002

Articles	August 13
Letters	August 13
Club News	August 13
Advertisements	August 23
Classifieds	September 2

December 2002 ~ January 2003

Articles	October 15
Letters	October 15
Club News	October 15
Advertisements	October 25
Classifieds	November 4

Publisher
British Gliding Association
(email: *bga@gliding.co.uk*)

Advertising in *S&G*: Debbie Carr
(email: *debbie@gliding.co.uk*)
Subscribing to *S&G*: Beverley Russell
(email: *beverley@gliding.co.uk*)

Kimberley House, Vaughan Way
LEICESTER LE1 4SE
tel: 0116 253 1051 fax: 0116 251 5939
www.gliding.co.uk

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***S&G* annual subscription:** £21.00 in UK
US $45 for airmail; $35 for surface mail



What can be learned about winch launch rates from studying a club's logsheets? Colin Stevens takes a look at Wolds GC's and explains his conclusions
(Junior on winch launch: the ***white planes*** picture co*)*

Sailplane & Gliding

18 **Towing with microlights**



The German authorities are due to certify microlights for glider towing, says **Jochen Ewald**, who describes the impressions he gained from initial test flights

23 **Wings and dreams**



Feshie pilot **Sarmed Mirza** achieves his goal of going solo and offers tips to other aspiring soloists; while **Nick Norman** whizzes round two training 300kms in a single day

26 **Cutting launch queues**



As the cu pop and the launch queue lengthens, your club's winch operation suddenly becomes more interesting. **Colin Stevens** outlines his research into Wolds GC's

32 **Is your trailer legal?**



Mel Eastburn offers advice to help you ensure that the trailer now overtaking you isn't yours

34 **Pushing the boundaries**



Our feature on what Spanish soaring can offer starts with **Steve Olender**'s FAI 1,000km, continues with **Richard Starey**'s reflections and ends with **Steve Crabb**'s Overseas victory

4-5 News

6 **Your letters**
Sid Gilmore; Ken Brown; Mike Cohler; John Puntis; Pete Stratten; Ian G Walker; Charles Boutcher; David Carrow; Gordon Hannah; Rae Emery and Alan Self; Mick Staples

8 **BGA Instructor News**

9 **BGA Development News**

10 **The UK's new National PPL**

12 **BGA Technical News**

13 **BGA Airspace News**

14 **News and reviews**

16 ***Tailfeathers* by Platypus**

20 ***Nationals:* Standard Class**

30 **How to share a thermal**

43 **Out of the back seat**

46 ***Gliding Gallery***

48 **Gliding's best-kept secret**

52 **Club News**

54 **Club Focus: Fulmar**

60 **Obituaries**

62 **Steam gives way to sail**

63 **A launch with a difference**

63 **Accident/incident summaries**

65 **Classifieds**

66 **Advertisers' index**

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British gliding's most critical phase

FIRST, two bits of good news. Peter Hearne (Vice President, BGA) has succeeded in gaining sponsorship from BAE Systems Avionics for students in a selection of university gliding clubs, details of which are in this issue *(see below)*. Our thanks to Peter for his splendid effort, and to BAE Systems Avionics.

Secondly, the National Private Pilots' Licence (NPPL) is about to become a reality, thanks to the combined efforts of four of the country's leading airsports organisations – the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), the Popular Flying Association (PFA), British Microlight Aircraft Association (BMAA) and the BGA – and to strong support from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). Negotiations have been going on for over two years to provide a licence for power pilots, including those already or wanting to fly self-launching motorgliders and tugs, that is more appropriate for sport and leisure aviation than the JAR PPL, which replaced the previous CAA PPL a few years ago. Details of the NPPL are on pages 10-11.

I should like to express sincere thanks to the BGA's Terry Slater, Max Bacon and Pete Stratten, in particular, for the enormous amount of their voluntary time in bringing about the NPPL.

As recently as February in this column I said the proposed redesign of airspace throughout Europe in the next few years represented the biggest challenge to the future of gliding. I was wrong, at least partially. There is now an equally big challenge in the form of EASA – the European Aviation Safety Agency, born in the last six months and with an agenda potentially to regulate all non-military aviation through the European Union. EASA's role will be based on laws made in the EU, replacing the Joint Aviation Authority, whose rules were based not in law but on consensus and mutual interest.

Within a relatively short space of time – about two years – EASA will take over many of the roles of the UK CAA, to establish a common framework, rules and standards in aviation. The CAA is likely to become an enforcement branch office of EASA. The real driver behind this is commercial aviation, but certain sections of sporting and leisure aviation have been sucked in unwillingly.

Already the enabling legislation has been passed with certain categories of aircraft excluded in what is known as "Annex II" – such as microlights, amateur-built and historic or vintage aircraft.

But despite recent lobbying at the European level, gliders and gliding are not excluded and are therefore within the scope of EASA's remit.

Gliding in the UK has always been a self-regulated sport, except in those areas where we interface with other users, for example with airspace and radios.

This position has always been supported by the CAA and has been reaffirmed recently in general terms by the Chairman of the CAA in a letter to me. We run our own maintenance system through BGA Certificates of Airworthiness, train instructors, teach glider pilots, run our own operations, have our own safety committee and many other things. This is not a framework of delegation from the CAA, but self-regulation. Much of the system is based on the efforts and inputs of responsible volunteers rather than of paid professionals. That is now all potentially under threat of becoming regulated by European law. The cost of this alternative is unknown. At this stage no safety benefit/cost case has been made by its proponents.

So we are now entering probably the most critical phase of existence for UK gliding as we know it.

To fight our corner on all these regulatory issues we already have key volunteers working in European forums on airspace and EASA, as well as the European Gliding Union (EGU) and Europe Air Sports (the over-arching airsports body that represents our interests, through the Royal Aero Club and the EGU, on regulatory issues). But the amount of time and effort required for making our case over the next year or two might, I fear, be beyond the capacity of hard-pressed volunteers.

The BGA Executive Committee will need to address this issue and find a solution if our desire to remain as self-regulated as possible is to stand any chance of success.

As a first and very positive step, the Royal Aero Club Council agreed, at its meeting on July 2, to commission the professional preparation of a "position document" on the wide range of regulatory issues for all UK sporting and recreational aviation interests including, of course, gliding. This should form the basis of the UK's input into Europe Air Sports' negotiations with EASA later this year.

As part of our lobbying strategy, in a few months, we may well be asking clubs to mount a campaign to influence the outcome of this development. But until we can clearly see the EASA agenda it is difficult to know where or at what to aim our campaign.

So for club chairmen, please watch the post box carefully for actions you and your club members can take to try to protect the future of gliding in the UK.



David Roberts
Chairman
British Gliding Association
July 2, 2002
d.g.roberts@lineone.net

BAE Systems help students to fly high

BAE Systems Avionics will be supporting a substantial number of bursaries for student members of university gliding clubs. Selected students studying aerospace and associated engineering and scientific subjects will benefit from the scheme, starting in the winter term of 2002.

BAE Systems Avionics' support is in recognition of the value of exposing aspiring aerospace design engineers to the practical disciplines of flight operations and aircraft inspection, maintenance and repair, which form an essential part of successful use of all types of aircraft. Each club will be allocated a number of bursaries, which will be awarded in equal proportion between the students in the different academic years. The bursaries will be applied to paying the annual club subscription for the successful applicants.

The detailed administration of the scheme will be delegated through the British Gliding Association to the individual university gliding clubs, who will select the successful candidates from their membership.

Further details will be distributed to university clubs by the BGA.

The BGA has undertaken to carry out the administration of this scheme and all queries of whatever nature should be addressed to BGA Leicester and NOT to BAE Systems Avionics.



ABOVE: a Kranich III HB-563 soars in Switzerland in the 1960s. The maiden flight of this type half a century ago is being marked by enthusiasts in its home country, Germany, with the first international Kranich meeting on August 30-31. The Oldtimer Segelflug Club Mainz and Aero Club Bingen-Langenlonsheim host the event, which is due to attract more than 15 of the 40 Kranich IIIs built, as well as four Kranich IIs (www.oscmainz.de)



ABOVE: Pictured at the Royal Aero Club's 2002 awards are, from left, Silver Medallists Jez and Richard Hood and (receiving the Prince of Wales cup from the Red Arrows' Lyn Johnson) Gold Medallists Pete Masson and Steve Jones. The British Gliding Team was awarded the cup for its best performance ever, winning five individual World Championship Golds, two team awards and two Silvers. Former British Team Manager Bob Bickers (right) received a Certificate of Merit for his contribution to many British team successes. Hugo Trotter, known to glider pilots as a former chairman of the Surrey club and British Team manager at the 1954 worlds, was given an RAeC Bronze Medal



News from the C&M committee

THE Communications & Marketing Committee are delighted to announce that Keith Auchterlonie, a member at Bath, Wilts & North Dorset GC, has been appointed as the new BGA Communications Officer, and took up his post on July 1. Keith has a wealth of experience in marketing/communications and PR, and will be introducing himself in the next *S&G*.

You may see the BGA's display stand around and about this summer, especially if you are lucky enough to be at the Farnborough Air Show, where we shall be exhibiting. Don't forget that if your club has a major event planned, you can book the display stand – a form for booking can be found at *www.gliding.co.uk*

We are planning a series of seminars in the autumn, focusing on marketing for clubs – more details will be announced soon. **Marilyn Hood**

Dates for your diary

Euro Aerobatics Champs	German	1 Jul–26 Jul
Europeans	Hungary	6 Jul–27 Jul
Regionals	Lasham	6 Jul–14 Jul
Competition Enterprise	North Hill	20 Jul–27 Jul
VGC Rendezvous Rally	Germany	12 Jul–19 Jul
International Air Tattoo	RAF Fairford	20 Jul–21 Jul
30th VGC Rally	Germany	20 Jul–27 Jul
Competition Enterprise	North Hill	20 Jul–27 Jul
Regionals (Hus Bos; Nympsfield, Sutton Bank)		27 Jul–4 Aug
15-Metre Nationals	Gransden	27 Jul–4 Aug
Inter-Services Regionals	Cosford	3 Aug–11 Aug
Club Class Worlds	Germany	10 Aug–24 Aug
Club Class & 18-Metre Nationals, Lasham		10 Aug–18 Aug
Regionals	Dunstable	17 Aug–25 Aug
Two-Seater Comp	Pocklington	18 Aug–26 Aug
Regionals & Open Class Nationals, Tibenham		24 Aug–1 Sep
Slingsby Rally	Sutton Bank	24 Aug–1 Sep
Regionals	Booker	24 Aug–1 Sep
Junior Championships	Hus Bos	31 Aug–8 Sep
Mountain Soaring Comp	Deeside	2 Sep–8 Sep
Saltby Open (Aerobatic)	Saltby	7 Sep–8 Sep

Club to celebrate 50th anniversary

COVENTRY GC, inaugurated on October 19, 1952, operated at Bagington (now Coventry Airport) until the early 1960s. In 1962 it bought part of the disused RAF airfield at Husbands Bosworth and moved there over the next two years. It has thrived, developing what became, ten years or so ago, The Soaring Centre, one of the UK's principal gliding operations. To celebrate the past 50 years the club is holding an anniversary dinner on October 19 this year. We hope many members – past and present – will make this an evening to remember. We expect at least one example of each type operated by the club over the years to be assembled for the week-end and flown, weather permitting. Past members or other interested parties with connections to the Coventry GC are invited to contact the office on 01858 880521 or email *office@soaringcentre.co.uk* for details of the dinner and other events.



Husbands Bosworth airfield in about 1965

In brief

DEVON pilot Paul Aston won the CAA's Safety Awards this year for a nifty piece of gliding – over water to a diagonal landing in a small field on Sark, after the engine of his Europa failed. Paul's only previous experience of the sport was a couple of winch launches at Brentor (one a 300ft cable break), but he regularly practised forced landings.

FOR news of the Leszno Pre-Worlds (Aug 13-29), or the WGC, see *www.wgc2003.pl/index.html*

WE are sorry to report the death of Jon Crewe after the glider he was flying was in collision with a parachutist in free fall, who also died. John was not wearing a parachute. The accident happened at Hinton-in-the-Hedges, near Brackley. Both the victims were members of clubs based at Hinton. The accident is being investigated by the AAIB.

FOLLOWING the recent tragic accident at Hinton, *writes Barry Rolfe*, we are concerned to receive more reports of potential conflicts between gliders being flown close to parachute drop zones and free-falling sport parachutists. Please take every sensible precaution and exercise good airmanship when flying in these areas – an up-to-date list of all parachuting sites is being issued to all clubs by the BGA. *Carr Withall, BGA airspace committee chairman, adds*: "It is absolutely vital that if a glider is going to fly over or very close to a parachute DZ then the pilot must make every effort to contact them. There is an agreed procedure *(see p13)* for cross-country pilots to call the local ATSU (these frequencies are on the half-million map) and obtain information on the activity state of a DZ."

WE are sorry to report the deaths of two notable people in the soaring world: John Fielden and Walter Neumark. Obituaries in the next *S&G*.

DEVELOPMENTS around UK clubs include the purchase of 136 acres near **Aston Down** for a depot. **Luton**'s owner, TBI, has applied to develop a 63-acre site near Luton Airport, which handles 6.6 million passengers a year but could, TBI says, handle 20 million using its 2,200m runway and a new terminal (*www.tbiplc.com*). Meanwhile, a decision is awaited on the European Spallation Source at **Burn**, where Burn GC rents a runway. "Blasting matter with neutrons," says chairman Bill Thorp, "needs a tunnel exactly the length of our runway to accelerate them to Warp Speed, which our winch drivers can do to a K-8 at a fraction of the expense." (*www.yorkshire-ess.org.uk/site.html*)

WINNER of the BGA 1000 Club Lottery's May draw was PV Perry (£47.50). Runners-up (each winning £9.50) were: Dr RP Saundby, KV Chatburn, A Page, M Wilshere and B Bateson. The June winner was JR Kinley (£47.50), with runners-up (each winning £9.50): M Doran, GH Chamberlain, SN Allery, M Davis and MP Wilson

Your letters

Mobiles – blessing or curse?

A MOBILE phone used in the pub, library, or restaurant is sometimes an annoyance; and we all see people using mobiles in the car.

Now I see the mobile phone being used in gliding. I have witnessed a wingtip holder talking on the phone: the glider going one way, the towcar the other. I then noted the towcar driver also on the phone, oblivious to what was going on. Needless to say, neither was taking note of the other's action.

I have been in the air with students – not in the UK – who have insisted on answering their phones with the excuse that as business people they have to keep in touch. When I pointed out they not only endanger their own life but also the life of others and their action was near suicidal, it cut no ice.

One student on finals just took his hands off the controls without warning at 100ft to find and answer the phone. I made a good landing; he got an earful.

I am not saying we should not have mobiles on the airfield or in the cockpit – just that *they should be switched off.* Following an accident on a field landing a pilot was able to call for assistance on his mobile as no-one had come to his aid and he was out of radio contact.

I have to admit, I have taken a call in the air and on reflection, I thought how stupid my action had been. Mobile phones should take a message; you can always ring back.

I suggest the BGA make a rule that mobile phones must be off in the cockpit.

Sid Gilmore, KIDDERMINSTER, Worcs

Barograph calibrations

I HAVE recently seen the IGC Official Observers' Guide annexed to the Sporting Code – belatedly, perhaps, but the BGA used to issue such things to Official Observers; apparently no longer. The sections dealing with mechanical barograph procedures and calibrations bear absolutely no relation to UK practice over the last 50 years.

The BGA method of reconciling a flight trace to a calibration depends either on carrying out the calibration on the flight chart itself so that the calibration and trace share a common base line or, more usually, by referring the flight chart and separate calibration to a common physical point on the barograph, namely the flange at the base of the drum.

The IGC method is completely different because it uses a base line on the flight trace which is supposed to correspond to a known pressure altitude. This altitude is located on a graph of the calibration and then used to place the other flight points on to the graph.

No doubt people used to any of these methods can make them work satisfactorily. However, the BGA method has the advantage that it is very quick and easy to use when only a rough answer is needed – for example with a height claim which is well in – and is not difficult even when an accurate estimation is required.

I may be wrong, but the IGC method seems to require the same complicated procedure whatever the margin of the claim.

The IGC calibration procedure is also based on different principles. We do calibrations with around 20 steps at successively increasing altitudes, whereas the IGC asks for only half that number, with half of those being done as steps returning from the full altitude range of the barograph. These steps are then transferred to a calibration chart and a curve drawn between them so as to smooth out the scatter. This chart seems very dodgy to me. You can read off the position of a calibration step with a repeatability of about .001 inch (1/40 mm), and I very much doubt if a curve can be drawn with anything like that precision. In addition, the validity of the descending points is very doubtful. Unfortunately, barograph capsules suffer from hysteresis, and take some time to recover from excursions to their extreme range. For example, if a normal ascending calibration is done to the range of the barograph, and the procedure is repeated as soon as the pressure has been reduced to sea level, the steps on the second calibration will all be higher up the drum than they were on the first. The difference is likely to be worth around 100ft at low altitudes. So it is hard to see how the IGC descending points can be related to an actual flight case where neither high or low points follow an excursion to the range of the barograph or anything like it.

I understand that the OO Guide does not have the force of law, and only gives recommended procedures, but why is it that the BGA did not get its own procedures included, at least as an alternative? Are we now to change our procedures, or ignore the IGC guide and stick to the last issue of the BGA OO Guide, or what?

I appreciate that mechanical barographs are gradually being superseded by electronic recorders, but the Winter barograph is far from dead. I have calibrated six of them in the last five weeks. In any case it seems absurd to change procedures at this late stage, but too early to stop caring about how we deal with mechanical barographs.

Ken Brown, PORTISHEAD, Bristol

Instructing and safety

GRAHAM Morris in his letter on page 7 of the June-July issue of *Sailplane & Gliding* suggested that I had disregarded the benefit of increased instructor hours to pupils. In recent years it has predominantly been the increase in instructors' minimum *solo* hours which has been controversial. Given that raw statistics indicate that more hours will lead to more accidents, how can demanding more *solo* hours possibly be of benefit to pupils? Of course asking instructors to do a sensible minimum level of both solo and instructing hours to keep their hand in at both handling aircraft and instructing technique is perfectly reasonable. There are many related but as yet unanswered questions such as whether flying recency in aircraft other than gliders would be just as effective for the purpose of keeping handling sharp.

What is questionable is the policy of driving up the solo hours requirement expecting that this will increase safety, when there is no evidence that this is in fact the case. It is possible, though not proven, that instructing effectiveness may be improved for those instructors who do more than the minimum *instructing* hours, but this is a very different issue to that of safety. On the other hand a seriously overworked instructor is likely to be less than optimum on both counts! The current system of periodic instructor renewal checks has worked very well in maintaining standards, and there is no evidence that any change is required.

There is surely a happy medium which is also compatible with safety, instructing effectiveness and also within operational limitations for clubs in terms of the minimum number of instructors that makes a club training operation possible.

Mike Cohler, YORK, Yorks

Please send letters – marked "for publication" – to the editor at the new address on the contents page or to: helen@sandg.dircon.co.uk *Please include your phone number and postal address. The deadline for the next issue is* ***August 13***

Calculate your stalling speed

I ENJOYED reading Bob Pettifer's article on *The way to winch* (June-July 2002, p24) and am now wondering if this might be a good time to offer some help with the mathematics for any pilots who may wish to calculate the actual stalling speed of their particular glider during the winch launch. This is not very difficult because the relationship between stalling speed and wing loading is well understood and the wing loading is mainly a combination of the glider's weight and the pull of the winch wire. The angle of the wire to the horizontal must be taken into account and since we are primarily concerned with safety, we need only consider the maximum pull, which is limited by the strength of the weak-link.

Some factors cannot be included in the analysis because they are not accurately predictable. For example there may be a wind-shift or local turbulence or a trainee pilot might apply exaggerated control inputs. These could increase the wing loading and hence the stalling speed. Instructors allow for these factors and may expect a trainee to fly at 10 or 15kts above stalling speed for approach and landing.

It seems reasonable to suppose that they might require a similar margin to cover these same factors, which are just as likely to occur on the way up as when descending.

The analysis of the main features of a winch launch can be expressed as a formula that gives the stalling speed for any desired cable angle via a ratio **S** that is then applied to the free-flight stalling speed.

$S = \sqrt{\sqrt{[(L \cos A)^2 + (1+L \sin A)^2]}}$

Notes: **S** multiplied by the free-flight stalling

speed gives the stalling speed when the winch cable is elevated at an angle of **A** degrees. **L** is the weak-Link factor = breaking load/max all-up-weight of the glider. To get the values for Cos **A** and Sin **A** one needs a scientific calculator. After working out the bits within the square brackets, hit the "square-root" button twice.

Example:

A particular two-seat glider has a free-flight stalling speed of 38kt. It is launched by a winch using a red link that breaks when its load reaches 30 per cent more than the weight of the glider. What is its stalling speed when the winch wire is angled at 50°?

Solution:

We have **A** = 50, **L** = 1.30

So the formula gives **S** =1.47

So the stalling speed at this point of the launch is 1.47 x 38 = 56kt

The safe speed to fly would depend on what the instructor feels is needed to cover the unpredictable factors. Perhaps he would be content with a 10kt margin, in which case his student should be flying at no less than 66kt at this part of the launch.

John Puntis, ASHURST, Southampton

More use of motorgliders?

IN THE generally overcast UK, learning to fly gliders can be a frustrating and expensive trial at sites without ridges. It can take quite a few five-minute circuits at £5 per launch to master the basic handling skills, and then even more later in the syllabus to get to grips with circuit judgment and landings. The wait between launches at some sites has to be experienced to be believed.

It is possible to operate a Falke-type motor glider at about £30/hr. A student who is lucky enough to squeeze in six launches in a full day in the early part of his or her training will part with, say, £30 and experience about 30 minutes in the air, of which little time will be spent handling the glider. For half an hour at half the cost in the motor-glider, which takes off and lands once, the student's handling time and *learning* time available increases significantly.

From an instructor's viewpoint, there are also many other documented advantages to be sitting next to your human sponge in the early learning flights.

Of course, none of this is either rocket science or new – Derek Piggott and others have been promoting the use of motorgliders for some aspects of soaring pilot *ab initio* training for years. Nobody would suggest that all *ab initio* training in conventional sailplanes should or could be replaced, but maybe clubs that are suitably equipped should again consider incorporating the use of a motorglider, operating at break-even or minimum profit, during part of the gliding *ab initio* syllabus.

The benefits to the pilots learning to fly are obvious, and the wider long-term potential from making learning less frustrating is worth considering.

Pete Stratten, BRACKLEY, Northants



Steve Longland

Many thanks to all who told S&G about the NGA badge (above): Glen Alison, Don Brown, Tony Butler, Mike Gagg, Naftali Kadmon, Goff Plummer, Bill Thorp, Angie Veitch, Graham Wadforth and Allan Young. David Carrow sent in a photo, below, of an amphibian based on an American Seabee, bearing the logo on its fuselage. See The NGA mystery solved, *below*



The NGA mystery solved

THE badge that Ann Welch wants to identify (*Can you identify this?*, S&G June-July 2002, page 7) belonged to the National Guild of Aeromodellers. I have a 1942 edition of *Aircraft of the Fighting Powers* that contains a full-page advertisement for the Guild (Hon President: Lt-Col CE Bowden; Hon Chairman: DA Russell; Hon Secretary: Dudley Ship. Address: Allen House, Newarke Street, Leicester). The guild provided third-party insurance to model aircraft enthusiasts for the princely sum of "6d per annum for those who fly rubber-driven models, and 2/6 per annum for those who fly petrol planes". A footnote adds sadly: "Petrol Plane Insurance is suspended for duration of the war".

Ian G Walker, LITTLE EATON, Derby

WHEN I opened the June-July *S&G* at page 7 and saw the badge it gave me a feeling of *deja vu*. When I was a keen aeromodeller back in 1952 I joined the National Guild of Aeromodellers and received approx three different-sized (the largest being c. 2-1/2in) transfers for affixing to the wing surface of the model aircraft – in my case, free flight models powered by 1.0cc diesel engine E.D.Bee. The symbol was in black and gold using water-based adhesive. The badge was placed in a saucer of water and then the transfer was slid off the backing paper on to the wing surface and, when dry, secured with a coating of clear dope.

Charles Boutcher, TENBURY WELLS, Worcs

THE NGA was the National Guild of Aeromodellers, a rudimentary third-party insurance scheme, which I joined when I was demobbed in 1946 and began making "Mills" diesel powered models, including a tail-less flying wing. In the attic, I still have an amphibian's hulk (see photo, left); the logo is black on a gold background and 1 1/2in dia (in old money!) I think one paid 5/-d or 10/-2d for a year's membership and I have also found my last membership card trim, which shows the third-party insurance angle. Both models flew and the amphibian, its plug-in wheels removed, successfully took off from the Avon at West Amesbury a few times, but of course it had no radio control and it usually ended up in a tree!

David Carrow, HARTLEY WINTNEY, Hants

ANN Welch asks for identification of the NGA badge. It belonged to the National Guild of Aeromodellists (later Aeromodellers) set up by the *Aeromodeller* just before the war and continued up to the early fifties. According to a copy of the February 1941 *Aeromodeller* it was then entering its third year of operation and providing third-party insurance to aeromodellers.

I can recall seeing the badge in transfer form on most models of the time – and some keen vintage flyers of today can still find (or make) the transfers for their current models. There was a rumour that it also covered for loss of the model – but I expect that was a recipe for filling up the tank of a clapped-out model and waving it goodbye! The Latin is said to mean "Fly with care".

Gordon Hannah, CAMBRIDGE, Cambs

AN application form for NGA membership in *Aeromodeller* for November 1945 gives the modest annual subscription rates, depending on the third party insurance required: 6d (2.5p) for rubber-powered aircraft and sailplanes, or 2s 6d (12.5p) for petrol-engined aircraft and race cars.

Additional cover for OOS (lost out of sight) was offered at 2s (10p) per rubber-powered model or sailplane – all free-flight at that time. It would be interesting to know how long this part of the scheme lasted.

Transfers with the black and gold NGA logo were 1d (0.4p) for large, or half price for small, and a lapel badge was 1s 3d (6p).

Rae Emery and Alan Self
CONGLETON, Cheshire

I READ with interest the letter from Ann Welch regarding the NGA badge. I was a member of the NGA in the forties and it stood for National Guild of Aeromodellers, to become NGM – National Guild of Modellers. I still, incidentally, have my lapel badge from those days.

Mick Staples. CAMBRIDGE, Cambs

Instructor renewal requirements

FROM THE discussions held at the current round of regional CFI meetings, *writes Bob Pettifer*, it has become apparent that we have reached a point at which some clubs are now having problems with increased hours requirements for instructor renewals. In summary, the following factors are exacerbating the problems. Not all of these factors are immediately addressable and some require that clubs re-assess their operations to enable the CFIs to be able to manage the instructor team in a more productive way.

1. Some clubs have too many instructors for the amount of instructional flying available due to the current decline in membership.
2. Clubs with an ageing instructor base have not prepared for instructor replacement and now have to share the instruction available between the older instructors and basic instructors. This means that it is difficult to maintain currency for both groups who are needed to maintain the operation.
3. Some clubs at difficult sites or below the critical size cannot increase their instructor numbers because they are not able to achieve enough flying to train potential instructors or to maintain currency.
4. There is always a conflict of interest for CFIs when minimum ability instructors are good club members and these instructors should be encouraged to retire or to accept a different role in the club without losing status. It is even more of a problem if there are too few instructors in the club.
5. Overworked instructors at small clubs often find that the opportunity to fly solo is reduced so maintaining solo hours/launches is a problem.
6. For the first time we have tried to assess how currency of instructors affects the accident rate of instructors but we have accepted that it is not perfect since the base data is not enough to positively identify risk factors but does indicate trends. Because of this CFIs have requested that we hold the *status quo* until we have firmer information.

Objectives of the instructors committee

The instructors committee has been charged by the BGA Executive Committee to achieve the following.

1. To set and monitor standards in flying, teaching, operations and safety.
2. To retain self-regulation of the sport as delegated by the CAA
3. To provide a consistent and high standard of training for club instructors.

To achieve this, all levels of the instructional organisation have to play a part in maintaining these objectives. Which means that individual instructors need to continually improve their ability, the CFIs have to manage the instructors, identify weakness and take action to improve and develop instructors under their care. Coaches and examiners have to set standards and ensure common standards are maintained over the gliding movement as a whole.

Changes to renewal requirements

The renewal requirements for implementation at the year commencing October 1, 2002, have been set taking into account the factors stated above and the current situation of the gliding movement. In the opinion of the instructors committee all clubs and CFIs should encourage instructors to exceed the figures quoted and should take action to improve the performance of all instructors. The requirements are the minimum not the norm. It should be borne in mind that the minima requested barely gives the air time and flights necessary for the instructor to carry out each of the exercises in the instructors manual once.

Basic Instructors

Instruction	5hrs or 25 launches
Solo	10hrs or 50 launches
Total	20hrs with a minimum of 30 launches

Assistant and Full Rated Instructors

Instruction	10hrs and 25 launches or 100 launches
Solo	10hrs and 10 launches or 50 launches
Total	20 hours

At the CFI's discretion, dual flying where the instructor is the handling pilot for the duration of the flight, and the payee, may be counted as solo hours. Self-launching sailplanes or sustainer (SL/SS) motorglider hours can be used but touring motorglider (TMG) hours may not.

Instructors not meeting minima required

In the case of total hours met but instructor hours short the instructor can be renewed by test generally by an examiner or coach external to the club. In some circumstances this test may be delegated by the regional SRE or the chairman of the instructors committee to the CFI of the club concerned.

In the case of total hours met but solo hours short the instructor will be required to carry out some solo hours and renew by carrying out a handling test by an external coach or examiner. This handling test may be delegated by the Senior Regional Examiner or chairman of the instructors committee to the CFI of the club concerned.

In the case of total hours short the instructor will be required to carry out sufficient solo hours to make up the deficit then take a test with an external coach or examiner. This test will not be delegated to the CFI.

If the shortage happens for a second year the instructor will be asked to make up the difference in hours by flying solo and will be asked to take a refresher course with an examiner. If standards are not achieved then the rating will be rescinded.

Conclusion

It is possible that renewal hours may be increased at the next review since in any sport skill increases with practice.

Since there has been no increase in total hours from the last review due to factors highlighted by CFIs then the clubs must respond by increasing skill levels of all levels of pilot, make a significant reduction in instructor-related accidents (and achieve significant reductions in all accidents).

CFIs must demonstrate improvements by an increase in the quality of flying of candidates put up for instructor courses. If clubs are having trouble in doing the necessary work to prepare pilots for courses they should approach their regional coaches or examiners for assistance. If you want to get an independent assessment of the suitability of candidates or discuss proficiency standards required then examiners are available to assist.

If there are any problems, the chairman of the instructors committee is contactable by telephone or email. If we can improve quality without increasing the hours then we are making progress.

Checking of instructors by CFIs according to the following schedule is to be continued.

Year 1 – No mandatory check required unless hours/launches are not met (see above)

Year 2 – No mandatory check if hours/launches are met.

Year 3 – Mid-period check with the CFI. This is to be a quality assessment and retraining session to ensure instructors are maintaining skill levels.

Year 4 – No mandatory check unless hours are not met (see above).

Year 5 – Refresher course with approved CFI or regional examiner. CFI approval should be obtained within the first year of appointment for newly-appointed CFIs.

CFIs may wish to carry out checking for the years where no mandatory checks are required for local training purposes and is for the CFI to decide.

Checks and refresher courses should be tackled early in the year to avoid delaying presentation of annual returns in October.

Bob Pettifer
Chairman
BGA Instructors Committee

This information was first issued in March 2002 to BGA club CFIs but was not available in time to appear in the last S&G *(See* Stop press: instructor renewal requirements, *June-July 2002, page 4).*

Action-packed hangars

HOW MUCH more flying would you do if your glider was always rigged and ready to use? Most syndicate members find rigging and de-rigging a chore. The risk of inadvertent damage is increased and opportunities are frequently lost when time is spent, not only in rigging one's own glider but in providing assistance to numerous other private owners, before flying can commence.

Additional hangarage is one solution but with conventional designs, the glider you want is invariably at the back of the hangar, resulting in more delay – more hassle and possibly more hangar-rash.

However, some clubs are now planning to provide easily-accessible hangar space for private owners by adopting a side-loading design that enables one man to access and unload any glider from the pack and then to replace it after flying – all single handed!

The advantages of such a system, in terms of community benefit and sporting gain, are significant. In Sports Council parlance, they can be summarised as "more flying for more people". In practical terms, this means:

- flying opportunities are maximised, particularly for older or less robust members,
- the weather can be beaten, wave windows exploited and best use can be made of the day,
- hangar-rash is reduced to a minimum
- the incidence of "glider-rigger's back" is much reduced
- more launches per glider could allow an additional syndicate member to fly, for the same costs
- a wider range of people can be actively involved, including the elderly, the less strong and those with disabilities.

On a recent visit to the Antipodes, I was particularly impressed by the quality and availability of hangar space for private owners, enabling gliders to remain rigged and ready for use. I don't know what these cost or whether they would comply with UK building regulations, but the ideas behind them certainly deserve an airing.

At Omarama (New Zealand), there is hangar space for 40 fully-rigged gliders all under one roof. The 45ft-wide hangar has 20 bays, each of circa 20ft (giving 18,000 square feet or 450 sq ft per glider). Due to the design, which is self-supporting, there are no vertical stanchions or pillars to interfere with the sliding doors which run full-length, front and back and an opening can be made to accommodate gliders with the longest available wingspans. There are no rails and the gliders are pushed in backwards on a smooth concrete floor.

At Lake Keepit (New South Wales) there is a range of more traditional hangars with individual buildings or bays of approximately 60ft x 30ft, each accommodating two gliders, mounted on trolleys which run on angle-iron rails. This appeared to be an easier system to operate as one man can remove or replace any glider, simply by pulling or pushing on a wing-tip (with tail dolly in place). Compared with Omarama, use of space is less efficient at about 900 sq ft per glider. Both systems and designs seemed to work well, enabling both club and privately-owned gliders to remain rigged and ready for use at short notice.

How relevant are these techniques to British gliding? I believe they have great potential. Such a development could halt the trend towards declining participation by the older members and contribute to the long-term survival of many clubs. I'm aware of the long-established South Hangar at the Bristol & Gloucestershire GC; how many other clubs have already adopted such a system? Please send me details and photos so that any good ideas may be shared.

Designing your hangars so that they are easy to unpack could enhance use of both club and private gliders, argues Roger Coote
This photo is of the internal pack, tail-first, at Omarama in New Zealand, showing how the hangar's supporting structure doesn't obstruct getting out the gliders



Windfarms: a threat on the horizon?

The proliferation of wind turbines is causing serious concern. At least two gliding sites have been actively threatened by windfarm developments in recent months. Airfield safeguarding policies can provide protection for gliding sites.

Without formal safeguarding then clubs need professional help to challenge and remove the threat to operational safety.

If you are concerned about site security for whatever reason, then please contact the BGA as a first step. The Development Committee can recommend specialist help and the BGA Planning and Environment Fund is available to support clubs faced with professional charges in such cases.

Club Chairmen's Conference, 2002

Please make a note in your diaries. The Chairmen's Conference will be held in The Soaring Centre's new briefing room at Husbands Bosworth on Saturday, November 2, 2002.

Roger Coote
BGA Development Officer



Detail of undercarriage trolley running on angle-iron rails at Lake Keepit (see also external photo, far right)



A hangar for 40 gliders at Omarama – the exterior of the building illustrated in the main picture, above



Lake Keepit's hangar, equipped with rails for a one-man pack of two gliders

In brief

"DON'T wait up," said Helmuth Rohs and Robert Fe Ler before they began a 1,682km task from Starmoen, Norway, at 14.00hrs in June. They did five hours in thermals then used wave all night. At 02.00hrs, they reached 5,000m (16,400ft) at Vågå but by 11.00hrs poor weather forced them to fire up the Nimbus 3DM's engine. The result: a free flight of 1,200km at 59km/h (2,600km in total). Using long days at high latitudes has been debated for ages; now the Germans' goal is a 1,700km O/R from Starmoen to Kiruna, above the arctic circle in Sweden (*Robert Danewid/glidingmagazine.com*)

FOR 186,700, Diamond Aircraft, makers of the Super Dimona, have launched the single-engined DA40 TDI, with 135 PS Thielert turbo-diesel engine (JAA approval expected 2002). Or, for 359,800, there's a four-seater diesel twin-engined DA42 Twin Star (JAA approval expected 2003); glass cockpit an optional extra (*www.diamond-air.at*)

THE seven-day Bidford (Turbo) Regionals was won by Dave Findon in Nimbus 4DT 48 (4,130pts). Rod Witter came second in Ventus 2C W54 (3,974pts) while Ian Cook was third, also in a Ventus 2c, VII (3,782pts). Overall results will be in the December 2002-January 2003 *S&G* – or see *www.jarvisweb.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk/bid/turbo.htm*

MINUTES of the recent IGC meeting are at: *www.fai.org/gliding/meetings/2002/igc.minutes.3-02.pdf*

MET-MINDED net aficionados might like to surf to *www.xcweather.co.uk* – set up by paraglider pilot Dave Billington but used, he says, by everyone from pigeon racers to firework display organisers.

AS Steve Fossett completed the first solo balloon trip round the world in July, Einar Enevoldson arrived at Omarama to start systems and checkout flights in the Perlan project, for which they both fly (see *Soaring to Space*, April-May 2002, p30).

A successful BGA presence at the PFA Rally (thanks to Claire Emson, Jon Christensen and Howie Clark) promoted gliding at the event and led to a 10% increase in visits to the BGA website.

After the glory years for Dutch Juniors, Francis Van Haaff reports that their team has just one Junior member, who has only 250hrs. Dutch plans include a post-Silver syllabus, buying a Club Class glider for the juniors and talent scouting in clubs.

THE CAA turned down a request this May by the partly-privatised national air traffic service to raise charges to airlines. In March, the government gave Nats £30 million as part of a £60 million bail-out.

For info on its third photo competition, which runs until October 1, see *www.royalaeroclubtrust.org*

GAVIN Wills' series will conclude in a future *S&G*.

New licence offers a 10hr conversion for UK glider pilots

The advent of the National Private Pilots' Licence, or NPPL, offers holders of the UK Glider Pilot's Licence a 10-hour (plus exams) conversion to power flying. Terry Slater, one of the BGA team involved in the complex negotiations to secure it, explains what the licence means for the association – and what it lets you do

BY THE TIME you read this the National Private Pilot's Licence (NPPL) should be up and running. This new licence will have some very real benefits for members of BGA clubs, and may even become the main licence for all recreational pilots in the UK. There are major changes in privileges, training requirements, gaining other ratings and medical requirements.

What is it?

The NPPL is a UK National, sub-ICAO licence, with ratings for SEP (Single Engine Piston, the old "Group A"), SLMG (Self Launching Motorglider) and Microlight aircraft. The licence, unlike the JAR licence, is issued for life. It is valid only for UK airspace, except for the SLMG Rating, which will be ICAO-compliant with a JAR Class II medical Certificate.

What will the NPPL allow me to fly?

SEP – all single-engine piston aeroplanes to a maximum weight of 2,000kg, and up to four seats. Differences training is required for tailwheel undercarriages, variable-pitch or constant-speed propellors, retractable undercarriages and pressurisation.

How the NPPL will be run

GOVERNMENT approval of a change to the Air Navigation Order (ANO) was due (as *S&G* went to press) to introduce a new power flying licence in the United Kingdom from July 29, 2002.

The British Microlight Aircraft Association (BMAA) and a new company, National Pilot Licensing Group Ltd (NPLG), will provide administration and support for the ratings available on the licence under an approval from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). The BMAA will continue to handle microlight licences and the NPLG processing those for single engine piston (SEP) aeroplanes and self-launching motorgliders (SLMG).

Queries from current or prospective licence holders will be handled by the BMAA for Microlights, and NPLG for SEP aeroplanes and SLMGs. The BGA, Popular Flying Association (PFA) and the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) will also provide specialist advice.

Head of the CAA's Personnel Licensing Department, Ron Elder, said: "I'm very pleased we've now reached the stage where the licence is ready to be introduced. All those involved have put in a lot of time and hard work to reach this point."

The microlight and SLMG PPLs will be absorbed as ratings into the NPPL (although existing licence holders will maintain their current UK licence). Those wishing to undertake SEP light aircraft or motorglider flying will then have a choice between the European Joint Aviation Authorities (JAA) JAR PPL and the NPPL.

Because both the hours and the medical requirements of the NPPL offer a reduction on the existing JAA Private Pilot's Licence, limitations have been placed on NPPL holders. These include:

- ❑ Operating only single-engined aeroplanes with a maximum take off weight of 2,000kg, or Microlights as defined in the ANO
- ❑ Flying in UK airspace during daytime under Visual Flight Rules (VFR) with a minimum in-flight visibility of 5km (10km under special VFR), or 3km for Microlights
- ❑ Carrying a maximum of three passengers plus the pilot (subject to the pilot's medical standard) in SEP aircraft only
- ❑ Flying simple aircraft types (extra differences training will be required before flying with features such as a retractable undercarriage or variable-pitch propellers).



*Launch of a new licence: the NPPL could help you move from a glider (below left) to a power plane. And if the latter all looked as good as Lasham's refurbished tug, above, who could blame you for wanting the best of both worlds? (the **White Planes** picture co.)*

SLMG – all SLMG types. This includes both "TMGs" (touring motorgliders) and true Self-Launching Sailplanes. Differences training as for SEP (this should hardly be a problem for most glider and SLMG pilots).

Microlight – all aircraft classed as "Microlight types"

What are the training requirements?

For SEP and for SLMG, 32 hours are the minimum requirement from *ab initio*. For Microlight, it's 25 hours. SEP Training must be at a Registered Facility at a licensed airfield, as per JAR requirements. SLMG training may take place at specified BGA sites, and Microlight training from the same sites as at present. There are two flight tests in addition to the 32 hours training: one for navigation, the Navigation Skills Test (NST) and one for handling, the General Skills Test (GST). The JAR theoretical knowledge exams must be taken (and passed!).



How do I keep my NPPL valid?

Six hours per year, with a training flight with an instructor every second year.

What allowance do I get for gliding?

There is only one conversion criteria – the BGA Glider Pilot's Licence. Holders of this licence will be required only to carry out a minimum of 10 hours prior to taking the two tests and the exams to gain an SEP or SLMG NPPL.

How do I convert from SLMG to SEP and from SEP to SLMG?

Undertake differences training with an appropriate instructor. No tests!

Can I fly tugs?

Yes, on an SEP rating (but not for money!).

Can I instruct on a NPPL?

Not at present.

I have a current PPL. How can I convert to an NPPL?

Apply on the basis of your current licence, with a NPPL medical certificate.

What are the medical requirements?

Very similar to those currently in force for gliding. The basic medical standard is DVLA Group II, equivalent to HGV driver. The medical is a pilot declaration, countersigned by your General Practitioner. There is provision for those who cannot attain this standard to fly on the basis of DVLA Group I, although only solo flight or flight with another qualified pilot will be allowed.

How much will it cost?

Initial licence issue will be £131. Additional ratings will be £101 per rating.

How will the licensing work?

The BGA, PFA (Popular Flying Association) and AOPA have formed a company to process NPPL applications. The actual processing work will take place at the PFA offices at Shoreham. The CAA has devolved the NPPL administration to the associations, with the aim of reducing costs.

How can I get more information?

The BGA website – *www.gliding.co.uk* – will have full details of the NPPL. You may also telephone the BGA office. The NPPL has taken nearly two years to negotiate with the CAA. Negotiations have involved AOPA, the BGA, PFA, BMAA, GAMTA and GAPAN. There are still many other areas where we hope for further devolution from the CAA, and you can be sure we hope for more liberalisation to come! The NPPL is the best news for years for UK light aviation, and we must thank the CAA for the trust placed in us all.

Airworthiness and motorgliders

Make sure that you're up to date with the latest technical issues affecting motorgliders by reading through the advice from the British Gliding Association's Chief Technical Officer



Right: Rotax Falke, by the ***White Planes*** *picture co.*

As follow-up to last month's article (*Airworthiness and inspectors*, June-July 2002, p12), *writes the BGA Chief Technical Officer Jim Hammerton*, a lot has happened on the motorglider front.

Recent changes to procedures and practices are mainly due to the Civil Aviation Authority's decision to bring motorgliders closer to the rest of General Aviation. Some changes were instigated by the BGA Technical Committee as a response to the ever-changing world. In some areas we have gained more freedom to control our own activities and in some areas we have been more restricted.

To summarise the important points:

Initial motorglider C of A (new or used)

Application is now made directly with the CAA and not with the BGA using Form CA1 for registration and Form CA3 for C of A application. The CAA website is very helpful for details.

The CAA have their own requirements regarding status for entry on to the UK register.

A BGA inspector may certify any work required.

If the motorglider is a CAA-approved type then you need the following documents:

❑ Export C of A (original).
❑ Certificate of Non-registration for new aircraft or Certificate of De-registration for used aircraft (original).
❑ Approved Flight Manual for personalising to the particular aircraft.
❑ Weight and balance schedule.
❑ The aircraft will normally require an annual inspection and a survey by a CAA surveyor.
❑ A flight test using CAA AFTS No 2.
❑ A copy of the AAN (Airworthiness Approval Note) issued by the CAA for that type and a copy of the type data sheet issued by the manufacturing state.

If the motorglider is not a CAA-approved type:

❑ Application should be made directly with the CAA Applications and Certifications as an initial contact prior to purchase to establish the recommended course of action to obtain type approval and costs involved.
❑ The above documents and process apply.
❑ Four copies of the Flight Manual will be required by the CAA.

Renewal of motorglider C of A (three years)

❑ The C of A must be completed at a BGA M3 facility or independent CAA M3 facility. This is a CAA requirement for operating on LAMS (the Light Aircraft Maintenance Schedule). The BGA M3 normally only operates within the UK.
❑ Application is made to the BGA about one month before the C of A is to be renewed using form AD200 with the fee payable to the BGA. The C of A may be anticipated by up to 62 days without any loss of time. If the C of A is anticipated more than the 62 days (to bring into winter months for example) the C of A will be renewed for three years and two months and you will lose the remaining time.
❑ The Annual/Star inspection is completed using the LAMS worksheets.
❑ The CAA will acknowledge your application and, if applicable, send you a Flight Manual Status Report and an AC 968 Radio Installation check sheet.

Once the BGA Chief Engineer at the M3 facilities is satisfied that the work is complete:

❑ A *Certificate of Fitness for Flight* is issued if the C of A has expired.
❑ The flight test is completed using BGA 267FT.
❑ CAA form AD202NR or BGA 202 is completed.

The following are sent to the BGA for processing:

❑ AD202NR or BGA 202.
❑ Original of flight test.
❑ Flight manual Status report.
❑ AC 968 Radio Installation check sheet.
❑ Expired C of A.

Please note that the BGA 30-day ticket procedure is not applicable for motorgliders and it must not be used under any circumstances. If the C of A has expired you may NOT fly the aircraft until it has been renewed by the CAA. If the C of A is still valid you may fly the aircraft as long as the certificate remains valid.

Motorglider C of A – subsequent issue

If the C of A has expired for more than 12 months then it becomes a subsequent issue. The same procedure as a renewal should be followed but the BGA should be advised that the C of A has expired more than 12 months previously.

The following additional requirements apply:

❑ Survey of the aircraft and technical records are required by the CTO prior to test flight.

Motorglider registration

The CAA requires that if a motorglider is sold or changes ownership, the registration details be also changed with the Aircraft Registration department. Forms for this purpose are available on the website (*www.srg.caa.co.uk*). A fee is payable to the CAA for this. Additionally, the owner's nameplate in the aircraft and the title pages in the logbooks must be changed. The CAA will use this information to forward any Emergency Airworthiness Directives. The owner's details are also on the G-INFO database on the website. I understand that if you do not want your details on the database you should inform the CAA accordingly.

Motorglider restoration projects

If your motorglider is about to receive that long-awaited restoration then Airworthiness Notice 11 may apply. The CAA area office should be informed so that the level of surveys required may be determined.

Motorglider inspectors

The same procedure for issue and renewal of a motorglider inspector applies as for a Glider inspector (see *S&G*, June-July 2002, p13). Who can certify what?

A glider inspector (GL) may certify the airframe part of the inspections and repairs if privileges allow. A motorglider inspector (MG) must certify any engine, propeller, fuel or associated systems.

The BGA also has the authority to appoint suitable engineers for motorglider Engine Overhaul (EO).

A senior inspector (A) is also required in the same way as for gliders for major repairs to your motorglider.

Maintenance checks and variations (or extensions to maintenance)

Some extensions are allowed by the CAA to maintenance checks. These are only to be used for planning purposes and not to allow for additional flying time. The CAA closely

monitors extensions. 50-hour or six-month check may be extended by up to five hours or one month. 150-hour may be extended by up to five hours. A motorglider inspector (MG) must authorise the extension in the log book.

Annual check: no extension allowed. Airworthiness Directives due may not be extended.

However, the annual check may be anticipated by 62 days and the next annual becomes due in 14 months' time. (See LAMS section 6).

Motorgliders that soar with engine off may adopt the following:

The engine and airframe running hours may be recorded independently provided that the engine has a method of recording hours run (hour meter). The maintenance checks, with the exception of six months and annual, may be performed independently of each other. The check cycle is realigned at each annual check.

Motorglider weighing

The CAA does not set a time limit when a motorglider should be re-weighed provided that the current weight schedule is accurate. The aircraft must be re-weighed after major work, recover or repainting. The BGA Technical Committee recommends that motorgliders are re-weighed every eight years.

Motorglider modifications

All modifications to motorgliders have to be approved by the CAA. The BGA does not currently approve any motorglider modifications. The CAA Local Area Office can approve minor modifications and the cost is currently £68. Projects Department at Gatwick costs will vary according to the amount of investigation required but currently starts at £309 to approve major modifications.

The secret is to prepare the modification as fully as possible with all the aspects covered and all the information supplied. Remember the surveyor will have to understand the mod from your application. A good tip is to get another engineer, who has not been involved, to look at it and see if they can understand it.

Crossing drop zones

The following information is reprinted from Sailplane & Gliding, June-July 2000, page 16: parachuting drop zone procedure

PARACHUTE dropping takes place in the open FIR at various altitudes and uses the same airspace as powered and gliding aircraft. Over the years concerns had been expressed on the interaction between these activities and the potential hazards were highlighted by an accident involving a glider and a free fall parachutist in France in 1995.

On April 1, 1999, a procedure was introduced which was designed to address the two sets of concerns which focus on the perceived risk of collision between aircraft and parachutists; the general aviation pilots' need to establish whether or not a Drop Zone (DZ) is active at a particular time and the parachuting operators' experience of an unacceptable level of transitory incursions into active DZs.

The introduction of this new procedure ensured information was available on activity at all permanent DZs. Consequently, there is a requirement for the DZ operator to inform the appropriate ATSU or ACC of when their DZ is either active or inactive. The list of DZs together with the telephone number on which the ATSU or ACC should be contacted for the notification of the DZ activity is detailed in the AIP, section ENR 5.5.

The next step was to publish a legend on the civil 1:500K and 1:250K VFR series maps detailing the list of DZs together with the appropriate frequency of the relevant ATSU/AC to be contacted for the transiting pilot to obtain activity information. Currently, this information is published on the following charts: 1:250K series: Northern Ireland; The Borders, England South, Central England and Wales; and 1:500K series: Southern England and Wales; Northern England and Northern Ireland.

It should be noted that in many cases procedures were already in place for parachuting operators to notify activity to appropriate Nominated Air Traffic Service Units (NATSUs) at the start and finish of operations; indeed, in some cases these procedures were contained in Letters of Agreement. Thus activity information for many but not all DZs was available to pilots of aircraft making use of a flight information or radar service. The new procedure was trialled for six months and reviewed at the end of this period. It was decided that the procedure would continue as notified with an added tactical enhancement. The trial showed that for 80 per cent of an average operational day DZs are not active. This means that for an average of 9.6 hours each day all DZs are free to transiting traffic.

When a pilot calls a NATSU and is told that the DZ is active, the pilot has the option to request the DZ frequency to obtain updated activity information. Armed with this frequency the pilot now has the option of contacting the DZ for current information.

However, most importantly, in the event of a nil response the transit aircraft should act on the strategic information given by the NATSU and remain clear of the site.

In sum, a procedure has now been established which provides the basis for a more flexible and safe transit of a parachute DZ by all interested parties. The message now needs to be spread and it is essential that all your pilot colleagues are made aware of this procedure. Gulliver, when describing his travels, said it was easy to tell stories about his adventures but his real purpose was to teach. Furthermore, he stated that a traveller's chief goal should be to make men wiser and better.

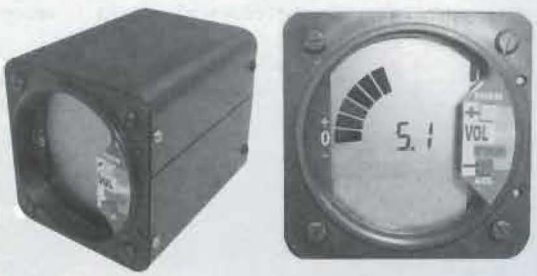
Please follow his example and spread the word on this innovative procedure, which is a major step forward in flight safety between the GA and parachuting activities.

Information provided by the Directorate of Airspace Policy, Civil Aviation Authority.

Peter Hearne, BGA Vice President, added: these changes have come about because of the BGA's initiatives to eliminate as far as possible in UK airspace contributory factors of the Gap accident. The key to these improvements is USE THEM OR LOSE THEM. Be sure you make in-flight R/T calls to ascertain actual status of DZs on your route.

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Record airtime at Camphill's Classic Rally

IN ITS seventh year, the Camphill Vintage & Classic Rally is the world's second-largest vintage event; this year a record 37 aircraft attended (flown by nearly 70 pilots). The famed rally weather was in evidence: we have lost only four flying days in seven years. This year's total of 605 hours is twice the previous record, and with club flying exceeds the totals for the 1954 World Championships, creating an "all-time" site record.

Crowded would be an understatement for local skies: 31 aircraft were counted at one time, not necessarily flying or circling in the same direction. All watched by two regional examiners, a plethora of CFIs and, subconsciously, by insurance brokers.

The intent is to put the fun back into gliding. Families enjoyed the 1930s American theme, complete with violincase-wielding gangsters and molls. Our "machine-gun battle" was, however, marred by the lighter walking into a tree in the dark, falling off the ladder, breaking the fuse and running into the tree while trying to get clear.

The Camphill Horn (awarded by "clapcheerometer" daily), was fiercely contested. In the past this has gone to pilots for feats such as wearing a raincoat – over a parachute; discovering the secondary effect of rudder locks; and unmentionable problems involving plastic bags. "Man of the Rally", elected by daily prizewinners, was K-6 pilot Bob Horsnell, for his lyrical description of his first wave flight – it summed up the rally's spirit.

Next year's rally, June 21-28, will have a 1960s theme (leaving the 1950s for 2004, when we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the World Championships at "Damphill"). The weather will, of course, be excellent.

Ian Dunkley

Photos by Geoff Moore. Clockwise from top left: the Dutch K-4 of Bert Stryks, before its less-than-perfect landing; Barry Briggs' Weihe, from Cranwell; Humphry Yorke's K6cR GAW and Chris Raine's Kite II



THIS YEAR the Slingsby Rally will be at the Yorkshire GC, Sutton Bank, starting August Bank Holiday weekend (Aug 24-Sep 1). All owners of Slingsby gliders are welcome to soar in ridge and wave (westerlies have been ordered) and sample end-of-season thermals. It's always nice to see these gliders returning close to their birthplace.

I will ask "Slings" if they will open their strip for a Slingsby Glider Fly-in – good publicity for us (and them) if we can get the media there.

YGC will be happy to organise daily briefings with tasks, if required, appropriate to the weather and the assembled throng. There will be one of our famous dining-in nights and maybe a barbecue or two in those balmy late-summer evenings.

By the way, non-Slingsby gliders have always been welcome. So if you have an EoN machine, K-6, Kranich or whatever don't feel you are excluded. We can always lend you a Slingsby badge to stick on!

Oh, fees: There will be no reciprocal membership charge for anyone with a Slingsby glider or for paid-up VGC members. Camping, trailer parking and caravans are free.

We look forward to welcoming lots of pilots and gliders. As we are also hosting the finals of the Inter-Club League on the first weekend it would help if you let us know you're planning to come, by returning the entry form asap. We may need to get in an extra tug to ensure everyone gets off the ground in good time.

Phil Lazenby



Left: this smart-looking Slingsby glider, a T-8 Tutor, visited the Camphill Rally. Its owner, Dick Short (left), is chatting to Derby & Lancs CFI Mike Armstrong. If you take a Slingsby glider to the late-August rally at Sutton Bank – or if you're a VGC member – there's no fee for reciprocal membership

Photo: Geoff Moore

Book reviews

Black Lysander – by John Nesbitt-Dufort
Whydown Books, Sedlescombe, Sussex TN33 0RQ
ISBN 1-874262-02-0 (£7.50 plus £1.50 p&p)
www.whydownbooks.com

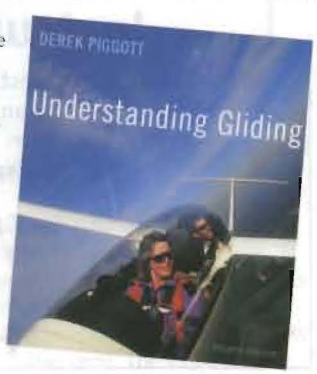
READERS who enjoyed *A nightmare on tow* in the last *S&G* (p32) may like to read more about John Nesbitt-Dufort's flying, even though it was not in gliders. As a boy he was fascinated by engines and loved rebuilding them, sometimes with dramatic results. He joined the RAF at 17, around the same time as the BGA was formed, following Kronfeld's cross-country flights here in his Wien. The author's aeroplane flying on a variety of now-very-vintage types led to his becoming a Lysander pilot landing and collecting SOE agents in France. Glider pilots know all about landing in difficult fields, though not at night without lights in unknown and unseen paddocks, assisted only by a few torchlight flashes! **Ann Welch**

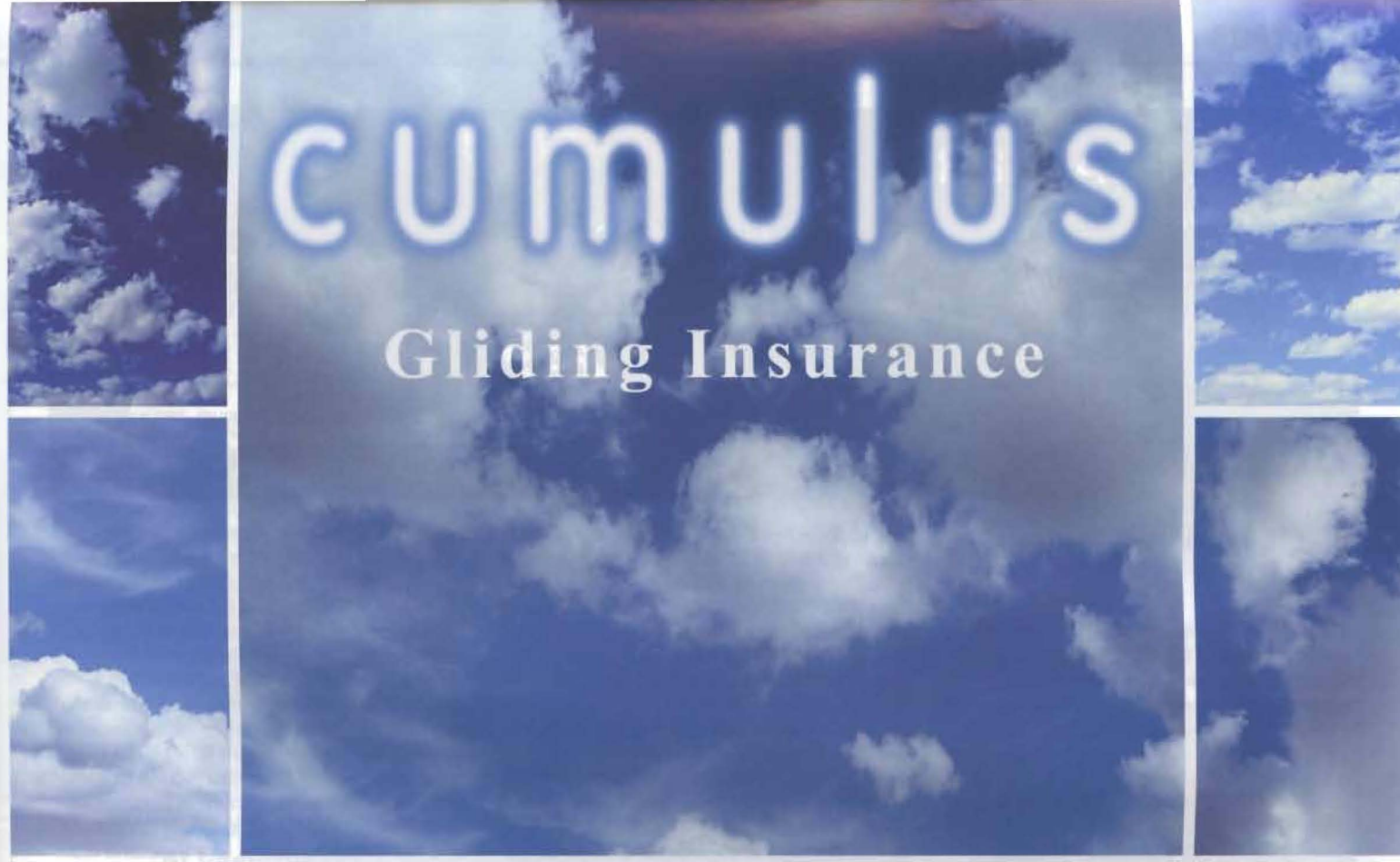
LASORS 2002 – Civil Aviation Authority
www.gliding.co.uk or 0116 253 1051 (£10)

A review of a CAA book? Surely nothing out of the "Committee Against Aviation" is worth a tenner of your money; after all, that's half an aerotow! *LASORS* is short for "Licensing, Administration and Standardisation, Operating Requirements and Safety". It is the CAA's "Bible" – the equivalent of the BGA's *Laws & Rules*, albeit rather bigger, all 644 pages of it. It is in two parts: the first – LAS – gives a digest of the laws, rules and procedures for private and commercial pilots who fly, or wish to fly, all types of aircraft. Want to know how to get a Commercial Licence – look in section D. Want to know the rules and requirements to be an SLMG Instructor – try Section H8. There is a lot here, and it should be a great help to CFIs, tugmasters and all power pilots in interpreting the mass of rules which govern our flying. The second part of the book – ORS – is further divided into two sections. The first gives a list of CAA AICs (Aeronautical Information Circulars), which you all read anyway, don't you? Just scanning through the list shows several of interest to glider pilots, such as "Class B and D Airspace – Glider Operating". Section 2 of ORS is a complete reprint of the CAA *Safety Sense* leaflets. *LASORS* will be published annually, and in 2003 will include details of the NPPL. Although billed as an advisory document, very little is likely to be incorrect. I was fortunate to be given one of the first, and I use it constantly. I recommend all CFIs, instructors and power pilots in our clubs to get a copy soon – it is likely to be the best-value book you will ever get from the CAA. **Terry Slater**

Derek Piggott's ***Beginning Gliding*** (ISBN 0 7136 6352 9) and ***Understanding Gliding*** (ISBN 0 7136 6147 X), both A&C Black; available from *www.gliding.co.uk* or 0116 253 1051 (respectively, £17.00 or £19.90 inc. p&p)

Hard on the heels of our notice in the last *S&G* (p15) of the 3rd edition of Derek's *Beginning Gliding*, comes a reprint, with a Lasham K-13 on the cover. Also published, right, is the 4th edition of *Understanding Gliding*, updated in 2002.





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First Amendments and first laws

I HAVE BEEN asked to give a talk later this year at one of the US soaring sites on a subject of my choice. The topic initially suggested by the organisers was safety. Safety! I told the secretary what I have said to you on another occasion, that I am only an expert on safety the way a burglar is an expert on the criminal justice system. But in this edition I will be so bold as to contribute a few rambling words related to a safety issue – Without Prejudice, as British attorneys say, which I understand means it can't be dragged up in court afterwards. After all, I am entitled to write what I like in this column so long as it doesn't cause the BGA to be sued for defamation. Though whether the BGA can be sued for allowing its organ to carry advice that turns out to be lethal in its consequences is an interesting point. There should probably a disclaimer in small print on this page: "Acting on the 'advice' in this column may prove hazardous to health. The Management disavows any responsibility. Try suing the author, but leave us out of it."

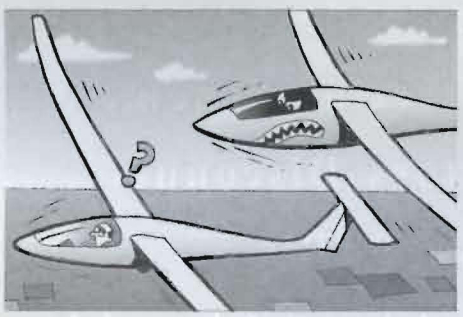
By the way, what we need in Britain is a First Amendment guaranteeing the freedom of the press, except you can't have an Amendment without a written Constitution to tack an Amendment on to. Which we have not got, and I don't suppose we shall ever have. Well, I dunno, those Continentals are shoving us that way…

(Get on with it! Ed.)

Sorry. As you know there is an excellent article in the last *S&G* (page 22) about the technique of joining friendly gliders in thermals during pair-flying on a cross-country. Do re-read it in addition to reading this piece. In fact it might be best to read that article twice and not read this piece at all, but now you've started you might as well finish, as the actress said to the bishop.

I think last month's article needs a respectful Amendment or two, especially to deal with the case where the guy already in the thermal is a stranger, or worse, a serious rival. The first worry one has (I am talking like the Queen, because I would hate you to think I was talking about myself) is that as one approaches the thermal one is not pootling along at 60kt, a nice considerate speed very close to that of the other glider. One is not, indeed. One is full of ballast and doing some hundred knots-plus to get through the sink that surrounds each updraught like a malevolent doughnut. Besides, that other fellow going round at 45° of bank is clearly ascending at 6kt, and one has therefore set one's MacCready to 6kt, has one not? Make an allowance for 500lb of water and the circumambient sink, and from a good mile out one's vario is screaming at one to shove one's stick hard forward. The distance separating one and one's mark will be covered in about 30 seconds.

Thus assuming one started off at the same altitude, when one reaches the thermal one

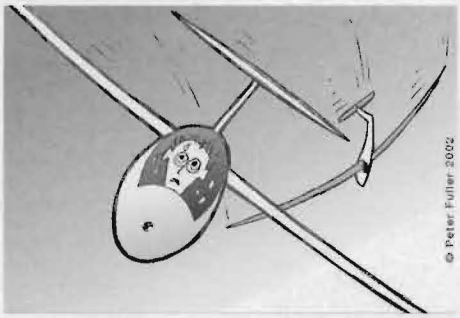


Like a great white shark...

is several hundred feet under the other chap, who if he possesses any awareness of his surroundings and maintains a lively lookout (rare) should by now have a deep sense of foreboding. Some object representing a huge accumulation of kinetic energy, weighing close on two thousand pounds and travelling at over two hundred kilometres per hour, which he was sure he glimpsed on the periphery of his visual field only a minute or so ago, has now vanished. Like a great white shark or attack submarine, it is shortly about to do something terrible at a time of its own choosing. But more likely the circling pilot is blissfully unaware, focussed on his little dials, reading a map and chewing a Kellogg's Nutrigrain cereal bar, or having a pee.

Now if one is a decent citizen, personally dedicated not to maximising one's cross-country speed but devoted to good airmanship and respect for the comfort and happiness of others – a gentleman, by definition – one still has the problem of working out exactly where one is going to intersect the hapless victim's circle as all this kinetic energy is converted into height in a tightening spiral. (Remember that the radius of turn diminishes for a given angle of bank as the speed falls off, so this three-dimensional geometry is hard to do without an immense amount of practice.) One is not boasting but in strong conditions one has achieved zooms of a thousand feet in a heavy glider, going from 120kt in the sink to the point of the stall in the core. So there is a good chance that one will, with terrifying suddenness, hurtle past the innocent thermaller in something like full plan view pointing steeply upwards like a U2 on an urgent mission. This is what happens even if one is eager not to scare the living daylights out of the other pilot. It is not oneself but Isaac Newton who grimly ensures that the poor stiff will get a bad fright. There is just too much energy mutely obeying the First Law of Thermodynamics.

But say one is not a gentleman. Say one is a middle-ranking Nationals-level contest pilot. Then it's a different *chaudron de poissons*, indeed. The very top people – the national champions and world champions – are usually pretty civilised, but the second-raters cannot afford such a luxury. As a great star of our entertainment industry said many years ago: "There's plenty of room at the top – it's the way up that's crowded." How exquisitely true. The steep and slippery slopes leading to the victor's crown are thronged with people who will stop at nothing to advance from tenth place to single figures. Such people are not merely determined to arrive in the core with every spare ounce of kinetic energy converted into altitude. No, they must do it in such a way as to make the poor guy who found the thermal ignore his variometer and yaw-string – he was doing so well up till now – and spend all his physical and nervous powers craning his head round, trying to see where the newcomer is. So he falls out of the core and becomes an angry, nervous wreck. The usurper stays in the victim's blind spot and, as soon as he spots a third glider



ambushed, mugged and abandoned...

in the distance marking yet another good thermal, sneaks away undetected. The victim does several more badly-centred turns before realising he has been ambushed, mugged and abandoned with no Good Samaritan anywhere on hand.

If one seriously doesn't want to incommode the other pilot one needs to get the airspeed down somewhere close to the other's speed, about 50-60kt, well before one arrives in his thermal. "Boring, boring!" No satisfaction for the Coarse Glider Pilot in that. But it's the only way. Isn't it?

Wither the thermals of yesteryear?

No, that "wither" is not a miss-spelling. Talking of spelling, while writing the foregoing piece, I was puzzled and a little indignant to find circumambient, the sort of word that flows off my pen without a pause, repudiated by Microsoft Word's spell-checker. So I looked it up in the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary: "Going or extending around, encompassing, environing, as in c. gloom, air, etc." So it specifically applies to air! A minor triumph for the exhausted shreds of a classical education.

After consulting the SOED, I wondered who first used that wonderful expression, "circumambient gloom". Google, that wonderful tool of the internet, told me in a trice that Matthew Arnold uttered it in a truly turgid poem:

"Lost labour! when the circumambient gloom
But hides, if Gods, Gods careless of our doom?"

Meaning, I suppose, that neither Nature nor Providence gives a damn what happens to us.

Anyway, circumambient gloom describes well the mood at British gliding sites, where many people are convinced that our soaring weather has gone permanently down the tubes. Those that have the time and money book their gliding holidays as far as possible from Britain, and haul their ships at great effort and expense to the south of Spain or to the Alps. Some buy small shares in gliders (or rent them) based in other continents, even the other hemisphere.

I rang Hans-Werner Grosse in Luebeck on the Baltic coast last week; he says the great masses of cool Scandinavian air that used in decades past to sweep over Germany in the spring, creating record-breaking conditions, now come down too far west or too far east. Northern Europe as a whole has been suffering for years.

To my shame I must admit that, as at June 16, 2002, I have not completed a single declared task in the UK, and have had four aerotow retrieves. My partners cruelly call this "Cheque-book soaring." It is certainly ruinous at £100 an hour, especially if a tug has had to come out from your own club to get you.

It is more economical to hand over your plastic card to the club where you land – if they have a tug and tug pilot available – and get them to tow you to 5,000ft within safe gliding range of home.

Meanwhile, thank you for your hospitality, in date order over the past three weeks: Saltby; Lyveden – though there was a bit of a hiatus during which the tuggie thought I said I was landing out at *Luton*; Husbands Bosworth and Old Warden. By the way, Old Warden shuts up shop at 17.00hrs, and Sywell, whom I called up at 17.58hrs before diverting to Lyveden, reminded me that no take-offs are allowed after 18.00hrs. That is the hour when Sywell's firecrew goes home and all departures must cease.

I have been caught that way before some years ago and had a road retrieve from a long-suffering JJ. He did the same for me a Halfpenny Green once – a long, long way from Dunstable. Something to bear in mind when you think, as you join the circuit, "Great! I won't have to derig this beast. I can be towed out." Gliding clubs do not operate under the same restrictions or the same legal obligations as aerodromes.

Incidentally I have been aerotowed out of airports in Nevada, Utah and California at all hours of daylight, and have flown in and out of them in single-engined aircraft at all hours of day and night, without incurring any such prohibition.

The reason has not been technical, operational, procedural or legal: it has simply been that when I arrived all those airports have been utterly deserted, as if you were in a sci-fi movie where the aliens have abducted everybody. Which in that neck of the woods you can well believe.

Critters cute and cuddly – except in the mating season

Out of curiosity *(don't you mean vanity? Ed.)* I also looked up *Platypus* coupled with *gliding* on the splendid Google a few moments ago. There were one or two references to the author of this column (hardly surprising, since I wrote them myself) and a few to the very pleasant Australian side-by-side two-seater sailplane in which I once flew in the 1980s. However here's one I did not expect, on an American website – *www.crittergames.com* – with the two key words in one sentence:

"The nostrils are found at the top and near the front, so that the *platypus* can breathe while *gliding* almost completely submerged in water."

There is more.

"It does all its hunting with its eyes closed!" Hence the wide berth I get when searching for lift.



Protected in Australia since the late 1800s

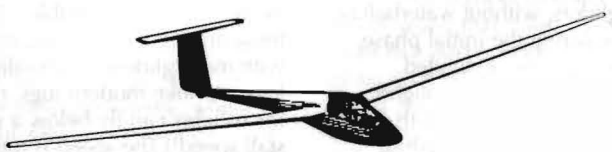
"Its venom glands are enlarged during the mating season." You bet. Just watch it, that's all.

"The platypus has been protected in Australia since the late 1800s."

Maybe, but it's open season everywhere else, especially at Lasham and Booker GC.

mdbird@dircon.co.uk

The Platypus Papers: fifty years of powerless pilotage (hardback, 160 pages, 100 Peter Fuller cartoons) costs £19.95 + £3.50 p&p. See *www.hikokiwarplanes.com* tel 0208 748 6344, fax 0208 741 1757 or buy it from the BGA on 0116 253 1051 or securely on line at *www.gliding.co.uk*



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Towing with microlights

The German authorities are due to certify microlights for glider towing, says Jochen Ewald, who describes the impressions he gained from initial test flights

IN RECENT years, microlights – like motorgliders – have acquired better engines and more and more power. Most countries now allow a take-off weight of 450kg (992lb), and the three-axis controlled microlights of this class are poised to take over the function of the cheap "club light aircraft" such as 65 or 90hp Piper Cub and light Jodels. Given that their engines can be more than 100hp, the obvious question soon arose: why not use certain microlights for aerotowing?

Following permission from the Ministry of Traffic, tests on aerotowing by microlight have just been conducted in Germany. Initially, the test programme allowed only gliders up to 350kg (772lb) take-off weight, which meant towing mainly Standard and 15-metre Class gliders, without waterballast. But, after success during the initial phase, this weight range was soon extended.

One of the most powerful microlights available is the AL-1 Wild Thing, with the Australian air-cooled six-cylinder Jabiru 3300 engine (120hp at 3050rpm). This all-metal type is certified in several countries as a microlight with 450kg (992lb) max take-off weight, or as a Very Light Aircraft with 550kg (1,213lb); and is known to be reliable and robust. So it was chosen to take part in the tests with other microlights, most powered by 100hp Rotax 912s engines.

I had the chance of towing with the Wild Thing, as well as with the prototype of the B&F FK-9 Utility with the 100hp Rotax, a new club version of the well-known and reliable FRP (fibre-reinforced plastic) microlight, designed by Otto and Peter Funk. Not much needed changing to transform these into tugs. Tests showed the fuselage was strong enough to take the extra loads, so a Tost hook was fitted to the tail, a release lever in the cockpit and a rear view mirror on the left strut.

To test the Wild Thing, I tried towing an LS-4 (330kg/728lb) and then an ASW 19 (350kg/772lb) on the end of a 60-metre cable at Sobernheim airfield. As with a motorglider tug, the cable is secured by a 300kg (662lb) weak link. After taking up slack, I set the power to full throttle, the flaps to +10° for shortest ground run, and the stick pulled back for good directional control, as the Wild Thing is a taildragger. Acceleration was good; after a short time the tail lifted and the tug left the ground at about 65km/h (35kt), clearly before the glider. I kept the nose low to accelerate to the 110km/h (59kt) that the glider pilot needs to feel comfortable. (This is the main thing any pilot converting to aerotowing with motorgliders or microlights has to learn. Unlike modern tugs, motorgliders or microlights can fly below a modern glider's stall speed!) The speed is quickly reached, and while starting to climb I put the flaps back to 0°, as at 110km/h (59kt) this setting gives the best climb rate. The engine turns over smoothly and quietly at 2,650rpm – so only 100 of the 120hp is used. (The reason is the Junkers Profly three-blade prop, designed to meet Germany's strict noise limitations, and not to turn with too high rpms at cruise speed. With a prop optimised for aerotowing, more performance is available – with no more noise.) The climb rate indicated for both gliders averaged 2m/s (4kt), a little less than you get out of similarly-powered motorgliders like the Scheibe Rotax Falke that you can see now at Lasham. This is because the microlights' struts, riveted metal surface and lower wing aspect ratio cause higher drag. This was particularly noticeable when I increased the speed by 10km/h (5kt), which resulted in a significant loss of climb rate.

Above: Air Light AL-1 Wild Thing, with its 120hp Jabiru six-cylinder engine, aerotowing an LS4 in Germany

The tug felt light, but not uncomfortably so, even when the glider was out of position. Cable jerks are felt a bit more, but there was always control movement to spare before reaching the stops. During simulated thermalling, I did not like the 60-metre (200ft) cable. Given the narrow, effective circles that can be flown by microlight (and motorglider) tugs, jerks tend to try to pull the tugs out of their circle. So, as I had already found in motorglider aerotowing tests, the



The Wild Thing's Jabiru engine



The Wild Thing tug prototype that Jochen Ewald tested at Sobernheim airfield



This FK-9 Utility taildragger tug with 100hp Rotax has been ordered by a German club

+/- 40-metre (130ft) cables again seemed best. The reason why longer cables are often recommended with powerful nosewheel tugs does not apply to microlights: the propwash is not only less turbulent, it is also directed towards the ground behind taildraggers during the early stages of an aerotow; the glider on tow will show no tendency to drop its upwind wing due to the propwash generating lift at the downwind wing. In such circumstances, this tendency, plus the pilot's application of opposite aileron, causes the upwind wing to stall and drop, sometimes resulting in awful groundloops if the glider pilot does not release immediately.

On tow, both the oil and the cylinder head temperatures stayed safely in the normal range. After nine minutes (LS 4) and 10 minutes (ASW 19) we reached 1,000m (3,280ft) above airfield. The descent took a little longer than in a motorglider, which usually have effective airbrakes. As the maximum speed for using flaps is limited, the most effective way to get down is to circle at higher speed and sideslip, with a bit of power still set to avoid the engine cooling out partially and getting the same damage (wearing out, cylinder head cracks) well known from air-cooled tug aircraft engines that are treated too roughly.

In this prototype Wild Thing tug I felt that the release lever was not yet in the best place. It is on the left cockpit wall, while the throttle is in the middle of the instrument panel. For serial production, they should be close together (reaching the release quickly might be the tug pilot's life insurance!) The best place for the mirror would be above the upper cockpit window, with a small mirror at the strut to check before landing whether the cable has really dropped.



The tow hook on the FK-9 Utility taildragger

With the FK-9 Utility – the prototype was the tricycle undercarriage version (*not shown*) – the performance was even better. I towed a 350kg (772lb) LS-4 at Speyer. The Utility's airfoil is a bit "faster" than the Wild Thing's (indeed, it is a "flapped glider" airfoil, with the cruise flaps position showing negative deflection); while the cleaner aerodynamics of the FRP surface gave a better performance, especially when the required towing speed was higher (for example, if the glider carries waterballast). I found no significant difference in the climb rate when accelerating to 125km/h (67kt), and observed climb rates from 2.5-3m/s (4.8-5.8kt). I used a 35-metre (115ft) cable, making thermalling with tug and glider very effective, while the glider pilot reported no problems and told me this aerotowing method required significantly less skill than behind the club's 180hp Robin, as the propeller and wingtip turbulence generated by this microlight are much less than those of a heavier aircraft. Although the FK-9 has no effective airbrakes, a faster descent after release was possible, as the water-cooled Rotax 912s allows diving at high speeds (about 170km/h or 92kt) with throttle fully closed. In later tests, both aircraft (and other microlights under test) successfully towed gliders of up to 600kg (1,323lb). After I test-flew it, the Wild Thing got other propellors, better suited to towing, which gave a much-improved performance.

Another question is now under discussion: how would microlight aircraft stand up to intensive long-term use? This cannot be answered definitively, as there are so many different types of microlight available on the market. Just look at them with an engineer's eye, and you will spot that some show build details that will probably wear out soon after "lots of landings" and need expensive replacement, while others are designed to be really reliable and strong workhorses, capable of taking years of intensive training use. Those in the latter category, to which in my opinion the Wild Thing and the FK-9 belong, appear suitable for "frequent and long-term use" in towing.

My opinion after my first aerotows with microlights was that they are very nice and safe, if employed in addition to using heavier aircraft or motorgliders to tow the fleet's heavier gliders. Several microlight aircraft clearly reach their limits if gliders with a high wing loading, requiring high speeds, are towed, while heavier gliders with a low wing loading cause no problems.

In the meantime, the German tests have been completed. Several manufacturers have demonstrated to the satisfaction of the German authorities that their microlights are safely able to aerotow gliders, some more than 600kg (1,323lb), fulfilling requirements established during motorglider aerotowing certification. These specify a min climb rate of 1.5m/s (2.9kt) and a max take-off of 500m (1,650ft) to clear a 15-metre (50ft) obstacle on a hard runway at ICAO Standard Atmosphere. Final work to legalise the new launch method generally is now being done at the Ministry of Traffic, which is expected to soon release the legal certification base for towing with microlights in Germany.

Aerotowing with microlights opens up new perspectives for gliding clubs. This new aircraft class allows power flying in a cheap way (the PPL/JAR FCL and real aircraft have become so complicated and expensive in recent years, that it lost its attractiveness in clubs that had previously had a powered flying section). And, with the possibility of cheap glider towing by a training and travelling microlight (a microlight needs only about two-thirds of the fuel a "real" aircraft needs to do the same work, and this is cheap car fuel...), clubs might be even keener to spread their offer by adding microlight flying to their club activities and so ultimately getting more people airborne – a good thing for our sport!

Text and photos: Jochen Ewald. For more information, email B-F_Technik@t-online.de *(for the FK-9) or* info@ulbi-750.de *(for the Wild Thing)*

In wind and wave

Kay Draper shares LS8 301 with her husband, Dave, and crewed for him in the Standard Class Nationals at Wolds GC, Pocklington. In her spare time, she wrote this report for *S&G*

DAVE prepared for his first nationals by spending three hours cleaning Oxfordshire's biodiversity off the LS8. He acknowledged that landing in a set-aside field of 3ft-high thistles two days before the competition might not have been the best form of preparation, and he was starting to feel as green as the glider was looking.

The five-hour drive to Pocklington (they claim that no dragons live here) set his head straight. Would years of competing in the British Hang-Gliding League (the equivalent of a gliding nationals) be any preparation for what was to come? He had not flown against most of the names on the list; until now they had just been the gods of *S&G* articles. But he realised that, as in hang-gliding competitions, all you have control of is your own performance. He would just have to see if that was enough at the end of the day. He resolved to enjoy the experience and to give each day a "fun factor" score out of 10.

As we set up the caravan I listened to the pre-comp banter from two pilots passing outside:

"Ready to go, then?"

"All except the water."

"Oh, I'm all set – filled to the gunwales."

"Well *what's-'is-face* has the right idea: he's brought all his oxygen kit!"

Antlers clashing – this was *just* like the hang-gliding league.

Day 1 The Mayor of Pocklington opened the competition by telling us proudly that the town was famous for burning the last witch in England. All crew resolved to give barbecues a miss. After the preamble, a 198km figure-of-eight course between the Dales and the North Yorkshire moors was set, with the prospect of spreadout and the prediction of wave. Early starters had a hard time in the unpromising sky but conditions improved through the afternoon. First back was Ed Johnston, who screamed over the finish line in ground effect, but the day was won by our old hangie buddy, Pete Harvey, at 80km/h. Pete connected with the wave just after the first turnpoint and took a 5kt-average climb to 10 grand before straight-lining it round the rest of the course.

Half the field landed out, and the finishers were split between those who had done the task in thermals and those who'd managed to use wave.

Dave made it back with a huge grin on his face. He had connected with wave near Ripon and had flown half the task above cloud – higher than he had ever been in the UK before. So he gave the day a fun factor of 9.

It was decided that hats donated by McLean Aviation would be awarded each day to the poor sap that made the most notable goof (to become "the prat with a hat"). Sadly, Julian Hitchcock became the first recipient. Having had a spectacular flight in wave to complete the course, he then found that he had not rounded the first turnpoint as the task activated on his GPS prematurely switched to the next TP.

Day 2 The gremlins had moved the lane cones so we just had time for a game of musical gliders before launching on the 328km triangle to Masham, on the edge of the Dales, and Bottesford, near Nottingham, on the edge of the map. The first leg was a

'Howard Jones had an anxious moment after landing at a reindeer farm...'

slow haul into wind and left a small gaggle (including Dave) struggling to climb after the first TP. Low and in the lee of the Pennines – just the job! It shook out some notables, including Russell Cheetham, into a park in Harrogate. A low save drifted Dave almost back to Pocklington before he was established enough to head south. His lesson today was: "Just because you are in a gaggle with some good people doesn't mean they are immune from going down".

Nobby Clarke completed at 89km/h to win the day. He described the last leg as easy, having conjured up a cloud street, which then drifted east to prevent others from using it. Was the Pocklington witch still alive? The 17 landouts tried to be happy for him.

Dave landed out on the home run but still gave the day a fun factor of 5 after his first ever aerotow retrieve, when he connected with convergence over the Humber.

Day 3 A short task was set, to beat an approaching front, but was changed after protests from pilots that it ran dangerously close to a parachute zone (the task-setter humbly accepted the "prat with a hat" award the next day). After re-briefing, a 165km triangle to Worksop and Beverley was agreed as a suitable alternative.

George Metcalfe climbed above clouds in wave before the start line opened and noted that there was no sign of the front's spoiling the day's fun, so he did not feel the pressure to start early. Having dropped below start height, he failed to find any interesting climbs so kept pushing on and eventually caught the lead gaggle to win the day.

Twenty finishers streamed over the finish line in quick succession into the brisk headwind, including Dave. He had elected to try to stick with the main gaggle. In the spreadout early on, he confessed that he could not see what people were heading for but, working on the basis that he was not going to learn from them unless he was with them, he trusted them into the gloom until he saw a bit of sky that made some sense, and later used the obvious stepping stones home. A fun factor of 8.

Day 4 Pilots were kept amused planning an assigned area task (AAT) before the 154km fallback triangle was confirmed. The wind was strong and wave appeared to be influencing cumulus development. The task started late into a progressively bluer sky. The first leg was a haul into wind: a scattering of pilots fell down as they wrestled with the wave-ragged cu. A handful managed to connect with the wave, with Sarah Steinberg beating the other seven finishers by over 10km/h to win the task.

A low fun factor of 5 today, due to the decidedly tricky conditions. Dave's lesson was that not all the power stations in the Trent valley are turned on.

Howard Jones had an anxious moment after landing at a reindeer farm. His glider was impounded until the farmer returned to disinfect the trailer. Foot-and-mouth precautions are still in place in some areas but we did wonder if he had inadvertently stumbled on Santa's grotto. Who put a Discus 2a on their Christmas list?

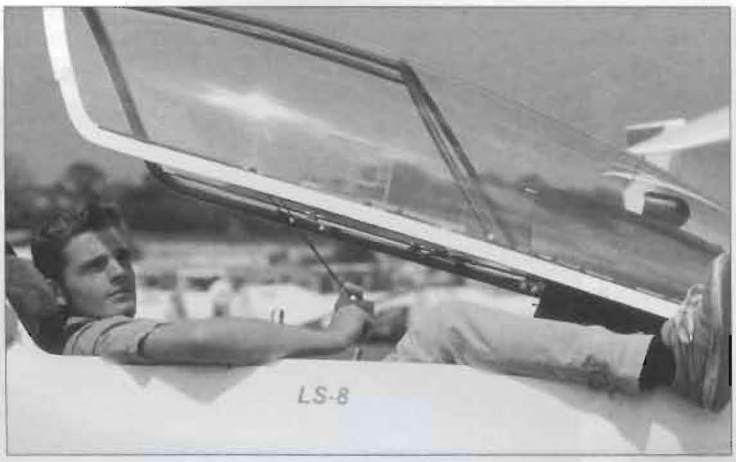
Day 5 After a scrubbed day another AAT of 3.5 hours was set and pilots went into huddles to consider how best to tackle it.

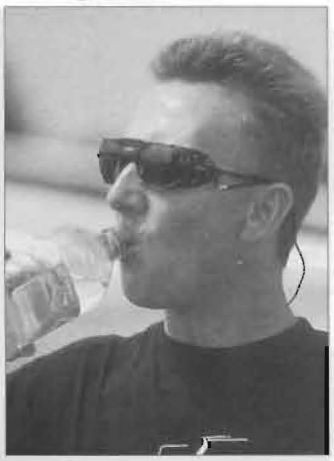
The grid launched late, having been held waiting for conditions to improve. An attempt to reduce the task time after launch was met with uproar on the radio and pilots left the organisers in no doubt that this was not an option. I had visions of involuntary loops and chandelles as the competitors recalculated their task strategies.

The start line opened at the same time as the heavens.

The task area took competitors to the north then south into better conditions before running through a control gate over York to home. With the long task time and late start Pete Harvey and Russell Cheetham, team flying, considered that few pilots would make it home and therefore that the







From left: Ed Johnston, second; Leigh Wells, third and Peter Harvey, first in the Standard Class Nationals *(the **White Planes** picture co.)*

thing to do would be to burn on to the deck at the end of the task time rather than trying to conserve height to get home. It worked and they were 2nd and 1st respectively.

Having never done an AAT, Dave decided to use the Pete-Harvey-lasso school of flying, electing to try to stick on his tail. His thought for the day was: "Oh, right, so we're off again, are we?" It worked for him as he came 11th on the day with a fun factor of 8.

Day 6 A day with progressively-shortening tasks as conditions failed to get going, and an 180km triangle was eventually set. The grid launched into a very unpromising sky but conditions improved after the start line

'Dave bemoaned the fact that he'd flown his fastest-ever task and only came 21st'

opened. Most competitors streamed over the finish line in 20 minutes. At one stage gliders were raining on to every corner of the airfield from every direction like so much confetti. It was a topsy-turvy day. Some competitors who had been struggling to collect points got a dollop in one go... but the converse was also the case. Jay Rebbeck, who had been flying consistently, became one of only two outlanders, dropping 11 places in the process.

Mike Mee turned his need for a relight, (into an improving sky) to his advantage – and won the day at 93km/h.

Dave bemoaned the fact that he had flown his fastest-ever task (at 84km/h) and still managed only 21st on the day, but gave it a fun factor of 7.

Day 7 With an impending warm front Andy Melville had set an A task, which he felt would be optimistic, and a B task, which he also felt would be optimistic. However, the Pocklington witch was clearly in charge of the weather because quite suddenly the sun broke the eight-eighths cover and thin cu appeared. Competitors hurried to finish rigging and fill with water before launching on the 233km task. The 26 finishers had a rough final glide into the stiff crosswind, and times depended on how little margin you were prepared to tolerate. Luke Rebbeck showed he had a bigger cork than the others by winning the day at 80km/h. He described his flight as "pretty easy". Others thought he had taken his own weather round with him. Dave elected to leave a gaggle and make a long detour east after the first TP to fly the second leg on his own. To his surprise, he found himself with the leaders at the last turn and finished in his highest position of the comp. Definitely a fun factor of 8.

The theme of the competition was wind and wave. The changeable conditions were always interesting and frequently challenging, with some seasoned competitors down in the weeds one day and at the top of the pile on the next. Dave felt he benefited from the diverse conditions, which compared more closely to hang-gliding competitions than to previous gliding regionals that he'd entered. He had arrived with an open mind, and a desire to learn and push his own performance. He had flown higher and faster than previously in a glider. He had completed his first AAT and first aerotow retrieve and was more than happy with his overall 8th position.

Pete Harvey flew consistently well to become a worthy Standard Class Champion, with the added prize of 100,000 air miles donated by Wolds chairman and contest sponsor, Martin Fryer. In the process he had been to 10,000ft and had scraped a low save up from 280ft, higher and lower than he had ever been in a UK competition.

Wolds GC, led by Director Allan McWhirter. ran a competition to be proud of: 51,049km flown with a determination not to give up on unpromising-looking days. Andy Melville kept his head, threading tasks through the myriad of air displays scattering the region. We were all particularly impressed to see the Red Arrows do a flypast over the runway after prizegiving. Now, how did they organise that... was it something to do with the Pocklington witch?

Full results in the December-January issue

David Draper spent 14 years competing in the hang-gliding league before moving into gliding. He was British Hang-Gliding Cross-Country Champion in 1991. He and Kay fly at Lasham and Shalbourne

Pos	Pilot		Glider & fin no.	Points
1	Peter	Harvey	LS8 H2	4944
2	Ed	Johnston	ASW 28 W7	4795
3	Leigh	Wells	LS8 LS	4764
4	Martin	Wells	LS8 321	4530
5	Sarah	Steinberg	ASW 28 S1	4241
6	Richard	Johnson	ASW 28 J1	4140
7	Stephen	Ell	LS8 E11	4128
8	**David**	**Draper**	**LS8 301**	**4111**
9	Brian	Marsh	LS8 D7	4102
10	Brian	Birlison	Discus Cs 565	4060
11	Tony	Mountain	LS8 R3	4022
12	David	Booth	LS8 790	4003
13	Jay	Rebbeck	LS8 628	3997
14	John	Glossop	Discus 291	3995
15	Paul	Brice	ASW 28 PB	3909
16	Mike	Fox	Discus B JMM	3805
17	Mike	Jordy	LS8 676	3775
18	Nobby	Clarke	LS8 R4	3755
19	Howard	Jones	Discus 2a D2	3695
20	Oliver	Ward	Discus 2b 183	3676
21	Leigh	Hood	LS8 352	3631
22	George	Metcalfe	ASW 28 104	3608
23	Paul	Shelton	LS8 D1	3484
24	Bob	Thirkell	LS8 B3	3452
25	John	Tanner	LS8 LT	3406
26	Luke	Rebbeck	LS8 232	3404
27	Jon	Arnold	Discus B JA	3328
28	Peter	Baker	LS8 144	3324
29	OJ	Garrity	LS7 7X	3290
30	Paul	Crabb	LS8 C64	3254
31	Jack	Luxton	LS8 685	3191
32	Bernie	Morris	LS8 Z8	3152
33	Jan	Mccoshim	LS8 161	2996
34	Russell	Cheetham	ASW 28 E1	2944
35	Angus	Watson	LS7 F1	2908
36	Bob	Fox	ASW 24 524	2797
37	Derek	Westwood	LS8 D4	2774
38	Mike	Mee	ASW 28 MM	2601
39	Jerry	Langrick	LS8 781	2375
40	Peter	Sheard	Discus 2a 310	2050
41	Carl	Peters	Discus 506	1965
42	John	Jeffries	ASW 24 HBB	1772
43	Julian	Hitchcock	LS4 LS4	1409
44	Iain	Evans	Discus Bt 173	1204





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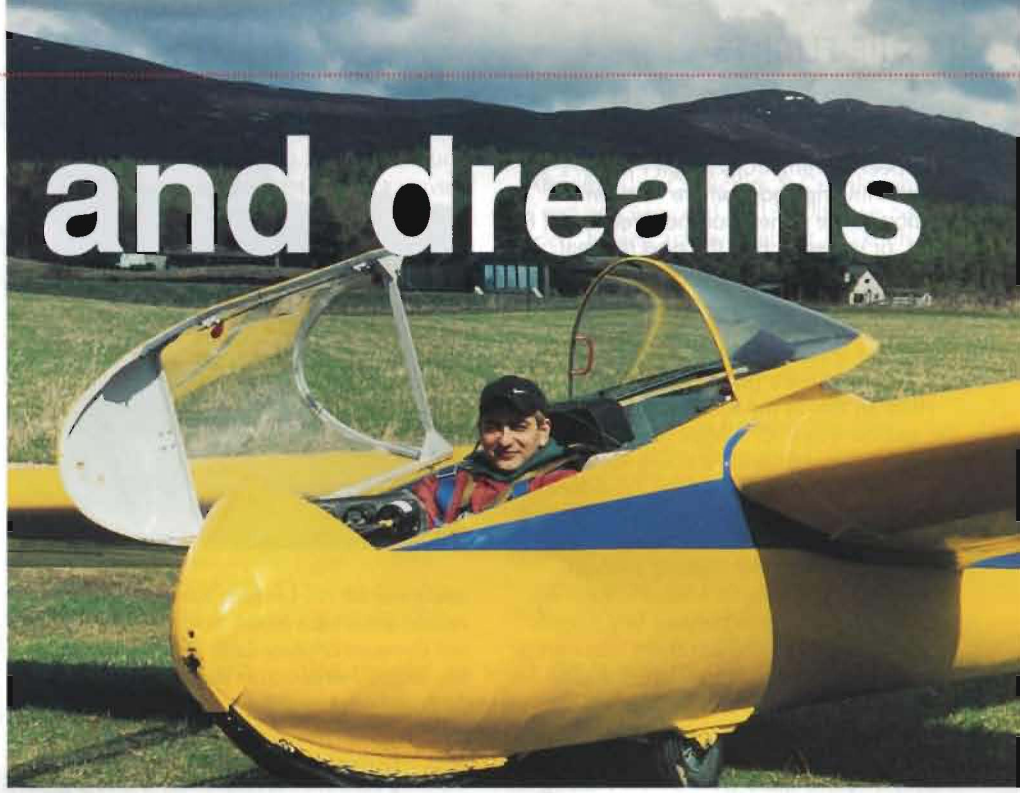
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Wings and dreams



Sarmed Mirza (right) describes how he went solo, and offers tips to other aspiring pilots

ANYONE who has ever been gliding at Feshie will know the feeling of home-from-home that it inspires. Familiar faces are always there to greet, feed and launch you but, heading there again after only 25 flights and four months' absence, I ruefully concluded that I was sure to face an unwelcome regression in my flying skills.

By joining Cairngorm GC in 2001 I had fulfilled a long-held ambition to start training as a glider pilot (see *New kid on the block*, February-March 2002, p28). Undeterred by bad weather and ever hopeful of a day's gliding, I made the four-hour bus journey from Glasgow almost every weekend. Then the drag of college and work acted on my spare time, winter caught up and I was grounded. Finally, I quit my job and went solo working from home as a web designer. I was still balancing college, job, gliding and life, but at least I could choose my own hours. Now I had another solo in mind...

Andy Farr rescued me from Citylink hell by letting me ride P2 in his Vauxhall Astra from Glasgow to Feshie every weekend. Then Andy Carter, our CFI, very generously gave up his holidays for a week's *ab initio* course for Feshie's pre-solo pilots in April. Only two months to go.

I like to monitor my progress, but there is always the danger that your goals become unrealistic and your own criticism can start to do more harm than good. It's easy to let small mistakes get to you when you are learning, but, as I have learned, it is so important to keep a positive mental attitude.

After one particular flight last year when I landed like a ping-pong ball, I flung myself out of the glider and swore I was too stupid to fly, and I'd better just pack my bags and go home. But my instructor had other ideas. As we pushed the glider back up the field, it suddenly occurred to me that a mind that is still absorbed in kicking itself about its past mistakes is not in a fit state to fly... or learn. The turning point came when I realised that I was holding myself back by judging myself too harshly – I needed to take responsibility for my own frame of mind. From then on I made sure I was tuned into learning and not judging. By the time we reached the top of the airfield the clouds had lifted and, with renewed confidence, I vowed I would do it better next time. And I did.

That flight was one of my most important. Not only had I overcome a mental barrier; just as importantly, during it I also realised that, improbable as it may be, any moment my instructor might not be able to take control. What if he passed out or was incapacitated in some way? Facing that possibility was crucial because it made me take responsibility for my own flying.

In previous flights I had suffered at the hands of a frustrating instructing syndrome many aspiring solos will recognise: the I-have-control syndrome. Just when you are about to make that turn, recover from that spin or narrowly avoid redesigning the wingspan of the club Puchacz on the hillside, a screech of "I have control" fills the cockpit. I had found it hard previously to concentrate when not actually flying. Instead I would almost doze off, enjoying the ➢



Nick Norman flew two training 300s in a day over Scotland's mountains. Rannoch Moor, in the distance beyond Loch Treig, offers some of his favourite scenery

One day, two 300s

"I AM going back into the ASW 20 syndicate and need to practise use of flaps," Ray Lambert told me one morning, *writes Nick Norman*. The Scottish Gliding Association's ASH 25 was already rigged so by 10.00hrs we were sitting in it at the end of Feshie's runway, awaiting the tug and planning our local training sortie.

Then duty instructor Alastair Robertson appeared with a "Well, what are you declaring?" sort of comment. I had not really looked at the sky – it being a bit early for me to function properly – but I could see his point. Off the cuff, I replied: "How about Crianlarich-Grantown-Dalwhinnie?" thinking this would be around the magic 300km. Not a bad guess: it's 297.8km.

Within moments we were off, Ray flying and me trying to programme something into the rather complicated S-NAV. So much for flight planning or map marking. One of the joys of cross-country flying in this part of Scotland is that there are no chunks of controlled airspace, danger areas, ATZs or parachute drop zones anywhere within the task area.

It was clearly a good day! Having climbed rapidly off ➢ p25

scenery or just dreaming. The clouds could have been raining frogs for all I knew. I wasn't thinking about where I was in relation to the airfield, or the direction of the wind, or where to find the next thermal. Once I realised that if something did happen to my instructor, it could be the difference between life and death for both of us, I began to make my own decisions, and thus think and fly like a pilot.

With all this in my mind, my first flight of the season was with Alistair Morrison. He asked if I felt comfortable doing the aerotow from the start. Initially, lacking confidence, I wanted to say no, even though I had done several aerotows four months previously. What was I scared of? Making a mistake? I heard myself saying to Alistair: "Sure, no problem." Nerves can be your best friends when you learn to convert them into intense concentration. I was extra alert. The rope went taut, we became airborne and I flew the aerotow to the bowl on a local ridge.

After 30 minutes Alistair reminded me that, inevitably, there were others waiting for their turn. It was then that I realised I had been flying all this time without any help – for the first time. I told Alistair that if I could sustain this till touchdown it would be my first, unofficial, solo flight, and one step closer to my goal. Before I knew it I was rounding out. I was so focused throughout that it seemed like it was all over in a flash, but the smile on my face lasted a lot longer.

Suddenly, going solo seemed more of a reality than a dream. Now I was really looking forward to the course week. Finally, it arrived. There were two other pilots close to going solo: Sandra (Sandy) Forrest and Mike Morrison. We had a a good time seeing each other go up and down in the skies in pursuit of our own dreams.

Because I had taken a year-to-solo ticket, it was more economic for me to winch launch. It was a new challenge within a challenge and very exciting. However, I had experienced only two winch launches before. I worried that having to learn a new launch process could hold back my going solo that week. But I knew I had to try.

To begin with, Andy Carter demonstrated the procedure. As we touched down, he announced: "Now you do the next one." I was thinking: "Oh no, so soon!" but to my surprise out came: "Sure. No problem!". Back on line, the rope, and I, tensed as we began the launch. But before I knew I was up there at about 800ft, getting in circuit. To consolidate the experience I flew seven consecutive winches and I did feel very comfortable by the end of the session.

Frequent, intensive flying has a tremendous effect on both one's confidence and flying skills, and is vital for continuous progress. The next day I had another five winch launches and by the end of the day I felt quite confident that I was ready to go on my own. But the next day I could not hide my disappointment when I could not have a single flight. The runway at Feshie cannot accommodate both aerotow and winch simultaneously so Sandy and Mike had their turn with an intensive aerotow training session. Nevertheless, it was a great day: both Sandy and Mike went solo and there was much celebration that night.



Above from left: Ray Lambert's training sortie with Nick Norman turned into a 300km; Nick went on to do another with Cairngorm CFI Andy Carter (right). It was Andy who sent Sarmed solo on an ab initio *course at Feshie*

They say patience is a virtue, but when you are desperate to fly it's just hard work. After feeling so confident, I was now getting worried about breaking my stride: I didn't want to regress, and I was sure that the ever-changing Scottish weather would catch up with me.

And it did. Next day the heavens opened. I spent Thursday looking out of the club-house window, with a heavy heart. If the weather did not improve then it would be quite some time before I would get my next chance to solo on the winch, as aerotow is the primary launch option at Feshie.

Time was running out. On Friday I woke up and jumped out of the bed to check the weather. I was delighted to see a clear blue sky and the windsock perfectly positioned for flying. It was an ideal day to go solo.

Cable breaks were all I had left to master. It was my first winch after two days so Andy decided to start with a normal launch. It was just as well as I was nervous. The pressure was on as I was the only one not solo yet. My circuit was OK but my approach and landing were poor, to say the least.

'Going solo is just the beginning. A dream has come true, and now it is time to dream some more'

By the time I was back at the launchpoint I had run the confidence gauntlet again but I re-focused and determined to do better.

The cable breaks started: high ones first: we pulled off at 700-800ft and carried on just like a normal circuit. That gave me another landing, and I was doing and feeling better. I knew that if I messed anything up now then it would be another day I would have to wait for my solo flight.

I was doing the medium-height cable break when the real challenge came.

Andy demonstrated what he wanted me to do. Break at 500ft, nose down, gain speed, regain normal flying attitude, do a well-banked turn to the left, do a mini-circuit and land. Feshie does not give many options for mistakes during take-offs and landings with trees in most directions and a narrow runway. I knew it would have to be perfect.

It was my turn. The climb began and at 500ft a loud click signalled I was off the cable. I tried to do exactly what I had been shown, and within minutes I was on the ground. I only noticed Andy's ominous silence once we had landed. It felt like an eternity, and he had still not said a word. Then: " Well done, Sarmed. You did everything perfectly, I could not have done it better myself: 10 out of 10."

Stunned is not the word. I was preparing myself for the worst and now Andy had just sent my confidence soaring into the stratosphere. I had two more low cable breaks after that and then I thought, what now? The day was ending. Soon it would be dark. Would I be sent off? We went for a normal circuit flight and on landing I heard Andy say to Alistair Morrison who had come to take us back to the launchpoint that now I was going on my own. My heart leapt to my throat and my stomach fell to my boots. Part of me felt like a condemned man walking to the gallows while the other part of me buzzed with adrenalin.

I got in the glider and started my pre-flight checks. Once ready, I asked for the cable to be put on and then Andy, who had been watching me to see if I had been doing all my checks, prompted me to do the final check, eventualities, which in my nervous excitement I had forgotten. That taught me never to take things for granted. Full attention and concentration are good friends when flying.

So I was up and away, the winch pulling me up and up skywards. In a moment I was off the cable and in circuit. To my satisfaction, the circuit was to the book and the approach dead centre. Finally I rounded out and landed gently.

Once back on the ground I tried to grasp what had happened. I had flown a sailplane on my own for the first time! It was over so quickly that all I could remember was going through series of checks at every stage for my circuit and landing.

As I unstrapped myself and started to get out, I saw people rushing towards me from various sides of the airfield. Of course, I had forgotten the Kodak moment. So I sat back and enjoyed the congratulations from my fellow pilots and had a few pictures taken. Then Andy told me I was to go up another time, just to make sure it was not a fluke. So I did it again. And I was back down in a flash, but the feeling afterwards was of elation and accomplishment.

Going solo has been one of my most satisfying achievements to date. At times I had feelings of frustration, anxiety and doubt. Sometimes I would question whether

I was really enjoying the sport, or just determined to prove to myself I could do it. While I was still flying with instructors I had no idea of what it would be like to fly a glider on my own. I had persevered to this point only to find that out. And then that evening I felt this new urge to keep on flying.

I wondered if I could challenge myself to go solo on the aerotow too in the same week? As if he had read my mind, the next day Andy said: "Why don't you take a check flight and go solo on aerotow?"

I commandeered Bob Forrest, Sandy's father, and we had a very good flight, even finding a blue thermal. As we returned, Bob shouted "I have control" in the middle of the circuit, remorselessly swung the glider totally out of position and handed it back to me.

I had no time to think. I regained speed, recovered and did a shortened circuit. This again proved to me the importance of being ready for anything. I was allowed to go on my own. I felt great. Finally I had the glider all to myself. Something I had always dreamed of was actually coming true.

After my solo successful aerotow my subsequent flights felt fantastic. The weather was great and the thermals were bubbling. Since then, during my next four solo flights, I did two Bronze legs, my cross-country duration (two hours for BGA only), and an unofficial Silver height (that taught me to take the barograph with me every time, because you just never know).

My true flying experience actually began after I went solo and I had not anticipated that my addiction to flying solo would develop so quickly. Now when I go up I just don't want to come back. I dread the radio call that tells me my time is up and there are others waiting to fly the club glider.

I would recommend any pre-solo or new pilot to have at least 10 solo flights and five to 10 hours once solo (on reasonably good days) to truly give themselves a chance of finding out what gliding really feels like. Do not stop right after the first solo. This sensitive period can make or break a pilot. Keep flying and soon you will find that there is so much to learn and so much to add to the repertoire of skills needed to enjoy this sport more and more. If it were easy then it would soon be boring.

The incredible challenge gliding presents is a symbiosis of developing the technical ability to fly a sailplane, while learning to tune oneself with the nature that enables mere humans to enjoy soaring like the birds of the sky. This is what inspires so many to wander the skies in search of these powerful and amazing invisible elements.

I have found that I love gliding more and more each time I have a flight and have proved to myself that with hard work and persistence I can achieve my goals. Strangely, or maybe not so strangely, this does not feel enough... I want more. There is so much more to the sport of gliding. Going solo is just the beginning. A dream has come true, and now it's time to dream some more...

Cont from p23 tow to 4,000ft we turned back to the airfield, descending to 3,000ft for our start and then headed straight off for a wave cruise climb on track. The on-track wave slot was huge and visibility infinite, so we had fantastic views of my favourite area around lochs Ericht, Rannoch and Tay. The 90km first leg to Crianlarich crosses only five roads of any description, just three of which are public. It really is a wilderness area, which – while desolate and hostile in the winter – looks fantastic in the sunshine from 7,000ft. Wind was surprisingly light, being only 20kt or so at our cruising altitude and the ASH was romping along at 90kt, still climbing.

Apart from looking at the view, I was paying little attention to the flight because Ray was doing a fine job. It's rather nice to be able to sit in the back eating sandwiches and Mars Bars with an autopilot up front doing the hard work. We normally conduct much of the cross-country training in the ASH by having P1 doing most or all of the flying – not because we are selfish but because this really is the best way for P2 to learn. We may give P2 control when things are looking good but the problem is that when things look poor ahead, we will recognise this early and take control, bearing in mind the unlandability of most of the terrain. This translates in P2's mind to: "When I'm flying it things are going really well, but as soon as the instructor takes over we are falling out of the sky". It does nothing for our egos. We get our revenge when, having spent the day telling them not to waste time circling in 3kt because the next one is 6kt, they go off in their own gliders and promptly land out because there were no 6kt thermals!

'We might as well do it again, I said, collaring our CFI, Andy Carter, who'd expressed an interest in flying the ASH'

Approaching Crianlarich, I noticed that things were not looking too good – we had been out of lift for some time and were at cloud-top height. Ray was asking what to do as there were no obvious slots ahead – although of course you can't see them anyway at cloud-top height. My guiding principle for cross-country flying is "If in doubt – press on!" which will no doubt elicit a call from the BGA safety committee, but I have so often found that when things are looking impossible ahead, perseverance shows that they are not. This was therefore my response, with the addition of "I have control" as we entered cloud. I had already observed that cloudbase was well above the highest terrain – around 3,800ft – and we were below freezing level. After a short white-out we emerged into another hole, and soon rounded the TP, passing through more cloud on the way back into lift.

Afterwards, Ray said that he would have turned back in his own glider, so what made the task possible was my ability to cloud fly, a skill I acquired years ago as part of my job as a North Sea helicopter pilot. It's just another of the innumerable skills required to make the best of the soaring day. It's the fact that these skills are never perfected that keeps my interest.

After the slight difficulty at Crianlarich, the rest was easy and by 13.30hrs we had landed, having achieved about 102km/h, my personal best for a 300, and Ray's first. Lunch was calling, but after a sandwich and coffee it was still only 14.00hrs and time for some more fun.

"We might as well do it again," I said, collaring our CFI, Andy Carter, who had expressed an interest in flying the ASH. Andy has all three Diamonds but recently his CFI duties seem to have kept him from flying cross-country. An injection of enthusiasm was required so he was bundled into the ASH and we declared the same task. Well, by now I knew the way! The lift was still strong and we were soon on task, and with Andy doing all the flying, I was having an easy day.

The trip was pretty similar with the same sticky point at Crianlarich but this time, as we rounded a cloud to get sight of the turning point, the vario unexpectedly got very excited and we climbed rapidly to 10,000ft. A fantastic view out over the west coast of Scotland unfolded, with Loch Lomond and a snow-capped Ben Lui in the foreground, and Loch Awe and innumerable sea lochs and mountains in the distance. I have been gliding in Scotland for more than 20 years now but these views are still awe-inspiring, and this one was a first for me, having only been to Crianlarich in thermal before.

Tracking back to our second turning point found us near Feshie and getting low – the wave was disorganised and we were starting to struggle. "I have control" and of course immediately things got worse – never mind, I struggled for a while and eventually got round the last turning point well above fast final glide for home, though barely above the terrain. This one was a bit slower at about 95km/h – Andy will no doubt tell you this was because I took control, but I can take it! We retired to the bar with me feeling that I had done the day justice, but in fact the ASH went on to do another 168km out-and-return that evening with another crew, clocking up over 750km, albeit with far too many turning points to count.

There is no doubt that the availability of the SGA ASH has made a big difference to the cross-country ethos at our club. We have only around 40 members but virtually all the post-Bronze pilots fly cross-country, despite the fact that the terrain puts off all but the hardiest visiting flatlanders. Most just come to Scotland, go up to 20-something thousand feet and when you say: "where did you go?" they look blankly at you, as if you must be mad to suggest that they should leave the safety of overhead the airfield.

But Scotland has a lot more to offer than that – provided it isn't raining!

Nick Norman is a BGA Senior Regional Examiner

Launchpoint efficiency



As the cu pop and the queue lengthens, your club's winch ops become more interesting. Colin Stevens outlines his own research into Wolds GC's

THE LAUNCHPOINT at Wolds GC during club flying on a busy summer day is hectic. There is the usual eager queue of two-seaters, the even keener queue of single-seaters, plus the parallel aerotow queue and the motor Falke operation.

Examination of the log sheets showed that the WGC launch rate per hour on such days was eight gliders an hour, when things went well. (We use a Supacat winch with a two-cable tractor retrieve system.) Wolds is no different to any other club in seeking fresh ways to improve the number of launches per annum, for all the usual reasons.

In the *Club News* section of the February-March *S&G*, Ged McCann credited me with "investigating the science behind club launch rates". In reality, all I did was revisit last year's winch log sheets and work out the rate per hour for every flying day and every launch scenario. The resulting report was of value in that it enabled Wolds to rationalise its launch activities and establish baselines against which future changes in operational procedures can be measured.

It may be that other clubs could benefit from this particular exercise and certainly I would like to hear from anyone who has done similar work for their club.

The report described those busy summer days as Level 2 days. Level 1 club flying days were identified as those more leisurely days when the number of gliders with crew at the launchpoint was insufficient to use all the cables available. Inevitably the launch rate fell well below the magic eight.

The third scenario examined was the tried and tested evening visit. This typically runs over some two to three hours and it is managed by a regular team of members with two or three K-21s landing back at the launchpoint, with minimal retrieving of gliders from the runway. Usually there is no parallel aerotow or motor Falke activity. On a good evening, with a much more focused launchpoint, the best launch rates reached 12 launches an hour.

Examination of the daily launch rates showed that a proportion of days fell short of the best launch rates that could be achieved for Level 2 and evening visit flying. A more consistent performance on those less-than-perfect days would bring an improvement in overall launch rates. While there is nothing startling in all of this, merely quantifying what potential launches the club was losing helped to focus attention on the apparent lack of launch readiness.

Launch rate is a useful measure of launch efficiency, since it is timely and can be tested at the end of the day or even during it. Once the best launch rate for the club has been identified, given the standard operating



the *White Planes* picture co.

Main picture: K-13s at Lasham's busy launchpoint
Above: a Junior launches at Husbands Bosworth

procedure and equipment, it is simple to measure the launch rate against that standard. A comparison of two scenarios will illustrate the point. Consider a busy summer day: 42 gliders launched in seven hours. The club treasurer is happy and the bank manager is happy. Then consider the next day, a rainy day. In a two-hour sunny slot between 12.00hrs and 14.00hrs, 16 gliders are launched. The club treasurer is not so happy, the bank manager is not so happy. However, eight gliders an hour are launched, which in the prevailing conditions is a better launch rate than the previous day, when only six an hour were launched.

Put another way, the previous day could have achieved 14 more launches in the available time. Admittedly, if there were no more pilots to launch, those 14 launches are hypothetical. However, that is the province of the club management committee – to ensure that pilot availability is matched to launch potential. Can your club afford to lose 14 launches, day after day?

Determining hourly and best launch rate gives club management the tools to identify where the spotlight should be focussed.

Can examination of the log sheets give any further useful information? The answer to that is an emphatic "yes", though some fast talking may be required! The winch launch consists of two activities, as far as the log sheets are concerned: the time interval for the two-cable service and the time to launch the two gliders. I constructed a simple model: four minutes to bring two cables (and associated cable handling and hooking on) and two minutes to launch two gliders (one glider per minute). In the meantime the tractor is on its way back to the winch. Let the two cables be cable A and cable B and the respective aircraft glider A and glider B. The fall of cable B after its release by the glider, its recovery to the winch and its hooking on to the cable tractor are taken as part of the one-minute launch of glider B. An entire cycle thus takes six minutes, indicating a theoretical launch rate of 20 gliders an hour. That takes some swallowing, given the best launch rates previously observed. This model is based only on the information in the log sheets, though it may take many hours of searching to find the evidence.

What evidence? Look for the recorded take-off times for glider A and glider B. Then look at the AB time interval and the BA interval for your club.

For the Wolds GC model, the AB interval should be one minute. Times of between two and five minutes were common, evidence of lack of launch readiness on the part of the crew of glider B or the launch team. Longer intervals were suggestive of a blocked runway preventing a launch.

Examination of the BA interval, which is four minutes in the model, showed intervals of five, six, seven and longer minutes. This suggested two possibilities: lack of launch readiness on the part of the crew of glider A and the possibility that the cable tractor service might be too slow for a Level 2 day. Lack of launch readiness on the part of the crew or launch team may have allowed the cable tractor to "catch up". Clearly both aspects require further examination and real-time fly-on-the-wall observations will need to be made. A very crude examination of the AB and BA times on a log sheet against the model times indicated a 30:70 split between lack of launch readiness and blocked runways.

We plan a trial of modified launch procedures/landing areas, which may help clarify where time is being lost. I would be happy to hear whether use of the above technique helps to throw light on your club operation and helps to shape club policies to achieve more efficient launching.

The BGA Annual Statistics, October 1, 2000 to September 30, 2001, are to hand in the February-March issue of *S&G* (p48). Deduction of *Aerotows* from *All Launches* gives a nominal figure for *Winch Launches* (admittedly not precise in the case of Wolds, as we have a motor Falke), which, divided by the figure for *full flying members*, gives a figure for the number of winch launches taken by each flying member. It works out at 54 launches per member for RAFGSA Centre Bicester, 53 launches for Wolds, 39 for Cotswold GC, 34 for Scottish Gliding Centre, 31 for Lasham and 28 for London GC. Admittedly, this order is changed if the calculation is repeated with the inclusion of temporary members. What will the order be in a year's time if all clubs analyse their launch rate and take appropriate action? If all clubs did so and then reported improved launch rates the gliding movement as a whole will be moving in the right direction.

At the time of writing, our plans to trial the new operational procedures to improve the launch rate have been sabotaged by the weather. The new system has not yet been tested against the pressure of a really good day. Watch this space!

Colin has Gold and 700hrs. He flies Libelle 862 from Wolds and Bijave FNX from Borders

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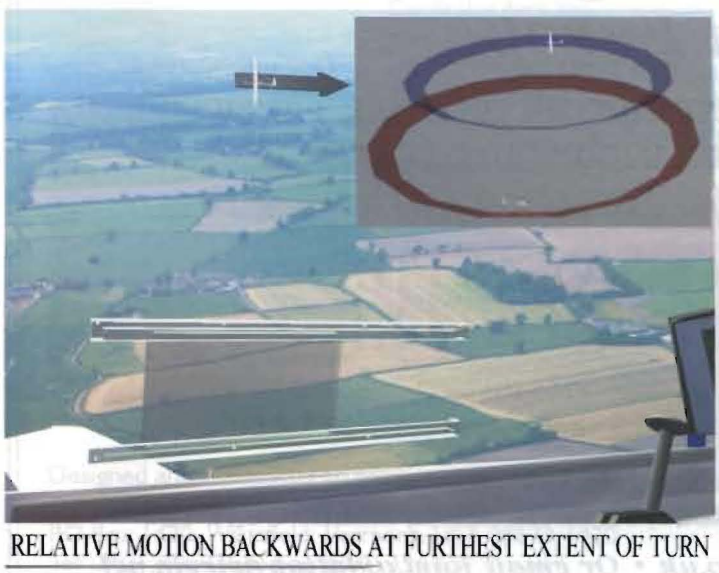
Two K-13s share a thermal near Lasham in Hampshire the **White Planes** picture co.

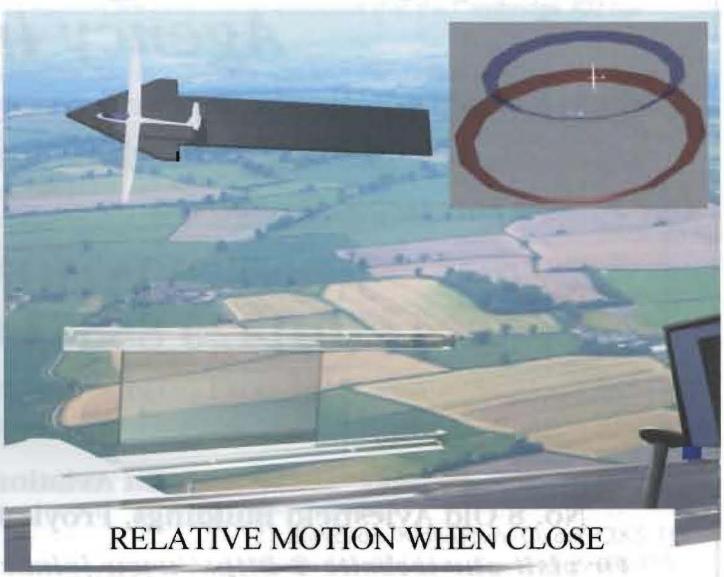
How to share a thermal

Having advised on joining lift in the first article of his three-part series on thermalling, BGA National Coach Simon Adlard offers tips on keeping station in a thermal with other gliders

ONCE WE have joined our thermal opposite another glider (as described in *How to join thermals*, June-July 2002, p22) and are managing to keep it roughly opposite us, one of the first things that we need to assess is whether our turn radius is centred on that of the other glider's. If we have managed to do this successfully then the other glider should the same distance from us all the way around the turn. If, however, our turn axis is displaced from that of the other glider's then not only will the separation of the two gliders alter but also the relative position of the other glider in the canopy will move back and forth (*figures 1a and 1b, below*).

This in itself is not inherently dangerous, unless the centres of the turns become further displaced, to the point that the overlap of the turns leads to the two gliders becoming unacceptably close. In order to rectify this situation, you will need to





Figures 1a (left) and 1b (right): when the turns are based on separate axes the other glider will be seen to move fore and aft as well as to alter its distance from you

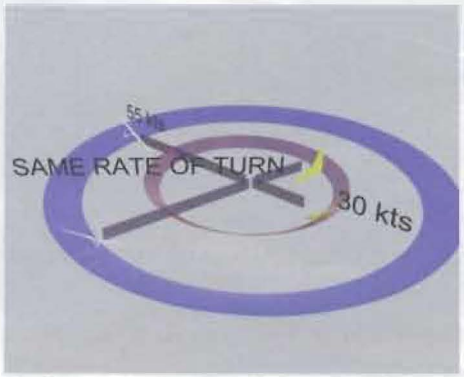


Figure 2, left: two different types of aircraft can thermal together provided the speed and bank angle are adjusted to give the same rate of turn

displace your turn towards the others by opening out and increasing speed when the other glider is at the furthest point from you, and then tightening and slowing again when you believe your turn axes are similar.

Once we think that we are turning on a similar axis to the other glider the name of the game is to keep it there. In order to do this, it is important first of all to understand the concept of rates of turn.

Our rate of turn is the number of degrees turned per second, and depends on several factors. The two factors that we have control over are speed and bank angle. For a given angle of bank the only way to increase our rate of turn is to slow down, and similarly for a given speed increasing our bank angle will also increase our rate of turn. Both of these will reduce our turn radius and so our distance from the other glider should be reduced.

This is all well and good; however, we need now to remember that a glider will have a minimum radius of turn. Consider a hang-glider thermalling at 45° of bank at 30kt. This is now joined by a Discus. In order for the Discus to have the same radius and rate of turn it will also need to bank at 45° and 38kt. Clearly, this is impossible. If now the Discus flies at 55kt and 50° of bank the radius of turn will be greater but the rate of turn will be similar (*figure 2, above left*).

Using these principles, we can develop a system that can help us to maintain station with another glider by using relative movements of the other glider in the canopy.

Let us assume that we have joined another glider in a thermal and have now matched our bank angle to its bank angle; unfortunately, though, our rate of turn is higher. From our perspective this can be recognised due to the fact that the other glider is now starting to move round towards the nose of our glider (*figure 3, above*). In order to put this right we must reduce our rate of turn. To do this we can simply reduce our bank angle until the other glider is opposite us and then slightly increase our bank angle again in order to hold it there.

In a similar manner, if the other glider starts to move behind us then it means our rate of turn is too small, so an increase in bank angle is required. This will then increase our turn rate and bring the other glider opposite us.

This works up to a point, but remember the case of the Discus and the hang-glider. You may find yourself continually tightening trying to stay opposite until you find yourself at a ridiculous angle of bank with pre-stall buffet. If this is the case then you should try to move further away from the other glider and try again, even if this means peeling off and rejoining.

Once again, sharing a thermal can be made less fraught provided a simple set of rules is followed (*The Rules (3), below left*).

The last and probably the most important aspect of thermalling with other gliders is being constantly aware of what is going on around you. I have described station-keeping by monitoring the other glider; however, it is also important to look around for any other aircraft that may be coming to join the thermal or – indeed – that are about to fly straight through it.

If other gliders do come and join you then try to manoeuvre so that all the gliders at one level are equally spaced, and maintain station with them using the same technique as with one glider. It is quite possible that four or five gliders may end up thermalling at the same level, in which case you may well find yourself flying behind another glider (but still in a position where the lead glider can still see you). If this is the case then still try to keep station using the normal method but be aware that it is important to match your speed with that of the glider in front: remember, if its apparent size is increasing then you are catching it up!

There may come a time when despite your best efforts the number of gliders thermalling with you exceeds your ability to either keep track of or, even worse, see them, and this will be when your best course of action will be to leave.

Next issue: Simon's third and last article describes how to depart from a thermal

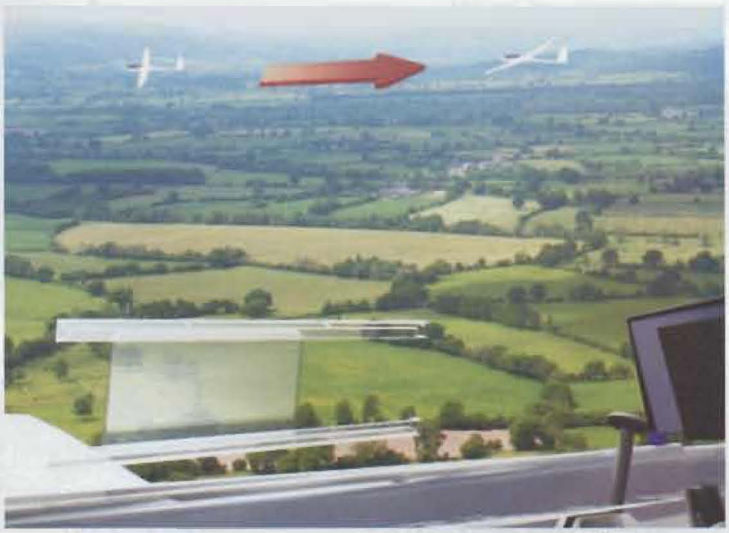
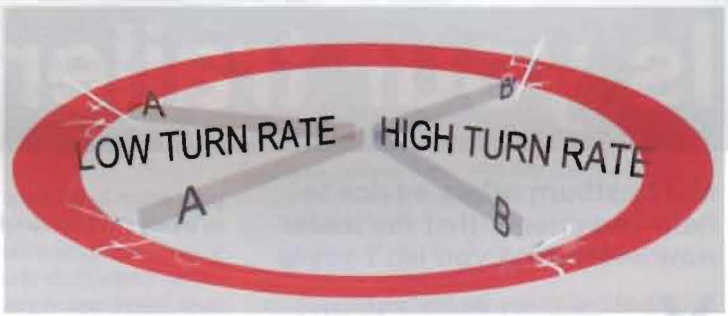


Figure 3, right: to correct this situation our bank angle should be reduced to slow our turn rate

The relative movement of the other glider is backwards when your turn rate is too high



Diagrams: Simon Adlard

THE RULES (3)

1) Always be aware of what is happening around you.

2) Make sure you can see the other gliders and they can see you.

3) Look out for other gliders joining or flying through the thermal.

4) Do not turn inside another glider unless you can maintain adequate separation even if they tighten their turn.

5) Leave the thermal if the other gliders are getting too close or too much of your attention is used up watching the other gliders.

6) Do not pull up or dive sharply in the thermal.



Is your trailer legal?

All photos: the ***White Planes*** picture co.

Mel Eastburn offers advice to help you ensure that the trailer now overtaking you isn't yours

YEARS AGO, my Bronze briefing papers warned that one in 18 field landings results in a 'damage accident' compared to one in 2,000 at airfields. It should have added that about one in four retrieves results in some sort of trailer disaster. I've had most. Trailer doors have opened twice whilst retrieving. Once, I had to park to go back and pick up the sundry discards, but of course the handbrake didn't work, there were no wheel chocks, no spare wheel and the tyres were of a type made just after they switched from solid wheels. And yes, I sold my K-8 to an unfortunate who watched the trailer overtake him on the M6 when the drawbar snapped (that was some retrieve!).

In the league of gliding boredom, trailers trail near the bottom until it all goes wrong – which happens often enough for the removal of the trailer section from *Laws and Rules* to have caused an outcry. It has therefore been re-written. What follows are the key points of the new *Laws and Rules* section that apply to most of us – fuller details will be given in the new section.

If you are pulling an original 1930s Weihe trailer with a bullnose Morris, you might just be exempt from some, but there are not too many people like you!

Complexity Trailer Regulations are extremely complex: there have been more than 100 UK and EU amendments to the 1986 and 1989 Regulations. Then there are Driving, Licensing and Road Traffic Acts. Though this means that your average traffic policeman is unlikely to have the foggiest as to whether or not your trailer is legal, your insurer will have a loss assessor who does know – especially if you've just reduced your brand-new rig to half its original length.

The glider trailer itself must meet the following requirements (dates are of manufacture):

❑ Be braked on all wheels (since 1.10.82) using a hydraulically-damped overrun system with compensation for brake wear.

❑ Have auto-reverse brakes (since 1.4.89). Beware – these operate in the wheel hubs, so do not be tempted to replace damaged hubs with scrapyard ones.

❑ Have a parking brake operating on at least two wheels on the same axle.

❑ Have a manufacturers' label on the drawbar nearside which, amongst other things, states date of manufacture and **Maximum Authorised Mass** (MAM – remember this new name for GVW/Gross Vehicle Weight: it means the maximum allowed gross weight of trailer and contents).

❑ Have a breakaway cable that applies the hand brake if the tow hitch fails – preferably attached to a solid part of the towing vehicle rather than the tow ball.



Should your trailer carry a sign like this – or not?

❑ Have tyres meeting the normal legal wear rules (1.6mm tread depth over the centre 75 per cent) and not mixed by type.

❑ Have operative mudguards to catch spray.

❑ Have the load properly secured by a means other than just gravity.

Unbraked trailers are still allowed if the MAM is less than 750kg – but I would not put my glider in an unbraked trailer, so these highlights do not apply.

Rear markers Sadly, rear markers ("Long Vehicle" or diagonal red/yellow markers) are not permitted unless the tow vehicle is over 7.5 tonnes or the trailer over 3.5 tonnes – unlikely. However, my motorhome/K-21 trailer combination is much longer than a genuine "Long Vehicle" so my (highly unofficial) view is: if it avoids a stupid overtake, it's better to fit one – who's going to complain?

The **trailer lights** must be as follows:

❑ All lights must be type approved (an 'E' mark embossed on the lens) to ensure correct size and wattage, and be mounted to prescribed dimensions.

❑ Include matched pairs of rear red triangular reflectors, side, brake and indicator lights.

❑ Have a single fog light between the rear centre and offside (nearside fog lights on imported trailers are both illegal and dangerous in the UK) or a matched pair.

❑ A number plate light.

❑ Amber side marker lights since 1.10.90 which must be mounted on both sides no higher than 2,300mm above ground. They must be spaced no more than 4,000mm from the front of the drawbar, 1,000mm

from the trailer rear and no more than 3,000mm apart – on a typical 15-metre glider trailer this implies three amber side marker lights on each side.
❑ Amber side reflectors with the same spacing on trailers built prior to 1.10.90.
❑ If a trailer (including mudguards) is more than 1,600mm wide, then two front white reflectors and marker lights are also needed.
❑ Front marker lights, rear reflectors, side and indicator lights must be visible with the doors fastened open. Trailers with side-hinged rear doors are unlikely to meet this requirement.
Two key points emerge:
❑ Many new trailers are illegal as they have only side reflectors where lights are required.
❑ With the full complement of side, rear and number plate lights (all on the same circuit), many towing vehicles will need their side light fuses uprated, so carry suitable spare fuses.

The driver Younger drivers who first passed their test after 1.1.97 are restricted in what they can tow without passing an additional test. In essence, the trailer MAM may not exceed the tow vehicle unladen weight, and the total MAM of both vehicles may not exceed 3,500kg. You could easily break these limits with small tow cars.

Driving with a trailer In addition to the points above, the law says:
❑ Vehicles and trailers may not use the outside lane of a three-lane carriageway, except to overtake an exceptional load spanning two lanes.
❑ Maximum UK driving speeds (unless otherwise indicated) are 60mph on motorways and dual carriageways and 50mph on other roads. (Remember you must advise your glider insurer, who insures the trailer and contents, as well as your motor insurer of any penalties incurred whilst towing.)
❑ Passengers are forbidden in trailers.
❑ There is no Road Tax or MOT for private trailers.
❑ The trailer must display the same number



Side-hinged doors can obscure indicators when open



New trailers may lack the required lights along the side

plate at the rear as the towing vehicle – one from some other car you own will not suffice! It must match the towing vehicle's (ie, new style since 01.09.01).
❑ The towing vehicle must be fitted with an audible warning device, which sounds when the direction indicators are used.
❑ Hazard warning lights may only be used (a) when stopped, to warn of the temporary obstruction, and (b) on a motorway or unrestricted dual carriageway to warn following drivers of an obstruction ahead.
❑ Tow vehicles first marketed after 01.01.96 may only have EC Type Approved and tested tow bars.

Good driving Although not legal requirements in the UK, the following driving practices are highly recommended by motoring organisations and thus by the BGA:
❑ You should not tow a trailer that exceeds either the tow vehicle manufacturer's recommended towing weight or tow hitch nose weight. Doing so could invalidate both vehicle and trailer insurance. Recommended practice for braked trailers is not to exceed 85 per cent of the kerbside weight of the towing vehicle.
❑ Snaking – if the combination starts to snake, NEVER brake hard. Slow down gradually and carefully, releasing the accelerator and then using the gears to slow. Hold the wheel firmly and steer straight ahead, and never into or against the snake. Bad snaking normally means that there is insufficient nose weight on the tow ball.
❑ Emergency braking can cause the trailer to jack-knife. Avoid the need by keeping a safe distance behind other vehicles.
❑ The driver should have ready access to a warning triangle (preferably two – on single carriageway roads place one well behind and one well in front of the combination when stopped), a First Aid kit, spare bulbs and spare vehicle fuses.
❑ The tow combination should have dipped headlights, except where this would dazzle other drivers.
❑ Ensure you can monitor the trailer wheels through the wing mirrors – especially on single-axle trailers – so that a puncture does not become a catastrophe.
❑ Unless you have taken the extra driving licence towing tests, you should practise and become competent at reversing with the trailer before towing it on public roads.

Insurance:
❑ Most tow vehicle insurance policies provide Third Party cover for an attached trailer but check before you tow since a glider trailer may be regarded as exceptional.
❑ Damage cover for the trailer and its contents requires a separate policy – normally part of the glider insurance.

Trailer pre-tow inspection Glider trailers are used for long journeys infrequently, so should be checked before any off-airfield journey. This is the recommended inspection ❑ remember **ET-B-DT**.
❑ **Electrical** – check plugs, sockets and cable; plug in and check all lights work.
❑ **Tyres** – check for tread wear, damage to side walls, pressures and ensure wheel nuts are tight. Tyres over five years old, especially if little used, may well be unserviceable; at the very least have them checked annually.
❑ **Bearings** – use two hands at 10-to-2 on each wheel to try rocking it forwards and backwards in the axle direction. There should be a slight movement. Any more requires the bearings to be adjusted.
❑ **Drawbar** – check all bolts tight, break-away cable in good order, parking brake and jockey wheel working. Attach to car, and check brakes apply moving forwards, and are free when reversing.
❑ **Trailer body** – walk round and inside and check body, trailer floor and mudguards.

Annual inspection A more comprehensive inspection and service should be carried out every 2,000 miles or annually on the coupling, brake linkages and wheel bearings.

Ready to roll That's it – you should now be able to tow a legal glider trailer to its next destination (and back) safely.

As a final tip, the trailer parts catalogue produced by Indespension (0800 720 720) gives an excellent 19-page, step by step, illustrated guide to trailer maintenance and servicing, including such esoterica as how to change the wheel bearings.



Is your own trailer ready to collect you from that field?





Pushing the

Our feature on what Spanish soaring can offer starts with Steve Olende

Above, from left: looking south down the ridge from Riaza; the high valley between ridges used in Steve's 1,000km; looking north, a Blanik and cu-nim at Santo Tomé; cu-nim over the northern plain (all photos: Steve Olender)
Below: Steve's 10hrs 10mins flight (map: Steve Longland)

THE FIRST time that I heard pilots talking seriously about trying to achieve their FAI 1,000km Diploma was on a visit to the Spanish site of Fuentemilanos in 1991. I was lucky enough to be able to fly with Ingo Renner in the Janus and we completed a 360km O/R to Plasencia in the south-west, thermalling up into southerly wave from the Gredos mountains to reach the turnpoint, and returning on the south-facing ridges passing the highest peak, Almanzor, on the way back before taking a thermal at the mountain pass of Puerto Pico to get home. It was one of my most enjoyable flights. My first thought was to return to the area with a glider of my own to try some long cross-countries and, I hoped,





boundaries

er's account of a superb day – and of 1,000km on a rather different one

improve on my previous best of 500km. As for the 1,000km...?

But before I could do this, I witnessed one of the best gliding days there has been in Spain for years – and I couldn't fly my glider! I was returning from a UK trip and we flew in across the northern plain going into Madrid. There was two-eighths cu on the convergence over most of the central area. Later, as we drove past the airfield of Santo Tomé at 16.30hrs, there was not a glider on the ground and there were the most fantastic clouds overhead. It seemed like a really good day.

It was. It was the day of the decade, if not the half-century. Nobody in the club would admit to remembering any further back, although Carlos Gómez-Mira (in his excellent book about soaring the Sistema Central) called it "the day of the century". It was July 29, 1995. Three 1,000kms were flown from Santo Tomé, two in Standard Class gliders. One of the pilots, Denis Flament, completed his task in 7hrs and 50mins (at 130km/h) by eight o´clock in the evening, going on to clock up over 1,100km before returning back. Lift was 10kt (5m/s) up to 16,400ft (5,000m) ASL. Fuentemilanos, 60km down the ridge, had 17 flights of 1,000km.

This was the kind of day I needed if I had any chance of getting round a big task. But when would the next one be?

The next few seasons flying the LS7 saw my flights increasing to 750km and then 850km. This period brought it home to me that there was more to big flights than just turning up on Sunday morning, getting the glider out of the hangar and completing 1,000km. There really is a lot of preparation necessary – of equipment and pilot – to be able to maintain the rhythm of trying big flights every day. Only then can you throw yourself in with all the other pilots who have come to do exactly the same thing. It can be very intensive, especially after perhaps five or six days of eight hours or more in the cockpit. Do you carry on, for example at 19.00hrs with 200km to go into a dying sky or return early to be ready for the next day, on the basis that the weather should improve during the current cycle? Landing late every evening and having the glider ready for the next day's flying by 09.00hrs can be very tiring if you are not organised.

'Do you carry on, for example, at 19.00hrs with 200km to go into a dying sky, or return early to be ready for the next day?'

So what was it like in 2001? Not good, by Spanish standards. July started weak and blue. Relatively low cloudbases stayed for the whole period and we just got accustomed to rounding the further turnpoints low down and out in the west, very close to the ridges. This did give much better views of the small turquoise lakes hidden high up in the mountains and the odd ibex leaping about on the rocky slopes. The weather did pick up, however, and the next few days saw flights of 700km and 800km. Then it broke and what followed were days with mixed conditions and just one day with a free 840km. A rest day followed as the early morning towering cumulus signalled thunderstorms. The news that the Grob Acro III (M) had whizzed round a 300km late in the day and seeing ➢



Below: looking north-east abeam La Salceda, 20km from Santo Tomé

Bottom: Santo Tomé seen before its new runway was laid





that the conditions had held out gave the promise of a better day to follow...

August 12, 2001 dawned with the remnants of the thunderstorms at medium levels and close to the mountains. At about 09.45hrs the first cu of the day appeared. As a matter of routine I pushed the glider down the slight slope to the runway and asked the tug pilot, Eduardo, for an early launch. While he warmed up the Pawnee's engine, I made the declaration (1008.3km) and jumped in. I hoped I had not missed anything in my checklist. We took off at 10.30hrs. This was the earliest start I'd had and I only hoped that the day would not overdevelop.

The tow plane hauled us past the peak of "La Cebollera" to the growing clouds. It took time to get established but meanwhile cu were improving down track, so I started by 11.00hrs. I carried on low along the ridge, holding for a while, but then falling away as I reached Navafria and the clouds that I hoped would get me across the flat table-land of "El Nevero". It felt like an age of searching before contacting a weak thermal which gave enough height to cross.

Approaching the wooded valley of La Granja I met up with, by coincidence, the LS6 (Echo Mike) of Pepín Sancho out of Fuentemilanos, the second Spanish pilot to achieve 1,000km. We thermalled together for a while then parted company. Just further on I contacted a good climb to cloudbase and was on my way.

The start of a convergence led towards Avila but the good run ended abruptly as I entered a steady 4kt (2m/s) down and had to divert to a cloudstreet more to the north but on track. Once there, I could push on towards Villatoro, still low. From here, another cloudstreet (in the lee of the main ridges of the Gredos mountains within the high valley) continued to the south of El Barco de Avila. The end of the street came almost abeam the first turnpoint at Tornavacas; I arrived at 13.00hrs, having averaged 100km/h over the first 200km.

The return was initially along a similar route, then towards Mengamuñoz to get back onto the vertical-faced ridgeline of the "Parameras". I passed under a large mass of cloud which had a much lower cloudbase than the rest – an early sign of what was to come. Progressing east there had been massive overdevelopment in the wooded valley near Fuentemilanos and the only way forward was to veer to the north-east over the plain.

I had been watching a street well to the north since passing Avila and telling myself that I should have been under it, but it was a long way across the blue. The brilliant white cloudstreet to my left contrasted vividly with the grey mass of clouds covering the tops of the ridgeline to my right. However, the cloud-street I was under beckoned me on, though it did not give the big climbs I would have expected. The frustratingly slow progress was made worse as I was getting lower and lower, but the wispy cu ahead took me north



Beyond Villatoro were spectacular chimneys of cloud rising up from just above the ridge (Steve Olender)

of Riaza and on towards the turn.

Then, out of the blue, a surge carried me upwards towards a rapidly-growing cloud giving the best (8.7kt/4.5m/s) – and the highest (7,700ft/2,350m QFE) – climb of the day. This spurred me on towards better-looking clouds in the distance, but they failed to live up to their promise.

So it was back to pushing on towards slowly-developing cu, this time over the forest between Almazán and Soria, taking what was on offer and thinking that, although I had made good progress so far, the current conditions were not really those of a 1,000km day. A final climb gave enough height to reach the famed cloudstreet which had by now curved back round to the east and right over the second turnpoint at Aldeapozo. I had covered the 340km leg at 126km/h – a total of about 540km. It was only 15.45hrs, showing how crucial it is to get an early start.

I progressed well back into wind under the street towards the third turn – taking only a couple of climbs in about 140km – until I hit high spreadout from the thunderstorms. Occasional cu lay ahead with better-looking clouds even further north, but I was already 30km north of track and having to fly parallel with it just to stay in the southernmost edge of the good air. North of Fuentemilanos the thermals began to get noticeably weaker and the climbs became more and more difficult to find. Abeam Avila, I could see that well to the south there were some cloud cells in the damp and misty air left by the thunderstorms. I elected to stay north where there was at least bright-ness on the ground, taking a final deviation even further north to a cloud 35km off track but with only 50km to the turn. But it did give 1,250ft (380m) extra and better still, a clearer view towards the turn. The view was not encouraging. The options were to carry on parallel to track towards an area of grey spreadout, but with the possibility of arriving below the turnpoint (which was on a ridge top pass) or cutting in towards Villatoro where there were more reliable-looking clouds. Beyond them, over the Gredos, there were four spectacular vertical chimneys of cloud rising up from just above the ridge for four or five thousand feet.

The high overcast was slowly beginning to break up and there was more sun on the ground near Villatoro, where there is a conical rocky peak that might warm up quite quickly. I headed for it, only to fly into rain from the grey mass above. No option now but to keep pressing on. I arrived above Villatoro town but below the peak, heading for the sunny south-west side where ragged cu were now starting to form. A long search finally gave a weak climb. It was now 18.15hrs and the sun had been out only a short while so the broken 2-3kt (1-1.5m/s) was very welcome.

It took 20 mins to get enough height to glide the 40km to the turn at Puerto Peña Negra and back. Returning to the hill at Villatoro, a couple of climbs got me back to cloudbase and heading for home. Earlier thoughts about the time wasted on the first two legs were soon forgotten, as I would have had to hang around even longer for the conditions to cycle again. The third leg of 300km was covered at 100km/h, arriving at 18.40hrs. I was very aware at this point that I should not start thinking that I was going to easily complete the task: there was still 170km to go and sunset was at 21.20hrs. But, after all, what remained was the normal milk run from the south-west – a couple of thermals and

'The route had been cut off by thunderstorms and the ridges had not had their intense all-day pounding from the sun'

then onto the ridge for 65km and home. Today was quite different, though. The route had been cut off by the thunderstorms and the ridges had not had their intense all-day pounding from the sun, which normally guarantees gently-rising warm air up the slopes or the occasional bubble, even when proper thermals have all but died away.

I decided to stay high and let the slight tailwind component help me along. About 15km north of track there were new but ragged cloudstreets orientated from the north-west. The best-looking cells along the street yielded only a broken 2kt (1m/s). I would have been grateful to take that to cloudbase, but it was not to be.

Still 1,000ft (305m) short 100km out, with the sky ahead just as dead-looking as when I passed by two hours earlier. Should I continue on track in the hope of finding

How to make the most of your days in Spain

Steve Olender's tips for flying large tasks in this part of Spain.

Preparation for the day:

■ During practice flying try to visit the further turnpoints of the likely task area. Conditions can be very different along the route: to the west there are the peaks with their high valleys while to the north and east is the plain.

■ Get to know the regular hot spots over the ridges to the west – and how the meandering rivers, forests and sea air intrusion can affect thermals in the east.

■ Watch for improving conditions during a flying day and especially for rapidly-rising cloudbases to above 10,000ft (3,050m) ASL, the daytime (and previous night-time) temperature rising, and thermals going on until very late. The next day could be the one!

■ Prepare as much as possible on the previous evening. Unlike in competitions, the start time can be quite early and last-minute problems can delay the launch and spoil your chances of success.

■ Have everything ready on the day as early as possible – but no later than 09.30hrs, then sit in the shade and watch for the first signs of thermal activity. Does what you see confirm the forecast timing and cloudbase and your ideas about which direction will be the best?

■ Task selection should be made based on what you observe (as in the above point) as well as on your own and other pilots' experiences of the previous couple of days' flying.

■ Take lots of water and some food. Keeping hydrated can never be over-emphasised.

■ Not many pilots can last 10 or so hours in the air without experiencing the call of nature. Take adequate measures.

During the flight:

■ Aim to get that perfectly-timed launch just as the thermals are starting.

■ Try to set off before mid-day. Leaving later means having to average a speed of over 115km/h. Setting off later is still worthwhile: the day could become "atomic". If all else fails it is still good practice for tomorrow.

■ Look for convergences. Over the ridges cloudbase can vary by as much as 1,000ft (300m). Over the plain they can form impressive cloudstreets.

■ Watch out for cycling conditions. Try to make the most of them if you can.

■ Make checkpoints along the route to monitor progress. Are you falling behind schedule?

■ Try to make that last turning point. Thermals can go on until quite late.

■ Don't relax on the last leg, as usually there is still a long way to go – and the conditions are deteriorating.

■ Know where the 1,000km threshold is. Pushing on, even to land out short of the airfield, could still get you that Diploma.

something on the way, or go to the ridge and scuttle back, at low level? I could now see the evening sun on the ridge line and some cloud cells as well. All those practice final glides from 100km out were surely not done in vain? After all, the ridge always gives something! What would the local pundits do? Well, I went for the ridge and the clouds, veering in towards the track line at more than 45°. Nearer and nearer – but no sign of lift. Then the clouds started to disperse and I cursed as I turned along the ridgeline not much above it. I could now see some cu in the distance, which had to be newly formed. The lower wind was almost in line with the ridge pushing me along with it as I headed for the section near to Torrecaballeros and its emergency landing field. A small headland sticks out here, which I thought might just kick something off. It did, but only a broken 1-2kt (0.5-1m/s). Even the family of vultures I was jostling with left it (in the opposite direction to me). It did, however, supply an extra 900ft (275m) to get me to La Salceda and the clouds I had seen earlier just beyond.

It was now 20.10hrs, with 40km still to go. The ground ahead falls away here as the ridge recedes a couple of kilometres to the south so I headed towards the clouds; failing that I could always have fallen back on to the lower slopes of the ridge. The clouds were way too high to indicate where the lift would be but looking at the ground all the clues pointed to a cluster of houses in a bit of a wind shadow. At first just turbulence, then broken lift which eventually died. A shift slightly downwind – weak turbulence turned to weak lift. I heaved a huge sigh of relief, achieving 4kt (2m/s) and enough height to make the remaining 25km.

At last, I started to allow myself to think that I really was going to get back. Thoughts of perhaps not completing the task having done 975km were quickly shaken off.

The last leg averaged 85km/h, giving a time on task of 9hrs 37mins. No beat-up: I was tired after ten hours in the cockpit and had to concentrate on entering the finish zone. When I landed the airfield was almost deserted; most people were in the caravan park preparing their evening meal. It was 20.40hrs, just 40 mins before sunset.

As I was putting the glider to bed I began to reflect on the difficult time I'd had getting back, but I was too elated to dwell on it for long. After all, I was more than content having achieved my goal. Later, it occurred to me that perhaps still to come was one of those really atomic days that everybody dreams about, but I was far too tired to start thinking about the possibilities.

The next day the weather broke and the poor weather that followed effectively ended the 1,000km season. Well, there's always the next one. I just hope "the day" of this new century comes along soon!

Steve, a member of Clevelands GC and the Loreto club at Santo Tomé, central Spain, flies a Ventus 2cT. He is a Chartered Civil Engineer working with UK and Spanish firms. He has 2,000hrs gliding and all three Diamonds. For his account of his 750km in Spain, see S&G, February-March 1998, page 33



Steve Olender with daughter Crissy in his Ventus, 63, at Santo Tomé: "Get them started young!" he says



Personal bests

Richard Starey, from Booker, tells how Spain helped him fly further, higher and faster – and to discover the joy of soaring



Main picture: ASH 25 approach after a wave flight

Above: runway 25, facing the Cadi
Below: runway 25 at La Cerdanya, mid-day in April



THREE YEARS AGO, almost to the day, I started gliding. My wife Tanya signed up 10 minutes later. With a succession of uncharacteristic flyable days each weekend, we were solo by mid-summer. Taking the last opportunity in October to fly outside the airfield boundary, I completed my Silver.

In my belief that what I didn't know about gliding wasn't worth knowing, I took a brief flight later that month in a K-13 in South Africa, while on holiday there for a friend's wedding, and landed myself and my despairing instructor at 35kts over a tall wire fence into a headwind. Well, it said 70 on my ASI and he wanted me to land at 100. Nobody had said it was in kilometres per hour. A weekend aerobatics course back at the club was followed by two days of Basic Instructor training, which turned into four days and then into two weeks. Yes, the CFI's revenge for my novice flying was sweet. It was re-learning from the ground up. From then on, I realised I knew little and had experience in even less.

The step into cross-country flying was binary: from local soaring to distant soaring. This was the point of all those hours of training, finally to be someone "on task". My Gold distance the next summer was from my local club at Booker; the height, c/o Aboyne. It was becoming a narcissistic notching of personal achievements, the love of gliding becoming largely the domain of pot-hunting. At the time I spoke to an ex-glider pilot, about my age, who said he had given up to fly powered aircraft when he had his Diamond.

So, a question arose: what happens when the BGA badges run out?

The answer, which had started in the spring of our second year of gliding, was Spain. Encouraged by the enthusiasm of other club members, we contacted Brian and Gill Spreckley for our first trip to Cerdanya. Flying their European Soaring Club's gliders, we had our first taste of a gliding playground. Wave, ridge, thermal, convergence, a whole toolkit of lift is at our disposal. The kaleidoscope of skills honed and experiences brought home is colossal. For me, the Badge Indicator was replaced by the Experience Indicator. Subsequently, flying in another part of Spain, from Ontur, each flight seemed to encompass more ways to learn and progress as a pilot than weeks of flying at home. Tanya, in the throes of morning sickness, completed her 50km on a blue day, with pin-pricks of thermals within oceans of sink.

The Spreckleys' airfield operation, care and task-setting create the platform that can launch personal bests; 500km in the blue on a moderate day was very tough for me last summer in Ontur, but I had the experience of 1,500km under my belt from preceding days. Next year, 750, 1,000km? If you want to push – fly further, higher and faster – the Spanish runways are waiting.

Here are some reflections of flying in Spain, of memories and instances of pure joy.

At 23,000ft it is reading -40°C. The canopy appears to be made from crepe paper, each breath out crinkling the surface. The leading edges of the wings have been reprofiled and look as if they have been recently pulled out of the freezer. My feet are, with a single pair of thin socks and deck shoes, numb up to my shins. I have been shivering uncontrollably for the last 30 minutes and climbing at under 0.5kts. At 23,100ft I open the brakes, and come off oxygen after two-and-a-half hours, three successive wave bars and a rigorous helping of tortuous rotor.

It is nine o'clock at night. The day has been blue. I have been on a final glide for the last 100km and have run out of height. The airfield is less than 5km away. Preparing to land in a massive, round but irrigated field, one of tomorrow's thermals tips my left wing. I have not had a rumble for the last 45 minutes, but I now climb the extra 500ft that I need and cross the final ridge, landing on the darkening runway and over a barbecue in full swing.

The snow is late this year and skiers hang from the skeleton of lifts. A few look up as I emerge from behind and fly low to the piste like a massive white seagull, the wind caught from the spur rocketing me high above the mountain top. I dare my wingtips ever closer to the rock face; I explore uncharted lift; my senses are on overdrive.

I head for the giant arms of the windmills. The air is warm and siesta-inviting, the sky a deep cloudless blue. There is not a breath of wind. My fibreglass arms play quixotically with my rotating adversaries. Pulses of lift taunt me ever closer into their steel jaws, as I tilt for a thermal advantage. Locking on to a steady positive from the vario, I slice the air as I climb ever higher over the hills, and the altimeter finally revolves comfortably clockwise.

Releasing at 1,000ft over the airfield, the air becomes still as if the tug has sucked in the wild thermal I released for. I dive for the nearest town under the southern slopes, reaching the clock tower, and start one meandering turn. I struggle for several minutes, gear down and locked, spiralling over the supermarket and the pizza bar. Five minutes later I am climbing at 8kt and continue to 10,000ft. A local two-seater dolphins over a ski-slope, terrorising the snowboarders. I push forward across the valley to the north side. Wisps of cloud pop up around the valley, disappearing and reappearing. Taking a rough climb back up to 10,000ft, the air goes still and I continue to climb at 2kt. The wave is working over a short one-kilometre line and I pass backwards and forwards until I break off at 17,000ft to fly west down the Pyrenees.

Right, from top: Early morning at Ontur in July; At 8,000ft over snow and rock, skiers and forests; Through the looking-glass; Morning wave over La Cerdanya valley; ASH 25 touches down at La Cerdanya



He stays with me for a while. Massive wings twitch in aerofoil refinement as the buzzard flies in close formation. He neither rises nor falls. I feel privileged.

There are hundreds of feet below me when I need thousands. The strip, with its runway teetering on the side of a hill, is calling like a Siren. A bird claws lift from beside me and I turn into his thermal. I wonder what his own landout options are. I climb steadily in his thermal, pushing back into wind on each turn until he leaves me for another struggling pilot.

A line of convergence leads me up the valley to the power station with enough height to cross the moon country. I am too high to feel nervous about the huge ravines and cliffs that stretch out far below me. The open flatlands, with their erratic needles of pulsing lift, are behind me. I glide out the kilometres to my second turnpoint, 100km north of home, trying to trace the areas of least sink and marking them on the GPS. My return carries me safely over No Man's Land, but invites me down to have a good look at a recently-harvested wheat field. The bales become larger. The antenna that I was flying over is now beside me and I anticipate an all-night retrieve. 3,000ft up and I look down on the farmer on his tractor in a field to the south of the town. Blue day triggers – they can be magic!









Photos: Richard Starey
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Top ten overseas

Steve Crabb, first-placed in this year's UK Overseas Nationals, offers pen-portraits of the winners of the Battle of Ocana. Steve, who with his twin brother Paul constitutes the Irish gliding team, lives in Poland



SO WHY the Overseas? UK Nationals held in England are generally torrid affairs involving just about every activity except gliding. UK Nationals held in Spain, on the other hand, are not torrid affairs and generally exclude all activities other than flying. I have flown every one of them and have never had less than nine competition days out of a possible 12. Brian Spreckley, the director, is the best in the business; the organisation (Claire Bradley, Pete (Boris) Wylde and John Tanner) is tiny but generally perfectly formed; the accommodation on the airfield is superb and the Ocana area on the odd day off provides plenty of 'odd day off' type opportunities. Just the perfect setting for a competition, which after all is what we signed up for.

This year's entry list was the biggest yet with 50 pilots and probably the strongest field seen to date. There were quite a few foreign pilots from such countries as the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, South Africa and Kenya (oddly enough, Irish people don't seem to make this category). It all made for the usual happy mix and relaxed atmosphere on the ground; in the air, however, was another matter entirely.

I am not going to bore you with the usual "Day 1, such-and-such won – Day 2 such-and-such should have won" stuff because, to be honest, I can't remember exactly what happened. So instead I'm going to bore you with my impressions of the top 10 pilots and why they stood out. Sue me if you like – but you'll have to do it in Poland!

Martyn Wells: "The One" to beat over here. Flies superbly and, despite my having a brand-new LS8, I really wished I had his as it always seemed to go that bit better. He won Day 1, which is the biggest No-No in the Overseas – no-one has ever won it having done this. Pair-flies with Leigh, his son, and together they make a formidable combination.

Leigh Wells: Always to be found at the top or in front of the gaggle pushing hard and calling his dear old dad into the cores. Judging by the radio chatter Leigh has a tad better eyesight than Martyn. I would rate him as one of the best (if not the best) young pilots in Britain at the moment.

G Dale: The only pilot not to land out (other than the glider drivers – errrr, turbo mob). Flew brilliantly at the start of the comp then had a rush of blood and decided to use his handicap to follow and win in the middle of the comp. Saw the light and concluded with some more superb flying, that is, leading. Had he not had a TP penalty should/could have won it.

Paul Crabb: Simply the tetchiest, most argumentative pair-flying partner on earth. Unbeatable when on form and responsible for finding a 13kt average "competition-winning" thermal following a particularly grumpy request from his (low) team-mate. The scorer.

Henry Rebbeck: Often to be found flying with his brother, Jay (*aka* as "Hen and Jay") and together they form the most laid-back pair in the history of gliding. It's almost impossible to tell by the radio chatter if they are about to land out or are at the top of a 10,000ft thermal.

Peter Baker: A gaggle flyer's dream pilot: leaves when he thinks he should, be it from the top, middle or bottom. His confident flying on the first day in blue conditions very late in the evening (20.00hrs) was a great example of having faith in your own ability and exercising it. For me it was one of the outstanding flights of the competition.

Jay Rebbeck: The current Junior World Champion and showing it. Fast and furious. Not one to hang around on the periphery of a thermal when the centre is calling. Always keen to get going, he even organised a mass start on one of the poorer days when everyone else was feeling a bit timid. Interestingly, he managed to break the top off his stick with a Volkslogger (which – of course – carried on working).

Richard Hood: His nightmare start to the competition was due to his having the 'flu, but showed his true potential by working his way back up there with consistently good flying. After last year's *smokin'* exhibition, I really thought that Richard could win it this year, but it was not to be.

Phil Jeffery: Simply a legend. Will always go the way that everyone else isn't and is absolutely fearless when it comes to final gliding (I once followed him in, and I know). How he does so well in competitions baffles me: if there were a gaggle of 10 world champions, Phil would refuse to fly in their direction just as a point of principle. The closest he has ever gotten to team flying is to have a crew. He is also one of the reasons why the Overseas is such fun.

The weather this year was probably the poorest to date, in that we did not see the normal high cloudbases. It even got the better of Brian, who on the last day had to resort to asking the pilots in the air if they thought the task was on or not. It was. On two of the scrubbed days I flew with Pawel, my long-suffering friend and crew. Had this been the UK we would definitely have squeezed a contest day out of both of these, but with such generally reliable weather there is no need to be so greedy.

The respite from flying also gave much-needed time to pilots who had to work on their gliders following "unsatisfactory" landings and a "heavy" take-off. The fields in the hills can have large stones in them and these caused damage to some gliders. Other accidents took place on perfectly good airfields. Martyn Wells and Iain Evans provided fantastic assistance to those who needed some expert sticking back together.

So that was it. If you want to do a comp where you actually fly, race and have fun in the sun, hitch up and come to Spain. Thanks, Brian.

OVERSEAS NATIONALS, OCANA

Pos	Pilot	Glider & fin no.	Points
1	Stephen Crabb	LS8 C65	7598
2	Martyn Wells	LS8 321	7541
3	Leigh Wells	LS8 LS	7479
4	G Dale	ASW 24wl 247	7476
5	Paul Crabb	LS8 C64	7457
6	Henry Rebbeck	LS8 232	7113
7	Peter Baker	LS8 144	7080
8	Jay Rebbeck	ASW 28 Z1	6879
9	Richard Hood	LS8 352	6389
10	Phil Jeffery	LS8 64	6348
11	Graham Smith	LS8 421	6286
12	Ray Payne	LS8 140	6247
13	Dolf Pretorius	LS8 1Z	6140
14	Roel Kuil	DG-800/18 BR	6135
15	Ronald Rooij	Duo Discus 42	6132
16	Iain Evans	LS4 WI PZ	6128
17	Peter Coward	LS8 L88	5953
18	Mark Wering	Nimbus 3/24 EM	5813
19	Gill Spreckley	LS8 I	5801
20	Rose Johnson	LS4 LS4	5744
21	Joost Clemens	Discus IKI	5642
22	Paul Shelton	Duo Discus HB1	5641
23	Gary Stingemore	LS8 X1	5573
24	Stephen Olender	Ventus 2c/18 63	5261
25	Paulo Rosado	Lak 17/18 C17	5248
26	Mike Mee	ASW 28 MM	5063
27	Gavin Goudie	LS4 GG	4908
28	Peter Batenburg	Discus wl CU	4858
29	Mccoshim/Luxton	LS8 685	4808
30	Richard Johnson	ASW 28 J1	4805
31	Bart Renckens	Ventus 15 SW	4804
32	Max Dolfin	Dg 800 MD	4722
33	Watson/Mountain	LS7 WI F1	4661
34	Alan Binks	Pegasus JCB	4591
35	Blackmore/Kangurs	ASH 25 108	4290
36	Chris Lyttleton	ASW 27 CL	4202
37	Harry Wondergem	Ventus 2CT/18	4060
38	Ryan Priest	Discus WI Y2	3887
39	Johns/Chant	ASH 25b/27 711	3779
40	Tony Pozerskis	Lak 17/15 L17	3699
41	Morris/Warren	Nimbus 3d Y44	3669
42	Adrian Emck	LS8 36	3430
43	John Glossop	Discus 291	3390
44	Reb Rebbeck	LS4 ETG	3311
45	Patrick Onn	LS8 P4	2388
46	Tim Scott	ASW 27 Z3	1651
47	Dave Ruttle	Janus B DR7	1617
HC	Jorge Arids Riera	ASW 20 EF	3633
HC	Jorg Hermann	LS4 H4	2435

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Out of the back seat



CFIs don't spend their entire lives instructing (though it may feel like that). Robert Tait tells the story of the dream 500km that finished his Diamond Badge

FIVE HUNDRED kilometre flights in the UK aren't unusual, so what made mine so special that I felt the need to write an article for *Sailplane & Gliding*?

The blunt answer is that I believe it was only the fourth in Scotland done entirely in thermals; and in the lowest-performance glider so far, an Astir CS77. It was also the first ever done (in wave or thermal) from my home site of Easterton, the base of the Highland and Fulmar clubs and the most northerly gliding site in the British Isles.

There is a good reason why so few long-distance flights have been done in thermal here. You need only glance at a map of Scotland to realise that 70 per cent of the land is mountainous and totally unlandable. Although I had done a lot of flying over the mountains in wave it was only in the last year that I had done serious flying in the mountains in thermal. An attempt on my 500km out of Aboyne last year gave me the confidence to do it again from my own site when the opportunity arose.

The day before looked fantastic as I drove home from work and the forecast I had seen for the Sunday was better with less wind. I arranged a winch driver for first thing in the morning and was to be joined in the attempt by Phil Penrose in a Standard Jantar.

Unusually for me, I was so organised in the morning that I had time to get the kids up and give my wife breakfast in bed before setting out to the club. I had plenty of time for printing out and signing declarations and filling the glider with all necessary items for a long trip, including a very fat book in case of landout. The task was: Easterton-Callander-Dufftown-Pitlochry-Easterton.

Above: looking east, a privately-owned Bocian on tow at Highland GC. where Robert is CFI. Below: the site; his is the first Diamond distance ever flown from here



I was first in the queue to launch but could not find Callander on the GPS so delayed, allowing Phil to go whilst I loaded it in. It was just after 10.00hrs when I was launched to 1,300ft and I was down to 900ft by the time I reached the ridge. I soon found a thermal with Phil and started climbing. After reaching 3,000ft we both set off down the Spey valley. Although clouds were forming well we both had difficulty pushing south, dropping down to 2,000ft a couple of times near Bridge of Avon. At this point, Phil elected to fly down the valley whilst I hugged the south side of the valley over the higher ground. This took me into the lee of the Cromdale mountains, where I had my first really decent climb to cloudbase at about 4,000ft. I then found by flying upwind of the clouds as in wave I managed to climb to 5,500ft whilst making good progress. This did not last long and I was soon down to 4,500ft over Loch Morlich at cloudbase again.

Although the sky ahead looked good there was the first sign of trouble to the west – light showers falling. I was faced with my first major decision. Stay on track and fly directly over the Cairngorms or divert along the Spey valley? A quick look at the Laraig Ghru and 4,000ft Cairngorm plateau and the decision was made by my sphincter! I flew along the Feshie ridgeline past the gliding club there and on up the Feshie valley. From here on I was in virgin territory for me and started feeling my way carefully. At the head of the Feshie valley is a plateau 3,000ft high and 20nm wide that needed crossing, with no valleys to run down if it all went wrong. I was still at 4,500ft but having no problem staying high and finding thermals so I nosed further and further over it knowing I could head back with a tailwind component if I had to. As soon as I saw the green of the valley at Blair Atholl I knew I was fine and speeded up a bit: the sky ahead was fantastic. From here down to Callander it was classic stepping-stone stuff with the mountains and lochs of Perthshire rolling

past as if I were flying an airliner. Visibility was so good that I could see the Cairngorms more than 100km away, making the job of navigating a mere exercise in sightseeing.

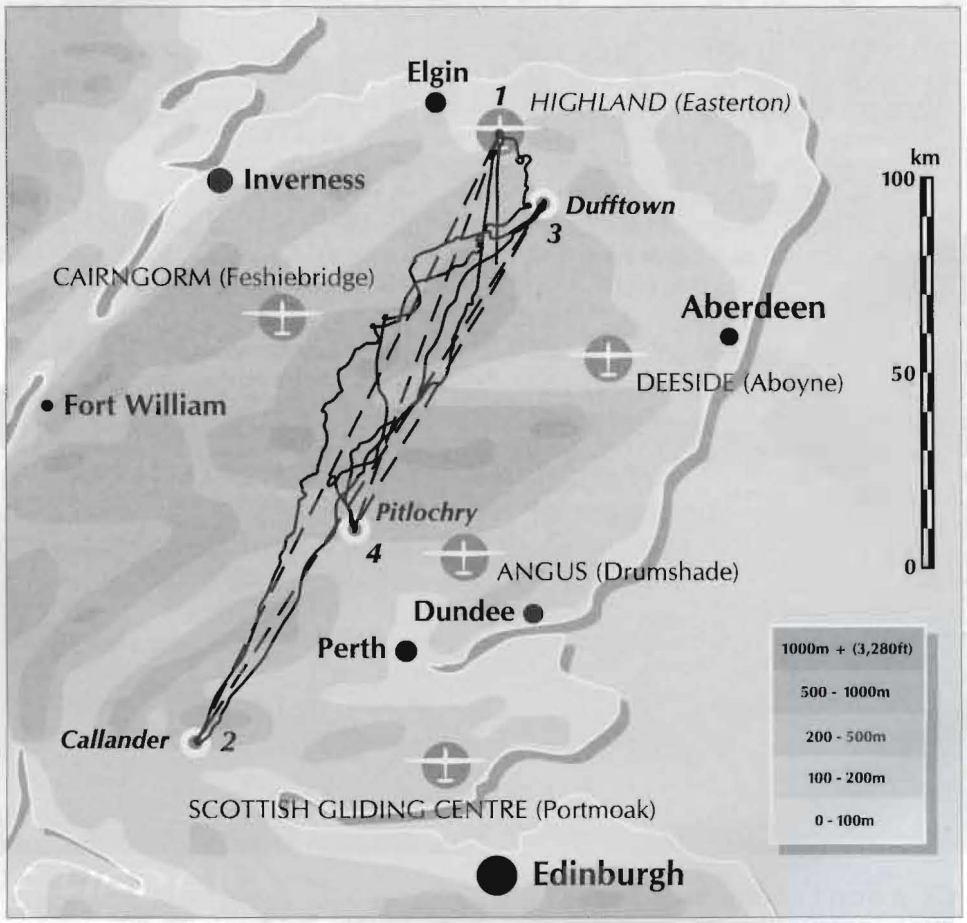
By Callander, cloudbase had dropped to 4,000ft but the sky was still full of healthy cu. I had taken nearly three hours to do the first 160km. However, it was only 13.00hrs and I would have a 10kt tailwind on the next leg. I wanted to do that in two hours or less to remain on schedule. After turning Callander in lift, the first 100km of the leg to Dufftown was a romp and I only had to stop a couple of times. Cloudbase over the mountains was more than 6,000ft, allowing me to take the direct route over the top.

My confidence in the conditions came to an abrupt end as I crossed Beinn Macdhui and realised that cloud cover was nearly 8/8ths and there was rain falling out of some of it. I was also down to 3,500ft over some pretty forbidding territory with the nearest fields at least seven miles away. Stopping to take a slow climb I re-evaluated my chances. Cloudbase was still high and I was looking at just making it home for now or at least turning Dufftown before diverting back to Easterton for a 330km flight, which would be a first at our club anyway. After climbing slowly to 5,000ft I set off for Dufftown again and promptly ran into 8kt lift under a darker-looking patch. This I took to 6,500ft and found that it was a street that led me directly into Dufftown. There was rain ahead, which I discovered became snow above 5,000ft. This meant I could keep going without worrying about wet wings. Turning Dufftown at 6,000ft in lift with the street I had just run down still working and having done it in only 1hr 40 mins I decided to change my plan again. Head for a promising dark patch near Grantown and if it did not work I could head home. If it did then I would carry on and divert to Feshiebridge. There was still virtually 8/8ths cloud cover with only very isolated patches of sunlight in the distance to be seen and all out of gliding range.

I was now on a mission to top 400km and really did not expect to make it home. With this new mindset I had nothing to lose and everything to gain. The cloud at Grantown worked and I wound up over Loch Morlich and the ski slopes at Cairngorm at 3,000ft under a grim-looking sky. Head for Feshie before it was too late was about the only thing I could do and I tried to route under the most promising black areas of cloud. Sure enough I stumbled into one of the best thermals of the day and averaged 6kt to 7,200ft. Bingo, I now had the height to fly direct to Pitlochry over the mountains again and arrive at 2,500ft. Better still, there was a street going in exactly the right direction. I hoped my wife would understand because I was convinced I would land near Pitlochry, entailing a six-hour retrieve.

As I flew down the cloudstreet I had to go faster and faster to stay out of cloud – 120kt at one point. Maybe not the most efficient way to fly but damn good fun and I covered 30km very quickly. There was a cost: flying out of the end of the street at 5,000ft into a hopeless-looking sky. I was over the highest mountains and my only safe options were to head south down Glen Tilt towards Blair Atholl or East towards Braemar. Blair Atholl's being only five miles from Pitlochry swung it and I set off for my six-hour retrieve. A call on the radio by the Scottish Gliding Association's ASH 25 confirmed my belief that I was doomed to a long wait in a field. The last TP of their task was Blair Atholl and they had not turned it because the sky was so hopeless. The die was cast and I carried on. Things went from bad to worse as I ran into heavy sink in Glen Tilt. Soon mountains were looming far above me but at least I could see Blair and somewhere to land.

I could also see something else at Blair and that was one very isolated patch of sunlight crowned with a brand-new cu just forming! Could I be that lucky? I estimated I would arrive there with about 2,000ft in hand so this was do-or-die stuff. It did, and after a slow start the thermal picked up and I climbed back to 6,000ft. It was then a quick run in to Pitlochry and straight back to my faithful cloud. It was still working and – even better – had formed a small cloud-street heading home. No problem crossing the hills again as I had plenty of height and the cloudstreet was working. However, it was taking me off track towards the west and at the end of it I was faced with a stark choice. Left, into the Spey valley and a promising line of dark clouds but signs of rain. Or right, into a dead-looking area that



Above: the flight (map: Steve Longland); below left: HGC logo; below: Robert with HSE (photos: Nick Hyde)





was showing signs of breaking up and was dry. Another shaft of light to the right swung it and I headed towards Braemar, hoping against hope I had made the right decision.

Bang on cue a beautiful area of sunlight opened up on a steep rocky cliff face exactly in the direction I needed to go. As I got closer a new cloud formed and when I arrived under it at 3,000ft even the Astir's wings bent as the vario hit the stops. A quick look at the GPS and John Willy calculator told me I needed 4,800ft to make it home and this cloud was obviously higher than that. A warm glow came over me as I realised that, barring disaster, my 500km was in the bag. However, having landed 9km short of a 310km task the week before through complacency, I was determined not to get caught out this time.

I took the thermal to 6,500ft and set off into a very dismal sky, happy to be 1,700ft above final glide. It looked like being just a long slide home until I was approaching Tomintoul, where I was faced with a serious problem. Rain! Anyone who flies an Astir will know the disastrous effect it has on performance. I had what looked like 10 miles of it to go through. I stopped in every scrap of lift I could find while still dry and managed to get 2,500ft above glide before I had to move: the rain was spreading and getting heavier. 40km to go and wet! It was very much in the lap of the gods now.

One problem with approaching Easterton from the south is that you have to cross, diagonally, several miles of unlandable moor that is 1,000ft above site. If you get too low you are forced to fly down the Spey valley until you can cross at the Rothes Glen, adding five miles to the task; I was worried that if I got too low this would happen to me. However, all my fears were unfounded as I discovered reduced sink in the rain and lost very little height. Time to call home and announce my imminent arrival.

No reply: but it was 17.30hrs and very dull so I guessed they were packing up. After my usual competition finish I rolled up to the hangar as they were putting the last aircraft in. My father was the first person to ask where had I been. It took a little bit of time to convince him but word soon spread.

Within 30 minutes of landing I had received congratulations from Aboyne and Feshie; I was somewhat stunned by the amount of interest the flight generated.

This was my dream flight and was all the more satisfying because it was done off a winch launch, from my home site, in my Astir CS77 (with no waterballast) and entirely in thermal. To my knowledge, this was only the fourth 500km in Scotland in thermal.

I attribute this success to a number of factors that anyone could exploit. Experience played a big part, particularly recent flights over similar terrain. Preparation made getting ready in the morning a relaxed affair. Plenty of food and drink at regular intervals kept my energy up. I didn't give up when the conditions were no longer perfect.

750 next!

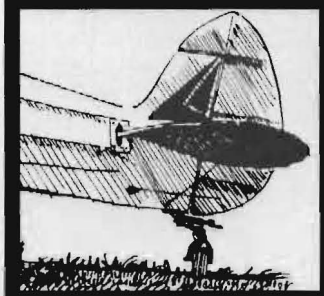
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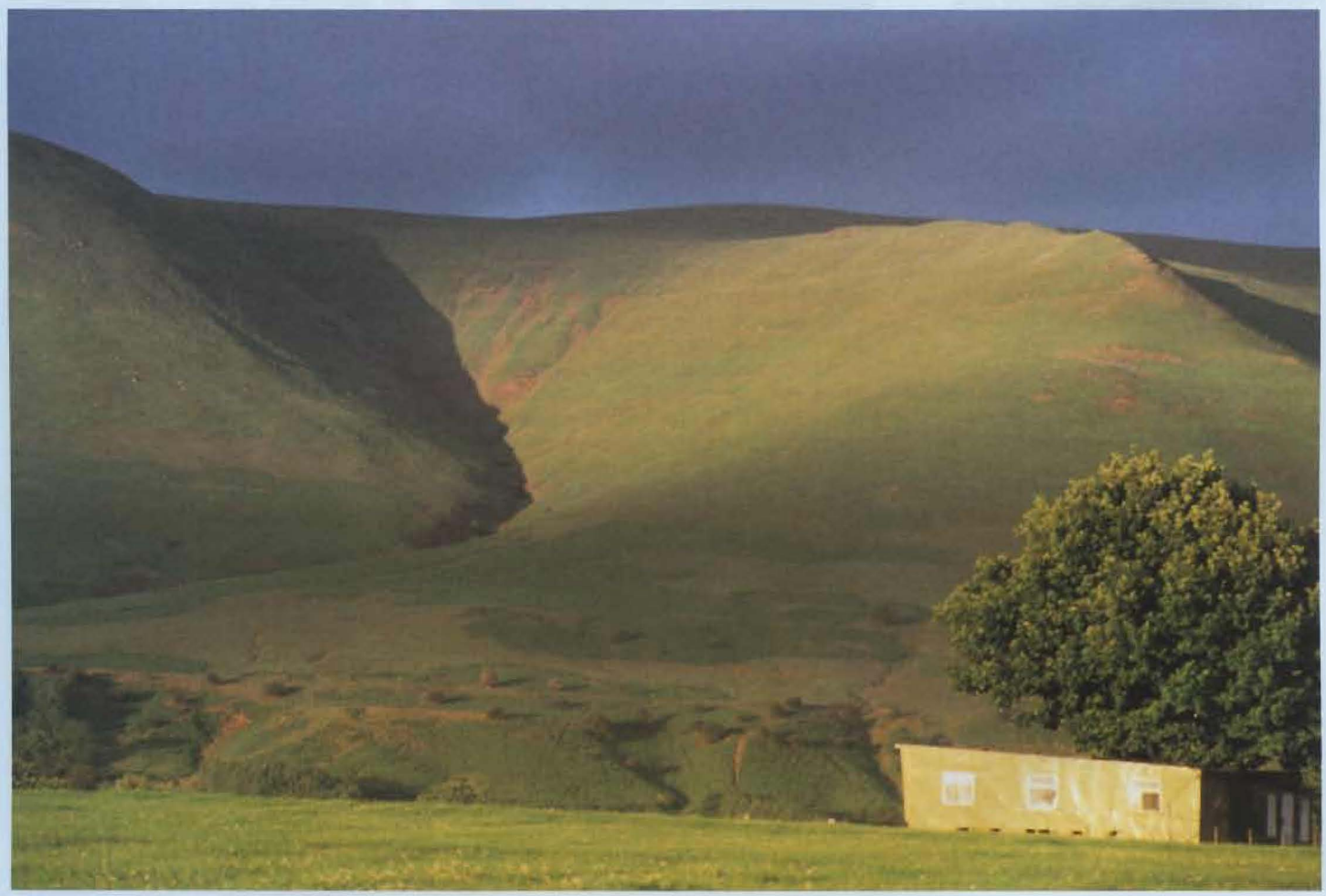
Left: Mark Evershed took this photo of his ASW 24, HS, at a Gransden Regionals. The S&G team hopes that the cloudstreet you can see persisted past the start time and led straight to the first turning point. We also wish all pilots similar skies this season...



Right: Mike Fox (yes, him again – doesn't anyone else take photos on 35mm film these days?) seen over his home site at Wolds GC. Mike, who is the son of Bob and Jean Fox, distinguished himself at the start of the Standard Class Nationals at Pocklington this June – but a bad couple of days at the end left him 16th overall

Below: Robbie Robertson's photograph of the old clubhouse at Black Mountains GC in evening light will evoke memories for those pilots who remember superb wave climbs above it – or even wet days playing scrabble in it. The old clubhouse will by now have been replaced by a new one, says Robbie, but the ridges are still there for anyone who chooses to visit. That lovely old oak tree, by the way, also stays as the centrepiece of a barbecue area, from which to watch those famous Talgarth sunsets

The ridges remain...



Gliding's best-kept

The Mafikeng worlds don't mark the end of soaring in South Africa. S&G looks at two places set up to welcome Europeans

"THE only limit in Africa," says Geoff Tabbner, "is your imagination". After 18 years spent living in South Africa, he is better placed than many British pilots to assess the amazing soaring on offer.

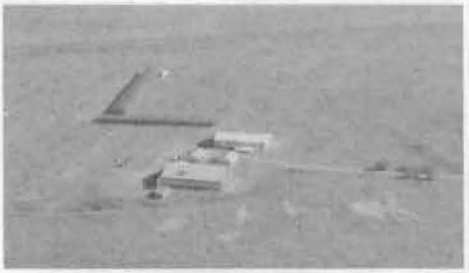
His first choice for distance and speed flying is the airfield at Gariep Dam, 5km from the lakeside resort of the same name, and next to a game reserve. "It's where I did my 1,000km, in 1996," he says, "and it is some of the best flying that I have had anywhere. Once the trough line is working and you're on the edge of it, it's like a magic carpet. (see opposite below, *the magic of the trough line*). I did an airspeed of 230km/h for an hour in a straight line," he says.

These are the kind of conditions that bring him back to Gariep again and again – even now that he's returned to the UK; "I'm an aficionado," he says. His Ventus B turbo, now "GA" at Cambridge GC, was for years "21" in South Africa. "Gariep," he adds "is for the person who really enjoys cross-country flying; not for someone who just enjoys flying around the airfield. It is best for people who want to get this or that badge – especially the 1,000km."

But, he points out, some aspects of flying there require caution: where you get strong lift you can also get strong sink; aerotows can be a little bit demanding with the heat and turbulence and you may need to build in a margin of safety over rough terrain.

"It needs someone who's competent and confident and has got a few miles under their belt," he says, "but who is frustrated about the European weather."

The need for pilots to be competent and confident is echoed verbatim by John Hoye, an instructor from Kent GC, who has 3,000hrs, three Diamonds and visited at the end of November/start of December 2001. The long-distance camp, which in 2002-3 runs from November to February, attracted six Britons among 109 participants in 2001."I found the combination of ruggedness and remoteness initially intimidating," says John. "But after a while you get accustomed to it. Even when you've got airstrips programmed into your GPS, there's nothing like finding them and looking at them from the air: you get more confidence as you get higher and you can see them. Once I had got a bit of confidence and cloudbase went up a bit higher I started to make much better use of the conditions. I got up to nearly 14,000ft AMSL (4,300m) – not as high as they can get – and visibility was good. I did one flight that was nearly 300km and another of 500km. By modern standards it was local soaring but it did enable me to go down the Orange river to the next dam. It was a lot of fun. There's



Above: the new L-shaped 15-glider shade park at Gariep; the old and new large hangar; one of the 1km tarmac runways and the clubhouse and ablution block

Dick Bradley begins a new venture

THE magic of South Africa, says Dick Bradley, extends beyond fantastic wildlife, spectacular scenery and a wonderful climate – it is also one of the best places in the world for soaring flight.

Soaring Safaris is a new venture that he is setting up Bloemfontein's New Tempe airfield, (it is not the city's commercial airport) with hangarage, clubhouse, swimming pool, lawns, shade trees and bar.

Flying will start at the beginning of November 2002 and continue until the end of March 2003, depending on demand.

"I just saw the opportunity for a tourist destination for glider pilots," says Dick. "If we look at what is happening in Europe, what we're seeing – and I think this is a long-term trend – is that airspace is becoming more and more restrictive. To have a place like South Africa where we have few constraints means European pilots can come out and play like we used to."

Bloemfontein was used for SA Nationals in the late 1960s and early 1970s and will be used for the same purpose this year. Cloudbases are typically 14-16,000ft AMSL (4,300-4,875m) during summer, sometimes reaching 19,000ft (5,800m). Thermals are 3-5m/s (6-10kt), and usable convection can start as early as 09.30hrs. Some of the first 1000kms flown in South Africa were from Bloemfontein.

"The weather can be as good as Gariep," says Dick, "but on average the cloudbase is not going to be quite so high."

He says that outlanding conditions within a few hundred kilometres of Bloemfontein present minimal risk even to inexperienced pilots, and 300 and 500km triangles and bow-tie 1000s can easily be flown without venturing further west and south, over the more arid regions. Here there are not so many fields, but Bloemfontein pilots would not expect to cross these areas except in excellent conditions.

Soaring Safaris, which is supported by Brian Spreckley and will be run on a daily basis by Dick with a full-time tug pilot and other helpers, is pitched at people of all experience levels. "We will provide the expert help necessary for you to safely enjoy soaring the high, wide and open skies of South Africa," says Dick. This includes glider hire (a combination of his own and some of the European Soaring Club's), aerotows from hard runways by Cessna 182s, and what Dick describes as "a complete support infrastructure".

New Tempe airfield is 6km west of the city, which is itself a four-hour drive south of Johannesburg on good roads.

Dick sings the praises of South Africa as a place to visit. "I believe it is now being seen as a safe destination," he says. The exchange rate from the Rand to the Euro or Sterling is very favourable for European pilots, he adds, and prices for everyday goods and services are not expensive. From a holiday point of view there's a lot to do and see.

Dick, well-known internationally as well as in South African gliding circles, has flown in virtually all competitions in South Africa since 1969, been National Champion seven times and represented South Africa at six worlds. He was director of the 27th World Gliding Championships at Mafikeng in December 2001.

In real life, he was Managing Director of a software development company that produced payroll and time management systems used by more 6,000 South African companies. After 15 years as CEO he chose to take early retirement before it was too late to pursue his dream of developing a full-time gliding operation in South Africa.

***For more information see* www.soaring-safaris.com**

secret

some fantastic flying there, I just wish our visit coincided with better weather. It's whetted my appetite to go back: I can see the possibilities. Perhaps a 750km..."

He and Brian Laverick-Smith, also from Kent, visited Gariep together. Brian, a K-6E pilot who had 55hrs and Silver at the time, says: "Value for money is excellent, Gariep offers a relaxing, enjoyable atmosphere, and it's a different magnitude of gliding". John flew the DG-505 for a check ride before being let loose in an ASW 20. Brian flew dual in the site's motorised ASH 25.

Both commented that the lack of jetlag makes short visits possible. Gariep itself can serve for a family holiday: there's a resort at the dam as well as local game reserves.

The last word goes to Geoff Tabbner. "It's not the easiest or safest place to fly from but the people who go there go because it can offer conditions I have not seen anywhere else. From 1,500ft/460m AGL (5,500ft/1675m AMSL) I caught a 7.1m/s (13.8kt thermal to 19,500ft (5,950m). That's really, really exciting flying. It's the sort of place I'll always go back to because it's so good. It's probably one of gliding's best-kept secrets."

For more information see www.gariepgliding.com



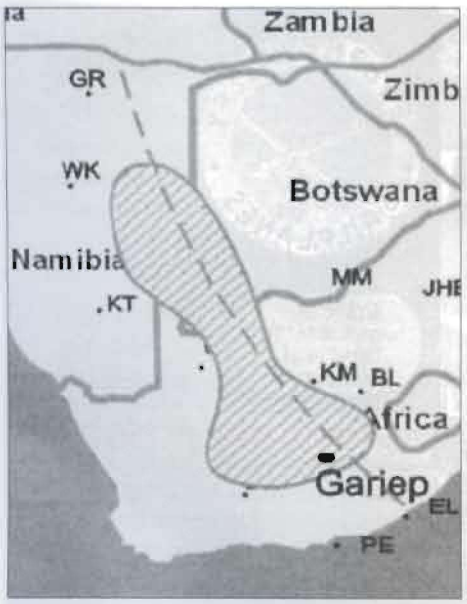
Above: Geoff Tabbner took this shot of Gavin Johnson from Magalies GC, Johannesburg (Geoff's old club) in the Janus flying from Gariep. The line feature is the mighty Orange River

Below: the clubhouse and hangar at Bloemfontein



The magic of the trough line

THE major weather engine for the Southern African region is a strong high-pressure system over the Atlantic Ocean, which periodically sweeps around the country to link up with another over the Indian Ocean. The most important feature for soaring pilots is the formation of a heat low over the interior of Southern Africa, usually between November and February. Due to its elongated shape this is frequently called the "trough line" (see shaded area on map, below left). It oscillates around a line stretching from Grootfontein in Namibia to almost East London in South Africa. The cycle starts with warm, moist air moving in from the east, and frequent thunderstorms. To the west of the line, the air subsides, having lost much of its moisture, and with a strong high-pressure system in the upper air, this leads to the formation of flat cumulus with a cloudbase of 14-18,000ft AMSL (4,300-5,500m), as well as strong thermal activity – a glider pilot's dream. The position and vertical extension of the trough line and their movements during the course of the day are critical planning parameters – not only for the setting of the task, but also for selecting the launchpoint. Ignoring criteria such as outlanding opportunities, which – South African pilot and record-breaker Helmuth Fischer says – might lead you to choose Kimberley, Bloemfontein or Mafikeng/Mmabatho (all east of the trough line), Gariep Dam is the best place to base yourself. His world speed record of 169.7km/h over a 1,000km triangle was flown from Gariep.



These notes are based on a paper by Helmuth Fischer, to be found at www.gariepgliding.com; *a list of SA clubs can be found at* www.sssa.org.za/Clubs.htm

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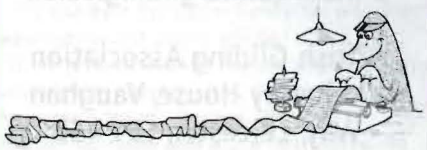
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HOW TO BUY IT: see *Tailfeathers*, page 17

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Club news

Angus (Drumshade)

CONGRATULATIONS to Roger Lashly, whose Silver distance (after several failed attempts) gained him Silver. Congratulations also to Alex Maitland, who became an assistant instructor in May. Ongoing trouble with one of our sometimes-reluctant retrieve and towing vehicles caused us to look for an affordable replacement. Thanks to John Cobb, who finally sourced a tractor in good working order, there should be less time wasted trying to start engines in future.

Wolf Rossman

Aquila (Hinton-in-the-Hedges)

WITH two instructors and a task-setter on duty each day, the emphasis here is firmly on cross-country flying, although not at the expense of normal training. The K-21 is proving its worth in cross-country training and inter-club tasks. Congratulations to Jim Hughes (1st, Novice) and Bob Johnston (2nd, Intermediate) in the Bicester leg of the Inter-club League. Aquila is fielding several inter-club pilots. Belated applause to Michael Pettican for Gold height that was oh-so-nearly a Diamond! Visitors and pilots are welcome as always, with *www.aquilagliding.co.uk* providing up-to-date information. We will run flying evenings for groups (*groups@aquilagliding.co.uk*) until autumn.

Hugh Gascoyne

Bannerdown (RAF Keevil)

THE small group visiting Sutton Bank in early May had a mix of ridge, thermal and wave. Ken Bryer followed a landout with five hours in easterly wave (a first for the site) ending with an interesting return to earth in low cloud, aided by frantic hand signals from an anxious Al Stacey at the threshold. Our Jubilee task week did not have Royal patronage weather-wise, disappointing for club and guests alike. However, Ron Peach and Stuart Renfrew made the most of a sunny interlude late on the first day with Silver distance to Lasham. After that it was a case of grabbing brief spells of extended local soaring.

Derek Findlay

Bath, Wilts & N Dorset (The Park)

SO far an abysmal season. Our flying week in late May was almost a washout, although our CFI Stuart North managed to keep two-seater flying going on every day in spite of the weather. Mike Thorne managed a 500km on a very marginal day, and on the same day, although denied his 500, Mike Jenks made a superb flight of just over 400km in his SHK. We have recently sold our much-loved K-6E (to a good home, we think). This had been with us for nearly 30 years, and was still in marvellous condition. It makes way for another glass machine. We have just completed another of our one-day introductory courses, which are a great success.

Joy Lynch



*The WW2 memorial at **Borders GC** designed by Peter Fairness (left) and unveiled by Sir John Riddell (right)*

Bidford (Bidford)

WHAT a great start to the season. We have already two new solo pilots – congratulations to Richard Ellis and Derek McMullan, who both reached solo in record time. Also, loads of cross-country flights so far, including 300km flights from Dave Findon (in 3hrs exactly), Bill Inglis and Dave Smith. Our star of last year – Steve Agar Hutty (who soloed last season) – completed his Silver Badge with a 50km flight and also gained part one of the 100km diploma. Well done to all. Two pilots have successfully completed their Basic Instructor training – well done to Roger Wilson and Jan Ozimkowski.

Lynne Taylor

Black Mountains (Talgarth)

VISITORS from Peterborough and Spalding GC had great fun on our ridges over a long weekend. A group from Oxford were less fortunate with the weather. Don Gosden thrilled us all when he brought his fully aerobatic Fox two-seater to the club and cast a whole new light on ridge soaring and low beat-ups! Bob Johnson is cleared to fly the tug and the long-awaited house move to Wales by Anne and Tony Crowden gives us yet another tug pilot to call on ... so hook up your trailers and try our ridges and summer wave. We always welcome visitors but call us beforehand to book in. Comprehensive pilots' notes are available on our web-site. Work on the new clubhouse is well in hand with plenty of willing members doing their bit. We will be sorry to see the old clubhouse caravan conglomeration go ... it has served us well over the years. John Clark has finally taken over from Gerry Martin as CFI, is doing a great job and insists that we can still address him as John rather than sir!

Robbie Robertson

Blenheim (Jamaica)

AT Blenheim, Jamaica's premier (only!) BGA gliding club, enormous ongoing improvements have been realised in our first two to three years. The runway, with its formerly notorious bridge area, has been filled, levelled and extended to over 4,000ft, so novice pilots no longer have extra difficulty with launch failures and launches up to 2,000ft are possible. More than 15 local pilots have soloed from scratch and others are being fledged by CFI, Sylvia Bateman, who has also welded staff members, Aldean, Biggs and Newton, into a helpful, efficient airfield team. Next to the sky-blue clubhouse are new T-hangars for the extra K.7 and the refurbished T-21. Seven-day operation is intermittent but it will be possible to offer holiday courses for pre-solo and post-solo to Bronze pilots during the dull days of the British winter in the balmy weather on this island in the sun. We continue to welcome visiting pilots.

Clive Thomas

Booker (Wycombe Air Park)

THE expedition to Jaca in the Pyrenees was judged by all attending to be an overwhelming success, and looks like becoming a fixture in our calendar. Eleven gliders with 15 pilots spent a highly enjoyable fortnight there. The Duo Discus flew for more than 50 hours, almost all of them with expedition leader Jed Edyvean in the back seat. Our traditional autumn Aboyne expedition is also filling up well. Our first members' forum for some while was well attended and produced interesting discussion. The greatest pressure seems to be improving members' facilities; the airfield is substantially a commercial operation. Our second 260hp Pawnee is expected around publication date, in good time for our free, highly-competitive regionals at the end of August: entries are still welcome; see *www.bookergliding.co.uk/*

Roger Neal

Borders (Milfield)

A MEMORIAL to those killed flying from the wartime airfield at Milfield was unveiled on Friday, May 24 by the Lord Lieutenant of Northumberland, Sir John Riddell, The memorial, a plinth clad in Northumbrian slate surmounted by an airscrew blade from a Merlin engine, has a brass plate showing the names of the dead. It was designed and built by Peter Fairness, whose Kestrel flying took a back seat in the meantime. Funding was provided by ex-service men and women who served at Milfield, the RAFA and RBL, and club members. The RAF flew a salute with a Tucano aircraft from No 1 FTS Linton on Ouse to close the proceedings.

Bob Cassidy

Bristol & Gloucestershire (Nympsfield)

OUR clubhouse has been repaired after the fire and we have imported an LS4a from Holland to replace the ASW 19. Our DG-505 and many members are going to Gap to try mountain soaring. Our new catering team has proved successful.and a good party was held for Juniors on the mentors-mentees open day in June. Our regionals are nearly fully booked. Juniors can fly at half price (£50). We have appointed Mark Parker as junior full-time instructor for the summer. Mark is one of two new tug pilots – Dave Zarb is the other. Congrats to Mark on his lookout during his first solo aerotow (the Hercules pilot got a rollicking!). Good weather for our heat of the Inter-club League saw 300s flown on the first day and 200 on the next.

Bernard Smyth

Cairngorm (Feshiebridge)

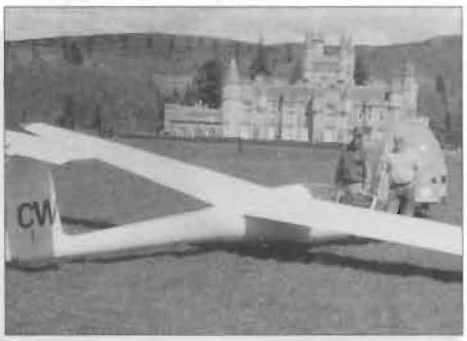
MAYFEST enjoyed some superb soaring conditions with pilots flying countless kilometres during the first week. Nick Norman gave cross-country instructional flying in the SGA's ASH25 completing 1,400km in a week and two (yes two) 300km trips on the same day (see p23). Phil Hawkins achieved a personal best wave climb to 17150ft. Our observation sun lounge is almost complete in time to enjoy those long summer evenings watching gliders pm the local hill until the late sunset (useful for OOs observing five-hour attempts, stopwatch in one hand, gin and tonic in the other). Badge claims include Hugh Stevenson (Diamond goal), Don Grant (solo), Bill Greive (Silver distance), Sarmed Mirza (Bronze legs, see p23), John Whyte (Silver), Andy Farr (Silver duration on the ridge), Sandra Forrest (B Badge), Carol Osborne (B Badge). Dates for your diary: Inter-club League, Aug 10-12, and Octoberfest, Sep 30-Oct 25. Bookings are coming in for Octoberfest so please book early. Phone Ruth Binks on 01667 493459 or the club on 01540 651317 to reserve your slot.

Chris Fiorentini



***Chiltern GC**'s Terry Lacey next to the club's Discus, in what had seemed an unlandable valley near Challes*





*While many of the people who wanted to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee accepted her invitation to party at Buckingham Palace, Sue Heard of **Deeside** chose instead to drop in at Balmoral. Sue was not surprised that Her Majesty was away from home and unable to welcome her in person*

Cambridge (Gransden Lodge)

BADGES and achievements for the season have begun to roll in and the good days are seeing the launch rate and fun factor increase. Don Howard, Greg Monaghan and Ian Noble have Silver distances, Martin Gregorie and Keith Turner completed part one of the 100km diploma, and Andrew Watson and Steve Woolcock have done 300km. The single-seater booking system is very popular and club aircraft are doing a lot of cross-country flying. Chris Millson is filling his boots on the cadet scheme and has completed his Bronze and John Glass has soloed. Last winter's crop of Basic Instructors are being kept busy. Most weekend days are fully booked for trial flights, a source of new members, we hope. Martin Boycott-Brown couldn't resist the allure of a career in aviation and has taken up the post of summer Trial Flight Instructor. As well as helping the CFI with courses and trial lessons during the week, he will be involved with flying groups of young people. We have a Faulkes Flying Foundation DG-505 stationed at Gransden. We hope to attract future British world champions before their interest is taken elsewhere.
Gavin Deane

Chilterns (RAF Halton)

LOOKING forward to our longest day, and our task, soaring and *ab initio* week in mid June, we have had a very successful club expedition to Challes in the French Alps. R34 is back on line following many long hours of hard work on a full refurbishment, thanks mainly to Don Knight. BZ, the Falke SF25B, will soon sport a new Sauer engine, whilst DA continues to support our efforts to fly many of the RAF's new recruits.
Dave Sale

Clevelands (Dishforth)

WE are pleased to announce the arrival of our new hot ship – the new Ventus 2CT. At the time of writing, only our CFI Kevin Kiely has had the pleasure of taking her airborne, but a (dis)orderly queue is forming! Our instructor ranks have swollen. Paul Mason (Baldrick) and James Prosser are now qualified as Assistant Instructors, and John Cook has regained his full rating. Three of our members are planning to join an expedition to Lusse in East Germany for the last two weeks in June, and we look forward to hearing of their adventures. We wish our competition pilots 'Good Luck' for the Northerns and the Inter-Services.
Polly Whitehead

Cornish (Perranporth)

CONGRATULATIONS to Nigel Climpson on gaining his Assistant rating. The weather continues to be temperamental, giving us intermittent flying. Gareth and Tracey, welcome visitors from Lasham, had some good flying on our Jubilee weekend, including some unexpected and rare wave – not your Gold or Diamond height stuff, but wave nonetheless! – and some nice trips for reporters from local papers/radio. All good publicity. A cheese and wine evening ended the weekend. We've replaced our old K-6CR (crash victim) with a nicer one at very reasonable cost, and since the pilot was unhurt everything has come up smelling sweetly. Last time I wrote one in three punters were buying trial lesson vouchers to greater heights, producing much-needed income, but now it is more like seven in 10. It really has been a good move. We have gained a few new members this year. Let's hope the trend continues. As I left the club today (raining lightly again) our stalwart grass cutting member John Dale was still there cutting vast acres. Cheers, John! And thanks to all members who keep things running smoothly – much appreciated.
Dean Penny

Cotswold (Aston Down)

DESPITE poor weather, we already have several badge claims. Helena Brogden flew 50km to Edgehill to complete Silver. Chris Huchas has five hours and Paul Lazenby Silver height. Brendon Greenhill and Kevin Kelly are to be congratulated on going solo. Our open day on Jubilee Sunday unfortunately clashed with the first England match in the World Cup although after a slow start we ended the day with a reasonable number of visitors. Thanks to Helena, we had an excellent barbecue in the evening. We are off to a solid start in our section of the Inter-club League, with John Tanner winning the pundit class at The Mynd.
Frank Birlison

Cranwell (RAF Cranwell)

SUMMER is here but, as I write, the sky is a delicate shade of black! Fortunately it has not been like this all the time. Air Experience evenings have again proved to be a popular Friday event. With our keen competitors away over many weekends the list of members to fill the ground duty slots can get very short but this is equally true of the flying list. I believe that for the moment the club is doing particularly well on the GSA Cross-country Ladder. We are preparing to host Team Condor, the RAFGSA Glider Aerobatic Team, and to support them during their performances at the Waddington International Air Show at the end of June. It is the club's 30th anniversary; we have provisionally scheduled September 7 for a suitable celebration. Details will be circulated asap but if you have or have had a connection with the club then please make a note in your diary and give us a call.
Paul Skiera

Crown Service (Lasham)

THE Crown Service Gliding Club (formally the DRA club and originally the RAE club) has now moved its operations from RAF Odiham to Lasham. Our aim is to provide gliding facilities for civil servants and other crown servants. We operate a K-13, a K-8 and a Sport Vega but are reviewing our fleet to match our changed circumstances. Anyone interested in joining us should contact Brian Stevens on 01252 325666.
Tony Newbery

Dartmoor Gliding Society (Brentor)

WITH our need for recruitment in mind several members have spent much time obtaining publicity for the club. Rick Morris has arranged several visits and flights for reporters, resulting in full page features in the local dailies and regular mentions on the radio. Our website, in continuous development by Mark Cooper, has had an encouraging response. Chris and Karon Matten again took chief responsibility for organising and promoting an open day, which generated serious enquiries about full membership. Alan and Annie Holland are working on the second edition of our newsletter. A local production company, making the film of an English novel for German audiences, used a light aircraft, a helicopter and our K-7 and K-13 to shoot a scene where the heroine flies with her glider pilot lover (see photos on p55). We greatly enjoyed watching and appreciated perhaps even more the useful contribution to our funds. We hope that knowledgeable Germans will get equal entertainment from watching our K-7. We welcome Ian Atherton, who has a full rating. Congratulations to Frank Dobbs on his Silver.
Phil Brett

Deeside (Aboyne)

IN May we hosted a leg of the Scottish Inter-club League. The Sunday was magnificent with pundits and intermediates being set 310km. Our chairman, James Davidson, flying intermediate, romped round in 3hrs 20mins beating all, including the pundits! Sadly we did not do so well in other classes and are lying in overall 4th place. The event was notable for the official 'unveiling' of the DGC Field Landing Database. Richard Arkle has spent many months compiling and categorising landable areas in the Scottish Highlands. We hope that this will encourage more visitors to experience the thrills of cross-country flying from Aboyne. The database has already been 'flight-tested' by our CFI, Graham Holloway. To celebrate the Golden Jubilee we held a barbecue however, Sue Heard made her own tribute by dropping in for afternoon tea (guess where). To Sue's disappointment, HMQ was otherwise engaged but Richard has yet another entry for his database. Congratulations to Fiona Barker, Gareth Ferguson and Mark Boyle on soloing; to Malcolm Soper and Mike ➢

Please send entries to *helen@sandg.dircon.co.uk* or Helen Evans, 7 Ollney Road, Minchinhampton, Stroud GL6 9BX to arrive by **August 13** for the October-November issue (October 15 for the following one)



Fulmar

FULMAR and Highland GCs share HGC's site at Easterton Farm, Elgin, Scotland. FGC pilots often visited HGC before dwindling membership and other factors affected the viability of staying at RAF Kinloss. In summer 2000 we decided to move inland to this better soaring site with more instructors, increased use of our tug and, crucially, like-minded people.

The two clubs have an impressive fleet of modern two-seaters and single-seaters. The fleet, private gliders and several powered aircraft are housed in two hangars on the north side of the strip. The site lies 09/27 and has two grass strips split by a winch tow-out track. Winch launches achieve 1,000-1,500ft depending on the wind. In a westerly the local ridge can easily be reached from the winch; and if it isn't working you have plenty of height to return safely. It usually works well up to 1,800ft and you can often move to higher ridges or wave from this. Alternatively, an aerotow can drop you straight into ridge, wave or thermals. Flights are not limited by airspace until FL245; in fact there is very little airspace to worry about within 40 miles of site. When operating, launchpoint frequency is 130.1 and calls are made to "Easterton base". Military aircraft operate from both RAF Kinloss and Lossiemouth; however, we are not limited at all by the RAF movements and can operate seven days (weather permitting).

The club normally operates weekends but for two separate weeks during summer the Scottish Gliding Association ASH 25 comes to Easterton, when a mini task week is held to encourage members' cross-countries. A flight to either Deeside or Feshie qualifies for Silver distance and the Cairngorm mountains provide excellent scope for both wave and thermal cross-countries. Indeed, during summer it would not be unusual to climb in a 10kt thermal to 7,000ft or more over the hills.

We believe that sharing the site has proved very successful and shows what can be achieved when two clubs co-exist and pool their assets. We readily encourage visitors to come and fly from the most northerly gliding club in the country and try it for themselves. We are starting to go further and faster than ever before and there is no reason why you can't come and do the same. If, however, cross-countries don't interest you we boast possibly the best scenery in the country, which is well worth the trip in itself.

Mark Brown

At a glance

Membership: FGC, £22.50/ £45; HGC, £108

Launch type and cost: Winch, £3.50; aerotow £3/min (1st min); £2/min thereafter

Club fleets:
FGC: Acro, Astir, K-18, Motorfalke, Chipmunk
HGC: K-21, Junior

Private gliders: FGC, none; HGC, 9

Instructors: FGC, 4; HGC, 8

Type of lift: ridge, thermal, wave

Operating days:
Weekends, "ASH Weeks" and Bank Holidays
Other days by arrangement

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➢ Whyment on Silver durations (Mike now has Silver). We are gearing up for the 5th UK Mountain Soaring Championships, in September, and for the wave season. Places are still available (details in our advert, p64).
James Davidson

Denbigh (Denbigh)

IN the past month the club has put on road shows in order to promote gliding. We have participated in the Promenade Day at Colwyn Bay together with an open day for cadets at Kinmel Army Camp and at Erddig, a National Trust estate near Wrexham. Thanks must go to Robin Filer, Norman Large and John Friend for their work and enthusiasm in making these shows a success. The National Blood Transfusion Service has used Denbigh GC as a means to publicise their cause and to encourage all of us to give blood. Thanks must go to Tony Cooper, who has regularly given blood and for his cooperation in this publicity. We will feature in this month's National Blood Transfusion Service magazine. Mazda UK used us for a very successful corporate day to coincide with the launch of a new car. Guests and members of the motoring press were given trial flights and everyone enjoyed the experience. Despite the recent unsettled weather, ridge, thermal and wave have combined to give exceptional soaring days. Bookings for our autumn wave flying are progressing well: contact Keith Lewis at Denbigh GC to arrange your visit.
Brian Allen

Devon & Somerset (North Hill)

AFTER an encouraging start the good old British weather wins again! Despite this, memorable flights include Simon Minson passing 400km in a brave attempt at 500 and Peter Startup gaining 300km but just missing out on the Diamond goal, landing at Dunkeswell a couple of kilometres short. The saga of our tug continues. I believe a saga is a long winter's tale told by Norsemen to their grandchildren, though by now this will probably need a PG rating to protect their delicate ears! Tows have been available thanks to the lease of a tug from Nympsfield and the kind auspices of Mike and Barbara Fairclough. After a flash start, our brave boys in the Overseas Nationals seemed to fade somewhat; amassing penalty points for, among other things, daring to have a few glasses of wine and a decent meal before handing in their flight log! We look forward to Enterprise, when such activities are positively encouraged.
Phil Morrison

Dukeries (Gamston)

OUR flying week saw the private gliders on the line in force but unfortunately rain spoiled the latter part of the week. Our annual dinner dance was very well attended. The presentations were: Ron Vickers, Achievement cup; Martin Vincent, longest Silver distance; Glen Barratt and Craig Hobson, Roy Lunn cup for longest cross-country flight; Nick Ashton, most outstanding cross-country flight; Tim Bowles, Chairman's cup. Our chairman received a special award (The improved Adjectives Trophy) for monumental strides to reduce his expletives whilst on the airfield. We now have planning consent to aerotow, and a visiting LS4 from Cranwell was the first to take advantage of this to call in a retrieve. If you're in our area and we seem a better bet than the fields please remember that glider traffic cannot cross the active power runway or its extended centreline below 1,500ft. You will be made warmly welcome.
Mike Terry

East Sussex (Ringmer)

WE eagerly await the arrival from Booker of our Super Cub tug, which has been funded through a Sports Council Lottery Grant. Many thanks to our own Randall Williams for all of his work on this and thanks also to the BGA Development Officer for his assistance. Congratulations to the following: Richard Thoburn for



***Denbigh**'s blood donor Tony Cooper in the K-7M: "It doesn't matter how you get there. please get there any way you can! Save a life – give blood," says the poster*





*Filming a romantic novel at **Dartmoor GC** – the reality, above left. and the final product, above (Ian Chalmers)*

first solo, Mike Millar for BI status, Steven Barter and Ian Bull for Motorglider Instructor Ratings and CFI Dave Williams is a now a regional BI coach. There have been recent trips to Talgarth and Denbigh with varying amounts of success.
Adrian Lyth

Essex (North Weald/Ridgewell)

CONGRATULATIONS and very well done to Tony Brook on gaining his R/T licence and his Assistant Instructor rating, a welcome and much-needed addition to our hard working instructor team. Also well done to Graham Winch, who not only has re-soloed after some 25 years but has been hard at work on a Swallow, which he hopes to have flying by the time you read this news letter. Some good flights were achieved at our Ridgewell site during the May Bank Holiday weekend by members, hopefully the start of better things to come this season not only weather-wise but also flight times. Due to the hard at work by members, facilities at our Ridgewell site have been much improved by the addition of mains water and electricity supplies to our mobile club room. Also on site we now have Avgas so our Super Cub tug does not have to fly off to refuel at another airfield. Well done to all those who were involved in these projects. Trial lessons continue to sell well, resulting in membership enquiries. Little groups are at times to be heard in the clubhouse at North Weald, their heads down, murmuring incantations *sotto voce*. I thought I caught the words "request taxi" but the cab rank is miles away from the airfield and they would never have heard. No doubt all will be revealed later!
Peter Perry

Essex & Suffolk (Wormingford)

DESPITE the variable weather some accomplished members have been achieving notable flights. Johnny Gilbert and Rob Lockett played follow the leader and flew 120, 135 and 200km triangles together, which would seem to be good practice, for John at any rate as he went on to 500km Diamond distance on May 31. The previous week saw Andy Sanderson achieve a cloud climb to 11,000ft, something not managed too often from this part of the world. Frustration of the month must go to John Bone, who missed Silver duration by five minutes. We have had three Bronze completions in the period, (Eric Lowe and Neil and Lynn Morley), a first solo (Richard Robinson) and Kieran Boost gained his PPL. At the Inter-club League's May meeting at Rattlesden we won the day, a first and two seconds (Paul Rice, Colin Neil, and Peter Hibbard) so all in all a pretty satisfying time. But I do wish that summer would properly arrive. But then, don't we all?
Steve Jones

Four Counties (Syerston)

ACHIEVEMENTS have been many recently; Chris Taylor and Robert Richards have gone solo, Toby Wilson has passed his Bronze paper and has a Bronze leg, Dave Hatton has completed 50km, Andy Langton has flown Gold distance and Diamond goal, and Ewan Burnett completed Silver with five hours. The club joined in the Jubilee celebrations with a beacon lit at the end of the runway (or was that the barbecue?) and our CFI, Andy Mason, has bought a share in Kestrel 691 in a bid to escape the back seat of the K-13.
Sue Armstrong

Fulmar (Easterton)

SO the successes roll on. We have taken delivery of the long-awaited K-18, from now-disbanded Phoenix GC. On June 3 Guy Davidson, Stuart Naylor and I went to Deeside for the Inter-club League. I completed my first 300km and Guy landed 0.7km beyond Y on the last day, giving us enough points to win the first leg! Members have made several cross-countries and many soaring flights. Our motorglider is back on line after having wings repainted and C of A, thanks to all who helped with this. Preparations are well under way for Friends and Families day at RAF Kinloss on June 22, which will once again be a great chance for us to expose our sport to a captive audience. Stuart Naylor and Trevor Cook are preparing to fly the Inter-Services at RAF Cosford in August. Congratulations from Fulmar GC to Robert Tait, CFI of our sister club, Highland GC, on his 500km from Easterton – a brilliant and well-deserved achievement for someone who works so hard for both clubs. (See also Club Focus, *opposite*.)
Mark Brown

Highland (Easterton)

WE are the most northerly site in the UK and our CFI Robert Tait has put the club well and truly on the map by doing a 500km flight in thermal from Easterton to complete his Diamond (see p43). David Chalmers did 270km of a 300km flight, choosing to call in at Feshie rather than land out. At the Inter-club League Andy Anderson completed a 300km from Aboyne – sadly for him his logger failed at 200km so he cannot claim it, but we know he did it. Well done Andy. For the Queen's Jubilee Anne Burgess took her LS7 to Cooper Park in Elgin to join other exhibitors and was mobbed by children (future pilots?). This led to extra visitors to our open day two days later, which was very successful despite the rain. We flew some 35 trial lessons, gaining some extra members. Terry Slater flew a couple of very memorable aerobatics displays with Tim Griffiths doing the commentary (a hidden talent we now know he has). Work has now started on the new clubhouse, which we hope to finish by September, so why not come north and fly during our wave season? Check our website out at *www.highglide co.uk*
Roy Scothern

Imperial College (Lasham)

AT the beginning of August our new committee takes over. Alan Bamford replaces me as Captain, and the other new club officials are Luke Cooper-Berry (vice-captain), Nasreen Al-Hakim (treasurer), Jo Bichard (secretary), Jamie Denton (equipment officer) and Lanh Te (publicity officer). Many thanks to this year's committee for all their hard work. Congratulations to Jamie Denton for re-soloing after a two-year break and to Hemraj Nithianandarajah for becoming a Assistant Instructor. Duncan Ashley (finally!) gained his five hours in May to complete Silver and has now become a Basic



*Mark Boyle after his first solo, seen at **Deeside** with his instructor, Colin Wight (Colin Wight)*

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Instructor – try to remember though, that just because you enjoy spinning, it doesn't mean trial flighters will! Good luck to Hemraj and Duncan in the Juniors.
Katie Sykes

Kent (Challock)

OUR open weekend, over the May Bank Holiday, was a great success in spite of the weather. The Kent Air Ambulance was based at Challock on the Saturday and created much interest while Radio Kent broadcast a live, four-hour programme direct from the airfield.
A fine day enabled Tony Moulang to fly 540km in his "Turbo" Ventus, needing to use the engine only for the last 16km. The recent south-westerlies have supplied good ridge days although we are still in sweaters and anoraks! What's all this about global warming?
Caroline Whitbread

Kestrel (RAF Odiham)

CONGRATULATIONS to George Blundel-Pound (Senior) who converted from power flying to flying solo in our K-21, with any luck we shall send his son George (Junior) solo on his 16th birthday in a year's time. The club has run two successful long weekend courses. Thanks to our sister AGA club, Wyvern GC, for their co-operation in lending a K-21 on three weekends. Neil Armstrong and Kevin Buchanan have done an excellent job in getting the diesel winch operational, which will help cut down on our fuel bills. The newly-acquired diesel Land Rover is proving an economic and reliable cable retrieve vehicle. Well done to Barry Sealey and team for striping the K-13 fuselage and to Ian Jackson from the RAFGSA Wrekin GC for his help. The arrival of an ASW 27 has caused envious looks from members and should bump up the cross-country averages. After hosting the Crown Service GC (formally DRA) for seven years, we say goodbye and wish them well as they relocate to Lasham.
Simon Boyden

Lakes GC (Walney Island)

JUST when we thought it was safe to go flying again, the weather has shown that it can still spoil everything. I think the calendar is a couple of days out as we always seem to have more good Mondays and Tuesdays rather than good weekends. We have finally sold one of our tugs, the Super Cub. Our new chairman, Roger Copley, and all the members thank John Martindale, our retiring chairman, for all his good work, and wish him well for the future. Peter Lewis has also stepped down after a long and successful reign as CFI, the club also wish him many long and happy flights in the future.



The husband-and-wife team of Nicky and Ted Brandi soloed at Wolds then again at their club, ***Northumbria***

Dave North, our new CFI, has taken up the challenge of whipping us all into shape.
Peter Seddon

Lasham Gliding Society (Lasham)

MARGARET Holt flew solo on her 16th birthday, watched by her instructor Bob Johnson and her parents. Margaret gave an excellent interview to the local TV station before and after her flight. Jeremy Grindle flew the Surrey and Hants GC Grob to Old Sarum for Silver distance. Keith Grant abandoned his already rigged private glider at Lasham, and was flown to Old Sarum in the tug aircraft by DCFI Gordon Macdonald, then flying back to Lasham in the Grob for Silver distance. A case of two birds with one stone. Chris Mann went solo after a week's course last year. Returning this year for a two-week course, he completed Bronze and Silver. The club's and Hugh Kindell's Duo Discuses went to Jaca, where Andy Aveling and Hugh instructed. To quote CFI Graham McAndrew: "A big thank you to Andy and Hugh. Together they gave a lot of members their first taste of mountain flying, and produced many happy smiling faces". David Masson flew an 18-metre LS6 315km at 107km/h on April 15 to gain the 20-metre O/R record. David flew 759km on April 16 at over 100km/h to gain his 750km Diploma while Bernie Morris flew his Nimbus 3 758km to gain his. Flights of 500km have been achieved by Chris Lovall (twice), Paul Kite (twice), Allan Purnell, Tim Parker and Al Nunn. Up to the end of May, eight flights of 400km, and 34 flights of 300km have been flown from Lasham.
Tony Segal

Lincolnshire (Strubby)

THE expedition to the Mynd was spoilt to a great extent by the weather. Margaret Childs did, however, complete Silver with duration and distance. Congratulations also to Phil Pickering on his Assistant Instructor rating and Richard Coleman, who completed his Bronze and Cross-country Endorsement. Displaying a rigged Pirat in Lincoln town centre yielded a lot of interest and got us three new members on the same weekend. Sadly, we lost Jenny Allen a few weeks ago (see obituaries, p61).
Dick Skerry

London (Dunstable)

FIVE pilots achieved 500km on April 13, Ed Downham at 113.90km/h. We pulled in a record number of people during our Open Day. On duller days plenty of good wine and food was consumed during the Cerdanya trip with wave on the better days; congratulations to Simon Edwards on his Gold height. Welcome back to Mike Till as seasonal course instructor. Vicky Grayson takes over as winch maintenance engineer on the retirement of Dick after 30 years. Vintage Glider weekend saw high winds and rain; evening festivities made up for it, however, with generous acceptance of Bryan Middleton's Old Gertie's VGC Brew. Well done to cadet Amelia Nash (Silver distance) and Tom Rose (soloing in a T-21). At the National Glider Aerobatics Championships at Saltby, 21-year-old Alex Yates took second place in the Intermediate Class, (Fox). Carl Sorace came 1st in the Beginners class with Mark Erland 2nd and Adrian Hobbs 3rd. The Inter-club League gave us winners in Martin Smith (Novice) and Peter Harvey (Pundit); Malcolm Birch was 2nd (Intermediate). JJ is again running lead-and-follow courses, bookings now being taken.
Geoff Moore

Mendip (Halesland)

OUR splendid new MT building was due to become operational in early June. Although the first of this year's Group Trial Lesson evenings was cancelled at the last moment, it proved a blessing in disguise when the winch chose that day to go sick. The standby ex-North Hill Supacat kept us flying and justified its purchase. April and May have produced some excellent ridge and thermal soaring days, generating Bronze legs for Mat Vallins and Ian Phillips. The conditions also enticed Clive Brain into a Silver distance attempt. His valiant two-hour flight covered much of Somerset and a bit of Devon but the eventual outlanding was just under the required 50km away. Other achievements worthy of mention are Dave Beck's first solo and the BI rating for Gordon Dennis. We have managed to attract several



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new members, including two ladies. Immediately prior to the foot-and-mouth outbreak we were showing a gradual rise in the number of launches and the hours flown. Recovery after the two-month closure was gradual at first but our latest figures show not only the expected improvement on last year but the best May figures for many years.
Keith Simmons

Midland (The Long Mynd)

MOBILE phone crime reached out from the mean streets of our cities when, after a retrieve, Mike Whitton drove off with one belonging to a farmer. He thought it was his syndicate partner's and duly ignored its desperate trilling, finally switching it off. A quick PR patch-up was successful. Veteran K-21 797 is reborn as ELE after a complete refurbishment in Poland and surviving a rollover road accident in Germany. (Please buy CH a brandy if you should meet him). We have 27 new members as a result of our recruitment drive. One of them, Andrew Whybrow, was on our fixed-price-to-solo scheme and achieved this after 53 launches and on his sixteenth birthday. At the time of writing we are just leading Rockpolishers. David Rance did a 490km and Tony Danbury and Dominic Haughton achieved Diamond goals. On Saturday, June 1, Glyn MacArthur flew to Camphill in his Vega to retrieve the plate and then announced himself on standby to take off again the moment they send a pilot to get it back. Sailor Malan would have loved it! A geriatric Battle of Britain.
Roland Bailey

Nene Valley (Upwood)

WE failed to liaise with the weatherman when we changed the date of our open day to June 9 and all got a little damp. Advantage was taken of the Jubilee weekend by holding a mini-task week; the weather was mostly kind and some good flying achieved. Membership is slowly growing and we are pleased to announce that Ali Bunclark from St Ivo School was awarded our first Kittyhawk Flying Scholarship of the year. This should finance Ali's flying most of the way to his first solo flight. From our Meech flying family, Tracy Meech, who first went solo on in August last year, has Silver, completed with a five-hour flight from Upwood to Husbands Bosworth. We are all very proud of her progress. Friday evening trial lessons are again proving popular and our next big event will be our task week commencing July 27 whilst the most important event will be a safety meeting on July 22.
John Bennett

Newark & Notts (Winthorpe)

THE season started, dare we say it... well! Enough to tempt some of our more intrepid members to attempt cross-countries. Commiserations to Marcus Willet, who attempted his Silver distance and joins the lofty ranks of those who have landed out for real. Congratulations to Mike Noon and Dave Redfearn, the club's latest Basic Instructors, and to John Maddison, who has qualified as a BI coach. Talking of field landings, Dave Prolsolek achieved a cross-country distance almost equal to his wingspan (25m) and wins this year's wooden spoon for the first outlanding at North Muskham!
Chris Dring

Norfolk (Tibenham)

THERE was considerable public interest in our stand at the recent week-long "History of Flight in Norfolk" exhibition, in the magnificent Millennium Forum in Norwich. We are grateful to Marilyn Hood and the BGA for their support and, in particular, the high-class publicity material and display stands, which compared more than favourably with those of other exhibitors, who included Norwich Airport and the RAF. Barry Marcham and Andy Smith represented us for the whole week with good support from other members. Focal point of the exhibit was our fixed-wheel Astir, with many a cockpit photograph being taken. The event, which raised the profile of gliding both at regional and county level, will hopefully produce more visitors and members at Tibenham, and indeed in East Anglian clubs generally. We were happy to host the Vintage GC Rally at the beginning of June, which ran in parallel with our Task Week. The weather was generally poor but, undeterred, the Vintage club members cheerfully made the best of the conditions. Poor weather also bedevilled the Inter-club League. The usual suspects have taken part in two difficult rounds, at Rattlesden and Crowland. Norfolk is second behind Essex & Suffolk, with Chas Morgan and Peter Ryland scoring well for us. Terry Slater is organising two wave camps at Highland GC in September and October with several members and syndicates already planning the 500-mile trip to the edge of the Moray Firth. We hope one of the club's glass training gliders will go, with a high performance two-seater for advanced flying and tuition. It will be an exciting opportunity for a wide range of our members to experience conditions not usually found in Norfolk.
Alan Harber

Northumbria (Currock Hill)

THINGS are looking up. Our broken Puchacz has returned with a new wing. Another has been purchased

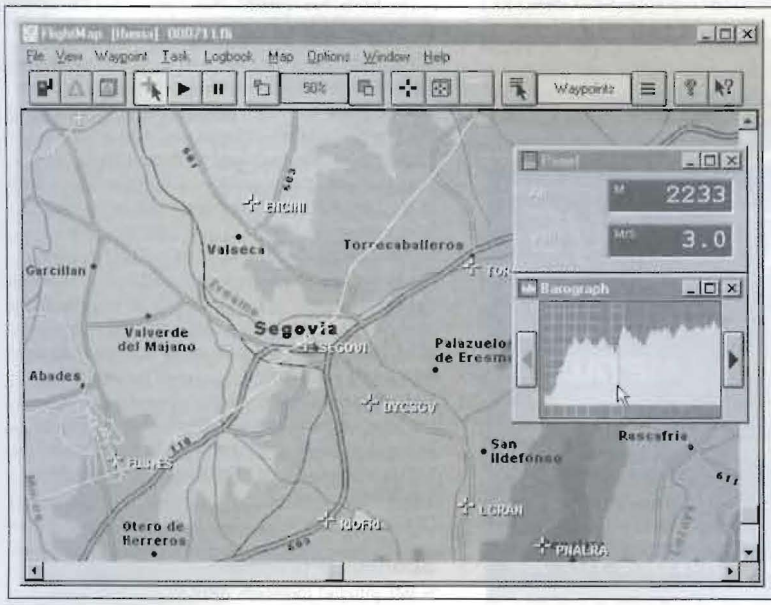


Dave Beck, the latest solo pilot gracing the skies at the Halesland base of ***Mendip GC*** *(Keith Simmons)*

from the Navy, so our two-seater strength is up to three. On April 9, Mark Stobo took his Pirat to Richmond (Yorks) to become the first of our cadet entry to complete Silver. The following day, Ian Plant became the second with a flight west of Carlisle in the club's Astir. They have applied to enter the Junior Nationals. On the same day, Alan Adams flew his five hours in his Standard Cirrus. Just over a month later he achieved Silver height with a wave gain of 7,283ft. Recent solos include Craig Storey (another cadet) and John Hire. Both have now completed two Bronze legs. The husband-and-wife team of Nicky and Ted Brandi soloed at Pocklington, perversely. Nicky gained a Bronze leg. Both re-soloed at Currock on their return. Roy Mitchison has done a 100km or two and our Hon Sec Don Welsh took his ASW 15 to Milfield to both complete his Silver distance AND retrieve the Hotspur Shield, our inter-club trophy. This is particularly meritorious as the Borders lot are at an advantage, their journey to Currock being downhill. On May 3 we had a very successful quiz and barbecue evening. Spring Bank Holiday Monday was a club open day. The public showed considerable interest but, as ever, half the day was lost to adverse weather. However, 24 were flown.
Leonard Dent

North Wales (Llantisilio)

OK, so it's summer? Will somebody tell the great CFI in the sky that we'd appreciate something a bit different? Still, over here in Wales, we have managed to fly most weekends. Lots of practice at crosswind landings, high wind flying, etc. All good instructor stuff. When the site does boom, we get some good soaring, but it has been



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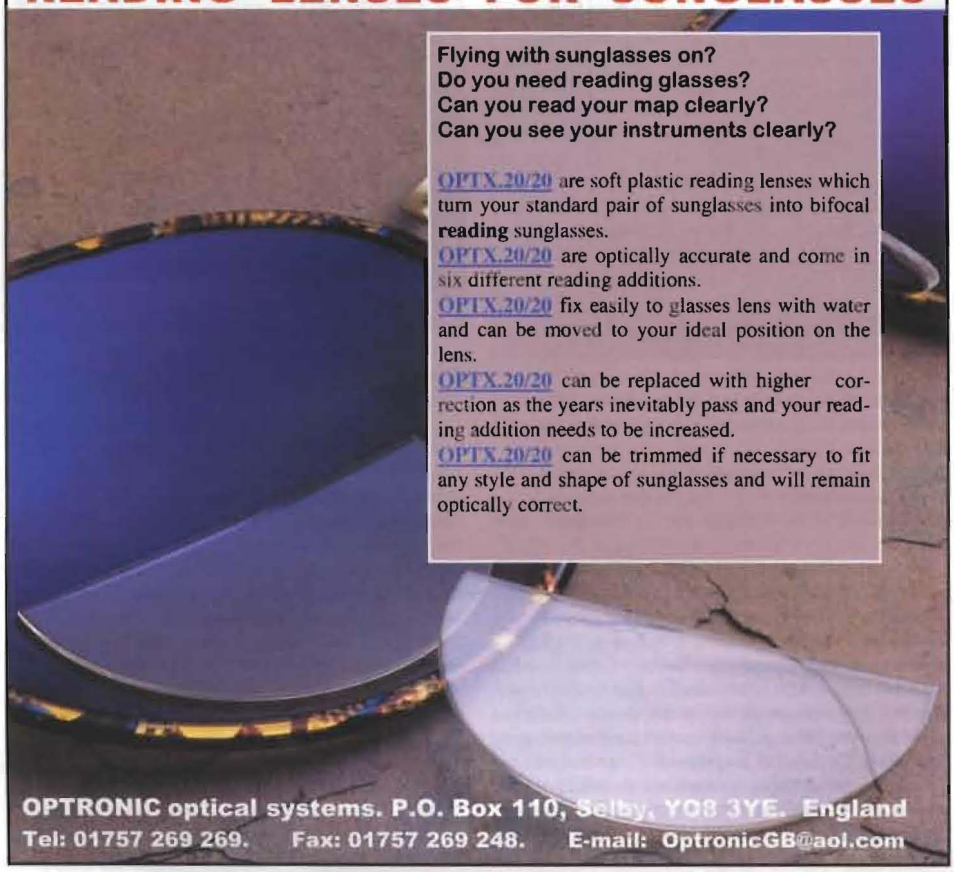
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Illustration shows the new map for Spain. Data is supplied by Bartholomew Digital Data.

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➢ in very narrow bits recently. We are selling a K-8. Apologies to Ian Samples, whose first trophy in 20 years I wrongly attributed last *S&G* to John Farley. Crawl, crawl, sorry, Ian. The longest flight of the year is yours and Mike Carlin's. We have a couple of new members and lots of people turning up at the site for BI flights. We find that this is a good way to get new members. Gliding needs this. (So does the treasurer.)
David Trotter

Oxford (RAF Weston on the Green)

WELL done to all the OGC over-achievers over the past months. Particularly Simon Walker and Maz Makari who took Gold and Silver in the Sports class of the National Glider Aerobatics Championship, at Saltby. And to young Anthony Buck who had his first solo flight and solo cable break shortly after his sixteenth birthday. OGC also managed to 'achieve' in the Inter-club League with Howard Stone getting a first in the intermediate class, Gordon Craig and Carole Shepherd a second in the pundit class and somebody else was caught out with a fourth in the Novice class.
Steve McCurdy

Peterborough & Spalding (Crowland)

THE Jubilee weekend provided five good days of flying. Many members and families chose to stay over and enjoy the social side too. Congratulations to Marcus Gale, who soloed two days after his 16th birthday in May, and within days attempted his two-hour duration flight but in fact achieved five hours one minute. Marcus first came to us in May 2000 whilst pursuing his Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award with his school CCF. He joined our cadet scheme when he reached the age of 15, and proved to be an above-average pilot. He intends to join the RAF as a pilot and we all wish him the very best of luck. We welcome Phil Ingamells, Tevik Ismail and Mark Wickson into our cadet scheme, who – with Daniel French – bring it up to full strength. Further achievements include Hilary Reeves's re-soloing after a few years' break. Shaun McLaughlin, a former cadet, has his Silver duration and Robert Thiel landed out on a football field and didn't score a goal. Many thanks to Black Mountains GC for their warm welcome, the weather did let us down but we managed two days of exciting ridge flying. The inter-club in May provided one good day of landouts followed by a barbecue for around 100 members and visitors. The second day was scrubbed due to bad weather. In June, DCFI Kev Fear was to head a flying expedition of eight people, courtesy of the Royal Navy, to Ocana in Spain.
Joan Pybus

Portsmouth Naval (Lee on Solent)

WHILE a horde of caravans and trailers descended on Keevil for the Jubilee weekend, others decided Spain was the place for them – probably wise! The Keevil trip saw Paula Aitken complete her Cross-country Endorsement. She managed to fit some thermalling around trying to arrange inter-club competitions. Back at Lee the RF-5 guys have been trying to get their Beetle engine to work – is this really sensible? Meanwhile the Chippie is doing its final few tows before the Supermonk with new tuggie David Gibbs at the helm (nautical pun). I must also claim glory for the most Solent crossings in a single flight, some strange conditions confining the lift to the sea! The computer kept saying I was 200ft above glide but five miles is a long way over the wet! Southampton University have been hard at work being students, in the interludes between drinking they have been busy stealing K-13s, K-21s, Discuses, in fact anything they can get their hands on.
Pete Smith

Scottish (Portmoak)

SOME intrepid members spent an excellent week at

Feshie with our "Walking On Air" people during May. Although the late May was very wet, we did have badge claims from the following: David Allan, Ricky Jackson and Archie McGurr all got Silver distance, and Alan Boyd got Silver height. From the Feshie trip, Bill Grieve got an unusual welcome when he landed near Fraserburgh ("I had to land because I had reached the Moray Firth coast!"). The farmer proudly showed off his new-born foal and is now considering naming it Glider. Neil Irving and Andrew Bates are both assistant-rated instructors, and Ron Mackie has completed Bronze. We are once again providing a static and aerobatic display at the East Fortune Museum of Flight's airshow.
Ian Easson

Shenington (Shenington)

THE weather is generally dire but we are undefeated! We had a very successful "Bring a Mate Day" at the start of May, where we were effectively swamped with members' mates! We hope some of these will translate into new members or – at the very least – gliding-friendly members of the public. The club diary remains busy, with a BGA Soaring Course in June and a Beagle Pup Club Fly In on July 6-7 to coincide with Mary Meagher's Big American barbecue/party on Saturday, July 6. Local clubs are welcome to join us at the latter to enjoy the baseball, line dancing and jazz band, not to mention the Chili cooking competition and lots of food. We also have a BMPA fly-in on July 27-28 and are hoping to hold a task week from August 5-9. The inter-club is operating once again. Thanks to Alan Langlands who is organising our team this year. The midweek courses remain busy so if you plan to visit us then please do give us advance warning by calling the office or emailing! We look forward to seeing you.
You can keep up with our news at our website: *www.gliding-club.co.uk*
Tess Whiting

Shropshire Soaring Group (Sleap)

I DOUBT if even Baron Munchausen could put much of a gloss on our activities over the past few months. We've had a few wave flights, but no great climbs. Colin Ratcliffe again tried for Diamond goal only to find conditions around Hereford impossible; at least he got home without a retrieve. We've had three pilots nearly reach Talgarth. Ric Prestwich and Dave Triplett went to Feshie but broke no records. Charles Webb landed out at Tern Hill. We arranged a soaring week for the Jubilee and after only one decent day's flying in the week considered sending an order for ribs of cypress, reeds and pitch and plans for an ark converted from cubits to metric. However, by the time that this is in print I am sure the weather will have improved and that we shall have grasped any opportunities going.
Keith Field

Southdown (Parham)

"WHEN this sign is under water then the airfield is closed." A Gloucestershire wag had added this to the common-sense advice on offer outside the clubhouse at the Cotswold club recently. Despite the ever-threatening possibility of rain, the welcome was as warm as ever and the Southdown contingent enjoyed what soaring there was. Back at Parham, the family Kuen visited us from the Fussen club in Germany to enjoy the delights of aerobatic flying. Guy Westgate obliged as P1 in the Fox despite the strong wind. They departed happy, though rather gyroscopically challenged. Our one-day introductory courses are proving a success in that they are locating a source of new members. The visit from Evening Argus newspapers also provided welcome publicity. Niall Burke resoloed after an interval of 18 years, and John Raynor completed his Bronze. James Stewart went solo on his sixteenth birthday to a fanfare of cheers from enthusiastic supporters from nearby Seaford College, where he is a pupil. Frank Howard has decided to retire from gliding after more years than



***Oxford GC**'s Anthony Buck soloed – and had his first solo cable break – soon after his sixteenth birthday*

I dare mention. His escape from occupied Europe to join the British Army in WW2 is legendary at Southdown. He will always be welcome here, and wherever pilots old and young gather to talk about flying. During the Jubilee weekend, Guy Westgate again won the National Aerobatic Gliding Championships – congratulations.
Peter J Holloway

South London (Kenley)

IS there any truth in the rumour that summer has arrived? If so, does anyone know which day it falls on? But we won't let a little thing like rain dampen our spirits... Congratulations to Mark Corrance on doing all three parts of his Silver in one epic out-and-return from Parham to Lasham, a truly great effort for the day's conditions. Several members enjoyed a long visit to Hus Bos in May, as always they were made extremely welcome and had a thoroughly good time. We are pleased to report that our long-established association with the Marie Curie Trust was again a success, grossing over £6,000 on our charity day. Along with a good turnout of members, the weather was kind and the day memorable. Our thanks go to Peter Poole, the CFI, for all his work in keeping our fleet airworthy. Without his hard work, we would all be flying kites! Also well done to Peter Bolton for his well-received lectures on our sport to Croydon Airport Society and others.
Alan Seear

Staffordshire (Seighford)

THANKS to the efforts of Chris Jones and gang on the publicity front, our May Open Days were a roaring success. Over the two days we had 75 visitors and logged 81 trial flights – and some new members. Our next Open Days will be on August 25 and 26. The Leek Squadron of the ATC is affiliated to the club, allowing up to four Cadets the same flying benefits as members. Congratulations to Chris Johnson (five hours) and Nick Rolfe (50km) who have completed Silvers. Mark Burton has an Instructor Rating, and Ian Taylor and Chris



*James Stewart of **Southdown** soloed on his sixteenth birthday and is seen with instructor Rod Walker*

Johnson have BI Ratings. Jeff Heard (K-6) flew an O/R to Hus Bos (176km) – Derek Heaton (K-6) followed, but didn't quite make it back. Chris Jones hopped to Needwood Forest in the club's Skylark 4. John McLaughlin has a commanding lead in the club ladder after 'another' 300km (DG-400). James Davies re-soloed, and has both Bronze legs. We are looking forward to soaring/flying weeks. Our Youth Flying Week at the end of July will include the selection of the winner of our Sponsored Cadet Scheme for 2002, who will get training to solo (see *www.staffordshiregliding.co.uk*).
Paul (Barney) Crump

Strathclyde (Strathaven)

DESPITE the rain, our open day went ahead in June. After negotiating two changes in operating ends of the field (due to the wind) and sheltering from spells of pouring rain under the T-21 wing, we still managed to launch around 20 visitors and importantly gained some new members. Jim McTaggart also provided a great air display in a Chipmunk. Thanks to all those who helped. Amongst all this excitement, progress on the "new hangar" has continued, our AGM was well attended and some good flying days have led to a number of soaring flights. For more information please visit our website: *www.strathclydeglidingclub.co.uk*
Scott Neilson

Stratford on Avon (Snitterfield)

COURSES and evening flying are picking up well; Phil Pickett is course instructor and Mark Pedwell is winch driver. Congratulations to David Ireland on his five hours in the Dart 17. Good news: the club's Kubota tractor has been recovered after being stolen, thanks to a photo in the local press of stolen goods.
Harry Williams

Surrey & Hants (Lasham)

ALREADY a treasured – and distant – memory, April provided a spectacular early season experience, with "Super Tuesday" (16th) not only giving David Masson 750km at over 100km/h, but also a Silver height and duration for Bob Burton, Silver height for Tim Coldicote and an almost-Diamond-goal for Nigel Pocock, whose special interest subject is now "logger batteries"! Other badge flights include Silver for Chris Mann, Jeremy Grindle and Keith Grant, and Gold for Gerry English (at Benalla) and myself, with Diamond height courtesy of Aboyne. It's June and we're washing mud instead of bugs off the gliders. We lost most of the first Southern Inter-club League meeting to weather, and all the second, but after heroic efforts in unappealing conditions S&H is second to Lasham – we hope to arrange a replacement date. Next is the comp season, with a record eight S&H gliders in the Lasham regionals.
Graham Prophet

The Soaring Centre (Husbands Bosworth)

CONGRATULATIONS to Jon Woodcock and Brian Scaysbrook on Silver durations, and to Simon Ramsay for Silver distance and first 300km. Mike Jordy has set a new UK 400km triangle record. The first 500km of the year has been done by Paul Crabb. Dave Booth completed 729km of an attempted 750km flight in June. We have held two very successful evenings of trial flights for women only. Twenty-seven ladies turned up and some plan to come back! Many thanks to Lindsey Astle, who organised the evenings, and to all who helped. The new members' kitchen is now finished and in use. Tom Burton and Alan Fretwell have been racing at Le Mans in the club motorglider. Barney Toulson has renewed his BGA MGIR (Motor Glider Instructor Rating) to allow him to do field landing checks and Mike Cater and Jonathan Walker have gained their BGA MGIR.
Siobhan Hindley

Trent Valley (Kirton-in-Lindsey)

JOHN Margave and Richard Trussell have gone solo and

Club news

Geoff Davey has his UK cross-country diploma. Pat Holland did a splendid job of directing the Glass Cup but neglected to order any good weather, nevertheless everyone made a valiant effort against a gale of wind with Colin Metcalfe a worthy winner. Several members manned the early shift to fly a group of Scouts over the Bank Holiday. The trophy shelf groans under the weight of the rose bowl, recently liberated in fine style by Gordon Bowes and Paul James, and Rasher the pig still awaits rescue by the reluctant aviators of Saltby.
John Kitchen

Ulster (Bellarena)

MAY started with us well on track to equal our best launch rate but, alas, atrocious weather determined otherwise. Our open day on the first of June had to compete with events to mark the Jubilee celebrations but nevertheless proved very successful. A large turnout



***York** instructor Tom Stoker (right) was asked by DCFI Brian Pritchard (left) to capture in watercolours the rare moment when Brian, who shares the Libelle with Tom, soared between two well-defined wave bars over the club's Rufforth site (Chris Brayne)*

included a BBC film crew who had seen our advert for the open day and featured the club the following week in a local what's on programme. It pays to advertise! A further BBC programme "Sky High" was recorded on June 8. Congratulations to Martin Earle on his PPL.
Seamus Doran

Vale of White Horse (Sandhill Farm)

BY the time this appears we should, with any luck, have completed the purchase of our very own tug. This should mean we can offer much better opportunities for soaring flights, with earlier starts on task, and soaring on more marginal days. Congratulations to Cliff Beveridge, who has recently qualified as a Basic Instructor. Now an apology: in a previous club news I said that Jane Nash was first round our local 100km triangle; in fact, that honour went to her husband, Steve. We would like to do more cross-countries, but, like everyone, are suffering from an all-too-reliably poor British summer.
Graham Turner

Vintage Glider Club

THE unique Viking 1 was sold to Mike Beach and flies from the Chilterns club. The Harbinger is now owned by Sue and Jed Edyvean; the Kite 2, "Percy," by Chris Raine, and the original Petrel has been bought by Bob Gaines, President of the Vintage Soaring Association of America. In Germany, the Goeppingen Collection burnt down, destroying a Kranich 2, Minimoa No 100, a Meise, Rhoensperber and Rhoenbussard. Better news from Germany is that the new Reiher 3, built by the Oldtimer Club Wasserkuppe, has flown, revealing an impressive performance. A second is being built by VGC members at Achmer. Another German project is a replica Grune Post glider of 1932, being built by Helmeth Degenhardt. Both gliders should be ready in two years time. A factory at Jesow (Grunau) in Poland has been set up to restore and build old gliders, as well as to work on newer ones. It is using the Edmund Schneider workshops, which once saw the production of hundreds of Grunau Babies, as well as the mighty Moazagotl. Chris Tonks has been working on a Grunau Baby 2b in North Wales, which had the WL registration LN+ST, to be restored by the Welsh and the Danes together. It seems that this was one of six owned by the Danish Air Army from 1941-1943. In 1943, the Danes were stopped gliding and their aircraft were taken over by the WL;, as WL aircraft, they received post-1943 WL registrations. In 1945, British forces arrived in Denmark and took all WL-registered gliders back to Germany. Among them were the Danish Air Army's Grunau Babies, which were sent to Britain and Canada. In Denmark, a beautiful little Hutter H-17a, once Danish but found in Norway, has been restored. Our 30th International Rally at Achmer and two Rendez-Vous meetings (at Nordhorn on the Dutch-German border, and at Rhan, the Czech Rhon) took place in July.
Chris Wills

Welland (Lyveden)

ALTHOUGH the *ab initio* flying week was hampered by the variable weather, some members were able to take advantage of this opportunity for concentrated flying. More experienced members who have notched up successes recently include Jason Hammett (Bronze and five hours), Paul Porter (Bronze and Silver height) and Peter Heywood (five hours). By the time this appears we will have held our open weekend and another games evening. Our flying week starts on July 27.
Jane Cooper

York Gliding Centre (Rufforth)

CONGRATULATIONS to John Taylor on gaining his basic instructor rating, after a mid-life development layoff and a return to solo flying. Despite more extremes on the weather front, club flying has remained buoyant with fully-booked visitor schedules, record numbers of new members (especially on our fixed price to solo scheme) and also increasing numbers of group bookings. We have the giant model weekend again this year, building on the huge success of the previous two years. With a number of members completing Bronze with Cross-country Endorsements recently we are expecting a crop of Silver legs this season. Thanks are due to the loyal band of members who continue to volunteer to keep the grass runways in golf course condition, look after the office and clubhouse, and keep the flowers blossoming. We are grateful to the few who dutifully fly the tugs and keep the other duties manned.
Mike Cohler

Yorkshire (Sutton Bank)

THE club has now bought some 27 hectares of woodland to the north-east of the airfield with the kind help of Mrs Daphne Sharpe, whose family were founder members during the 1930s. It is the intention to clear-fell some seven hectares to the north-east of 200 by the end of this year and prepare the ground for seeding during the spring of 2003, doubling the width of 200/20. To commemorate the occasion Daphne planted a Walnut tree at the edge of the caravan park in a short ceremony followed by a lengthy reception in the club bar. In future this north-east end of the airfield will be known as the Sharpe End. This brings the YGC into the forestry business should anyone care to build a T-21. Well done to: Oliver Cottreil and Steve Atkinson on their first solo flights; Tony Kirkby for Bronze plus endorsement and Steve Ball for his five-hour flight. Visitors from Hus Bos, Bannerdown, Stratford, Bath, Wilts & North Dorset and Shalbourne GCs have all contributed to the club atmosphere (and the bar takings). Ken Bryer from Bannerdown completed a five-hour flight in north-east wave (said never to have been done before).
Bryan Boyes

Obituaries

Jenny Allen – Lincolnshire

JENNY (1939-2002) died recently, following a short illness. She first came to the club with her husband Ken, to support him, when he started learning to fly. Though never a flyer, Jenny took on the role of social secretary-cum-caterer. She was famous for cooking enormous breakfasts in the tea bus. A visit to the top deck invariably ended with a mug of Jenny's brew. She then took on organising the club's social functions with an enthusiasm and energy that some younger people could not hope to match. These were invariably a roaring success, and enjoyed by all. Come rain or shine, if Ken was on the site Jenny would be on the bus. Our thoughts are with Ken and the family. Goodbye, Jenny, we'll miss you.
Dick Skerry



Beryl Stephenson – London

BERYL (1919-2002), who died on June 4, was the other half of the well-known "Steve and Beryl" team *(pictured above in 1950)*, who were one of the centrepieces of British gliding for so many years.

She had been a member of the London club since 1938. After their marriage, whenever Geoffrey ("Steve") went gliding she went too, summer and winter. She crewed for him at nationals and internationals for more than 20 years. During the drab post-war years her vivacious personality and vitality were a real tonic at the club. Her welcome to new members and helpful advice on retrieving were legendary. "Go and ask Beryl" was often heard.

In the days of free distance tasks and no radios she herself had an uncanny sense, combined with good knowledge of the weather, of where Geoffrey might land. On one occasion she drove to a small airfield over 250km from Lasham without phoning back to Control and Geoffrey arrived half an hour later. She said she "knew" that he could get there.

In later years when Geoffrey was task-setter for many Nationals at Dunstable she was an invaluable part of the team, arranging the social side of the comp and choosing the prizes.

Beryl was a keen gardener and avid reader. When Geoffrey was painting on their many caravan holidays she would read and look forward to the pub lunch with crab salad. She was always happy and everyone she met enjoyed being in her company.

Let us pray that this wonderful "team" are together again.
Carr Withall

Tom Zealley – London

MANY readers will remember Tom Zealley PhD (1927-2002) as a competition pilot and ex-chairman of the BGA, but he was much more than that. He was a dedicated stalwart of our sport not only in active flying both at home and abroad, but also in committee work and management at local, national, European and World levels. Tom (right) started gliding at Dunstable in 1959 and I first met him flying competitions in the 1960s. Later, as a fellow-member of the BGA Competitions Committee, Tom becoming its chairman in due course. He "practised what he preached", flying in nationals and other comps from the early sixties to the early nineties. His call sign Zed Ship will be remembered by many. He was also an instructor and a two-Diamond pilot. There have been rumours of a third (height) Diamond flown abroad (but not claimed through the BGA) as part of his enthusiasm for mountain flying at Zell am See and other Alpine sites.



For no less than 13 years he was chairman of the London GC at Dunstable. Not only that, he fought a battle with the air traffic authorities about airspace for the nearby Luton airport so that the club could continue to fly from the historic Dunstable site. Today, they operate from inside the Luton CTR under rules formulated during the Zealley period.

From 1980-85 he was chairman of the BGA, which requires no further comment in terms of dedication! He was also UK delegate to the International Gliding Commission (IGC, previously CIVV), in due course being elected as an IGC Vice-President and Bureau member. At Royal Aero Club (RaeC) level, Tom was awarded its Silver Medal in 1984, was chairman from 1988-90 and was one of its Vice-Presidents at the time of his death. His RAeC work resulted in his becoming UK Delegate to the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI), which deals not only with gliding but the other airsports as well. He was a respected chairman of the FAI Statutes Committee for many years, retiring only due to ill health, and being awarded the FAI Bronze Medal. At European level, Tom was instrumental in setting up the European Gliding Union (EGU) founded in Paris in 1992. This short account of Tom's work for airsports is inadequate, but shows his dedication, particularly beyond the launch-point. One memory of mine is that, when talking to me, Tom often used to call himself a "devout civilian," a gentle leg-pull on me for being in the armed services.

Roger Barrett (ex-BGA chairman and Dunstable pilot) writes that Tom had a combination of intelligence and sensitivity that made him a brilliant manager of people, able to persuade lots of us to work hard in furthering the cause in which he wanted us to be involved.

Tom's PhD was in chemistry and he was a world expert in polymers and films, working for ICI. The family house is an old mill on the river Coly, near Axminster, and when he left the Dunstable area he brought his glider to the Devon & Somerset club at North Hill. He was very proud of his refurbishment of the Canadian "Little Giant" water-driven turbine, which in modern times supplies electricity, but was fitted by his grandfather in 1891 to drive the newly-installed roller mills and later to provide electric lighting.

Returning to gliding, this mechanical dexterity included the design of single-man rigging and tow-out devices before these became more common. He was indeed a versatile man.

Our hearts go out to wife June, son John, and the rest of the family. Goodbye, Tom, old friend and "devout civilian". You served us well.

Ian Strachan

BGA Badges

	Pilot	Club *(place of flight)*	Date
FAI 1,000KM DIPLOMA			
12	Steve Olender	Cleveland *(Santo Tome)*	12/08/02
BGA 750KM DIPLOMA			
25	David Masson	Lasham *(Lasham)*	16/04/02
DIAMOND BADGE			
614	Richard Starey	Booker *(Tocumwal)*	8/12/01
615	Phil Kirk	Southdown *(Minden)*	23/03/02
Diamond distance			
1-870	Paul Cox	ex-pat *(Tocumwal)*	8/12/01
1-871	Philip Hutchinson	4C *(Darling Downs)*	2/12/01
1-872	Ian Reekie	London	16/4/02
1-873	David Masson	Lasham	16/04/02
Diamond goal			
2-2807	Gerald English	S&H *(Benalla)*	07/02/02
2-2809	Don Mallinson	ex-pat *(Omarama)*	03/03/02
2-2810	Keith Auchterlonie	Bath, Wilts *(Benalla)*	10/01/02
2-2811	Chris Fiorentini	Cairngorm *(Narromine)*	12/02/02
2-2812	Brian Harrison	BMGC *(Lasham)*	16/04/02
2-2813	Ian Reekie	London	16/04/02
2-2814	David Masson	Lasham	16/04/02
Diamond height			
3-1566	Chris Bryning	Seahawk *(Aboyne)*	26/10/01
3-1567	George Emsden	Lasham *(Minden)*	05/12/01
3-1568	Paul Clarke	Booker *(Aboyne)*	11/10/01
3-1569	William Prophet	Lasham *(Aboyne)*	28/03/02
3-1570	Andrew Warbrick	Deeside	23/04/02
3-1571	Gary Nuttall	Nene Valley *(Minden)*	23/02/02
3-1572	David Williamson	BMGC *(Minden)*	12/03/02
3-1573	Tanya Starey	ESC *(Cerdanya)*	23/04/02
3-1574	Richard Starey	ESC *(Cerdanya)*	20/04/02
3-1575	Phil Kirk	Southdown *(Minden)*	23/03/02
3-1576	Richard Thirkill	Southdown *(Minden)*	23/03/02
3-1577	Anthony Challoner	Southdown *(Minden)*	23/03/02

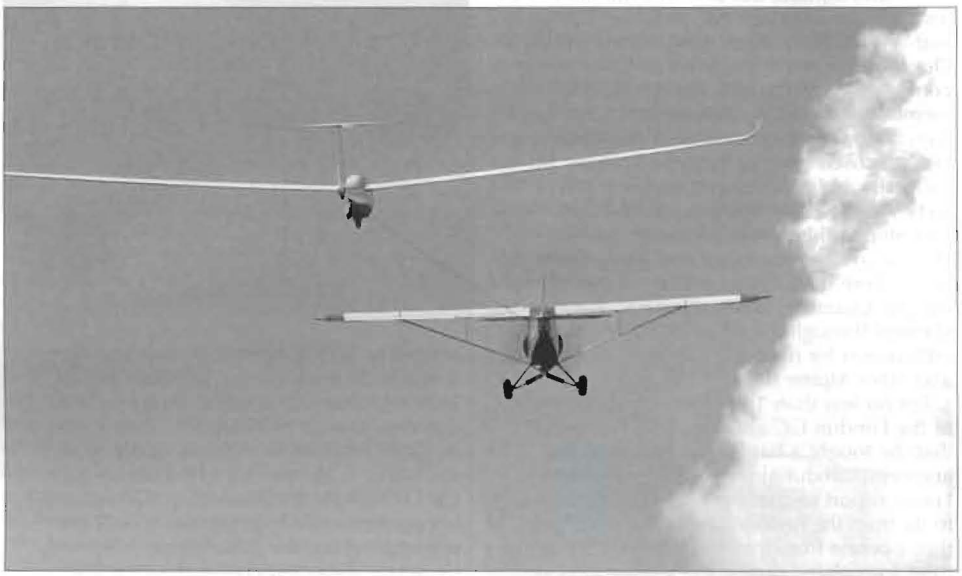
GOLD BADGE			
2217	Paul Cox	ex-pat *(Tocumwal)*	25/11/01
2218	Don Mallinson	ex-pat *(Omarama)*	03/03/02
2219	Chris Fiorentini	Cairngorm *(Narromine)*	12/02/02
2220	Graham Prophet	Lasham	25/04/02
Gold height			
Paul Cox		ex-pat *(Tocumwal)*	25/11/01
Ian Santos		S Wales *(Omarama)*	23/01/02
William Prophet		Lasham *(Aboyne)*	28/03/02
Nicholas Ashton		Dukeries *(Portmoak)*	26/10/01
Lee Mitchell		Bowland *(Aboyne)*	13/10/01
Roger Christie		Highland	02/04/02
Andrey Samuels		Kent *(Jaca)*	11/04/02
Gary Nuttall		Nene Valley *(Minden)*	23/02/02
Tanya Starey		ESC *(Cerdanya)*	23/04/02
Gold distance			
Don Mallinson		ex-pat *(Omarama)*	03/03/02
Keith Auchterlonie		Bath, Wilts *(Benalla)*	10/01/02
Chris Fiorentini		Cairngorm *(Narromine)*	12/02/02
Brian Harrison		BMGC *(Lasham)*	16/04/02
Graham Prophet		Lasham	25/04/02
David Masson		Lasham	16/04/02
SILVER BADGE			
10994	Keith Auchterlonie	Bath, Wilts & N Dorset	10/01/02
10995	Sarah Favell	Nottingham University	25/01/02
10996	Brian Soper	Essex & Suffolk	20/01/02
10997	Mark Stobo	Northumbria	09/04/02
10998	Dale White	Wrekin	12/12/01
10999	Paul Rodwell	Buckminster	11/04/02
11000	JB Hingley	Cambridge	13/04/02
11001	Simon Ramsay	The Soaring Centre	16/04/02
11002	Andrew Langton	Four Counties	14/04/02
11003	Jeremy Grindle	Surrey & Hants	25/04/02
11004	Andrew Robinson	Midland	15/04/02
11005	Barry Beadsworth	Buckminster	25/04/02
11006	Ernest Perrin	Devon & Somerset	25/04/02
11007	Gareth Francis	Scottish GC	25/04/02
11008	Gerard Cox	Dorset	04/05/02
11009	Brian Penfold	Wyvern	21/04/02
11010	Michael Mann	Surrey & Hants	11/04/02
11011	Michael Whyment	Deeside	05/05/02
11012	Gareth Baker	Wrekin	04/05/02
11013	Helena Brogden	Cotswold	16/04/02
11014	Tim Parker	Shenington	15/04/02
11015	Mike Jackson	Lasham	16/04/02
11016	Michael Pagram	Wolds	17/04/02
11017	John Whyte	Cairngorm	13/04/02
11018	Roger Christie	Highland	29/03/02
11019	Alexander Yeates	London	05/08/02
11020	Keith Grant	Lasham	25/04/02
11021	Stephen Agar-Hutty	Bidford	15/04/02
11022	Donald King	Wyvern	04/03/02
11023	Paul Shaw	Wolds	05/05/02
11024	David Bellamy	Burn	02/05/02
11025	Ian Plant	Northumbria	10/04/02
11026	Diane Childs	Lincolnshire	05/05/02
11027	Ian Noble	Cambridge	01/05/02
11028	Roger Lashly	Angus	11/05/02
11029	Frederick Jackson	Scottish GC	11/05/02
UK CROSS-COUNTRY DIPLOMA			
Pts1&2	Keith Turner	Cambridge	16/04/02
Pts1&2	Martin Gregorie	Cambridge	16/04/02
Pt2	Mark Roberts	Anglia	20/04/02
Pt1	Stephen Agar-Hutty	Bidford	15/04/02
AEROBATIC BADGES			
Michael Collett		Standard Known	14/5/02
Simon Walker		Sports Known	31/5/02

Steam gives way to sail

WHEREAS aeroplanes shall when converging give way to aero-tows and gliders ... it is nevertheless the responsibility of all pilots at all times to take all possible measures to avoid collision. This well-known phrase comes from a basic principle in the Air Navigation Order. All very well, but the collision avoidance rules rely upon the "See and be Seen" principle whilst operating VFR. This has limitations in itself; recent incidents and three actual collisions have highlighted the particular hazards whilst aerotowing.

It was late in the day and the sun was sinking into the western horizon. After poor weather, the club pilots were keen to make the most of a good day and so two tugs were operating. After release, one tug was descending, concentrating lookout on other gliders in the circuit area. Unfortunately, the second aerotow was climbing into sun on a track that infringed this descent. The glider pilot on tow spotted the descending tug at a late stage and took avoiding action by descending immediately. His tug pilot noticed the problem almost at the same time and so the glider was followed by its own tug diving down rapidly in front of him! The descending tug pilot didn't see the climbing tug at all and only became aware of a problem when the glider passed directly underneath him at a distance described as less than one hundred feet. On this occasion luck was with all concerned and the rope connected to the descending tug didn't make contact. Recently, at another site an aerotow rope made serious contact with a glider breaking the canopy: the club concerned is investigating the feasibility of fitting a tow rope winch to the tug. Of course, there were compounding factors here: the wind was south-westerly and so the runway in use was directly into sun. Combine this with a high nose attitude in a climbing tug and a lack of manoeuvrability of the combination...

The "See and be Seen" principle will always remain the basis of collision avoidance in an uncontrolled circuit. However, this particular incident was not helped by the intersecting climb-out and descent tracks. Most gliding sites have constraints on the circuit, dictated by noise complaints or otherwise, but in the absence of anything else it is surely wise to set up a basic deconfliction pattern. The obvious one is a division of right-hand and left-hand circuits on base leg and finals by a separation line through, say, the control box at the launch-point. This was a factor in two recent tug/glider collisions – both from opposing circuits, the collision occurring on final approach. However, this ideal is not always possible and has to be tailored to the local circumstances: everything might have to happen in one circuit direction, or landings may only be possible on just the runway itself.



"What's the best way to fit a fast-moving tug into all of this?" *(the **White Planes** picture co.)*

What's the best way to fit a fast-moving tug into all of this? Keep the descent, circuit area and climb-out track all clear of each other, of course, but how about fitting the tugs into any circuit, opposing or not, at low level? This has the advantage that tugs will always be below gliders and any glider in the circuit will therefore be skylined and, one hopes, easier to see from the tug. A high-winged tug has a restricted upward view in this situation, but it is always necessary to adjust lookout to compensate for this when flying such an aircraft. If a low-level circuit is adopted it would be preferable to use a low-winged tug – assuming a choice exists. Good tug pilot education must also be the norm. Clearing the descent area with turns is standard practice, but what about the turn onto finals? I love tight circuits in the tug to achieve a fast turnaround as much as any pilot, but if it's so tight that you are in a continuous turn on to finals, how about a quick wings level halfway through the turn for a "belly check"? This rarely seems to be done. Tempering one's enthusiasm on finals might also be a good idea anyway: the tug has to give way to a glider, so why not make the approach slightly further out? It might just give you that little more vital time to spot a glider ahead.

Towing into wave also always seems to cause problems with the climb. Invariably the wind is fairly brisk, and so the tendency is to maintain a straight climb into wind – totally contrary to standard "powered pilot" education. The nose attitude of the tug is even higher than usual whilst aerotowing, which makes it even more important to weave during the climb. The first turn after take off also has other uses too. A 90° turn made about the time you are crossing the airfield boundary – in both tugs and motor-gliders – has an advantage for both the tug/motorglider and the glider on tow if the rope breaks. In the event of any mishap, options are increased by the possibility of a crosswind landing on to the airfield with only a small further turn. The alternative is a straight tow out committing any emergency situation to a field landing.

I could continue with the advantages of increasing "situational awareness" by blind radio calls in the circuit – but then not every aircraft has the luxury of a radio. Invariably we return to the limitations of the human eye and "See and be Seen". Once during a competition the snifter was minding his own business in a thermal as the grid launched. He noticed an approaching aerotow some distance away, but continued turning, thinking that the tug pilot would see him and aware that he had the right of way. The next time around the circle he was suddenly presented with a tug close enough to require hard avoiding action.

The aerotow continued on its course, the glider pilot on tow commenting on the radio: "That was close!" As this pilot is a well-known notoriously press-on Nationals pilot of long standing, it was generally considered that this encounter must have been very close indeed! The tug pilot concerned returned to another site after launching the grid and so it is not known if he was even aware of the event. What was that I said about "the one you don't see"...?

Martin Durham

A launch with a difference

ALTHOUGH it was late afternoon, the sky was still blue, with lovely little puffy white clouds beckoning the wise old instructor to launch the sleek dazzling white glass two-seat hot (but heavy) sailplane on what was to be the last soaring flight of the day.

"All out!" came the cry from the launch marshal and the sleek bird (make and number withheld to protect the innocent) accelerated towards the winch.

At the appropriate time the wise old instructor rotated into a full climb, his eagle eye on the cloud and his anti-gravity boots feeding in appropriate bits of rudder.

The speed was not what it should have been. A slow launch – even a launch failure, perhaps?

The wise old instructor muttered his favourite incantation for use when all was not going well: "What the B***** H*** is goin' on now?".

The P2, being young and innocent, could not decipher the incantation but somehow felt all was not well.

The old and wise instructor duly lowered the nose, released and performed a low 360° before landing nearly at the winch.

"Strange," he thought... and then he muttered darkly to the P2: "I'm sure that winch wasn't b***** *there* when we set up this morning".

Hooking his parachute crutch straps up to prevent his ancient undercarriage being chaffed and with head bowed down and swaying in time with his quickening pace the wise old instructor set off for the winch. Or was it the driver?

Now the winch driver was a likeable lad but he had on more than one occasion done silly things incurring the wise old instructor's wrath.

Seeing the wise old instructor's impending charge he abandoned the winch and walked towards the wise old instructor, around whom the air was blue with very strange and incessant incantations.

"Sorry, o wise one!" said the poor winch driver. "As it was the last launch of the day I thought it might speed up things if I took the chocks out from the winch wheels. When I tried to launch you the b***** thing lurched sideways and got pulled some 20 yards down the runway. It was so difficult trying to launch you and put the prime mover in gear and get my foot to the brakes."

For once – and perhaps for the only time ever – the wise old instructor was completely speechless.

Accident/incident summaries

by Dave Wright

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	BGA No	Damage	Time	DATE Place	PILOT(S) Age	Injury	P1 Hours
20	Pegase 90	3854	Minor	16-Feb-02 1502	Portmoak	–	None	52

On his second flight on type the pilot made a steep approach through the gusty wind conditions and landed heavily, damaging the nose of the glider.

21	K-6CR	–	Minor	–Feb-02	Incident Rpt	73	None	

While towing the glider out to the launchpoint by car the pilot allowed the wing tip to collide with a parked car. This caused damage to the wingtip, aileron and fuselage.

22	Super Falke motorglider	G-BPIR	Minor	12-Jan-02 1340	Saltby	63 –	None None	503 0

After a flight in conditions that the pilot suspected made carb icing likely, he returned to the airfield. On the descent he applied carb heat but did not detect any drop in RPM so thought the carb heat had failed. When the motorglider bounced on landing he did not go around because of his worry of engine failure due to icing and made a very heavy landing.

23	DG-505	–	None	–Oct-01 1250	Incident Rpt	45 18	None None	1580 0.85

During recovery from a spin the rear seat pan support strap buckle broke causing the seat to drop low down. P1 could not reach the pedals or fully operate the stick. P2, an early solo pilot, took control and safely landed the glider. This is the second time a rear seat buckle has failed at this club and they recommend it is modified.

24	Stemme S-10 motorglider	G-BZSP	Minor	03-Nov-01 1120	Portmoak	34 35	None None	127 –

An inexperienced SLMG pilot selected a take-off run over an area of rough ground. During the ground run both wings touched the ground, then the left wing touched again causing a ground loop. The port main undercarriage lower support link was broken.

25	Not applicable		None	–Nov-01	Incident Rpt	–	None	–

After the glider released at the top of the launch the winch driver opened the throttle to wind in the falling cable. At this point the engine failed and he was unable to restart it in time to wind it in before it fell over two parked commercial jet aircraft. In future the winch will be positioned to avoid this happening again.

26	K-18	2245	Write-off	05-Mar-02 1509	Camphill	75	None	182

After 20 minutes' flying there was a loud bang. The right rudder pedal moved out of reach (both pedals had been adjusted fully back). The pilot decided to bale out, as he was uncertain what had broken and whether he could land safely, so flew out over the valley and baied out, landing unharmed. The investigation of the pedal mechanism continues.

27	K-13	–	Substantial	–Mar-02 1430	Incident Rpt	–	None	–

The club had suspended flying as the wind had increased to about 40kt. All the gliders except one K-13 were parked in the hangar. The K-13 was parked in the lee of the hangar and well weighted with tyres. However, the wind veered through 90 degrees and a gust, recorded at 60knots, blew the glider over onto a fence which caused substantial damage.

28	Falke motorglider		Minor	–Mar-02	Incident Rpt	–	None	–

During the night gusts of up to 100kts blew the motorglider 50 metres across the airfield into another aircraft. The motorglider's wings had been tied down to two 3cwt concrete blocks. These were also moved. The club have now created a permanent tie-down point with 6cwt concrete blocks below ground level.

29	Pegase 90	3854	Minor	16-Feb-02 1502	Portmoak	64	None	52

This was the pilot's second flight on type, and his first for over six months. In a strong wind he flew a high, close circuit, and made a steep approach with a large amount of airbrake. He rounded out too late and landed heavily, damaging the fuselage of the glider.

30	K-8	–	Substantial	–Mar-02 1515	Incident Rpt	–	None	–

The visiting group of pilots and instructors had been briefed on ground handing in strong wind conditions. However, while the K-8 was being towed back behind a vehicle, the wind increased. With one person on the wing and one on the tail, but no-one on the nose, it lifted off and was blown on to its back.

31	ASW 19B	3870	Minor	29-Mar-02 1835	Long Mynd	43	None	115

Following refresher training on sideslipping the pilot was practising in his own glider. After four sideslipped approaches he was increasing in confidence and improving his technique. However, on the fifth approach he over-extended the sideslip and failed to recover in time to prevent a heavy, sideways landing that collapsed the undercarriage.

32	Supermunk tug	G-BCCX	None	31-Mar-02 1710	Dishforth	50 –	None None	2000 500

During tug pilot training the instructor, in the back seat, tried to retard the throttle to demonstrate a glide approach. The engine remained at full power and so P2 in the front seat was told to stop the engine. The instructor then landed the aircraft from a glide approach. The throttle cable had broken.

33	Carman M-100s	3150	Substantial	27-Mar-02 1300	Strubby	67	None	2

This was the pilot's first flight on type and he was briefed by the duty instructor. During the winch launch the canopy opened and the pilot released but then bounced the glider and groundlooped. During this the fuselage hit rough ground and broke. The pilot may have caught the canopy catch with his arm as he opened the cable release before launch.

34	K-21	2588	Minor	29-Mar-02 1210	Tibenham	51 65	None None	700 108

The pilot had returned from a long break in gliding and was having a dual training flight. After a winch launch and short thermic flight the circuit in use changed but P2 made a good circuit and approach. However, he failed to round out early enough and bounced. P2 pushed the stick forward and the glider landed heavily before P1 could react.

35	PA25 Pawnee Tug	G-DSGC	Substantial	30-Mar-02 1505	North Hill	75	None	841

The pilot had just completed an aerotow and was returning to the tug holding point. This was adjacent to a short boundary fence, which the PA25 wing would just clear. He misjudged the distance and struck a stout fence post with the wing, damaging formers and the rear spar. A clearly marked parking box, clear of the fence, will be created.

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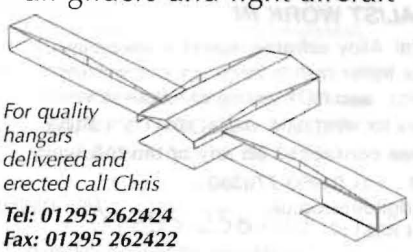
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INDEX TO DISPLAY ADVERTISERS

Airborne Composites	54
Anthony Fidler	64
Baltic Sailplanes	40
Benalla	22
Bicester Aviation Services	40
Bristol & Glos GC	42
BGA courses	48
BGA shop	inside front cover
Bruno Brown	64
Cair Aviation	56
Cambridge Instruments	28
Chris Croucamp	66
Clacton Aero Club	45
Confurn	66
Cotswold Gliders	65
Deeside GC	64
Flightmap Software	57
Gariep Dam Aviation Club	45
Glider Instruments	64
Hill Aviation	51
Ideal Microsystems	58
Jaxida Covers	55
Joint Air Services	29
Lasham Gliding Society	22
London GC	51
McLean Aviation	28
Midland GC	42
North Yorkshire Sailplanes	58
Omarama	64
Optronic	58
Oxfordshire Sportflying	50
Pilot Flight Training	64
RD Aviation/AFE	inside back cover
Roger Targett	42
Russia Sailplanes and CP West Ltd	50
Sailplane & Gliding subscriptions	22
Scheibe Falke	64
Scottish Gliding Centre	64
Severn Valley Sailplanes	50
Shenington GC	45
Skycraft Services	29
Skylaunch	65
Soaring Safaris	65
Southdown Aero Services	13
Southern Sailplanes	outside back cover
Stemme Motorgliders	29
Strong Enterprises	66
TaskNav	42
The Platypus Papers	50
Thomas Sport Equipment	40
TL Clowes/Cumulus	15
Turnpike Technics	64
Waikerie International Soaring Centre	17
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Yorkshire GC	51
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