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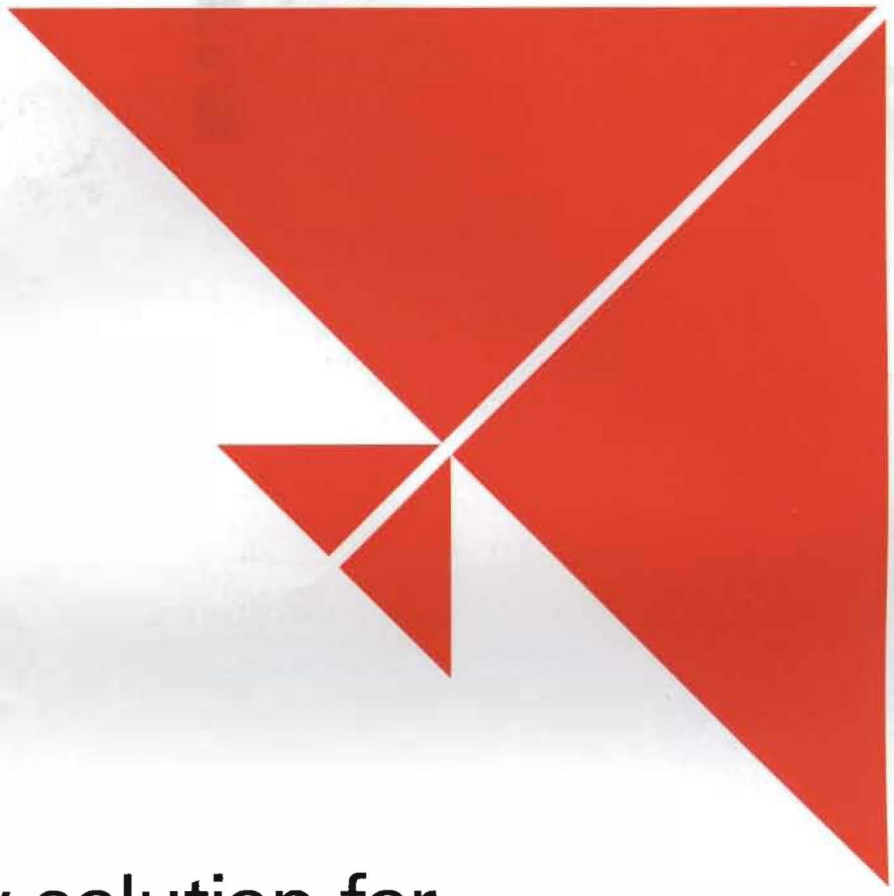
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Classifieds	September 3

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Articles, Letters, Club News	October 12
Display advertisements	October 22
Classifieds	November 5

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***S&G* annual sub:** still just **£22.00** in UK
US **$55** for airmail; **$35** for surface mail



Russell Cheetham is the first pilot to earn an FAI 1,000km Diploma in the UK, and also took the free distance record with 1,020km. Brian Spreckley tells him he's just trying to save on air fares... (Mike Fox)

22 ***That* weekend**



Mike Miller-Smith's story of a failed 750km that's an amazing achievement leads a round-up of how British glider pilots enjoyed *that* weekend of May 22-23. Where were you?

28 **A grand day out**



Russell Cheetham's 1,000km, **Ed Downham's** 800km triangle and the flight from Aboyne to Lasham by **Afandi Darlington** and **Gordon MacDonald** all go to make a grand day out...

34 **Should we be here?**



Briton **Andy Perkins** recalls a memorable flight in New Zealand, while **Peter Newport** and **Gavin Wills** outline how you too could make the most of soaring from Omarama

42 **Solo in under a week**



Arwen Hunt's gliding diary reveals how an intensive aerotow course enabled her to achieve her childhood dream of flying like a bird – in just three-and-a-half days

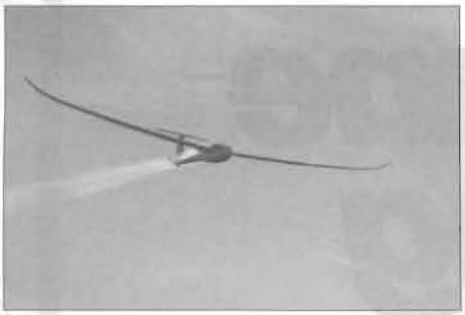
46 **Norwegian Silver**



Jay Rebbeck picks out three defining moments of the third Club Class Worlds, while crew **Jon Meyer** tells the full story of a contest where a Brit again made it on to the podium

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Robert Harris/Booker Regionals

Roll of honour

CONGRATULATIONS to all pilots who have achieved personal goals this season. As the following BGA-rated competitions are not reported elsewhere in this issue *(full results in the December-January S&G)* we must say well done to the following: **Bidford**: 1, Bill Inglis; 2, Ian Cook; 3, Jamie Allen; **Booker**: 1, Dave Watt; 2, Paul Brice and Tim Scott; 3, Bruce Cooper; **18-Metre Nationals**: 1, Jez Hood; 2, David Booth; 3, Ian Ashdown; **Northerns**: 1, Graham Morris; 2, Brian Stott; 3, Richie Toon and Derek Taylor.

Congratulations, too, to everyone who had fun on *that* weekend (May 22/23: see pp22-4 of this issue). Many apologies if you sent us a story that we couldn't use because space was unexpectedly squeezed by the record flights of Friday, June 25 (pp28-33).

Incidentally, do remember that if you want to win a BGA trophy, make sure your flights are logged on the BGA Ladder. You can enter details, including GPS traces, on line or see your club ladder steward. The ladder site is: *www.aircross.co.uk/bgaladder/index.asp*

Finally, good luck to Brits in the European Gliding Championships, Pociunai, Lithuania from July 24 to August 8: Dave Allison, Leigh Wells (Standard Class); Steve Jones, Tim Scott (15-Metre Class); Phil Jones, David Masson (18-Metre Class); Russell Cheetham, Jed Edyvean (Open Class). See *www.egc2004.lit* and *www.glidingteam.co.uk* for their news.

Comps and rallies

Standard Class Nationals	Aston Down	24/7 - 1/8
European Championships	Lithuania	25/7 - 7/8
Inter-Services	Cosford	31/7 - 8/8
Regionals/Junior Pre-Worlds	Soaring Centre	31/7 - 8/8
VGC Rendezvous Rally	Grunau, Poland	1/8 - 8/8
VGC International Rally	Gliwice	6/8 - 15/8
Gransden Regionals	Gransden	7/8 - 15/8
Western Regionals	Nympsfield	7/8 - 15/8
Junior Championships	Lasham	14/8 - 22/8
15 Metre Nationals	Lasham	14/8 - 22/8
Dunstable Regionals	Dunstable	21/8 - 29/8
Open Class Nationals	Tibenham	21/8 - 29/8
Eastern Regionals	Tibenham	21/8 - 29/8
Two-Seater Competition	Pocklington	22/8 - 29/8
Slingsby Rally	Sutton Bank	27/8 - 4/9
Mountain Competition	Aboyne	5/9 - 11/9
Saltby Open Trophy	Saltby	11/9 - 12/9
Gleitertreffen	Laucha	15/9 - 19/9

More on EASA

AS this issue of *Sailplane & Gliding* went to press, the European Gliding Union (EGU) had sent its draft response on the EASA consultation for Pilot Proficiency and Operations to Europe Air Sports (EAS), in preparation for the EAS co-ordination meeting for all European Union air sports in Paris on July 10.

The BGA has worked with its colleagues in EGU to come up with a united approach. The draft response is structured to answer the specific questions posed by EASA, as required.

It needs to be borne in mind that this structured approach by EASA is addressing all forms of civil aviation (including commercial), not just gliding. Thus some questions are not relevant to gliding.

In addition, the board of EGU (which includes the BGA Chairman as First Vice President), has drafted a covering letter to accompany the response. The letter sets out the key elements of the vision for EU gliding in the context of the EASA proposals. This letter is likely to have been published, once agreed by EGU, by the time this issue of *S&G* appears.

The BGA is publishing this *draft* response on its website so that UK glider pilots can see the essence of the key issues being addressed. The response should not be taken as definitive at this stage, as changes have been made right up to the last minute, and further changes may be made before this issue of *S&G* appears.

In parallel with this consultation process, a separate initiative is in hand to propose an amendment to Annex II of EU Regulation 1592/2002, which established EASA and the Essential Requirements for airworthiness, including maintenance. Annex II defines the exemptions from regulation.

Gliders were not exempted (therefore not within Annex II), but the current initiative is to try to obtain exemption for gliders, at least from airworthiness regulations. Annex II does not necessarily apply to future regulations on Pilot Proficiency and Operations – that is to be determined by EASA and the European Parliament later this year.

The BGA is considering the various possibilities generated by these developments, in what is a very mobile and not entirely natural sequential order of proposed legislation. Certainly for airworthiness there are very considerable doubts about the suitability and the consequential costs of the current EU law as it is likely to affect us.

Whilst the maintenance rules (Part M) are subject to review through this year, before implementation, implementation of the original airworthiness rules (Part 21) is on the near horizon.

On the other hand, if the original Annex II were to apply for Pilot Proficiency and Operations, currently under consultation, then gliding would be within the scope of the proposals.

Hence the draft response that is available at *www.gliding.co.uk* (dated July 9, 2004).

In summary, the BGA, representing UK glider pilots, faces several difficult and seemingly irreconcilable options.

We shall use our best efforts and judgment in considering what is best in the interests of UK glider pilots and owners.

David Roberts
Chairman, British Gliding Association
d.g.roberts@lineone.net
July 9, 2004

EASA and deadlines: a note from the editor

NEVER have I been more aware of the constraints of publishing a bi-monthly printed magazine as when trying to update you in this *S&G* on what's happening in the consultation exercise that has been set up by the European Aviation Safety Agency and is coming to an end as I write this.

The fact is, almost the only thing I can be certain of is that the debate could well have moved on by the time the August-September *S&G* hits the streets at the end of July 2004 – which, coincidentally, is of course the deadline for submissions to EASA about the future shape of licensing and operations regulations across the European Union.

So, after much agonising, I have chosen to print for the record the BGA Chairman's statement of July 9 – the accompanying draft response he mentions *(above)* was posted at *www.gliding.co.uk* on the same day – and to provide a fuller report on what has happened in the October-November *S&G*, due to be published at the end of September.

Even then, the story will not be complete. The very hard work put in by, in particular, David Roberts, Terry Slater and Pete Stratten has involved meetings with: EASA officials who will draft the new rules; gliding and air sports colleagues across Europe to protect our corner and to hammer out common agreements; and UK authorities on a whole range of important regulatory issues.

Still to come: EASA officials must put their rules through the European Commission, then the Council of Ministers, then, towards the end of the year, the European Parliament. The BGA's work on this issue is far from over.

Watch this space! And, of course, keep an eye on *www.gliding.co.uk* – it will be updated when there are developments to report.

Helen Evans
Editor, *Sailplane & Gliding*
editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk
July 9, 2004

Presentation days at Lasham



TWO PRESENTATION days were held at Lasham recently to provide a "taster" to potential sponsors of the Junior Worlds 2005. John Macknay, of Quo Vadis group, who is helping the BGA with the sponsorship search, gave a presentation about the package of benefits available while Hannah Hay and Andy Perkins helped to give the visitors an insight into competitive gliding.

The weather co-operated, enabling Andy to give each of the visitors the experience of a half-hour flight in Lasham Gliding Society's Duo Discus *(above)*, which rounded off the day. Thanks are due also to the staff of LGS for helping to make the days so successful.

A lot of positive feedback and interest was generated, and we plan two more days during the Midland regionals/Junior Worlds Training Week at Hus Bos (July 31-August 8), the venue for the 2005 Junior Worlds.

If you know of any firm that may be interested in learning more about the mutual benefits of sponsoring this prestigious event, then do contact sponsorship co-ordinator Marilyn Hood *(marilynhood@tiscali.co.uk)* and we can get in touch with them!

We are continuing to work hard to show the commercial world out there what a great sport we have and what an excellent showcase for gliding in Britain the Junior Worlds event will be. **Marilyn Hood**

BGA appointments: working for gliding

THIS is the up-to-date list of volunteers who are working for gliding within or on behalf of the British Gliding Association:

SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRS:
Airspace, *Carr Withall*; Communications & Marketing, *Marilyn Hood*; Competitions, Ron Bridges; Development, *Diana King*; Instructors, *Don Irving*; Safety, *Kevin Moloney*; Strategic Planning & Finance, *Patrick Naegeli*; Technical, *John Bradley*.
INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES:
International Gliding Commission (IGC), *Brian Spreckley*; European Gliding Union, *David Roberts*; OSTIV, *Howard Torode*; JAR 22, *Howard Torode*; OSTIV Training & Safety Panel, *to be appointed*; Europe Airsports (via RAeC), *David Roberts*.
NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES:
CCPR Central Council for Physical Recreation, *Diana King*; Royal Aero Club, *David Roberts*; GAAC – General Aviation Awareness Council, *Roger Coote* and *Chris Nicholas*; GACC – General Aviation Consultative Committee, *Peter Hearne* and *Terry Slater*; GASCo – General Aviation Safety Council, *Arthur Doughty*; European Gliding Union, *David Roberts*; NPPL Policy & Steering Committee, *Terry Slater*; Department for Transport/Civil Aviation Authority Negotiator, *Terry Slater*.

First UK FAI 1,000km in line for BGA trophy

RUSSELL Cheetham's 1,000km flight on June 25 – in the BGA's 75th anniversary year and during the first National Gliding Week – is in line to scoop the BGA 1,000km Trophy donated by Vice President Peter Hearne last year to encourage British pilots to make more and faster attempts on the distance. Russell's is the first solo 1,000km flight flown in the UK (the only other 1,000km, by Chris Rollings and Chris Pullen in 1995, was in a two-seater by two pilots) and takes the free distance record, too. "Russell's successful 1,000km shows that the trophy is doing its job," said Peter Hearne. "Heartiest congratulations to him."

"I'm obviously pleased with myself," adds Russell. "What I did find was that it was a very easy flight. It went ever so quickly and I was comfortable in the cockpit. It's not quite the same if you aren't competing against anyone, just the weather, and I had plenty of things to think about – a bit of cloud flying, a bit of blasting along and a bit of careful tiptoeing – it had everything really, except company. I usually drive on instruments and go for absolute speed, whereas for once I felt I had lots of time to survey the scene and perhaps even plan a strategy for future flights. I was just having a nice day out".

Russell's full account appears on p28 of this issue. Thanks must go to Russell, Ed Downham, Afandi Darlington, Gordon MacDonald, Adrian Hobbs and Steve Longland for responding so quickly to *S&G*'s requests for copy and illustrations.

WE are very sorry to have to report three more deaths in UK gliding since *S&G* last appeared. On May 16, Patrick Martin, a member of Bristol & Glos GC, died after a failed winch launch at Halesland. The BGA is investigating. On May 26, Michael Fairburn and Christine Ryder, from Lincolnshire GC, both died after the failure of a wing of the K-7 they were in. K-7s and K-10s (K-7 variants) have been grounded as a result of the latter accident. The BGA appreciates the difficulties caused to some clubs by the grounding and is working with the AAIB. For the latest news see *www.gliding.co.uk*

UK AIRPORTS face more uncertainty after pressure groups won a judicial review of the Government's expansion plans (published last December). At some point, possibly in October, the matter will again go to the High Court, where it will be argued that the White Paper broke the Government's rules on conducting consultations (*www.stopstanstedexpansion.com*).

THE BGA Club Chairmen's Conference will be at Husbands Bosworth on October 30, 2004. The 2005 BGA AGM/Conference will return to Eastwood Hall, Nottinghamshire, on March 5-6. Make a note now!

THE BGA and the Air Accidents Investigation Branch are making in-depth summaries of BGA investigations into serious glider accidents available on the web. These summaries provide insights that we can all learn from. You can access this password-protected information via the Department for Transport website *www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_avsafety/documents/page/dft_avsafety_503161.hcsp*

GASIL (General Aviation Safety Information Leaflet), edited by David Cockburn and published by the CAA, is valuable reading for glider and power pilots alike: *www.caa.co.uk/publications/publications.asp?cattype=sercat&id=7*

EVEN the most moderate drinker should be aware that the new Railways & Transport Safety Act (*www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/si/si2000/20001562.htm*) makes it an offence for pilots, including glider pilots, to fly while over the prescribed limit for alcohol – a quarter of the equivalent drink/drive limits (effectively, a zero tolerance limit). These new regulations could also be interpreted as applying, in the event of an accident, to anyone involved in flying operations. A Civil Aviation Authority explanation is at *www.caa.co.uk/docs/33/FOD200328.pdf*. The BGA recommends all those involved in gliding to read this.

NEW limits on third party and passenger liability have been set under European law and will come into effect from May 1, 2005. The new rules split the glider fleet into aircraft above and below 500kg maximum take-off mass (MTOM). Initial soundings suggest that the likely cost increase of your insurance policy is likely to be in the region of £30 on a glider over 500kg. An official compliance regime is under discussion between the CAA and BGA – more details next time.

THE winner of the BGA 1000 Club Lottery for May 2004 was M Davis (£37.25), with runners-up S Hord and C Bainbridge (each £18.63). The June winner was RI Walker (£37.25), with runners-up J Delafield and RC Tatlow (each £18.63).

BGA SOARING COURSE

The BGA is running a Soaring Course at Husbands Bosworth on 31st August to 4th September. Simon Adlard will be running the course and the BGA fleet of gliders will be available for use throughout the week. The course is aimed at any glider pilot from A badge and above.

Course fee is £130 for the week.

For more information or to book on the course, please contact the BGA office.

Coaching Department, British Gliding Association, Kimberley House, Vaughan Way, Leicester, LE1 4SE

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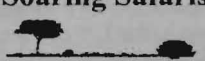
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Your letters

Thanks for the hospitality

THROUGH the pages of *S&G* I'd like to pass on my sincere thanks to Shenington GC.

I was "caught out" by a thunderstorm on the evening of Wednesday, May 26, and had no option but to make a quick, unannounced and uninvited arrival at the club in my microlight.

Within an hour, and after safely stowing the aircraft for the night, the instructor ensured I had a plate of fish and chips, beer and bed. Was it coincidence that a documentary on aircraft lightning strikes was being aired on the clubroom television?

Similarly, the following morning the club staff showed nothing but concern and refused to accept any payment for their hospitality.

It's more than 25 years since I last climbed into a glider (Two Rivers GC, Germany); maybe I should try it again.

Thank you, Shenington; my next visit will be more conventional.

John Leaper, DEFFORD, Worcs

Cherishing the World Class

I MUST say I was appalled to read Jay Rebbeck's uncalled-for attack on the World Class Glider competitions in the June-July issue (*The 2004 racing season stretches ahead of you*, p26). I think that you really should have edited some of that out.

The one-design sailplane obviously does not appeal to him, but it does to many, especially to those less wealthy who can cherish a low-cost, lightweight and easy-to-fly sailplane.

This class was envisioned by Paul Schweizer in the USA about 15 years ago, as a less-expensive dingy class, where everyone would fly and compete with equal performance sailplanes. It is really a pretty good concept in many people's opinion. Sorry that Jay feels otherwise.

Richard H ("Dick") Johnson, TEXAS, United States of America

The history of that Sperber

IN his account of the Rhonsperber in the June-July 2004 S&G (*Flying the Sperber*, p43), there were some mistakes with the history of the Kit Nicholson aircraft, which I wrote about in *Vintage GC News* (No 110).

It was owned by Nicholson, Dewsbury and Major Cooper, the latter being involved in the military gliding trials at Netheravon on the outbreak of war. When he was posted to the Far East he left it in its trailer inside the hangar, safe until his eventual return. Several years later the impending inspection by the Air Officer Commanding caused an officer to query the presence of this trailer in the hangar, and it was moved outside.

Unfortunately, it was then located under the overflow pipe from the main hangar roof, the downpour directed on to one side of the trailer. This eventually gave way, and the water started to attack the caesin glue of the starboard wing. When eventually rescued, all that was left was fuselage, tail surfaces and the left-hand wing.

The remains were bought by a syndicate that had just rebuilt the Scud I – Frank and Mike Costin, Peter Davis and myself – and we managed to get drawings via the MoD, specially cut pine from de Havilland, and started to make a new wing at Portsmouth in 1954.

The syndicate then broke up; we felt that we should let someone else take over, and after much agonising decided to let it go (free of charge) to the RNGSA at Gosport, where the rebuild would be overseen by Pop Pinniger, at that time Chief Technical Officer of the BGA. We later heard to our horror that it had been on the point of being burned by the Navy, and was saved at the last minute by Chris Wills.

After all we had done to ensure its rebuild, I found this hard to believe; but apparently Pinniger had suffered serious bad health and had had to have a leg amputated. He died in April 1965. So without him there the Sperber must have sat neglected for many years before some naval type was told to get rid of it.

Why they could not have found out where it came from, or at the very least got in touch with the BGA, is something I will never understand.

Peter Ross, FALMOUTH, Cornwall

Low finishes again

THE debate about low competition finishes and thermalling becomes simpler if we adopt the principle that no competitor shall gain an advantage by breaching the UK low flying rules.

Most competitions take place from unlicensed airfields so the basic rule is:

"An aircraft must not fly closer than 500ft to any person, vessel, vehicle or structure."

However, there are two relevant exemptions:

"Does not apply to any aircraft landing or taking off in accordance with normal aviation practice;"

"Does not apply to flight over or within 1,000m of an assembly gathered for an aircraft race, contest or exhibition of flying if the flight is made with the written consent of the organisers."

It cannot reasonably be claimed that a glider that crosses a finish line at low altitude and then climbs away to do a circuit, or repositions for landing other than straight ahead, is performing a landing in accordance with normal aviation practice.

A glider on a final glide at a conservative 30:1 that crosses the finish line at 20ft may have been below 500ft QFE for up to 4.5km. How many sites in the UK can guarantee that within an angle of say plus or minus 15° of the final leg of typical tasks there will be no persons, structures, navigable waterways or roads which might have a vessel or vehicle on them within 4.5km of the finish line? In the flatlands, very few, I suspect.

If we aim to use the exemption for contests then we could require competitors to remain above 500FT QFE until within 1km of the finish.

Our 30:1 final glide would then have the glider cross the finish line at about 390ft – perhaps not as spectacular as at 20ft, but safer and legal.

It would be simple to measure gliders entering a 1km barrel around the centre of the finish line below 500ft and then impose a penalty sufficient to remove any advantage they might have gained.

The same principles could be applied to low thermalling – but enforcement might not be very practical with present tools.

James George, SANDY, Beds



We didn't give you the full facts about this Rhonsperber replica's original cousin, whose survival story was described in the last issue. Peter Ross explains how a sorry wreck came to be saved in The history of that Sperber, *above*

In praise of the SLMG

I KNOW in writing this I am exposing myself to all sorts of flak from the purist gliding pundits. However, at 67 I don't care even if they do say: "it's his age, you know".

Having left the rat race and happily scuttled down to Cornwall some 10 years ago now with my beloved ASW 20, I don't regret it for one minute. Here, close to an old WW2 airfield and with the addition of my TOP engine module, I have been able to take to the air at my convenience, selecting those days that are interesting and not too demanding. Mind you, weathering a cold north-easterly up at 960ft (Davidstow) during the winter months so that one can explore the wave off Dartmoor makes you fairly hardy. On the other hand, on a recent blue, windless day, taking the glider to 6,000ft with the TOP, shutting it down and just enjoying the view across and down the Cornish peninsula was magnificent.

When the easterly wind blows I struggle into a 20kt or more headwind and usually hit the tertiary wave from Dartmoor over or just east of Launceston. I know Dartmoor is not as good as Aboyne but it often takes me to 8-10,000ft. On one occasion I recall checking ground wind speed with Plymouth Airport and being told that it was now 25kts gusting 30kts. This prompted an immediate downwind dash to Davidstow, only to find much lower wind strengths there in spite of its higher altitude. Terrain does funny things to wind patterns.

The convenience and flexibility provided by the SLMG is hard to refute, especially if your crew is non-existent. Also the get-home aspect is very appealing to those of us who really don't find midnight retrieves very attractive any more, if we ever did.

In the real mountains, though, certainly relatively low-power SLMGs (TOP is 25HP) can give you more confidence to explore than is healthy, which is why when I flew at Cerdanya I took Brian Spreckley's advice and left the TOP off. Brian's argument – with which I fully concur – is that alpine sink can beat all but the most high-powered of SLMGs and the pilot should be thinking about avoiding or getting out of it as soon as possible and not messing about trying to start an engine. (Mind you, didn't Guy Westgate and Paul Barker do well with their trip to Etna and back? I was glad to note that they never attempted a burn unless they had a landing site within gliding range.)

The *S&G* article on the Antares (*Electric charger*, February-March 2004, p18) was surely a sign of the way to go for single-seat SLMGs. With a 3,000m height gain capability and a virtually silent engine, we can but dream.

Here in Cornwall, the windy county, I could become the ultimate green – using a wind turbine to recharge the batteries and biodiesel in the car to tow the glider to the airfield. Talk about environmentally optimum gliding!

Bill Andrews, *via email*



PGS Photographic's wonderful pictures of Jamie Allen in the Swift in the last issue prompted Chris Ellis to come up with a novel suggestion for raising the profile of gliding. See Advantage, aerobats? *below. What do you think?*

Advantage, aerobats?

THE wonderful images of Jamie Allen tying the Swift in knots at the Yorkshire Air Show (*Gliding Gallery*, June-July 2004, p30) have prompted me to burst into print with an idea that has been rattling round in my brain for a while.

The BGA is putting a lot of time and effort into attracting more people to the sport. Surely a very effective way of raising awareness would be to form an official gliding display team to tour the airshows? It would need to be properly funded, possibly by a sponsor, and managed in a professional manner. It could include all types of gliders ancient and modern, white and colourful.

I expect that the pilots would volunteer their time but funds would be found to pay for launches, etc, whilst practising. I don't know whether they would need a "display" rating as power pilots do.

I throw the topic open for discussion.

Chris Ellis, OSWESTRY, Shropshire

New Bronze book

IN reply to James Collins's letter (Bronze Book, p9) in the previous *S&G*, I have also been puzzled about the lack of a book for pilots at the stage of Bronze Badge, and so I have written one, which I hope will emerge in the next few months. It is provisionally entitled *Bronze & Beyond* and it is 99 per cent complete, but the last one per cent is the hardest part.

John McCullagh, *via email*

More on 30-day tickets

DAVE Salmon (June-July 2004, p10) makes the sensible suggestion that the C of A inspector should issue the 12-month ticket, with the BGA having the right to suspend the C of A if something is wrong with the paperwork. Jim Hammerton's reply reminds us of the bureaucratic rules but produces no facts to justify them.

Perhaps he would tell us how many times in the last 10 years the BGA has overridden the C of A inspector and refused to issue a 12-month ticket.

Jim also reminds us that in other forms of aviation the aircraft cannot fly until a C of A has been renewed by the relevant authority, presumably the CAA. However, this need for central certification only applies to aircraft and not to pilots. When I see my AME for an annual medical he issues a valid certificate and sends copies of documents to the CAA. When I renew my SEP licence or my IMC rating all that is needed is for the examiner to sign the relevant certificate.

Aviation regulations are riddled with illogical inconsistencies. Perhaps we might make a start to tidy them up by following Dave Salmon's advice.

Gordon Pledger, *via email*

*Jim Hammerton, BGA Chief Technical Officer, replies: As explained in last issue's article on EASA (*How might EASA affect you? *June-July 2004, p24) the whole system for managing the "continuing airworthiness" of gliders is currently under review. We have made changes to the existing system recently to help alleviate some of the problems; anticipation of the C of A by up to two months is now possible (please see* BGA Engineering News *Number 24, May 2004). Given the workload that EASA proposals are imposing on BGA staff and volunteers, spending more time on revising the existing system cannot be our priority at the moment. But we will bear in mind all your comments as we formulate the way forward within the regulations imposed upon us*

30-day tickets – the last word

IF a 30-day ticket isn't long enough, then let's have a 60-day ticket.

Paul Harvey, CAMBRIDGE, Cambs

Please send letters (marked "for publication") to the editor at editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk *or the address on p3, including your full contact details. Deadline for the next issue is* ***August 10***

THE BGA Instructors Committee advises all pilots and instructors, when considering the height at which spinning should be initiated, to be aware that some gliders have particular characteristics that can sometimes cause a delayed recovery and/or a significant height loss in the recovery phase. This should be carefully taken into consideration when deciding when it is safe to initiate a spin – consult the glider's flight manual. The recommendation in the BGA Instructors Manual to initiate a 'brief' spin at under 1,000ft during pilot training is being removed.

TEAMWORK was the key to an emergency night landing by a Cessna 152, which won the Civil Aviation Authority's 2003 Safety Awards. Martin Grogan, Steven Anthony, Jim Ririe, Sam Shields, Brian Britton, James Clift and Geoffrey Yates were presented with the Tiger Moth Trophy by Lord Glenarthur at the RAF Club in May. They had helped Cessna pilot James Meeson when engine problems forced him down. He could see a flat lit area but could not tell whether it was safe to land. The team of RAF Wattisham ATC, duty aircrew, MoD police and an Essex Constabulary PC identified it as a car park and used headlights to mark a "runway" threshold. Now in its tenth year, the scheme recognises people within the UK general aviation community whose outstanding airmanship, practical skills, quick thinking and common sense have averted a serious or possibly fatal incident. Unusually, although gliding has featured strongly in previous years, no glider or tug pilots made the 2003 finals. So if you know of an incident that fits the bill, make sure you get a nomination in to *www.caa.co.uk/srg/general_aviation/award.asp* Closing date is December 17, 2004.

AS we went to press we were very sorry to learn from Justin Wills that Peter Schneuwly died suddenly on July 3 of a heart attack at his home in Switzerland. Peter was a devoted glider pilot, a highly successful industrialist, and President of the Swiss Gliding Federation for the last six years. As an admirer of the BGA's founding principles he used his remarkable abilities and energies to promote the concepts of self regulation, self discipline and self determination in Swiss gliding. As a result Switzerland continues to be one of the tiny number of countries where cloud flying in gliders is still officially permitted. His loss will be felt by glider pilots everywhere. He was 59.

THE Royal Aero Club Trust has launched an appeal to raise £65,000 to help save and conserve the RAeC Collection, at the RAF Museum, Hendon, that includes a range of unique and valuable artefacts (*www.royalaeroclub.org/trust/trust.htm*).

KEITH Mansell is the BGA's Company Secretary for the purposes of compliance with the Companies Act.

GASCo (the General Aviation Safety Council) has published a paper opposing the general fitting in future of engines with manually applied carburettor heat because, while this is a technical solution that prevents carburettors icing up and engines stopping, it is in practice problematic because it relies upon pilots to apply it in good time. GASCo plans to liaise with engine suppliers and manufacturers to propose other, more dependable methods, like fuel injection, permanently warm induction air, heated carburettors and compression ignition (diesel) engines.

Three steps to funding

THE last-but-one *Development News* (*Lottery funding: all change*, April-May 2004, p12) outlined the imminent launch to Sport England's community funding stream. Although there have been some initial delays, it is now possible to complete the first two steps of the new process and gliding clubs seeking funding will be able to complete the third step of the process from July 1, 2004.

Funding for both capital and revenue projects is now available. Projects requiring £5,000 or less should approach the "Awards for All" scheme and projects requiring more than £5,000 will be handled under the Community Investment Programme.

Generally, funding is in short supply compared with previous Lottery grant schemes and will be limited to 35 per cent of the project cost.

The final stages will be handled regionally, within Sport England, under nine regional sports boards. To date, regional policy remains to be decided and each board has yet to finalise its individual sports plan and to announce its regional priorities. Please visit your relevant Sport England regional website for this important information.

Other arrangements by the remaining home countries within the United Kingdom will be reported in due course.

Meanwhile, the initial stages are open and are all being handled by Sport England's London office. Initial enquiries can either be made electronically (*www.sportengland.org*) or by telephone (08458 508 508). The three steps are as follows:-

Step 1: Submit project idea. Sport England will provide instant feedback about eligibility and basic project suitability.

Step 2: Submit basic additional information (e.g. business plans, sports development plans, building plans) as directed by Sport England who aim to process in 15 working days.

Step 3: Selected projects will be invited to develop a detailed request for funding to be decided by a regional sports board. Decisions are to be given, in writing, within 12 weeks.

Gliding clubs are still advised to consider alternative sources of project funding as set out in the 2003 edition of the BGA booklet *Financial Help for Gliding Clubs* (available from the BGA office for £2.50).

The availability of funding from local authorities should be checked, particularly where joint venture undertakings have been set up to take advantage of European funding schemes such as the Single Regeneration Budget or the Rural Development Commission.

Talk to your local Business-Link office and to your BGA development officer.

Roger Coote
BGA Development Officer



THE Air Cadets' recently-retired senior gliding instructor, Robin Milter (left), has been awarded the prestigious Master Air Pilot Certificate from the Guild of Air Pilots and Navigators (GAPAN). He was presented with the certificate, signed by the Grand Master of the Guild, HRH the Duke of York, by the Master of the Guild, Captain Richard Felix, at a Livery Dinner at the Guildhall in London. The certificate recognises his outstanding qualities of pilotage, air navigation and airmanship. He was nominated not only for his dedication to aviation but more specifically to the Air Cadet Organisation. In 1967, he became a staff gliding instructor, and has been the Senior RAF Gliding instructor for 10 years. During his 37 years instructing he completed 33,000 conventional glider launches, more than 3,600 motorglider hours, sending around 2,100 cadets on their first-solo flights and training more than 1,800 instructors

Apologies that we printed 'kts' not 'km/h' in Andy Davis' article about contest flying, in the June-July *S&G* (Table 1, p37). The corrected table is:

Theoretical average cross country speed Discus, 735lbs

Average climb rate (kts)	Best Speed to Fly (km/h)	Theoretical average XC speed (km/h)
0	52 (best L/D speed)	0
1	56	44
2	67	62
3	75	77
4	80	87
5	81	94
6	82	101

£30,000 sponsorship for Nationals

TOSHIBA and ICT firm The Lapworth Consultancy (*www.tlc-ltd.com*) is supporting the Junior and 15-Metre Nationals at Lasham to the tune of £30,000. Lasham will show its new three-screen surround-sound gliding simulator, designed and built by Lasham and Southampton University, sponsored by Toshiba and The Lapworth Consultancy Ltd, and the two companies will exhibit the latest Plasma and home theatre technology, laptops, PDAs and printers, in the club's newly refurbished bar and restaurant.

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Bringing soaring to Britain

This tribute to the gliding pioneer Robert Kronfeld (1904-1948) by his son, Bill, marks the centenary of his birth and the BGA's 75th anniversary. Kronfeld's flying demonstrations in 1930 inspired UK gliding

IF WE LOOK back into the early history of aviation we come across a rather curious fact. Whilst man initially experimented with gliders to learn to fly, once powered flight had been achieved, the development of gliders virtually ceased. In 1919 Alcock and Brown crossed the Atlantic in a Vimy bomber, whilst gliders had yet to achieve 5km! It took the Versailles Treaty at the end of the First World War to precipitate the evolution of gliding as we know it today. The treaty limited powered aircraft and, as a result, Germany took to gliding as the principal means of flying.





The souvenir programme (above) and Kronfeld (right) with Wien and Zeppelin at Hanworth Park in 1930

It was against this background that Robert Kronfeld became involved with gliding. Born in Vienna in 1904, he showed little academic skill but excelled on the violin and in sport – especially skiing and kayaking – becoming the first person to travel the length of the Rhone and the Ebro in Spain.

Because of these achievements, in 1927 he was selected by the Austrian Aero Club to go to Rossitten on the Baltic coast to learn about gliding which, up to this time, had consisted mainly of flying on "broomsticks" on sand dunes or ridges. The following year he moved to the Wasserkuppe, becoming both an instructor and competition pilot.

Over the next two years he totally immersed himself in all aspects of gliding, including design and meteorology, as well as breaking records. He was the first pilot to make systematic use of the variometer and lift under cumulus cloud. This enabled him to win a prize for the first 100km along the Teutoburger Wald hills near Oerlinghausen. In 1929 he extended height and distance to 2,560m and 164km; on one occasion by flying inside a thunderstorm. He went on to win the Rhoen Contest in his famous Wien glider, designed by Alexander Lippisch.

In 1930 he accepted an invitation from the recently formed BGA to come to England to stimulate the gliding movement here. With the help of EC Gordon-England, Chairman of the BGA, and Lord Sempill, President of the Royal Aeronautical Society, he undertook a series of seven meetings over six weeks, giving lectures, instruction and demonstration flights. These events, all over the country, included Ivinghoe, where he was especially honoured to demonstrate to the Prince of Wales and Prince George. However, his most successful flight was in June, when he soared the South Downs, landing on Portsdown Hill, a distance of some 80km, which remained a UK record until 1934. In July he returned to Germany, and again won the Rhoen competition.

In February 1931 the Silver C certificate was instituted and Robert Kronfeld was the first recipient, having completed the three tasks over a year before the next qualifier.

In June he returned to England to take part in and eventually win *The Daily Mail* prize of £1,000 for the first double crossing of the English Channel. Whilst here he made a number of flights over London which helped further to publicise gliding in the UK.

In 1932, he became involved with the development of the gigantic 30-metre span Austria, the world's largest glider until the arrival, in 2000, of the 30.9-metre Eta. Unfortunately, the Austria broke up in cloud and Robert escaped by parachute, which he had been the first to use in gliders in 1929.

The early 1930s saw Robert demonstrating gliding across Europe, often to royal families. He was the first to fly glider mail in various countries and also achieved spectacular flights over the Matterhorn and Mt Vesuvius (*www.britishpathe.com:* search *gliding* and *vesuvius*).

With the deteriorating political climate, my father decided to settle in England, where he had been warmly received in earlier years. He joined and eventually acquired the British Aircraft Company Co and went on to develop the Drone motor-

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Bill Kronfeld (left) presents a plaque commemorating his father to Patrick Naegeli at the 1998 Lasham Nationals

glider , powered by either Carden Ford or Douglas Motor Cycle pusher engines (one can be seen in the Brooklands Museum).

In 1938 Robert became Manager and Chief Instructor of the newly formed Oxford University and City Gliding Club, where he continued to develop both training and launching techniques, so well described in his book *Kronfeld on Gliding and Soaring*.

In April 1940, my father joined the RAF Volunteer Reserves (interestingly at this stage he was still an Austrian citizen, only gaining British nationality in October 1940).

His experience in gliding was called upon in many ways, initially in training, but soon progressing to development and test flying. Originally based at Ringway with the Airborne Forces Experimental Establishment, he moved to Sherburn-in-Elmet and later Beaulieu, test flying the Horsa (a replica of which sits alongside Pegasus Bridge near

'Next time you step into your motorglider, put on your parachute, switch on your vario and soar under cu, remember Robert Kronfeld, who helped make all this possible'

Caen in France), Hotspur and Hamilcar military gliders (see one in the Military Museum at Middle Wallop), which were needed for the D-Day Landings in 1944.

He was also instrumental in developing techniques for towing these huge gliders, both in cloud, and at night – a marvellous account of which, was published in *S&G* in June-July 2002 (*A nightmare on tow*, p32).

In 1946, with a rank of Squadron Leader, he left the RAF to join General Aircraft Limited, as test pilot. GAL had a government contract to investigate the characteristics of swept wing configurations and based their flight test programme at Lasham. This meant evaluating both V-shape and U-shape tail-less flying wings with varying degrees of sweep (28.4-36.4°). On February 12, 1948 Robert was towed from Lasham to 17,000ft behind a Halifax in GAL 56 to do some stall checks. On release the glider went into a stable stall, before going into a vertical dive at 200kt and subsequently inverting. The observer, Barrie MacGowan, just managed to regain consciousness and bale out, but Robert went down with the glider.

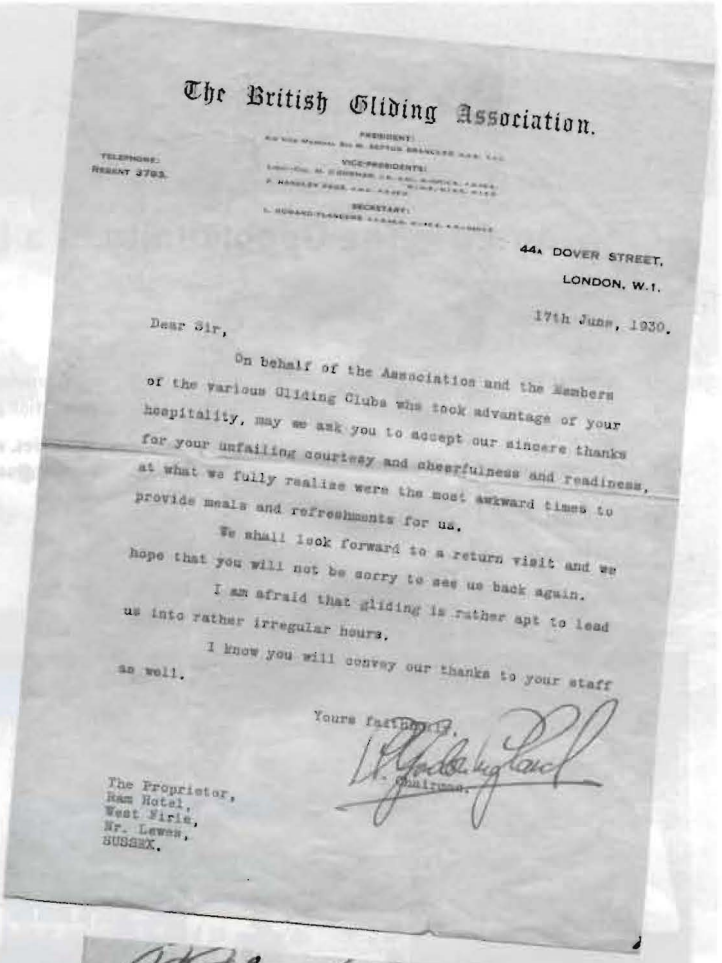
In a career of only 21 years, Robert Kronfeld dedicated himself to all aspects of gliding and especially soaring flight and was instrumental in "preaching the gospel" so that others could enjoy our sport too. For his contribution during the war he was awarded the Air Force Cross and later the RAeS Silver Medal for his gliding achievements.

Next time you step into your motorglider, put on your parachute, switch on your vario, and soar under cumulus, give a moment's thought to Robert Kronfeld, who helped make this all possible.

Bill and his son Simon are both glider pilots

Right: Robert Kronfeld's soaring demonstration on the South Downs was one of seven held across the country in 1930. This thank-you letter from the BGA chairman, EC Gordon-England, to the owner of the Ram Hotel in West Firle, says: "I am afraid that gliding is rather apt to lead us into rather irregular hours," he admits; a statement as true today as it was then, as anyone who has tried to buy a meal after a late retrieve will testify. An accompanying bill for accommodation and board for June 1-16, 1930, for Kronfeld's soaring demonstration's organisers – Messrs Wolfe & Lucas (of the Piccadilly Circus Garage, Denham St, London) – and the BGA's Mr Darlow, amounted to 36 pounds, 17 shillings and sixpence

The letter and bill, as well as this souvenir programme (front cover seen on opposite page) have been preserved by the family of the Ram Hotel's then owner. The programme says: "Herr Robert Kronfeld, whose gliding experience is undoubtedly unique, and who has visited England to teach us advanced soaring, is participating in these demonstrations in his record-breaking glider... There is little doubt that, given suitable conditions, Herr Kronfeld will afford a practical demonstration of the latest forms of soaring which will astonish those whose acquaintance with this fascinating sport is confined to previous attempts in Great Britain". The back of the programme (right) *is signed by many gliding names of the day, including, of course, Kronfeld himself* (fifth up from bottom left)



The British Gliding Association.

TELEPHONE: REGENT 3763.

PRESIDENT:

VICE-PRESIDENTS:

SECRETARY:

44A DOVER STREET, LONDON, W.1.

17th June, 1930.

Dear Sir,

On behalf of the Association and the Members of the various Gliding Clubs who took advantage of your hospitality, may we ask you to accept our sincere thanks for your unfailing courtesy and cheerfulness and readiness, at what we fully realise were the most awkward times to provide meals and refreshments for us.

We shall look forward to a return visit and we hope that you will not be sorry to see us back again.

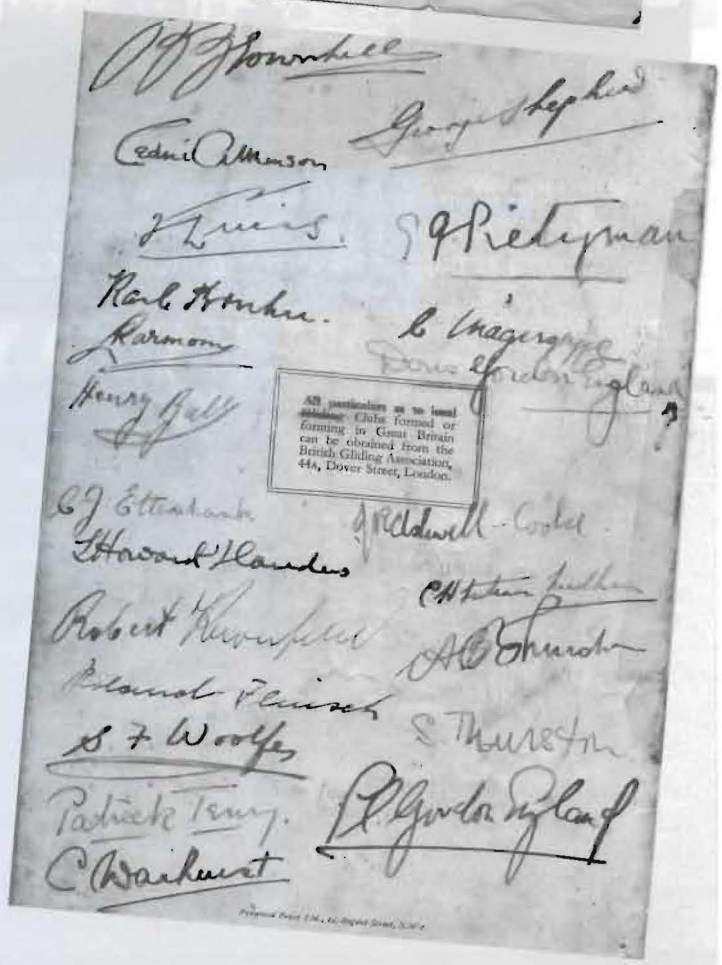
I am afraid that gliding is rather apt to lead us into rather irregular hours.

I know you will convey our thanks to your staff as well.

Yours faithfully,

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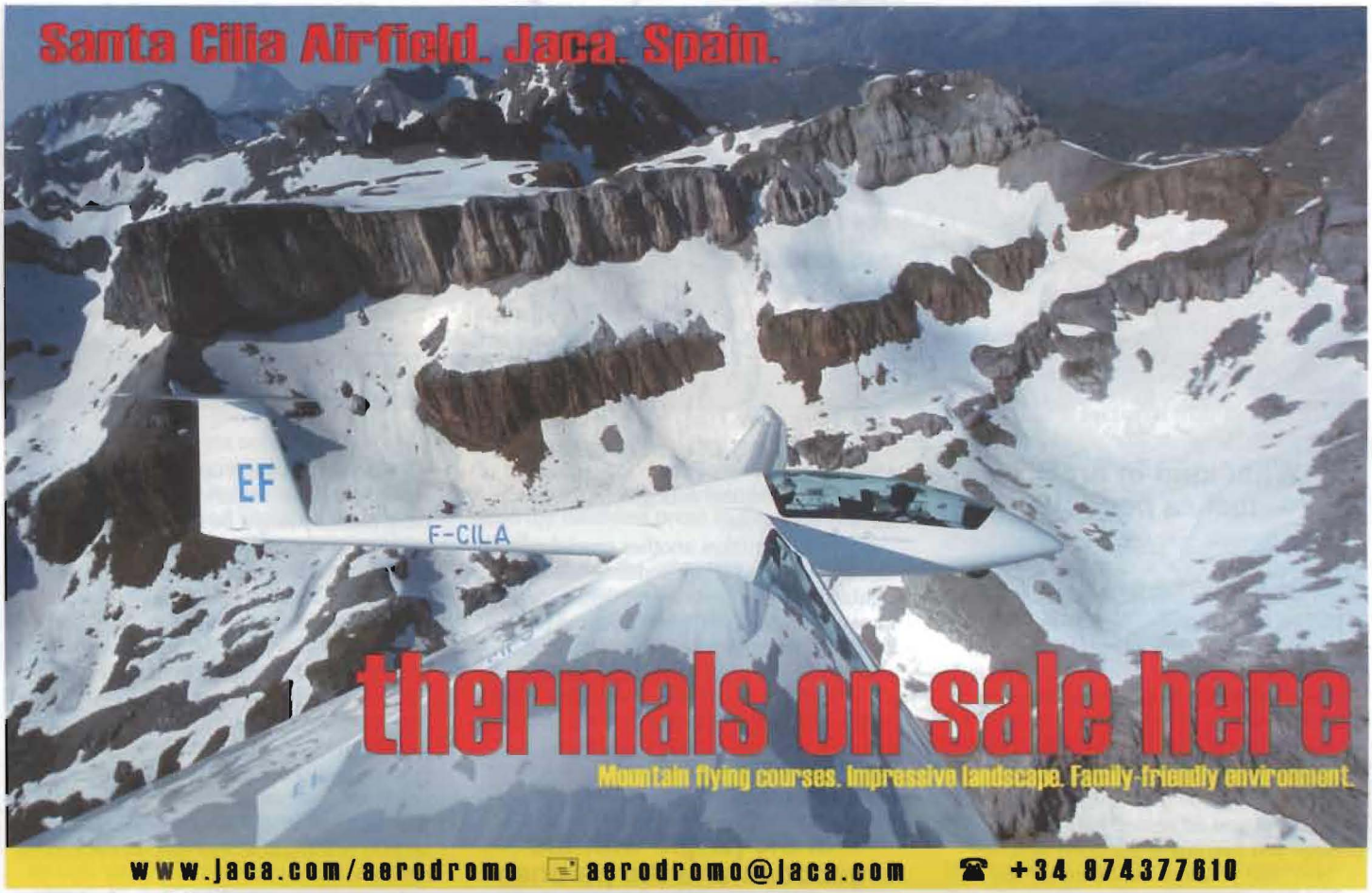
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What kind of practice makes perfect?

I HAVE BEEN struggling with the cello, taken up a couple of years ago. The sound is similar to that uttered by a sheep that has strayed on to a gliding site and finds itself being winch launched, which I understand happens from time to time in wilder and woollier regions.

I said to my teacher the other day, after the noises on the lowest string sounded more like a cow on the wire, "Well, I suppose if you do something often enough you eventually get good at it."

"No!" she yelled at me fiercely, "You only get good at it if you do it *right* often enough!"

I realised in a trice – 45 years late – what I and hundreds of other pilots, our logbooks bloated with hours, had been doing wrong all these years. (Platypus's logbook is of course a metaphorical entity, such documents not currently being required of glider pilots, though doubtless European integration will soon make it obligatory.)

What we have been doing wrong is assuming that if we just get our backsides into the sky for enough launches, hours and cross-country miles we will all become aces, and we won't be able to walk for all the badges, diplomas and gold medals thrust upon us.

That assumption is patently wrong, but what do we do about it? Nothing, naturally, except blame our luck or the weather or our instruments or a temporary absence of form.

What we should blame is the fact that most of us just get ourselves into the air with the aim of flying for a given length of time, getting to a certain height or going round a set task (all good aims in themselves) but we don't say: "What do I usually do wrong that I ought to start doing correctly, not next month or next season but today?" We don't analyse our weaknesses or systematically plan to eliminate them. Examples abound, but the most obvious one is, how long does it take you to get the best rate of climb out of a thermal from the moment you enter it? And how accurate was your assessment of that thermal's strength before you reached it? My own besetting problem is coming out of the top pointing the wrong way, for which there is no excuse.

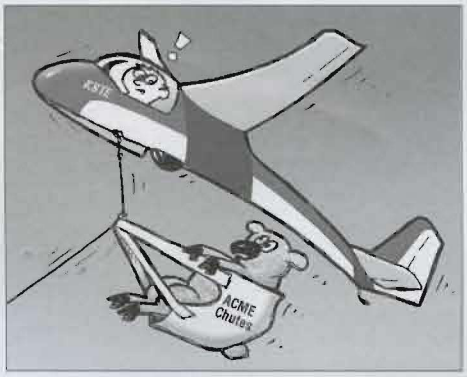
My teacher makes another crucial point. Once you find yourself suddenly doing it right, you mustn't just say smugly, "There, I knew I could do it!" then quit and put the kettle on. You go back and you do it again and again. If you do it perfectly six times in a row it is just possible that you didn't just hit a lucky patch, and that you are beginning to turn a difficult, artificial activity into a natural and instinctive one.

Make a note of it.

In the jungle with the gaboons and the paranas

Tim Macfadyen writes: "You once published Geralyn's comment that she always read you second in *S&G*, only the accident reports came first. After reading all your articles I have finally found a mistake. An apprenticeship in wooden glider repairs uses a box of 5,000 staples (to hold the parts together while the glue is drying). I have long since used 10,000 staples but have never seen parana-pine plywood. The Germans used birch and sometimes beech. Skylarks used gaboon, a sort of mahogany (ever wondered about the weight of the centre section?) Never parana-pine."

Tim is absolutely right. Yes, of course it was not parana, but gaboon ply for the wing surfaces – remarkably light and soft for a member of the mahogany family. It is 43 years since I went up to Kirkbymoorside to fetch my new Skylark 3f from Sling's, so a hazy memory might be excused. The weight of the centre section was probably due to the massive mainspar and I don't know what that was made of.



Being winch launched

What made the Skylark 3's centre-section such a pain was not so much the actual weight in kilos as the fact that you had to lift it chin-high well clear of the canopy (I'm not very tall) and carefully avoid dropping it through the perspex. At night, in pouring rain, on a slippery grass slope or muddy field with just one helper, that could be murder, even at age 27. Especially if it's the second or third time that day, as the contest rules permitted.

Another correspondent who noticed this error of mine was George Moffat: "I thought you were talking about piranha plywood, made from voracious South American fish, very useful in dealing with leeches!"

That is a cruel dig at the great unwashed mass of second- and third-rate contest-pilots, whose unofficial, self-appointed trade union leader I am. If they banned us leeches, most competitions would be uneconomic for lack of entrants.

George has had hepatitis A this last spring (not nearly so lethal as the B version, I should stress) and missed this year's Mifflin contest, in which he usually flies to considerable effect. It's an ill wind, you might say, since it rained nearly non-stop at Mifflin this year and only two competition days were flown, so he did not miss much. There was a British competitor taking part, and of course our national ability to break droughts anywhere in the world by merely opening the trailer doors is legendary.

Jay Rebbeck's excellent piece in the last *S&G* talks of our high national level of competition skills despite the weather. I would only suggest that maybe he should have said *because of* instead of *despite*. George Moffat is fond of pointing out that the most successful American pilots in world contests have come from the eastern half of the USA, whereas the best conditions by far are found in the western half.

Indeed, it is adversity that makes us great.

You're not often pompous, Plat, but that comes close! Ed.

More spun against than spinning

I like it when subscribers write in, if only because it shows that somebody at least is reading the column. And if I set out to get a debate going then I expect a few sods (clumps of earth, I mean) to fly in my general direction. However, I have to deal with one that hit the letters page in the last edition. Roy Ferguson-Dalling writes: "Platypus wonders why we continue with spin training *and appears to believe that all gliders need to be forced into such a situation" (my italics).*

After describing in my column how an extremely expensive glider (one of the very rare and costly eta series) was wrecked during a mandatory spin-test, when it resisted all attempts to make it spin and came apart in what had developed into a spiral dive, I wrote, in that context, "Does spin testing and spin training do more harm than good?" Asking a question is of course a standard journalistic device for getting readers to think about and debate important matters. A question is not a statement of opinion one way or the other.

The second part of Roy's sentence, stating that Plat "appears to believe that all gliders need to be forced into such a situation" would give the casual reader the idea that Platypus thinks all gliders have to be forced to spin. I don't think anything of the kind – though we know there is a wide variation in different types' willingness to spin.

What I said was, "For years now the most dangerous spin has been the low, slow incipient spin too near the ground, not a series of full-blooded 360° turns from a great height, into which a normal glider has to be forced artificially and against its will."

I also stated that East European gliders spun like tops with little encouragement – though they are not the norm, in the sense of being in the minority.

I have always believed we should be trained to identify and correct the incipient spin, and to be shown how insidiously a clumsy, semi-stalled, skidding turn can suddenly become a killer, especially at a low altitude. What is artificial is the aerobatic-style spin, with the stick pulled hard back to bring the nose up at a steep angle, with the rudder kicked hard over to initiate the rotation. The latter is not how poor Fred Fumble is likely to kill himself in his routine, ham-fisted weekend flying; the former is.

My inbox did get several emails, first reminding me that power pilots in the UK and USA are no longer expected to undergo spin-training and secondly detailing fatalities in the less docile two-seater training gliders.

Unlike our crowd, power pilots don't spend half their time deliberately flying as close to the stall as possible, so it is not an example for us to follow. But it is interesting that the power folk discovered that the cure had proved worse than the disease.



An issue

If this issue is not addressed, the BGA's organ will not be blessed with its next issue

I have been trying for a couple of days to send my deathless prose to the editor by email –

Go on, pull the other one. What pathetic excuses! Always a different and more ingenious alibi than the last. Ed.

– no, honest. Anyway, after kicking the PC, unplugging everything and "rebooting" (which means kicking it again, I believe) it turned out that my service provider, and not my computer, was to blame for the messages not coming in or going out.

I eventually found a phone number, and after obediently pressing all the right buttons in succession I was told by a mechanical voice, "There is an issue..."

Please note, not a problem, nor a headache, failure, crash, cockup, screw-up, snafu, foul-up, blunder, mistake, lapse of judgment, error or malfunction. ***Issue*** is the new buzzword.

The voice went on, asking us in effect not to bother them any more. "If customers have an issue..."

I rang off. It is easy to denounce this sort of taradiddle as stupid. It is NOT stupid. I am sure there is some very intelligent thinking here. It carefully dodges both
a) liability for the disruption to the work of thousands of people and
b) any serious promise to make good.
How can you sue somebody after they have only had an issue?

As for remedial action, good old-fashioned problems are energetically tackled, solved, answered, fixed, grappled with, dealt with, wrapped up and knocked on the head. But what do you do with an issue? Well, you can only address an issue. Address it politely, of course. Take your hat off to it first, and always call it Sir. Otherwise it might take umbrage and swell up from a minor b*lls-up into a major issue.

I wonder if such jargon will spread into *Thigmoo* – This Great Movement of Ours:

"Mayday, Bluebottle Base, I have an issue!"

"Dear me, what is your issue, Bluebottle?"

"My tailplane's just fallen off!"

"My, oh my, that *is* quite an issue; the manufacturer ought to address it. I suggest you ring their helpline, if they aren't all out to lunch..."

Partnerships made in Heaven

Here is some more Platypouting about the abuse of the great language of Shakespeare, Milton and George Bush.

In the far-off days when Mrs Platypus graciously insisted on making an honest man of me, it was pretty clear what a spouse was. That was a person of the opposite sex to whom one was legally married. I mention this pedantic point since I see that most club membership fees have a category "Flying Spouse" at a special rate.

When I first saw that I did a double-take, since there is not far from Minden an airstrip called "Flying Mouse" grandly called an Airport on the Sectional (half-million map to you) but in fact a narrow, lethal patch of dirt hemmed in with trees, farm-buildings and an awkward slope that no large-span glider should look at. I am proud to have been the about the last person to be allowed to do an air-retrieve from it in a 20-metre glider, in a great blinding ball of fine red dust, before they imposed a total ban –

I'd say you were getting off the point if only I knew what the point was! Ed.

– yes, back to spice, or spouses: I wonder if clubs aren't going to run into trouble from people insisting that they are spouses in God's eyes even though they have no civil licence to prove it; they may not even be of the opposite sex.

We live in a litigious age and some lawyers don't merely chase ambulances, they'll help drive the ambulance over anybody you choose for a share of the proceeds.

As it is, I also worry about the abuse of that fine old word "partner". It used to mean someone with whom you shared a business or, in our sport, with whom you shared a glider. Now the word carries a load of extra baggage.

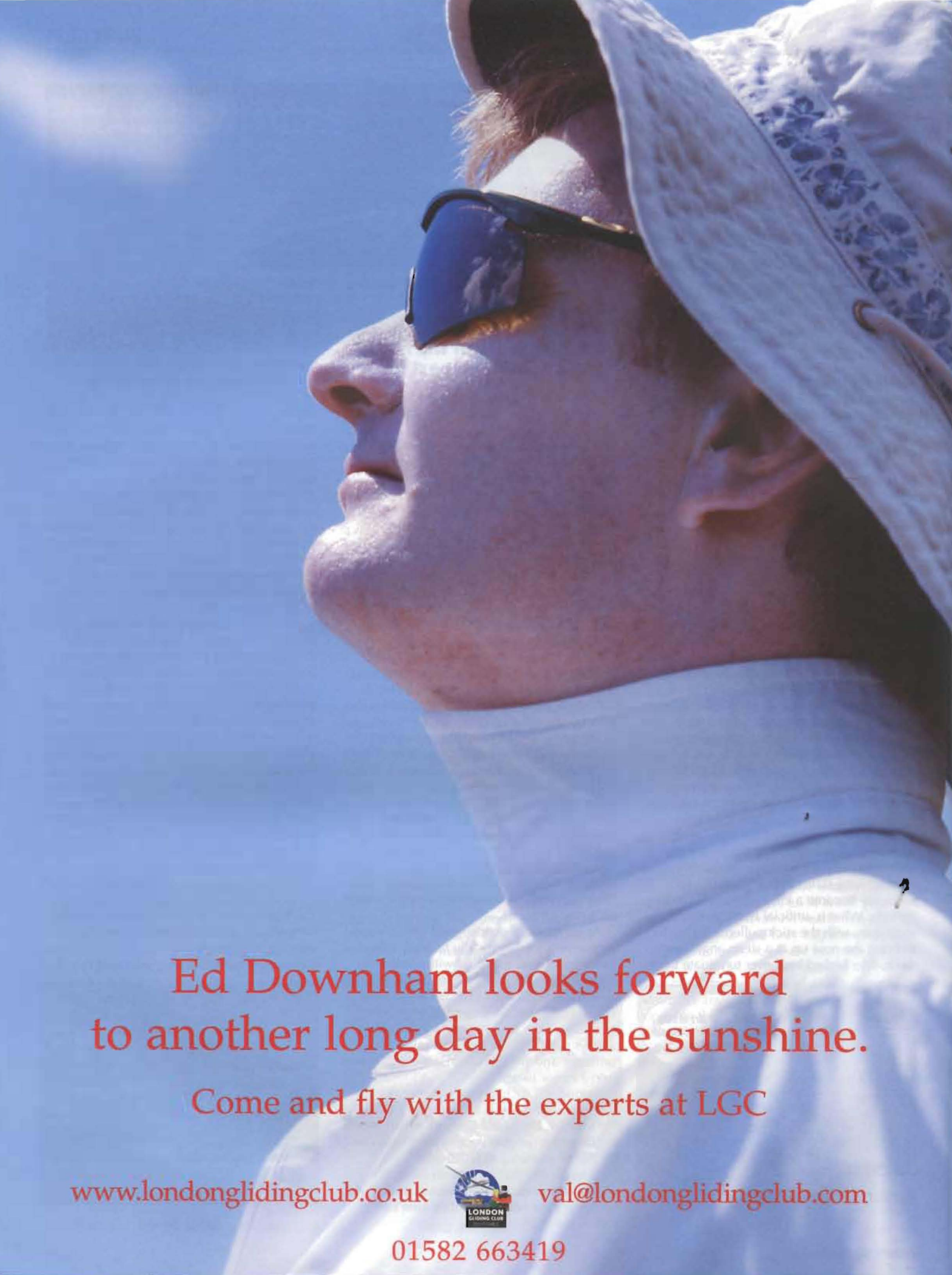
A young woman pilot from a gliding club might say out loud, in all innocence, in some London restaurant "I have three partners and we all take turns!" and the other diners look round aghast and wonder, "What on Earth kind of *ménage* is that?"

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
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Short-eared Ventus 2cxt

Jochen Ewald tries out the new Schempp-Hirth wingtips for the Ventus 2cxt in 15-metre mode

WHILE Schempp-Hirth put up a good show in competitions last year, this renowned German glider manufacturer also had to deal with some less welcome news. A fire in the factory affected, among other things, the moulds and tools for planned production of new prototypes. Then the "Duo Discus problem" came along: in some cases, the skin and main spar of several Duos were partially rather than properly glued. All Duos with Czech-built wings had to be grounded until cleared by inspection or repaired, and changes to the production process were introduced. While the firm concentrated on getting its customers airborne again and preventing the problem in future, some new developments were put on hold – including the 15-metre tips for the Ventus 2cx and 2cxt. But this April these were ready, and fitted to D-KXIK, giving me the chance to compare the interchangeable tips (see *Flying the Ventus 2cxt*, August-September 2003, p22, for my previous flight in 18-metre mode).

These new wingtips – for the "short-eared Ventus" – come with reduced dihedral on the outer section, and shark-like winglets designed by the American Mark Maughmer. Like the 18-metre outer sections, they are easily rigged; and the wing looks right – it doesn't give the impression of being just a shortened 18-metre shape.

The factory had fine-tuned this prototype's fuselage since I flew it last year. The spring connection between flaps and elevator has been adjusted to improve the relationship between flap and trim, and another spring has been added to the lever system that operates the powerful airbrakes. This latter introduces a light force in the direction of "closed," compensating for a general issue with this type of airbrake system: the faster you fly, the stronger the force that sucks open the brakes. This meant that weaker pilots struggled to reduce the brake setting when flying above certain speeds.

Although it is no longer possible to park the glider with open airbrakes unless you secure the lever somehow, another great bonus of the new arrangement is that the brakes will no longer suck open on launch if inadvertently left unlocked.

Even during my aerotow from Hahnweide, I was impressed by how well the Ventus's short wing harmonises with the x tail's control surfaces. Light, responsive but not over-sensitive, it feels good right from the start. I chose negative flap to start the ground run, switching to positive as soon as I felt the ailerons start to bite – the standard method. But I concluded once airborne that this wasn't necessary: the ailerons had responded immediately.

On tow, I also checked out the handling in the event of inadvertent full flap, but even at high speeds and with the flaps at L the aircraft was well under control, with no indication of kiting.

I measured the stall speed as 2km/h (1.5kt) higher than the 18-metre version; the stall itself is similar. The roll-rate is significantly better: at 100km/h (54kt) with flaps at +2, I clocked 3.3 seconds for a 45°-45° change of bank. This is very good, especially when you considered that most published roll-rate figures are taken in zero flap, not the more responsive +2 that many pilots prefer when thermalling! The cx's larger rudder allows full-deflection, slow-speed, crisp changes of bank without slipping. This and good feedback make it great to thermal. It's easy to centre quickly and accurately, with just a light pressure on the stick to support the aileron in place.

It's got a high "fun factor" and won't tire you out even on long, rough flights.

There was no need to change trim setting before landing; as the brakes were deployed, the hands-off speed increased by 10km/h (5kt). Sideslipping was easy and effective, and an increase in the differential of the wing's and tailplane's angle of attack means the speed doesn't increase too much even when sideslipping with open airbrakes.

After landing, despite a crosswind, I opt to leave the flaps in L until we roll to a halt: as I'd suspected, the ailerons are fully effective till the end.

So the Ventus 2cxt, although originally designed as an 18-metre sailplane, appears to me to be perfect in 15-metre mode as well. For contest pilots, despite its larger fin and rudder, the tailplane produces less drag because of its changed aerodynamic profile. So it even becomes attractive for the 15-Metre Class, where some pilots consider they might do better to squeeze into a narrow fuselage. I believe, though, that experience shows personal performance is improved by a comfortable seating position in a good-sized cockpit, rather than scraping up a couple of tenths of glide angle points by having less wetted fuselage surface on a smaller cockpit...







From top: Ventus 2cxt flown by Tilo Holighaus; wing connection with bolt open, and closed; the shark-fin winglets on the 15-metre tips (pictures: Jochen Ewald)



Acres of coverage for £125

Phil Punt of Bowland Forest recounts how his club got itself ready to make the most of the UK's first National Gliding Week

YOU CAN'T miss Sutton Bank – it has a socking great white horse cut into the cliff that you can see from miles away. That's what I was told when I was invited to a marketing seminar, held by BGA guru Keith Auchterlonie and *S&G*'s very own Helen Evans, one cold February evening earlier this year. Yeah, well, it was dark! That's why I was a tad late, and besides I'd left the night vision goggles at home.

As newly appointed publicity officer for Bowland Forest GC I had driven two hours to get some guidance on how to raise the awareness of gliding in general and of course our own little enterprise, so all five of us gathered round the table to focus and fine-tune our plans and, as it turned out, it was very productive and worth the trip. Hard luck to those who didn't go or couldn't be bothered going.

Bowland Forest is financially strong and while it has some membership turnover ("churn") it doesn't need to attract a whole new raft of them so a low-key approach seemed appropriate. The committee agreed that using the local press was a good idea and I was given more or less a free rein to get it organised. It's so nice when you have such an agreeable treasurer.

So the first task I set myself was to identify what newspapers to contact – and at that stage I really didn't know just how many pulped trees go into the newspaper industry on a weekly and daily basis. The internet provided me with all the contact telephone numbers and addresses I needed; some were obvious like the *Lancashire Evening Post*, probably the biggest in terms of coverage, but the proliferation of local rags was unbelievable. Most of them are part of larger organisations, though, and I finally managed to whittle the list down to 15, along with the *Lancashire Life*, a glossy monthly magazine. Having contacted them for editor's names, I then put a letter together inviting them for a day at the club, including a buffet lunch and a free flight, and outlining the reasons why (declining membership in the sport nationally, and so on). I timed the event for late April, when I hoped the weather would be reasonable; this would also allow more press releases to be sent out in "the season".

'By late afternoon, those who were a little nervous and those who were gung-ho had all flown, and went away with smiles on their faces and notepads full of shorthand'

Having sent the letter a couple of weeks prior to the day I then followed up with phone calls. This was quite time consuming: either the people were not there or, if they were, they were not the actual ones coming and would need to organise someone else, and so it went on. It might be a pain but one thing I learned was not to rely on email, the telephone is by far the best method. On the day, nine publications were represented with reporters and photographers. These were of course, the cream of the crop.

The weather for the previous three days had been gloomy with rain, low cloudbases and poor visibility that are pretty much the norm for the time of year at BFGC. We began with an informal gathering in the lounge where press packs were handed out containing information gathered from the BGA, National Gliding Week and our own websites. This information was crucial to ensure that the reporters had proper facts at their fingertips during the day and for later reference. This was followed by a site safety briefing in the lecture room by our illustrious CFI and then straight out to the waiting aircraft in glorious sunshine, a steady wind for hill soaring and under cloudbases of 3,000ft-plus. I'm sure someone muttered something about Jammy Dodger biscuits and references to dubious parentage but the words were whisked away by the wind.

With three K-13s on hand we strapped our intrepid hacks in and threw them skywards one by one, while photographers caught all the action from every direction imaginable. No sexism intended, but it did surprise me just how many young female reporters are employed by local newspapers. I wasn't sure if the number of members who graciously volunteered to help that day was due to that, or to the treasurer's insistence that all flying was free. Whatever the reason, they worked tirelessly, driving tractors, winching, serving lunch and really making the day a success. By late afternoon those who were a little nervous and those who were gung-ho had all flown and went away with smiles on their faces and notepads full of shorthand scribble.

A bonus was getting some superb aerial shots by a professional photographer, although from the rear seat I did wonder how much additional drag was caused by



On the Monday of National Gliding Week, 22 members of a local WI went flying at Bowland Forest – raising the club's profile as well as £1,500 pounds for charity

The week at Bowland Forest

AT 05.00hrs on Saturday, June 19, we started the (nine-day) week off with dawn-to-dusk flying. Showers dogged us all day until 20.30hrs, when, with no let-up in the wet stuff we retired to the clubhouse for beer, buffet and karaoke.

Sunday was a normal flying day and on Monday, 22 members of a local WI joined us. Labelling themselves *Take to the Skies with the WI* they raised £1,500 for Mencap. *The Garstang Courier* was in attendance along with *BBC Radio Lancashire*, who aired their recording of their flight on Wednesday morning.

On Tuesday it was the turn of 10 members of Southport Model Engineering Club. Conditions improved greatly by mid-day and everyone enjoyed the views of Lancashire from 5,000ft. Gwendoline Baguley, one of their members, had been sponsored for the day and raised £600 for the Queenscourt Hospice at Southport.

On Thursday, we planned to fly patients from the Southport Spinal Injuries Unit, but the weather gods just weren't with us. On Saturday it rained yet again, but we heard of the great achievements around the country the previous day – well done to all concerned. We enjoyed a local cloudbase of 2,200ft that day, not at all encouraging for setting off cross-country, in any direction!

Since our press day on April 22, we have flown 67 visitors – 17 more than last year – and gained at least five new members, with further coverage in the press both during the week and after, so we seem to be reaping some reward for our efforts.

Reaching new heights





Feature writer Amanda Griffiths goes up in the world to help publicise National Gliding Week
Photographs: Bill Wilkinson

'GLIDING!' My friend nearly choked on her meal when I told her what I was planning to do the next day. 'But you don't like flying', she pointed out. True enough, I'm the passenger who lets everyone else fight over the I'm glad I didn't pass up.

There are more than 10,000 active glider pilots in the UK, who between them make about half a million flights each year either across country or in the airspace surrounding the 90 or so clubs. The sport can be enjoyed at

with an aerotow. The Bowland Fo near Chipping clergyman, t windscreen fro plus membership And I had the just 15 minutes

extending a rather large telescopic lens from the front DV panel.

The first feature came out just three days later in the *Lancashire Evening News*, a daily tabloid that covers the whole county. Two colour pages and lots of pictures. In the next three weeks all the papers published; we've scanned the coverage and put it on *www.bfgc.co.uk/Publicity/publicity.htm* for members and the public to see.

Steve Pendrill, the *Lancaster Guardian* photographer, supplied us with the photos he had taken, again placed on the website with his kind permission.

The June issue of *Lancashire Life* arrived with a resounding thud on my hall floor at the end of May. It had a four-page spread of photos and a glowing report *(see above)*. This has to be the jewel in the crown – it's prestigious and has a long shelf life, ending up in dentists' and doctors' waiting rooms.

Not only have we achieved county-wide coverage, but we have gained five new members, and visitors who came for trial flights. One has lived in the area for 20 years and never realised we existed. From my own experiences in business, I have found that people will take up to a year to finally get around to acting upon a decision made at the time of reading an article or advert. I see no reason why this should be any different.

We intend to continue to feed the press with club achievements and members' feats, from first solos to Diamond Badges.

How much has it all cost? The tangibles are about £4.25 for postage and telephone calls; winch launches, approx £70; buffet, £50. If you consider that a full-page advert in just one paper can cost £1,000-plus it's not a bad return, and a darn sight better PR than the normally reported accident.

It may be this kind of marketing will not suit all clubs, but good PR can only benefit for relations with the local community and an awareness of our sport that will, over time, bring in more members. I recommend wholeheartedly that you have a go.

Nearer, my God, to thee...

The *Cathedrals of East Anglia Race*, run on June 22 by Cambridge GC, was an outstanding success. Originally inspired by John Birch ("it'd be fun to do a live broadcast from a glider on cross-country"), this evolved into a nine-ship race involving four camera crews, a flying radio crew, a camera platform, a reporter plus photographer, two school pupils, an inter-university grudge match, a WW2 Mosquito pilot, a visit by a Tiger Moth – and one bishop.

The night before, it looked like it was all going to go horribly wrong. Both the BBC and Weatherjack were forecasting everything from rain to a plague of frogs and while we can deal with most things this was all a bit too high-profile to scrub and retire to the bar. Pinning our hopes on the weather for a one-day race on a date set in January with no Plan B was a high-risk strategy but there is no way of organising a fallback. (Getting the BBC and ITV to commit to a single date is interesting – and that's before we try to find pilots, aircraft – oh, and a bishop.) Yet Tuesday dawned bright and clear with just a hint of cirrus from the west and a 10kt breeze. Rain forecast for early afternoon. Richard Baker and John Glossop set the perfect task for the conditions (Gransden-Peterborough-Earith-Ely-Gransden). John, with Mike Wells from *www.thirdlight.com*, won in 1hr 20 minutes at 94.5km/h – the first time a director has won his own race? The Bishop of Peterborough was fifth. The press, who flew with and alongside us (thanks to Mike Pettican in the Faulkes Flying Foundation motorglider) were also on the roof of Peterborough Cathedral and on the ground at Gransden. They all seemed to enjoy themselves immensely. The Cambridge University student beat the Oxford one.

We got stories in the *Cambridge Evening News* at least four times, the *Peterborough Evening Telegraph* at least twice, were on *BBC Look East* at 15.00hrs and 18.30hrs the next day, *ITV Anglia* at 18.45hrs, *BBC Radio Cambridge* sport throughout Tuesday, plus a major round-up on Friday – and the 06.50hrs BBC local radio faith slot (luckily, *that* was pre-recorded).

A terrific day in support of the BGA National Gliding week and the club's thanks to everyone who helped.

And for the next event? I have a cunning plan.

Richard Brickwood



THE Bishop of Peterborough, the Rt Revd Ian Cundy, got his diocese into fresh perspective when he saw it from 4,000ft. He had been invited to join Cambridge GC's Cathedrals of East Anglia gliding race as part of National Gliding Week. Guests were flown in two-seaters from Gransden Lodge, west of Cambridge, first to Peterborough Cathedral and then to Ely Cathedral. "It's a wonderful sensation and very peaceful up there," Bishop Ian said. "You see things in a new perspective. Hills seem flatter. It's a reminder of the need we have to get things in proportion. In the same way, situations in our lives can seem different when we see them from God's point of view." He added: "Gliding is a wonderful sport and I'd commend it to anyone."

More pictures available online at *library.thirdlight.com* © Third Light Photography. It's worth checking here after any major event at Gransden – prints are often available

Now tell us what you think

THESE reports and *www.nationalglidingweek.co.uk* (writes BGA Communications Officer Keith Auchterlonie) will give you some idea of what happened around the country during the first National Gliding Week.

In total, 44 events took place at 25 clubs: we were advised of events at Bowland Forest, Bristol & Glos, Cambridge, Dartmoor Gliding Society, Derbyshire & Lancashire, Devon & Somerset, East Sussex, Highland, Kent, Lasham Gliding Society, Lincolnshire, London, Midland, Nene Valley, Norfolk, Shalbourne Soaring Society, South London Gliding Centre, Southdown, Staffordshire, Strathclyde, The Soaring Centre, Trent Valley, Ulster, Vale of White Horse, and Welland.

The week was meant to provide a focus to enable clubs to promote their activities and the BGA to showcase gliding in general. Was it a success?

The true answer will only be known when we see if we have attracted new participants into the sport or raised our profile. However, we do know certain things.

- Many clubs generated a lot of publicity locally.
- We didn't do so well with national publicity.
- There were lots of innovative events.
- Fewer than one in three clubs participated.

The question now is whether to repeat the exercise next year and, if so, how can we improve it? To this end, the Communications & Marketing Committee needs your feedback:

- Did your club take part? (If not, why not?)
- Would you take part in an event next year?
- What, realistically, should we do differently?
- When should the week take place?
- How much publicity did you generate this year?
- How many members of the public took part?

Please let us know: *keith@gliding.co.uk* or C&MC chairman Marilyn Hood at *marilynhood@tiscali.co.uk*

A failed 750km?

Mike Miller-Smith beat muscular dystrophy to fly 730km of his declared 752 – an unparalleled achievement for a disabled pilot. His story heads our look at *that* weekend of May 22-23, 2004



*Mike (*mike@blueskiesflorida.com*) is an active member of the British Disabled Flying Association (see* www.bdfa.net *for more information). The BDFA is seeking support and sponsorship for the Bulldog Project, adapting for the disabled four Bulldog light aircraft donated by the Jordanian Royal Family.* *(*www.whiteplanes.com*)*

THE weather gurus at Lasham had been predicting a good day for a while and it was a tough choice whether to go gliding, or to Sandown model aircraft show (an annual pilgrimage to witness model crashery). Saturday, May 22 was my day for the glider and dawned crisp and bright, so I postponed the Sandown trip to Sunday. I had no intention of doing anything big, just attempt the club task and continue to learn how to get the best out of the Nimbus 3DT, which we bought at the end of last season. I arrived at Lasham at 0900hrs, just in time to catch CFI Gordon MacDonald briefing the day's tasks in our superb new club briefing room. The overhead projector was showing rather a large area of the UK. In fact the task was Lasham – Roadford Reservoir (on the Devon/Cornwall border) – Abingdon Bridge – Chard – Lasham: 752km. Gordon thrust me a task sheet, told me it was on, then attended to the amassed pilots waiting for his help and advice. 750 it is then.

Preparation was zero: it was now 0930hrs and I needed to find a P2. Pressure, just the way I like it! I have muscular dystrophy, which blesses me with weak arms and legs, and use an electric wheelchair to get around. I am not strong enough to operate airbrakes on my own and struggle to get full stick deflection, hence the need for a safety pilot in case things get out of hand (literally) near the ground.

It soon transpired I was the only syndicate member on site. I searched in vain for one of my safety pilots; alas, they were all tugging or instructing. At 1030hrs I was ecstatic to see a syndicate partner, Tim Browning, arrive for a cup of coffee. Luckily, he was easily persuaded to postpone coffee and agreed to come along. A whirlwind of activity later and with me hoisted into the glider we were ready to launch by 11.15hrs.

A quick engine start/stop at the top of the tow was followed by task start at 1130hrs at a whopping 2,000ft. It looked good down track and we simply had to get moving as soon as possible. To be honest, I thought there was zero chance of doing 750 – it was just a bit of a giggle to see how far we would get before we found an excuse to give up. After all, everybody else had set off on their 750s at least an hour before us.

Eight knots of wind up the chuff ensured good progress to the first turn, particularly with the long lines of energy which made up for the poorer-than-expected 3kt climbs, which I soon decided weren't worth the bother of stopping. (I tend not to move the stick unless I have to!) Passing the northern edge of Dartmoor was fantastic; the view was stunning with a coast on each wingtip. We really were a long way from home. We turned Roadford Reservoir at 1320hrs. Maybe, just maybe, the task was on.

The leg back to Abingdon was something of an enigma. The clouds looked rubbish – all spread out with no sun on the ground. This must be the infamous Somerset Levels "damp patch". Tim tried persuade me to head south of track to some better-defined cumulus – albeit with a lower cloudbase. I secretly wanted to experience the Somerset Levels monster for myself, so belligerently stayed on track. The north-easterly wind obviously kept the dragons at bay. Despite spread out, magically we cruised just below cloudbase weaving under the darker bits. Maybe, just maybe, the task was on.

During this powered-aeroplane-like flight, we contemplated the likelihood of finishing the task. There was little science about it, we looked at our average task speed, around 100km/h, stuck a proverbial finger in the air and decided to go for it. This prompted me to do something I've never done in a glider before... take a pee. As Wells cathedral passed under the port wing, my pressured bladder was swapped for wet trousers and a damp seat. The relief was tremendous and my vigour was renewed. We arrived at Abingdon just after 160hrs. The 750 was on if the day lasted long enough.

Heading off downwind to Chard started well, however the desire to impatiently keep on moving meant that we were slowly decreasing our operating height and I started to lose touch with the clouds. I found a nice save from 800ft at Westbury and took 6kts to 5,500ft above Lasham. However optimism was short lived as the day started to tail off quite rapidly. It was still quite soarable, but it was hard to keep up the cross-county speed in order to get around before the day died. Winding back the cruising speeds and becoming ever more cautious, I found it hard to pick a productive route into the TP. As we trickled around the turn at 1730hrs, Winpilot showed 140km to home.

Things didn't look so good. We had a 12kt headwind. I was by now very cold (the wee I had earlier was coming back to haunt me) and the remaining muscle power in my body was just about spent. The sky had the look that it often has at the end of a good gliding day, a lowering sun illuminating isolated large flat cumulus. So isolated in fact that they dictated our route absolutely, with long into-wind glides in between. You know that feeling you get; that it is imperative to climb

back to cloudbase in order to have a chance to make home? This time was no different. Milking 2kt at The Park it was nice to see another glider for the first time in hours.

Try as I might, the wind was starting to win the battle. After passing Henstridge twice, I realised the chances of success were rapidly waning. However the Nimbus surprised us with its performance and a long slow glide with a laborious 1-2kt top-up over Salisbury saw us arrive at Middle Wallop at 1,000ft, under one of the three remaining clouds in the surrounding 100 miles. The time was 1915hrs.

I'd had enough of flying; I really couldn't do any more. My strength was gone and I could no longer move the controls. The cold had taken its toll, and nine hours of flying had taken all my body could give. I was so pleased to give Tim the glider; the best I could do was offer whoops of encouragement when the averager flickered to a half-knot climb and read out the final glide news from Winpilot. "We need 1,000ft with no margin to get home," I kept croaking, as if it would somehow persuade the sky gods to give us a rate of climb that would beat the strengthening wind. The collective will to succeed was palpable. The glider cockpit was alive with hopes and prayers to get home. It sounds cheesy now, but it was. I wanted to be the first disabled person to fly a 750. I wanted with every fibre of my body to get round the task.

The 1,000ft we needed never came. At 2015hrs with a dead sky, I simply said to Tim: "Start the engine and let's go home". I didn't hear the engine as we motored past Andover; the usual deafening rattle of that noisy two-stroke was drowned out by my own thoughts. I felt immense disappointment at not achieving the 750km, having come so close by flying 730km. However, as I noticed some car headlamps on the A303 near Popham, I began to smile and forgot about my (by then) convulsive shivers. I was struck by my own personal challenges as a disabled person. At that moment I realised that the flight had challenged my broader goals in life; a will to continue flying, lead a "normal life" and overcome the daily challenges my disability brings. I had achieved that goal and more.

Thanks to Tim Browning for agreeing to come along, sitting patiently in the front, giving me a rest when needed – you never did get your cup of coffee!

Graham Garnett, another syndicate partner, adds: "I was getting quite concerned, they were well overdue. At last, at 2030hrs, 880 arrived low and fast over the main runway. Club flying had long since finished. We had to get Mike out, cold, stiff and (still) a little wet! It took a half an hour or so to defrost him as he sat in his car with the heater on full blast.

The next day, Sunday 23, Gordon MacDonald and I tried the same task in the Nimbus. We turned back at Devizes after two turns (around 500km covered). Unfortunately Mike's "bladder release" appeared from under the seat and caught up with Gordon for six hours!"

Where did you go?

Phil Jones: 981.6km from Gransden Lodge

I FINALLY worked out a 1,000km task at 0900hrs and launched at 0919hrs on Gransden Lodge - BRU (10nm south-west of Frome) Tibenham - Halesland (near Cheddar Gorge) and back. I started at 1,000m at 0925hrs. My glider was a Ventus 2cx with 150kg of water. The wind was about 020°/12 most of the day so I had a slight tailwind on the first leg; it was barely soarable initially. Cloudbase was about 3,000ft amsl rising to a best of 6,000ft amsl later. It was a long steady day with decent thermals, but never felt like a classic. I was too often struggling to find the thermals, especially as I spent all day crossing cloudstreets. Having said that, all other task directions would undoubtedly have suffered more from the effects of spreadout. After 200km the average speed was 89km/h; after 750km the average speed was up to around 100km/h but I had to tiptoe around the last turn, which made completion virtually impossible. At 1735hrs I had 210km to go in a decaying sky into an 8kt headwind and was forced into taking any climb that came along. The last reasonable one was 2kt to 5,500ft near Bicester, followed by a little top-up at Milton Keynes under the last cloud in the sky. I landed out in a set-aside field near the A1 at Sandy at 2005hrs. Surprisingly, I did not feel too fatigued at any time – until the next day, that is. Total distance 981.6km; flight time 10hrs 45 minutes (on task, 10hrs 40 minutes); average speed 92km/h. A failed 1,000km but with the consolation of flying a new 20-metre free distance record and having a lot of fun. With hindsight, I could have tweaked the TPs a little, which would have made it easier. Hindsight is a wonderful thing.

Ken Hartley: 826km from Bicester

THE forecast for May 22 looked promising, with May 23 being the "Day of Days". Having fitted a new vario and bought a new parachute for the Nimbus, I wanted a reasonable cross-country on Saturday to iron out any bugs before going for the big one on Sunday. As I believe 750km is the "new 500km", I set Bicester – Retford – Chieveley – Doncaster – Bicester for 765km. The sky didn't look too good early on so I didn't launch until 1020hrs local and started from tow (cloudbase was only just above 3,000ft). There was a fair street down track and I took my first real climb abeam Leicester to 3,500ft; this got me though the East Midlands zone. Thank you, kind controller! The task may not have been possible but for the help from East Midlands who let me though three times out of four. On to Syerston: 20km out, I found my first good climb (4kt-plus to 4,500ft), which gave me a good run in and round. Running south at an average of 150km/h, this leg was a joy, with the wind behind me and 30-40km cruise descents with the glide angle sometimes over 500:1 – which made up for the variable thermals. I turned Chieveley at 1400hrs and started the push north back into wind, which dropped my speed down to 120km/h. When I reached Melton Mowbray – and the area with the spreadout or blue hole (depending on the time I was there) that plagued me all day – I had to take 1-2kt thermals to get into good air to the north. Thermal strength was peaking but the distance was increasing: cloudbase had risen to 5,500ft, forcing me into climb-glide mode. A 35km glide saw me round the last turn at 3,000ft just before 1700hrs: with the wind behind me all I had to do was get home! A climb north of Worksop allowed me to glide to the good cloud over Nottingham, where I joined the Hus Bos boys. With a energy line pointing at Bicester I thought I was home and dry... But this time the kind controller said NO! So we all had to go round the edge. Aircraft *were* departing every 3-4 minutes, climbing out over the routing I had requested, so I have no problems with his decision. But it did force me to take a two-knotter – again by Melton Mowbray – to get to Leicester for a slow climb to 4,000ft; then a 40km glide to Watford allowed me to take 1,000ft in 2kt to get me home. I flew 826km for an altitude loss of 73,000ft, but only climbed for 39,000ft; the average L/D was 78:1 and I was on task for 8hrs and 7 minutes for a speed of 94.1km/h, with an average rate of climb for the flight of 3.1kt. I was hot to trot for a 1,000km on Sunday, and was ready and waiting at 0930hrs to launch. But by 10.00, it had not started, and so I gave up the Nimbus to one of my partners who tried for his 750km, but was stopped by an area of spreadout... guess where?

Derek Copeland: a Swallow from Lasham

THE Slingsby Swallow was designed as the poor man's Skylark with little stumpy 13-metre wings and the glide angle of a streamlined breeze-block. However, [illegible] day

Meteorology from weatherjack

THE EXCELLENT weekend weather in late May was straightforward to forecast several days in advance. The key factors were:

1. High pressure drifting down from the north.
2. Dewpoint Saturday predicted to be around 3° rising slowly over the weekend to reach about 6° by late Sunday. These were low figures – ideal.
3. 850mbs (5,000ft) cold with temperatures –2°C rising to +3°C over the weekend – cold for the time of year.
4. Forecast soundings suggested cumulus, not blue thermals.
5. Surface maxima Saturday around 17°, Sunday 19° (as dewpoints drifted upwards, the maxima rose – the good split remained).
6. Air above 850mbs quite dry, so little spreadout.

So the temperature/dewpoint split both days was expected to exceed 13°. This gives expected cloudbase well over 5,000ft. In late May, the days are long and the sun is strong.

The consistency of the forecast charts had been encouraging in the run-up to the weekend.

In the event, the forecast data used to make my predictions turned out to have been very accurate.

I was able to suggest excellent conditions several days in advance. This must have helped with the turnout that weekend.

These were in fact some of the easiest forecasts I have made this year.

I wish every weekend were as simple.

Jack Harrison
www.weatherjack.co.uk

Saturday

Pilot	Task	km/speed
Afandi Darlington	LAS-CRE-GRW-TAU-LAS	804.8/83.5
Paul Brice	BOO-NHL-BED-SHB-BOO	766.5/87.3
Ken Hartley	BIC-RET-CHV-DON-BIC	764.2/94.1
David Masson	LAS-HAS-CNW-LAU-LAS	759.8/80.1
Jez Hood	BOB-NHL-BED-SHB-BOO	758.7/79.2
DP Taylor	SUT-ILS-BRN-SBY-SUT	754.2/90.5
Keith Walton	FAH-MET-PTW-MAH-FAH	750.6/81.1
Richard Hood	BOB-WEG-STC-TIV-BOO	728.6/72
Peter Stafford Allen	MRM-PEW-GRA-BIR-MRM	698.6/73.2
Dave Roberts	AST-LEN-SUT-LEN-AST	604.1/79.3
Richard Smith	NYM-LAU-BAS-SHA-NYM	592.6/77.5
John Bridge	GRL-TAL-CPH-GRL	557/63.2
John Russell	SUT-SBY-MAS-TUX-SUT	556/62.2
Mike Roberts	GRL-FRO-BSE-GRM-GRL	549.9/71.1
Adrian Hatton	HUS-CHV-WBS-HUS	535.4/83.2
John Wilton	HUS-CHV-WBS-HUS	535.4/83.7
Owain Walters	BOB-NHL-BED-SHB-BOO	534/85.4
Rory O'Conor	SUT-HEC-SUT	524.1/61.3
Paul Gleeson	HUS-NEW-BVR-DID-HUS	521.4/83.4
Kirk Davis	BOB-NHL-BED-SHB-BOO	518.6/74.1
David Draper	LAS-CHA-POP-LAG-LAS	510.8/65.9
Kay Draper	LAS-CHA-POP-LAG-LAS	510.8/80.6
Mike Armstrong	CPH-SAR-GRL-CPH	509.2/77.3
Steve Woolcock	GRL-EVE-OAK-BID-GRL	509.1/67.4
Bob Hitchin	UPA-STN-GRM-NPT-UPA	508.4/86.9
David Caunt	BOB-BUL-GAI-BOO	508.3/90
John Simmonds	LAS-CHA-POP-LAG-LAS	507.8/88.6
Guy Corbett	LEZ-NHL-POT-LEZ	507.2/84.5
Andrew Warbrick	GAR-ABL-DUF-LEA-FES	507/74
Wendy Head	GRL-GRM-BSE-NPT-GRL	506.9/75.7
Simon France	USK-STN-NLE-PIT-NYM	506.6/63.1
Tim Caswell	BID-GRW-BUG-BED-BID	505.7/69.8
Roy Pentecost	ALT-CHA-HUS-ALT	505.6/85.5
Tim Macfadyen	NYM-NHL-ALT-STP-NYM	504.8/80.1
Stephen Bradford	TIB-SIL-BSE-OLN-TIB	503.5/77.5
Norman Clowes	TIB-SIL-BSE-OLN-TIB	500.5/74.5
Ralph Johnson	PAR-LEW-MAR-GRW-NEW-PAR	500.4/85.3
John Williams	KIR-LAS-KIR	498.8/66.4
Rod Christie	BOB-NHL-BED-SHB-BOO	485.9/93.7
Richie Toon	SUT-STS-SUT	483.3/83.6
David Booth	HUS-CHV-WBS-HUS	472.9/79
Julian Rees	NYM-CER-LAU-FRO-NYM	443.8/88.8
George Metcalfe	LAS-HAS-CIR-LAU-LAS	420.8/69.5
Ariane Decloux	GRL-GRM-BSE-NPT-GRL	416.7/75.8
Peter Ryland	TIB-NWT-TIB	409.8/79.3
Diana King	SNI-YAT-NOW-ROS-SNI	399.9/68.6
Russ Francis	NYM-YEO-LAS-ALC-NYM	399.7/76.9
Ian Smith	NYM-SHB-ALT-HER-NYM	397.5/79.5
Hywel Moss	NYM-YEO-LAS-BID-NYM	386/61.6
Mike Thorne	PRK-SLE-PRK	386/74.5
David Prosolek	SBY-OXF-RET-OLN-SBY	383.6/75.7
David Latimer	BRC-GRM-CAX-MOR-HIN	380/71
Nils Wedi	BOO-BUL-SHS-MAN-BOO	373.6/65.2
Ian Kennedy	USK-STN-NLE-PIT-NYM	366.3/60
Richard Palmer	BID-BED-BUG-GRW-BID	365.5/64.5
Stuart Howard North	PRK-LED-WNG-PRK	356.8/76.5
Matthew Sheahan	LAS-CHA-POP-LAG-LAS	345.6/62.8
Paul Browne	GRL-GRM-CAM-LEN-GR1	336.2/63.8
Neil Goudie	GRL-WCB-NMT-GRL	328.6/77.3
John Williams	POR-LMD-POR	324.4/80.1
James Ewence	SUT-KET-BYT-BVR-SUT	321.3/74.2
Nigel Pocock	LAS-CHA-POP-LAG-LAS	312.8/50
Jon Baldock	NYM-SHB-ALT-NYM	309.9/59.6
Kevin Tarrant	NYM-SHB-ALT-NYM	309.9/63.5
James Wilson	NYM-SHB-ALT-NYM	309.9/68.6
Gavin Deane	GRL-DID-LEN-GRL	308.8/65
Andrew Watson	GRL-DID-LEN-GRL	308.8/65.7
Andy Durston	LEE-NOS-LEE	308.6/68.6
Tom Smith	TIB-SIL-TIB	308.3/69
Andy Smith	TIB-SIL-TIB	308.3/78.1
Paul Machacek	SBY-GRL-MOR-SBY	308.2/62.7
Colin Sutton	SBY-GRL-MOR-SBY	308.2/70.3
John Dawson	NYM-SHB-ALT-NYM	307.9/82.5
Tim Davies	TIB-SIL-TIB	307.3/68
Martin Smith	LEZ-NOR-CHL-LEZ	306.7/73
Brian Harrison	BVT-THM-CER-NEW-BVT	305/46.2
Alistair Cook	BID-CAX-GRM-BID	303.9/64.2
Colin Cownden	GRL-GRM-GRL	302.4/70.9
Will Harris	GRL-GRM-GRL	302.4/80.3
Alan Head	GRL-GRM-GRL	302.4/75.9
Jamie Denton	LAS-ILM-MEM-LAS	301.1/72.3
Stephen Baker	LAS-ILM-MEM-LAS	301.1/59.8
Nigel Murning	LAS-ILM-MEM-LAS	301.1/56.1
Mike Truelove	UPA-BAT-EDG-LAS-UPA	300.8/52.3
Patrick Hogarth	UPA-STN-NPT-UPA	295.8/57.8
Pete Ballard	GRA-STW-BIC-GRA	283.9/47.1
Andy Preston	BRC-PSE-CAX-BRC	274.4/61.2
Mark Hawkins	UPA-BAT-EDG-UPA	234.3/46.9
Andrew Turk	BID-HEC-BAT-BID	223.2/45.2
Martin Hoskins	RIV-LAG-THA-RIV	198.2/57.7
Ed Wright	NYM-SHB-NYM	175.5/64.6
Gary Nuttall	BOB-BIC-BOB-BIC-BOO	149.8/49.1
Mike Terry	RET-WET-MAN-RET	146.5/46.5
David Bradley	SUT-BEV-RIP-HUM-SUT	133.5/38.1
Steve Barber	HUN-LAS-CBN-HUN	101.4/37.1

Details from BGA Ladder: *www.aircross.co.uk/bgaladder/index.asp*

before, a Nympsfield pilot had collected the "Wooden Plate" – a trophy for Lasham and Bristol & Glos GC members flying wooden gliders – in a SF27 (K-6E equivalent), so I decided to get it back in this vintage machine, HBX. Launching immediately after the grid, I climbed at 5kt up to the base of the TMA, 4,800ft above Lasham, and set out. After a good initial run, the clouds started to spread out and I got very low near Membury. Scraped up from 800ft and completed the trip with few further problems, apart from finding that I had inadvertently drawn the line on my map – no GPS – to Aston Down (gliding site near Stroud) rather than Nympsfield (gliding site near Stroud). However, I could see Nympsfield from 3,500ft over Aston Down and was able to glide there. About 30 minutes later, the Lasham-based, ex-Crown Services K-13, L99, with Gary Pullen and Merv Saunders, also landed with the same aim. We both managed to soar back to Lasham, with the wooden plate in the back of the Swallow, as I had got there first. Final gliding back into Lasham I thought that I had plenty of height in hand, so put the speed up to a dizzy 60kt. This proved to be a mistake as the Swallow descends like a brick above 50kt and I ended up scraping back with just enough energy to do a gentle beat up of the clubhouse before landing. OK, at 103km no great distance, but a most enjoyable and challenging flight nevertheless.

Some of the best flights from Yorkshire

YORKSHIRE GC chairman Graham Evison reports: Richie Toon in a Kestrel 19 flew 763.9km; Derek Taylor, with Chris Teagle in their Nimbus 3DT flew 754km. On the following day Paul Foster with Derek Taylor again in the Nimbus 3DT flew 752km. John Ellis in his Nimbus 3T flew 730km. John Russell in his Ventus 2CT, on three consecutive days, flew 620km, 556km and 502km. Rory O'Conor in his DG-800B flew 523.6km for Diamond distance. Richie Toon and wife Bryony, in the club's DG-1000, flew 485km. Over the weekend, two pilots flew more than 1,500km!

The longest flight ever from Marham

PETER Stafford Allen in Ventus B 333 and Paul Mclean in Ventus 2CT V2C attempted MRM-PEW-GRA-BIR-MRM "We would have made it home but for the sea breeze!" says Peter. "We flew about 700km, the longest glider flight ever from Marham".

A few of the flights from Cambridge

COLIN Cownden (ASW 20) declared and completed Gransden Lodge – Great Malvern – Gransden Lodge on Saturday. First 300 but the logger failed so he'll have to do it again. The next day his syndicate partner, Jem Davies, got in the glider. Not feeling bothered to think of his own task, he just switched on the GPS, saw Great Malvern was already in there, so flew that. Mike and Jane Roberts (Duo Discus) declared Gransden Lodge – Frome – Bury St Edmunds – Great Malvern – Gransden Lodge (785km) on Saturday. Jane was attempting to go straight from A Badge to two-seater 750km Diploma. Unfortunately they didn't quite make it, turning back on the last leg just short of Bicester. They got home for a total distance of around 630km.

Lasham to Land's End – and back

JILL Burry adds that Chris Garton (Ventus 2) did Land's End out-and-return from Lasham: a north coast flight. The windsock at St Just was showing just about southerly. Has anyone achieved this task before?

And Al Nunn did nearly 700km with the wheel down...

Sunday

Pilot	Task	km/speed
Adrian Hatton	HUS-ALW-PCT-DID-HUS	569.8/88.6
John Wilton	HUS-ALW-PCT-DID-HUS	569.8/88.3
Ian Macarthur	MYN-NPT-PEW-BLY-MYN	521.5/71.8
Neil Foreman	GRL-WCB-NMT-EDG-GRL	516.5/90.1
James Clark	HUS-THM-NWK-CHV-HUS	512.8/73.4
Kirk Davis	BOB-RET-CON-BOO	507.1/72.4
Rod Christie	BOB-RET-CON-BOO	507.1/70.6
Gavin Goudie	GRL-WES-STA-GRL	504.4/94.3
David Latimer	BRA-BUL-BVR-GOR-HIN	504.4/86.2
Ralph Johnson	PAR-CKL-BRI-PAR	503/90.1
John Russell	SUT-BVR-RIP-WKE-SUT	502.7/75.8
John Bridge	GRL-WEB-STA-GRL	502.2/87.1
Andy Walford	GRL-AND-TUX-GRL	501.8/85.5
Mike Thorne	UPA-HUS-LAS-NOS-UPA	501.7/82.5
Richard Smith	NYM-PTF-BWL-SPT-NYM	500.6/79.9
George Metcalfe	LAS-ROA-OXS-CHA-LAS	498/86.1
Garry Coppin	LAS-CHA-POP-GLA-LAS	493.3/80
Tony Hutchings	LEZ-RET-LA6-DID-DUN	471.9/78.2
Peter Hamblin	LAS-ROA-LA5-NEW-LAS	471/74.4
Andy Preston	BRC-BUL-BVR-GOR-BRC	470.6/62.2
David Masson	LAS-BUT-RHY-LAS	463.8/89.8
Alan Head	GRL-AND-SY1-GRL	460.7/73.3
Peter Ryland	TIB-SIL-BSE-OLN-TIB	447.3/78.9
John Williams	KIR-BSE-BUC-KIR	446.9/63.1
Mike Edwards	PRK-OSW-LAS	432.1/85
John Giddins	BRA-PTF-BVR-HIN	430.4/79.9
James Ewence	SUT-KET-SUT	416.6/67.9
Ariane Decloux	GRL-DID-TUX-GRL	407.6/77.4
Will Harris	GRL-AND-MET-GRL	407.4/76.6
jez hood	BOB-RAD-BRI-BOO	403.4/105.2
Richard Hood	BOB-RAD-BRI-BOO	403.4/96
Tim Macfadyen	NYM-LAS-IRO-NYM	397.5/80.8
Ian Molesworth	PAR-CHL-TOW-LA3-PAR	389.8/79.3
Martin Smith	LEZ-MTM-KGS-STS-DUN	384.3/72
Jamie Denton	LAS-CHA-POP-DID-LAS	366.8/67.3
Mike Roberts	GRL-LEO-KID-GRL	365.7/54.3
Sarah Platt	MYN-NPT-PEW-BLY-SHO	358.1/55.1
Bob Sharman	BIC-LAS-MET-BIC	351.8/87.6
Geralyn Macfadyen	NYM-ALT-STP-NYM	340.1/76.1
Neil Goudie	GRL-WCB-NMT-EDG-GRL	328.4/72.2
Geoffrey Lyons	BOO-SYE-BIC-BOO	321.6/77.2
Alastair MacGregor	PRK-MYN-PRK	321.2/75.6
David Prosolek	SBY-NOS-DNW-SBY	318.7/85
Z Goudie	PCS-DAM-FES-PCS	314.3/77
Tim Davies	TIB-SIL-BSE-TIB	311.8/72
Kevin Tarrant	NYM-BAS-NOS-NYM	311.1/69.7
Ed Wright	NYM-BAS-NOS-NYM	311.1/63.9
Stephen Cook	AST-KGS-HUS-AST	309/54
Owain Walters	BIC-MET-NEW-BIC	308.9/89.1
Stuart Howard North	PRK-PEN-THM-PRK	308.4/77.8
Paul Browne	GRL-DID-LEN-GR1	308.4/64.5
Andy Smith	TIB-SIL-TIB	308.3/76.8
Tom Smith	TIB-SIL-TIB	308.3/62.1
Chris Pollard	TIB-SIL-TIB	308.3/63.8
Matthew Sheahan	LAS-CHA-MEM-LAS	308/80.4
Stephen Bradford	TIB-SIL-TIB	307.3/76.2
Russ Francis	NYM-ALT-GAY-NYM	307.1/76.1
G. Drury	CLK-PTW-ALE-CLK	306.8/73
Mike Armstrong	CPH-SUT-WPE-CPH	306.6/89.7
Peter Uden	SBY-CAX-MOR-SBY	305.9/72.5
Martin Pingel	TAL-TOW-TAL	305/54.5
Dave Roberts	AST-MYN-BNW-AST	304.1/100.8
Tim O'Sullivan	BRC-BUL-LES-HIN	303.4/63
Jem Davies	GRL-GRM-GRL	302.4/69.3
Damien Dyer	BRC-BUL-LES-HIN	301.4/70.9
Andy Gibson	UPA-BAT-EDG-LAS-UPA	300.8/57.5
Mark Hawkins	UPA-BAT-EDG-LAS-UPA	300.8/73.7
Martin Hoskins	UPA-BAT-EDG-LAS-UPA	283.3/53.3
Chris Davison	SBY-DID-SBY	278.7/64.6
Steve Woolcock	GRL-WKE-GRL	276.6/57.6
David Bradley	SUT-BVR-SUT	273.3/43.2
Hywel Moss	NYM-ALT-BRO-NYM	273.1/66.1
Paul Machacek	SBY-GRL-MOR-CRC-UTT-SBY	272.8/60.2
Mark Fisher	TAL-TOW-TAL	270.2/41
Peter Belcher	GRL-DID-TUX-GRL	268.8/71.7
Claudia Buengen	WOG-SBY-OXN-WOG	243/59.5
Gary Nuttall	BOB-LEI-BIC-BOO	229.9/56.5
Alison Moss	NYM-ALT-FAR-NYM	229.8/71.8
Alan Langlands	EDG-MYN-EDG	215/63.9
Patrick Hogarth	UPA-BAT-EDG-LAS-UPA	196.9/53.7
John Clark	TAL-BID-TAL	189.7/65.4
Steven Myall	UPW-BIC-UPW	177.6/44.4
Glenn Barratt	RFD-CRL-RFD	166.9/66.8
Ayala Liran	UPA-BAT-EDG-LAS-UPA	163.9/44.7
John Swannack	RET-WET-RET-RET	147.2/73.6
Philipp Schartau	BIC-TEW-BIC	140.3/56.1
Tribe Allan	UPA-LAS-UPA	106.6/85.3
Eugene Lambert	AST-EVE-BOW-AST	104.1/46.3
Gerard Phillips	LAS-DID-LAS	101.3/47.1
Michael Edmonds	TAL-LLW-LED-BAN-TAL-TAL	100.8/37.8
Mike Witton	MYN-ABB-AST-MYN	93.5/31.2
Paul R. Sweeting	USK-BID	83.2/unk

Thanks to Rory O'Conor for the idea. to Jill Burry for getting the facts, and to *www.lasham.org.uk*. If your story has been cut or left out due to the unforeseen pressure on editorial space, *S&G* apologises

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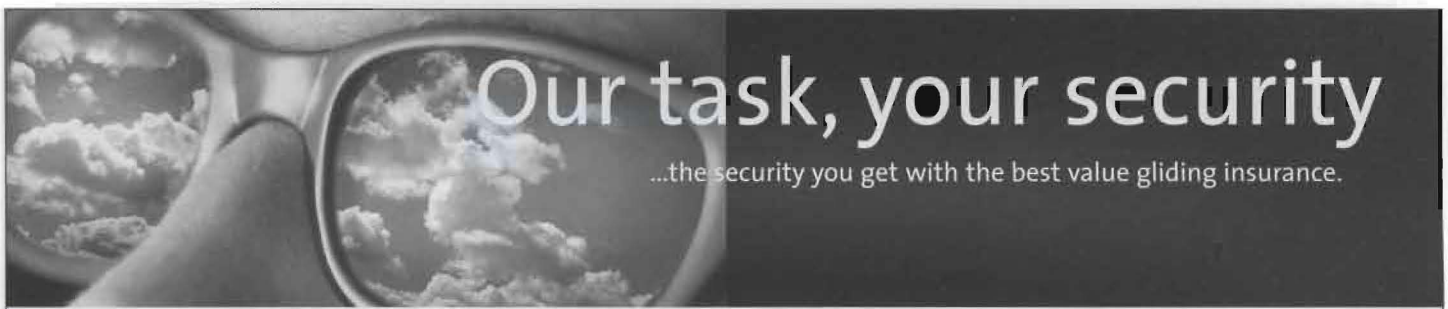
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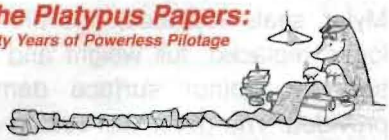
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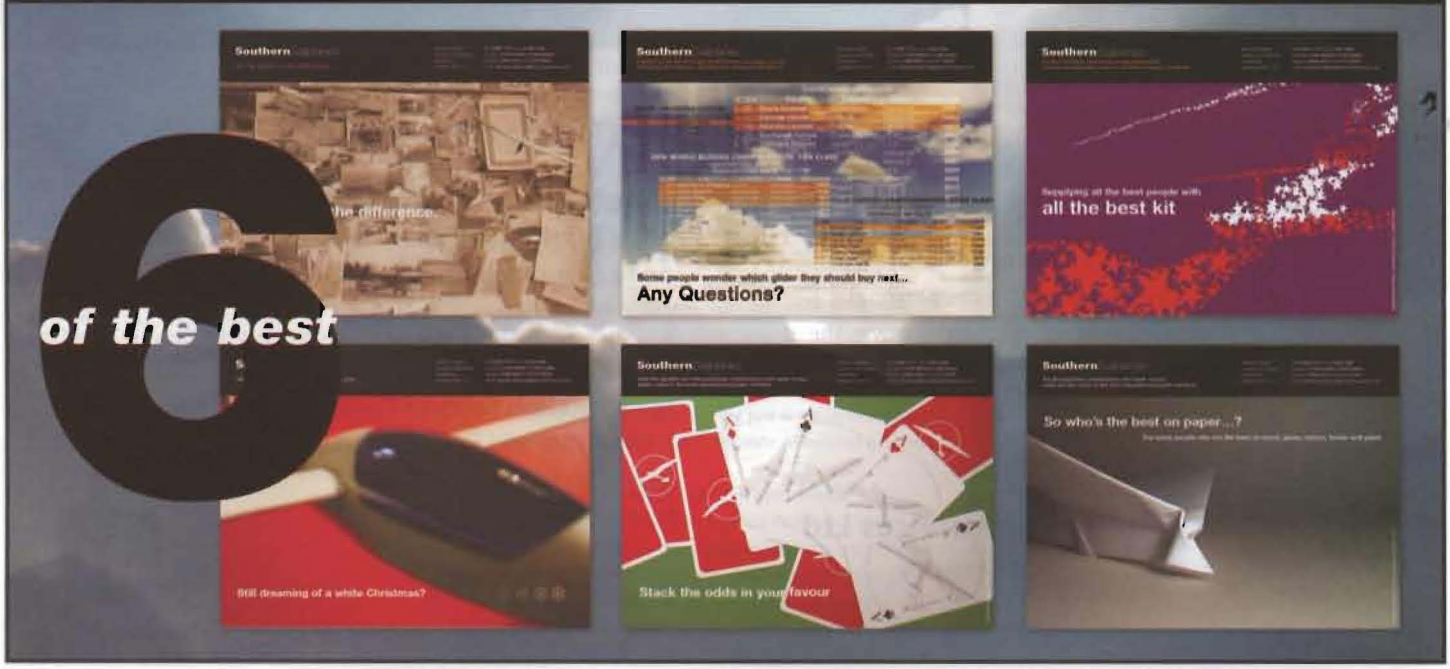
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1,020km in the UK



As Russell returned to Hus Bos at 20.00hrs on that *Friday, Mike Fox took this shot of the end of ASW 22BL E2's superb flight. This was only the second 1,000km flown in the UK and the first UK-earned FAI 1,000km Diploma (the other, being in a two-seater, didn't qualify). Russell's free distance – 1,020.07km, flown east-west – beats that record set by Chris Rollings/Chris Pullen (1008.54km, north-south) in an ASH 25 on 22.07.95.*

Left: Russell (who soloed in 1987, has a UK 750km Diploma and 3,500hrs) cleaning his glider after the flight. His Diploma distance of 1003.77km was the first 1,000km he has flown (Mike Fox)

Russell Cheetham's account of his record-breaking 1,020km heads our six-page account of the extraordinary flights made on Friday, June 25, 2004

EVER SINCE doing my 750km on a slightly scruffy day in late August 1994, I realised that much bigger distances were possible and resolved that one day I would attempt 1,000km in the UK.

I was flying on the great day in 1995 when Chris Rollings and Chris Pullen, in an ASH 25, flew the first 1,000km flight in this country. However, I had failed to recognise the day's potential and instead flew two competition training 250km cross-countries in an ASH 25 with two different co-pilots at a regionals. Since then, I have been patiently waiting for a big day to arrive that fitted in with my other commitments. I missed a couple of possible opportunities due to flying in competitions (there *is* sometimes good soaring weather at competitions) but eventually recognised that the perfect day would probably never come along and that just a good day would have to do.

So when on Thursday, June 24 the weather gurus were still promising the appearance of a ridge to produce a fine day on the Friday, following a couple of poor rainy days, I considered whether the 1,000km was on. A quick call to one of my trusty crew possibilities – "Arthur" – confirmed that I would get retrieved if necessary and that he would help me get prepared.

Every task that I had ever planned in waiting had been north-south oriented and would require a northerly wind, or one just west of north. I didn't really believe that 1,000km could be realistically fitted into an east-west task but considering the forecast of a significant wind from 270° it would have to be an east-west task. If not, I would have to drop the idea and fly some sort of FAI triangle instead. Some internet forecasts were describing showers on the East Coast, which cast additional doubts on the whole idea, but when I realised that from my base at Hus Bos it was just about impossible to do an FAI triangle of more than 600km, I went back to considering the 1,000km, three-TP yo-yo.

Going east nearly to the North Sea would probably not cause a problem due to the significant westerly, but going west could prove a problem, with the wind coming from the sea. Beyond Talgarth, the fields are small – non-existent in places. On the few occasions that I had previously ventured into Wales, the weather had been generally poor with the ground tending to come up to meet me under a lowering cloudbase. And there are dragons out there – aren't there?

Using official BGA TPs, I couldn't make a task up that I was happy with, so I created my own TP1 by selecting an arbitrary Lat and Long (52:16.720N 01:32.600E) somewhere next to the Suffolk coast. I eventually decided on a remote start at Hinckley, the arbitrary TP1, HAY (Hay on Wye), BUN (Bungay) and back to Husbands Bosworth for 1003.77km.

With the task programmed into the logger at 01.00hrs, I went to bed until 05.30hrs. Not the ideal preparation before a big flight.

Leaving home at 06.15hrs, I arrived at Hus Bos at 07.00hrs, the agreed time to meet my crew and start the extended process of rigging and persuading enough water into the smallish tanks of the ASW 22bl that I have the privilege of owning. On the drive out, I was more than a little concerned to see the beginnings of scruffy cu forming, which at that time usually signifies extreme overdevelopment or spreadout later. I don't recall ever seeing cu that early – or maybe I always get up too late...

It was pleasing to find that Peter Harvey, my several times British team partner in Open Class competitions, had also decided to visit Hus Bos with his Nimbus 4 and to attempt 1,000km, but using the more usual north-south tasking. Despite my best efforts, he could not be persuaded to adopt my task, which I thought much better utilised the forecast wind direction and speed. This turned out to be 290°/20kt, dropping gradually to 270°/6kt by the end of the day. His decision would later be his undoing, as he was unable to benefit from running downwind in the early windy and weak conditions or take advantage of any streeting effects that would inevitably occur.

I eventually took off at 08.52hrs behind the Supermunk and we just managed to squeeze through a tight gap in the now

'I discovered that bugwipers are pretty good at stripping ice off the leading edges'

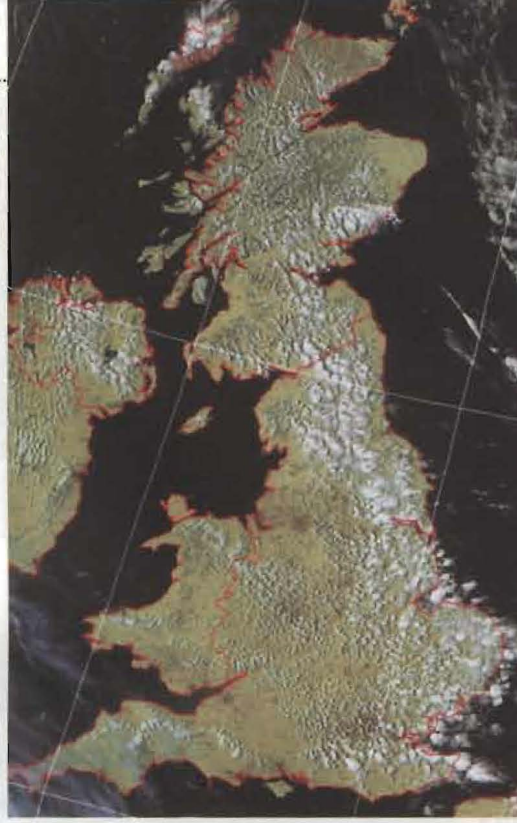
overdeveloped damp-looking cloud streets. Depressingly, cloudbase was 1,900ft.

The start went uneventfully at Hinckley at 3,600ft, before some cloud dodging and then cloud flying until I was running under the streets at 2,000ft able to hold my own mostly without circling, being helped along by the brisk wind.

Cloudbase slowly rose to 3,500ft by the time I reached the East Coast but the streeting seemed, unfortunately, to get less evident as the leg progressed while the spreadout became more evident. Climbs worth circling in were in the range of 2.5-3kt.

Rounding the first TP for 112km/h at cloudbase, which remarkably stepped up suddenly to 4,000ft, was encouraging but as I turned into wind for the 320km leg to Hay on Wye, it became apparent that with the spreadout and the headwind at 17kts, it would be a long second leg.

Climb rates did improve to 3-4kt but with the significant spreadout, the long legs of the 22BL were extremely useful. However, the average task speed dropped to 86km/h by the time I reached Northampton, about half way along the leg. Going west, the spreadout ended quite abruptly and conditions at last became excellent with cloudbase



Satpic for 16.11hrs Zulu from Bernard Burton's copyright site: www.btinternet.com/~wokingham.weather/wwp.html

approaching 5,000ft and climbs of 5-5.5kt. The wind had also been dropping steadily and settled at about 7kt, still from a westerly point. At Hay on Wye, which I rounded at 2,300ft at 14.43hrs for a leg average of just 84km/h, the conditions looking west were very good indeed with a line of cumulus that appeared to be going all the way to the sea. This must have been some sort of sea breeze effect from either side of the South Wales peninsula, which I will remember for the future. I considered continuing into this to increase the free distance but the slow progress of the flight so far prompted me to turn downwind for Bungay as originally planned. Conditions remained excellent again until about Northampton, where the beginnings of the spreadout started again, making longer and slower glides necessary between thermals.

At 25km before the turn it was apparent that the now near-eight-eighths spreadout might make the turn tricky or impossible. So when the opportunity of a cloud climb arose on the edge of this, I took it at 4kt average to 8,500ft. Although the glider was covered in ice, entailing poor performance, this allowed me to round Bungay at 5,700ft at 17.25 and gave me a good chance of escaping west into the better weather again. The leg had averaged 117km/h. Later than the ideal, I discovered that bugwipers are pretty good at stripping ice off the leading edges and earlier use may well have saved me some altitude rounding the turn.

The associated spreadout from the last big climb made escaping from the turn a bit tricky with one weak 2kt climb under the spreadout then a long glide out into the sunshine, where it seemed the day could have ended. However, two blue thermals

between Thetford and Ely gained me 1,500ft and 1,200ft respectively from quite low level and so allowed progress into what I thought was a hopeless, blue and now dead sky. However, with more than 100km to go to Hus Bos and the time getting on, the sky re-cycled once more and usable cu formed at Ely and beyond, giving reliable lift of 2kt up to near cloudbase (still at 5,000ft). Each small cumulus gave 2kt, even from quite low down, and this allowed me to glide to Thrapston, where a sole large but old cu several kilometres across still remained.

By this time, the computer was already confirming I should make Hus Bos but this climb, if it could be found under the wide canopy, would let me add a bit of distance to the task for a possible free distance record. Again, the cloud was still sucking gently and another 2kt climb to near cloudbase gave me 2,600ft in hand to the goal.

By now it was getting late: the day had gone on and on but it couldn't last for ever and there was precious little in the way of signs of lift ahead. Airspace would limit how far I could fly past Hus Bos but I decided I'd try to get all the distance available.

Crossing the task finish line at HUS at 20.07 at 2,400ft I headed for Lutterworth, where there was just a hint of a cloud. Sadly, this gave nothing so after a brief search I decided not to go for every last kilometre but to do a GNSS landout and get home whilst the computer still showed a healthy margin.

In the back of my mind, I knew that I was supposed to be going to a dinner party and that getting there late was better than not at all – although I knew that my wife, Helen, would be understanding and surprised that I had not eked out every last kilometre. So a low, high-speed fly by – as "beat ups" are not encouraged – finished off the flight and at 20.22 I landed to the welcome of several club members and also my patient Official Observer and crew. I had taken 11 hours exactly for the declared flight and, in total, 11 hours 31 minutes for a free distance of 1020.07km and a speed of 91.17km/h round the declared 1003.77km.

If you crave statistics, 28 per cent of the flight was spent circling – which is actually a depressingly high percentage for an Open Class glider. The average glide ratio achieved was 61:1 and the average climb rate 3kt.

What was remarkable about the day was not the strength or consistency of lift, which was reasonably average, but the length of usable day. This was quite exceptional even considering the time of year. Some pilots in other areas reported usable cu at 20.30hrs and as it looked soarable at Hus Bos from about 08.00, albeit with a very low cloudbase, it just shows what might be achieved in June and July with less wind, no spreadout and similar strong thermals.

So why not give it a go yourself when the next good ridge comes along? After all 91.17km/h should be well beatable, so the new 1,000km "speed" trophy kindly donated by Peter Hearne to encourage 1,000km attempts may yet be yours...

An 800km FAI triangle in the UK

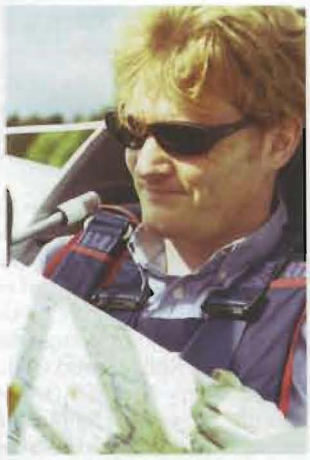


Photo by Adrian Hobbs. Map (opposite) by Steve Longland

Ed Downham (right) exploited that Friday to fly a record task in his ASW 27 N5 – eating a custard cream every 100km as a reward

I HAD BEEN planning a task of this size for some time but Friday, June 25, was the first opportunity weather-wise. I realised that a *long* day was more important than a *strong* day, although one that was both long and strong would be acceptable!

Fitting a large, record-shaped triangle into the UK is a challenge: airspace, high terrain, sea air – just some of the inevitable problems. To deal with this I had created a portfolio of tasks of various lengths and proportions, and researched and "flown" them in SeeYou in peace and quiet.

For the 800km I woke up at 05.30hrs and didn't have a great deal of time to spare up to the launch at 09.30hrs. My experience has been that you inevitably make mistakes if you leave too much for on the day.

I started overhead Dunstable just after 09.40 and waffled along into wind (which was 300°/16kt at that time). There were ragged cumulus on track at about 2,500ft AGL, marking lines of weak lift. These enabled me to stretch the glide by weaving left and right and slowing up but there wasn't very much to circle in. I didn't get a reasonable climb until near Enstone, when the thermal strengths started picking up. I had put 80kg (175lb) of water on as a compromise to facilitate soaring in the earlier, weaker conditions and it felt about right.

'From there it was a glide of more than 50km to the next climb, just to the east of a picturesque Castle Howard'

There was a bit of spreadout and an (almost) shower over the Cotswold edge but I pushed through and was rewarded with 6kts to 4,500ft ASL, 5km north of Cheltenham. At that point I thought: "Yes! it's going to be really good," and of course didn't see anything like that for another two-and-a-half hours.

There were flat cu over the Severn Valley and into Wales but it was hard to find anything consistent and the relationship between the clouds and the thermals was too complicated for me to fathom. I arrived at the edge of the Black Mountains to find I had stupidly arranged not to have enough height to cross them so had to scrabble up in one of the valleys then glide over the top.

It was almost blue running into Cray Reservoir (TP1) with uncertain bursts of lift. I went round at 12.40 (schedule 13.00), having averaged 70km/h; I felt much better now the wind was (partly) behind me. The sky looked good but persistently failed to deliver any more than climbs of 500ft at 2-3kt and I had to wait till Bridgnorth until I caught 5kt to 5,000ft. My long-standing theory is that high ground works well when there are no significant stable layers but can be problematic if there is any sort of lid, leaving less "fetch" for the thermals.

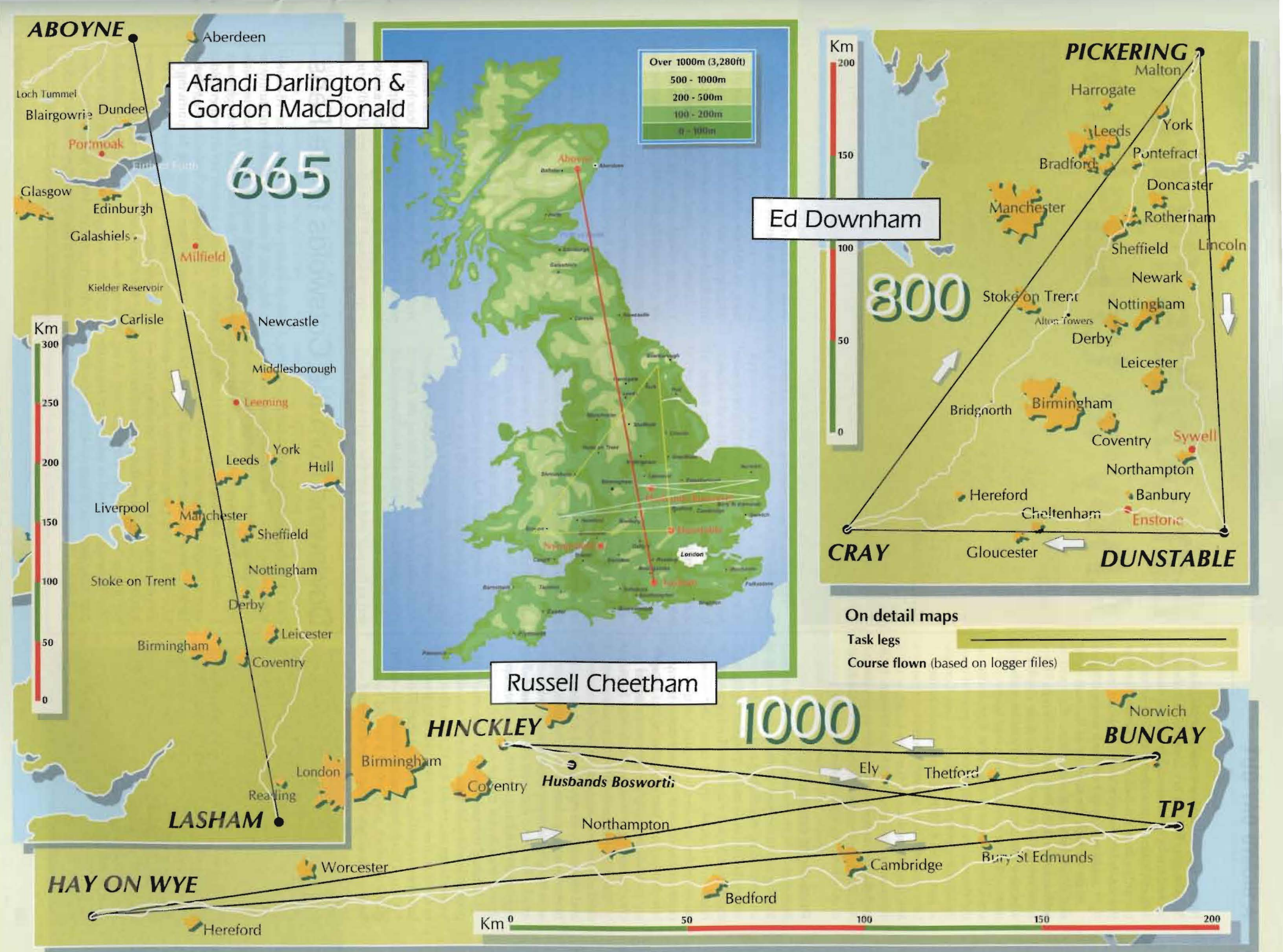
From there I worked my way round the back of Birmingham's airspace, where the clouds started to deepen and spread out again. (Thank you to Bruce Cooper and Carr Withall on the BGA's Airspace Committee, for getting the base raised to FL55.) I was using Alton Towers as a control point to keep me out of Manchester and East Midlands, so curved north once past.

I had my usual grovel over the Pennines and had to wait till I was beyond Sheffield for more than 3kt. There was a large amount of mid-level spreadout at around 8,000ft, which cut off the sun over quite an extensive area. I made a 90° deviation for a fresh wisp downwind of the power station at Pontefract and was rewarded by more than 6kt to 5,200ft.

From there it was a glide of more than 50km to the next climb, just to the east of a picturesque Castle Howard. It was almost completely overcast with a few holes but the cloudbase was high enough and the air unstable enough to make progress possible. I turned Pickering (TP2) at 16.05 (latest 16.30) and was lucky to be in one of the few sunny areas and also to be about 3km land-side of some sea air penetration.

The view south still showed large amounts of spreadout but I could see sunshine beyond the Humber Estuary. I took a cloud climb near Malton to cross the gap but left at 6,000ft, when I started icing up badly. I found a fractured climb after a 40km glide but had to go another 12km before I could get to base at 5,000ft.

From there to Newark it was easier, with more sun and obvious climbs and energy


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150
200

lines. I took a weaker-than-I-wanted 3kt to 5,000ft near Belvoir because the sky ahead looked tricky, with decaying clouds casting lots of shadows directly on track. I set off towards a hopeful-looking, isolated cloud to the south but thought better of it and made a right angle turn to get under a sunny edge.

At six o'clock the day felt as if it was dying so I slowed up, dropped some ballast and took another 3kt climb near Eyebrook. The number on the WinPilot final glide display was now becoming more attractive, rather than –34,000 or whatever it had been showing for most of the flight. Convinced the thermals were weakening, I ground up in 2.5kt to get on to a 1kt glide near Corby, at just under 6,000ft. Flying slowly home, I ran into 4kt near Sywell, wound up the MacCready and raced back at 100kt, encountering so much lift I had to go to 120kt and dump the rest of the water to get down! An 801.1km triangle (DUN-CRY-PKG-DUN) at 87.1km/h in 9hrs 21 minutes aloft.

Post-flight analysis

Being current in soaring and acclimatised to long flights helped. In the five weeks up to and including this flight I had done just under 110hrs with many 7hr-plus flights in the Alps. I took a three-litre fluid reservoir filled with isotonic sports drink[1] and sipped away for the whole day. (I must have produced twice that and was down to my last pee-bag but that's another story.) I forgot my sandwiches so grabbed some custard creams, eating one every 100km as a reward.

About 90 per cent of the thermals were difficult (for me, anyway) to find, to centre in and especially to stay centred. I'd normally blame that on a change in wind direction with height but there didn't seem to be much. The wind dropped off to about 6-7kts right at the end and the lift still played up (but at least it was there).

I finished the task at 18.55. Reports from people landing later were that it was still soarable up to at least 19.30, so with a climb to 6,000ft then and a 0kt glide out it would have been possible to add another 75 or 100km. I think keeping a ballasted 15-metre glider up much before 09.15 would have been exceedingly difficult and forward progress roughly nil, so add another 30km which means 900km-plus was on in a little ship. I think, given Russell's weather problems on his 1,000km, that a four-figure task length would have been too much, unless I had 100 per cent luck with the route and the conditions. Maybe next time...

Edward Downham, an airline pilot who flies gliders from London GC at Dunstable, holds 1,000km and UK 750km Diplomas and has 2,700hrs gliding since solo in 1984 – averaging 250hrs plus pa in the last few years. Reasonable success in competitions over the years but now flies for fun instead. If this 800km is ratified (Open, 20m and 15m triangle distance, 15m 750km triangle speed) he will hold nine UK and National records

1. Actually a CamelBak with Lucozade Sport (lemon) – but I'm not getting any money for saying this

Early birds fly from Aboyne to Lasham



On June 25, Afandi Darlington (right) and Gordon MacDonald (left) broke the UK goal distance record after launching before dawn in Scotland and flying 665km from Aboyne to Lasham. Afandi picks up the story...



IT ALL STARTED in the Aboyne bar last autumn during a Lasham wave expedition: "What do you reckon first launch time is here on the longest day?"

"Dunno – about 4am?"

"And last landing must be about 11pm"

"Hmmm: 19-hour soaring days – 55km/h for 1,000km!"

And so we found ourselves at a rainswept Aboyne airfield in late June with a borrowed Nimbus 3DT (Phil Green's 754) and a week's holiday to have a go at a big flight. Friday was looking promising from four days out with the classic north-westerly flow over Scotland being followed by a building ridge of high pressure to squash showers that might otherwise spoil the day.

The glider was prepared and parked out at the end of the runway overnight, the tuggie bribed to provide a 03:50 launch and a plan hatched to break the UK goal distance record, which had stood since May 10, 1959, when Nick Goodhart had flown his primitive Skylark 3 from Lasham to Portmoak for 579.36km. We also had in mind a go at the FAI distance task where you can declare turning points from the GPS trace after the flight, akin to a three-zone AAT.

We launched at 03:53 into obvious wave, slowly climbing westwards along the Dee valley after running through the Aboyne start line. It was still 20 minutes before sunrise and to the east and south the night was slowly receding, the orange glow of streetlights marking each small town and village in the rugged countryside below. As we climbed higher we could see solid eight-eighths west of Loch Tummel and at 10,000ft the wind dropped off, rapidly stopping our climb. With the cloud tops at 7,000ft we didn't risk pushing on further south-west to Loch Lomond – our original plan – but headed back to Aboyne to see how things were developing. We decided to burn our boats and head south for Lasham.

Following a good blue wave climb to 11,300ft 10km north-west of Blairgowrie we contacted Scottish ATC for a clearance through the P600 airway and headed south, arriving overhead Portmoak at 7,800ft.

Here was our quandry, since we had not received a clearance to fly through the Scottish TMA around Edinburgh, and the long route clearing it to the east would mean scratching at low level in the Galashiels area at 08.00hrs. I was beginning to think we should have started later. After discounting soaring the Bishop Hill until thermals started, we carried on, crossing the Firth of Forth at 6,000ft, which provided splendid views of Edinburgh in the morning sunshine.

We could see wave to the west of Milfield and after a glide of 126km from our high point, we arrived at low level in scrappy wave-assisted cu which just kept us airborne – spirits soared! Thermals were clearly going

Downwind from the Cotswolds to the Fens

ON Thursday, June 24, *writes Lemmy Tanner*, I was preparing my LS8, LT, for the 18-Metre Nationals at Norfolk GC when I learned of Friday's forecast. It seemed a good opportunity to fly the glider to Tibenham and let Peter, the crew, do the driving. Although Friday dawned with extensive cloud cover over Gloucestershire by the time the car was packed it had brightened considerably. Arriving at Nympsfield with a declaration of intent I found several other pilots were already on large tasks. Cloudbase was low initially, 2,500ft, but got better later. At about 12.30 I decided that this would be the best time to go, or Pete would be late arriving at Tibenham. Once I was airborne (with 15-metre tips) and climbing, a cloudstreet started up almost along track. The wind was only 10kt, a bit less than expected, but a good start below 3,200ft amsl put me on the street and cruising nicely. The flight was then quite straightforward but it was necessary to keep pushing along to keep the average speed above 125km/h. Tibenham was reached in under two hours for the 250km. Average speed 130.3km/h: a new 200km goal record (it was Alf Warminger, Vega, 127.1km/h, May 12, 1984) for Std, 18m, 20m and Open Classes. Pete arrived about four hours later after a difficult journey – thanks, Peter!



Climbing in wave over Dinnet at 04.05hrs at the start of Afandi's and Gordon's flight from Scotland to Hampshire

to kill the wave, so all we needed to do was to somehow keep the heavy Nimbus aloft for an hour or so, working each scrap of lift as it drifted downwind. The unfamiliar desolate terrain of the borders slipped below as the first cu of the day formed around us with very low bases and highish tops suggesting showers or spreadout for later. Running at low level into the higher ground near Kielder reservoir led to our only close shave of the flight but 1kt from 600ft AGL under a promising cu allowed us to climb and Gordon in the back could start breathing again! I was wondering if this flight counted as my annual check – Gordon is LGS's CFI – and imagining what he would have written in my logbook had we landed on the heather-covered moorside below...

The area around Newcastle and Teeside had seen more than an inch of rain the day before and the cu here were soft, damp affairs with only occasional 1kt climbs so we tiptoed along, ballooning downwind, sharing the flying and airspace warning duties. It was only after Leeming, where conditions improved markedly, that we could relax and speed up.

Perfect – classic looking sky in front, 15kt tailwind and on top of the world, lost in reverie until disturbed by the Volklogger beeping insistently, warning of low volts – only 6.5 volts and dropping. Switching to battery two didn't cure it – disaster – our only logger was about to go down!

After trying all the switch combinations and turning off the vario and radio, the only option left was to rewire the seemingly dead main battery into the fresh turbo batteries by Gordon's feet, which was no mean undertaking given the oxygen bottles, pee bags, jumpers, cans of coke, etc in the back. If we got the power back within one minute the trace would be valid. However, halfway though this exercise, after fiddling with the main battery with a Leatherman, the logger came back again with 12.6 volts (a dry joint somewhere in the battery pack). Our spirits lifted and we continued towards our goal, only 290km distant now.

The rest of the flight was straightforward: racing in strong 5kt thermals with a 5,000ft cloudbase, and we arrived at Lasham at 14.55 after a flight of 11 hours.

The temptation to continue to the west for an undeclared 1,000+km was tempered by our precarious electrics and desire to get the goal record in the bag. So we landed and had tea and cakes. We had broken the 45-year-old goal distance record and were elated. Thinking about it in the following days we came to these conclusions:

- A distance of 1,300km using three TPs should be possible, assuming clearance through the Scottish TMA. Such a task might be Aboyne-Balmaha Pier-Norwich East-Eaglescott-Lasham for 1,317km. I think this flight was achievable on June 25.
- Aboyne is under-utilised by UK glider pilots in the summer.
- Glider pilots' weather forecasting skills are increasing rapidly, as is the quality of meteorological data. This enables big flights.
- We were very lucky to get such a good day during the week we were at Aboyne, but I wonder how often it is possible to cross from the Highlands to Northern England during the summer? I suspect fairly often.
- Carry at least two loggers on record flights on separate electrical systems.

I suppose we shall have to institute an Aboyne-Lasham plate now!

We would like to thank all those from Deeside who made our flight possible, in particular Diana (the tuggie), Q – who ran our wingtip – and Roy Ferguson-Dalling. See you next year!

Gordon MacDonald, who was in the back seat, adds: "This was the first time in a while when I was actually nervous before take off. Not due to safety issues, but because we had a real chance of a record-breaking flight and I did not want to make any mistakes.

Launching before sunrise at Aboyne! Although I've done it before on Lasham's October expeditions – it always gives best wave conditions – I am still always amazed to be averaging up to 8kt towards 10,000ft and watching the sunrise. You have to be there to appreciate it. The entire week's trip was worth it for that moment. I remember Afandi shivering with cold, but I was OK, in lots of layers of clothes (hours later, thermalling, he was OK and I was boiling hot!) We nearly used some of our 4hrs of oxygen to cope with high-altitude body odours. A week of healthy Scottish diet had not helped!

Crossing the 14-mile stretch of water east of Edinburgh *(see picture at bottom of column)* made me a little anxious, even though we were over 5,000ft. At this stage I thought that an outlanding was probable but we aimed for the small wave-influenced cu anyway. I have never been so relieved as when we started climbing away in a quarter of a knot of wave to keep us airborne until the thermals started properly.

Getting a real thermal at 08.40 surprised me. A little later a 1,000ft cloud climb was a relief. A bit later sheep on the moorland near Kielder reservoir looked rather close, producing a very quiet moment! At breakfast time I got my Mars Bar out of my pocket to find it had liquefied. It took two hours before I could eat it (but still went down well).

Nearing final glide, I was pressing on for another 5kt climb when we needed only 1,000ft. Fortunately Afandi talked me into stopping for 2kt just to stay safe. There was no point falling down on final glide. Nick Goodhart's speed record was very safely still his. On final glide at 14.40 I longed for more logger battery life in order to break the free distance record. The last final glide back to Lasham on this day arrived after 21,00hrs. We could have done another 500km. We still felt comfortable and in good spirits even after more than 11 hours in the cockpit.

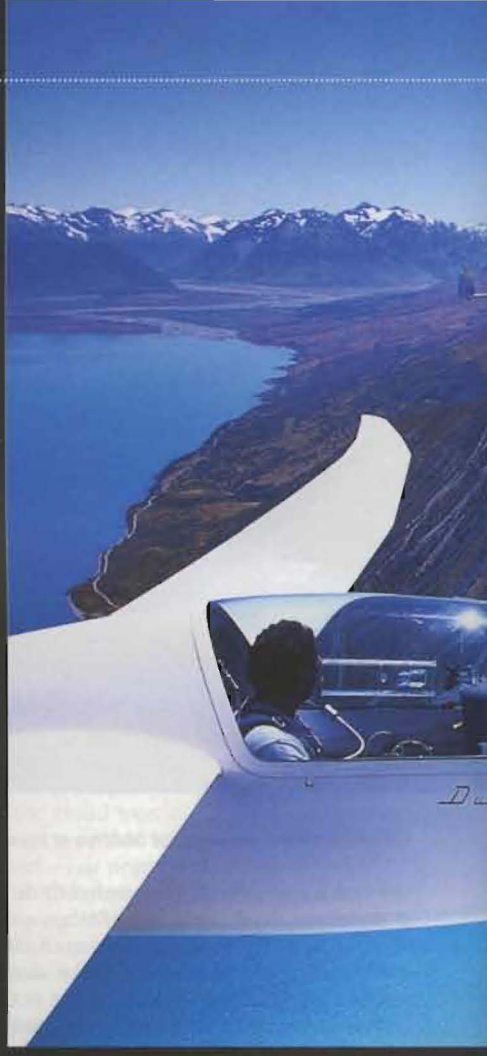
Afandi and I are planning to go back to Aboyne again next June to break more records. Anyone wanting to do the same should contact Aboyne. The biggest issue is the decision to try rather than actually doing it!

For the record, the retrieve of car and trailer from Aboyne took two days and involved: an Easyjet flight to Aberdeen, a lift from Al Eddie to Aboyne, a broken gearbox and a lot of help from the AA."

Below: Edinburgh viewed from above the Firth of Forth







Should we be here...?

Glaciers, crevasses, breaking waves – Andy Perkins shares a never-to-be-forgotten flight in New Zealand's Southern Alps



"ANDY, should we be here?" I looked up and all I could see were boulders the size of 747s and a crevasse-ridden shelf of ice more than half a kilometre long barely gripping the rock face above. It felt as though cracking open the brakes could cause several hundred tonnes of ice and rock to come crashing down – taking us along for the ride. One of those moments where you breathe in then hold your breath for no reason other than that it seems like a good idea...

The Mt Cook region of New Zealand's South Island is unique, captivating, and awe-inspiring. Conditions are some of the most extreme imaginable. It can turn from a mild, sunny day to –50° Celsius or lower in the space of less than an hour. The wind around this area often exceeds 100mph from the west. Anemometers placed to capture these conditions have recorded winds in excess of 140mph before being destroyed by the elements. When such winds blow, the vortices created in the lee of the mountain would toss a sailplane against the rocks faster than you could say "roc..."

It is unusual for the air around Mt Cook – which stands imposingly proud at more than 12,000ft – to be calm. On this occasion, however, it was so still that we were able to tuck in close and creep along its mysterious





Clockwise from bottom left: porpoising above cloud; low over an Alpine valley; Lake Ohau; Mount Cook. Photos like these, which were taken by Marty Taylor with the help of Gavin Wills, will be used in a high-quality limited-edition 2005 calendar available from www.extremegliding.com

east face and float gently down over the grand plateau. A truly awesome sight, with crevasses like awful teeth jutting in every direction, yet in the cavernous gaps we could see the beautiful deep and slightly translucent blue caused by compression of the layers of ice over the years.

This was all in stark contrast to my flight the previous week with Alaskan Bob: a true gentleman who learnt to glide in his seventies. Now several years younger, Bob approached me: "Andy, I want to soar Mt Cook."

Having absorbed the Kiwi spirit over my time in this incredible land, "no worries" was the obvious answer.

It was a fairly typical day with a light westerly and bases 1,000ft or more above the tops as we ran up the Barrier Range past Mt St Mary (7,650ft), crossed the Hopkins River to the Neumann Range over Mt Glencairn at 8,150ft and on to the divide at the head of the Dobson at around 11,000ft, Mt Sefton just below at 10,359ft. West of the divide was enveloped in cloud and at Mt Cook's summit ridge the cloud raced up and then tore apart in the lee of this spectacular giant. Despite running the crest of the divide we were managing 3-4kt descent at best. I knew that the western face of summit ridge would work. However, there was cloud engulfing our surroundings and flying in the infamous cumulo-granitus did not appeal.

"Bob, it's not going to work," I tell him. "We'll have to cross the valley and into the wave behind Mt Cook." "Ok-a-y" is Bob's slightly hesitant response. "Hold on, Bob," I warned him. What an understatement that would prove to be!

Turning at right angles to the divide and preparing for a few bumps we set off. Within a couple of seconds I find my head hitting the canopy and, regardless of my control inputs, the Duo Discus pitches and rolls unbidden. It is like I imagine it would feel like if you were shoved into a huge washing machine and put on a spin cycle!

Fortunately, after a very long 10 seconds we clear the other side; as it goes smooth the controls return to responses I'm more familiar with and I turn us into wind. "Are we still alive?" is Bob's question from the front seat. "Umm... Yep," is all I can muster.

'We watched as the cloud collapsed – just as a classic Hawaiian wave breaks...'

A few minutes pass in silence, apart from the high-pitched tones from the Cambridge settling at around 8kt or more. We climb through 15,000ft in the now surreal silky smooth air with the splendour of the Southern Alps stretching out beneath us.

Bob asks very quietly: "Andy... Do we have to do that again?" The sound of relief in Bob's voice as I assure him that that definitively won't be necessary is still with me today.

We head for home. The wind is slightly north of north-west as we glide south over the glacial meltwaters of Lake Pukaki. A stunning sight with its milky light blue appearance; the result of rock flour held in suspension after centuries of glacial erosion in the valleys around Mt Cook National Park. The wave is more obviously marked now by rotor cumulus and plates of lenticular clouds forming in an interference pattern.

As we reached the southern tip of the Lake we couldn't resist turning into wind in front of an unusual isolated wave cloud. This resulted in a climb that averaged 15kt from 10,000ft to 20,000ft. We broke off the climb because the cloud towering above us was leaning very markedly into wind. We could see it curling over and then back down despite our attempts to push further upwind. Less than two minutes later we watched from further south as the cloud collapsed – just as the crest of a classic Hawaiian wave breaks and comes crashing down with the full force of nature.

It's these wild, varied and spectacular conditions that attract glider pilots to the Mackenzie Basin from all over the globe. There is a magic that cannot be explained here, combined with a power and force that is enabling pilots like Terry Delore and Steve Fossett to aim to achieve the unthinkable. They plan use Lee Waves and the Polar Vortex to fly the furthest distance possible in our world, all without assistance. It's an incredible journey via some of the most exposed places a sailplane has ever been. This adventurous spirit is captured at *www.extremegliding.com*

Whatever your experience level you can enjoy the magic of soaring the wilds of New Zealand. See overleaf for more details of two gliding operations based at Omarama



The magic is in the sheer size and space

OMARAMA can deceive the casual visitor – an isolated airfield and a sleepy rural town. However, in the sky above is pure air, pierced by dramatic snow-covered mountains and disturbed on a predictable basis by every variety of energy known to glider pilots. Our wave conditions are famous – but to me the magic is in the sheer size and space of it all.

I took over the operations of *Alpine Soaring* on June 1 after many years working in New Zealand, Australia and the UK in the media and technology sectors. I've spent my life hovering around aviation – and first went solo in powered aircraft when I was 19. Last year, after a few disappointing glider flights at Booker, I decided to come back to my native New Zealand and learn to fly gliders as part of a structured, full-time course.

The experience was so perfect that I bought the company – not just because it is a good business, but because Omarama has a special feel which only people who have been here can really understand.

In the Maori language Omarama means "Place of Light" – and every evening here is proof of that. The electric atmosphere dances, scintillates and pulses in a variety of shocking scarlet streaks when the sun drops behind the massive Southern Alps.

Southern Soaring will maintain the relaxed, professional style so firmly established by Doug Hamilton – but everything will be a bit sharper – more flying, more planning, a bigger fleet and an ambition to become a global incubator for new glider pilots.

Any of our pilots can close off thousands of square kilometres of air space with one call to Christchurch air traffic control. Just one simple radio call – and all powered aircraft have to avoid the entire glider designated area (about the size of Wales).

This is all thanks to the extreme professionalism of Gliding New Zealand – who fight for the gliding community with a rigid determination that gets great results. It's a privilege to be a new part of this community – and I invite any *S&G* reader to come here and make that radio call – and feel the rush of total freedom!

Peter Newport – www.soaring.co.nz



Main picture: the sailplane is tiny when seen against the immense landscape of wooded slopes and braided river
Left: exciting flying and sensational views



Legendary soaring, in gorgeous scenery

WHISPERING home across the Omarama basin there were wave clouds stacked to 40,000 as far as the eye could see. It was midwinter's day and I considered myself fortunate to be cruising the Perlan Project's highly modified DG-505 (pressure suits, liquid oxygen and space technology) at 22,000ft above the snowy Southern Alps. With me was retired test pilot Einar Enevoldson, a man who started gliding before I was born.

I appreciated my luck: to live and fly at Omarama. It is a soaring paradise that attracts enthusiasts from all over the world. They arrive and become glider pilots, students of mountain soaring, successful Diamond Badge achievers, or world record beaters like Einar and Steve Fossett.

The gorgeous scenery and legendary mountain soaring qualify Omarama as a soaring paradise. But it is the fantastic live-on-the-airfield facilities and lovely village that make it a great place to holiday. And with sightseeing, hiking, fishing and golfing on the doorstep, there is plenty to do besides flying!

Luckily for my Dad and me we learned to glide at Omarama. This varied, challenging environment is a great teacher: Omarama lessons have served me well for more than 30 years of adventurous soaring world-wide. My job now is to be the middleman between Omarama's extraordinary soaring environment and the many pilots who need to experience and learn from it.

A great place attracts great people and I am blessed with great helpers. G Dale, Lemmy Tanner, Annie Laylee plus at times Luke Roberts, Andy Perkins and Justin Wills bring an enormous depth of experience to our operation. The aim of *Gavin Wills Mountain Soaring* is to ensure visiting pilots have a special yet safe soaring holiday. We have new briefing rooms and club facilities. We accommodate guests in our comfortable airfield chalets, we rent out well-equipped quality single-seaters and own our own fleet (two Duo Discus, Grob 103 and Discus CS).

Great place, great people, great kit, and a great job. "I know a lucky man when I see one," I thought to myself, whispering home to Omarama on midwinter's day this June.

Gavin Wills – www.GlideOmarama.com



Main picture: Flying over scenery like this gives you a sense of humankind's place in the scheme of things
Right: Even the aerotows are spectacular...

In my Skylark to Silver





In the last *S&G*, Sally Longstaff described how she was given a glider of her own. Now she tells us how she flew it to fulfil her next gliding goal – Silver

IN APRIL, Cotswold GC had an informal club expedition up to Portmoak (the Scottish Gliding Centre's site). Brian Birlison and I towed the glider up. The forecast for the week was not particularly good, but I hoped to get my Silver duration, the five-hour marathon! The first few days were either wet or too windy. Too rough for Skylarks, as the site was in the lee of the Bernarty hill.

Thursday, however, was fine and dry and even quite warm. The wind was westerly and with little turbulence. I launched at 19 minutes past 11 with my CamelBak, camera and elephant mascot, whom I stuck in the spare instrument hole. The other Cotswold members were already on the Bishop ridge and exploring very weak wave.

After an hour I was starting to get a little bored, four more to go. At two hours I was starting to wish I had launched earlier.

A rainstorm appeared over Stirling, and for a while it seemed to be heading straight for the Bishop. Fretting about this kept me occupied for the next hour and a half, but at the last minute it veered off around the ridge. Brian, flying nearby, was apparently terrified that I would go and land, but I used the strong thermals to climb up away from the slightly soggy ridge.

At four hours there was no question: I had to stay up and complete my five hours. Tired and achy by now, I just kept on the ridge. The views were spectacular after the rain shower had gone through. I even managed to take a photo of myself flying!

The last few minutes seemed to drag by and I decided to fly until half past four, just to be sure. I had no radio, and apparently all the Cotswold members were radioing each other to find out when I had finished. They added five minutes extra and at 25 past four Brian overtook me, raising and lowering the wheel. I took that as a hint and floated back to the airfield.

I couldn't believe that I had done it, but then the first thing I did after securing the glider was to sprint to the loo! I got the logger downloaded, grabbed an Official Observer to sign my form and posted it the next day – fortuitously I had taken my Gliding Certificate to Portmoak with me!

'I set myself up for approach, and was absolutely terrified. When I had landed, I got out, kissed the ground, and then wondered what to do next'

A couple of weeks later a fine and clear day dawned and on the way to Aston Down Brian briefed me on my Silver distance. When we arrived there were three other people all trying to do their 50km to Shenington, so I wasn't alone! The task was into wind, but because it was only a light wind I didn't consider this a huge problem. Just as I was about to close the canopy (equipped with the same CamelBak, camera and elephant), Frank Birlison said: "If you don't get 3,000ft cloudbase don't go." With those parting words I launched. The winch launch was a little too fast, I signalled but it did not slow down enough, so I released the cable early. I found a good strong climb almost straight away and climbed to cloud-base, which was 3,100ft. Time to go, and I turned my back on the airfield.

Pretty soon I was out of gliding range and paused to take another climb. There were large areas of sink and big blue holes, so I spent a lot of time waiting for clouds to develop. At Northleach roundabout, I had to scrabble around for over half an hour till a climb developed into anything usable. Luckily the Skylark will float around in very weak lift, and so when I was back at 3,000ft I carried on.

At Bourton on the Water I had to wait for another climb, and the spreadout that had been chasing me from Aston Down finally overtook me. I glid to Moreton-in-the-Marsh, where I found the last decent climb, which went to only 2,500ft before petering out. From then on I was picking a field and gliding to it, before scrambling in bits of lift and gliding to another field – I knew I would not make it up on to the ridge at Shenington.

Finally, I saw four set-aside fields that looked like last year's stubble. They went up the side of a small hill in steps, with the largest field at the top. Although there were trees on approach, they were in a dip at the edge of the field, which had a large flat area on the top of the hill. I set myself up for approach, and was absolutely terrified. When I had landed, I got out, kissed the

ground and wondered what to do next. The nearest village was about a mile away, so I picked up my map, pens, and jumper and trudged off.

At this point I was sure that I had not got my 50km.

I was just on my way out of the field when I spotted a local walking his dogs. I leaped a ditch and ran off to ask exactly where I was. I think he was a bit surprised to see me scampering around in a field in the middle of nowhere, but he took me into the village, where another local told me that the farmer was on holiday. He wouldn't believe that I had landed a glider in the field until I showed him, and then I was offered tea and scones. Unfortunately, my phone did not have coverage in the village so reluctantly I had to trudge up the hill again! Even though it was cloudy now it was still quite warm so I spread my map out and went to sleep. Brian Birlison and Jonathon Gill came to retrieve me (thanks!) and rang me when they were in the village, so again I walked down the hill.

The bloke who had offered the scones came out of his house and said to Brian: "Here's your lost aeronaut". I replied somewhat indignantly: "I wasn't lost at all, I just ran out of lift!" Then on the way out of the field a family of walkers spotted us and said: "Oh! Have you had a crash landing?" Cue another indignant response from me: "Of course I didn't crash, it was a lovely landing, I just ran out of lift". They asked, "Did the wind stop?" and at that point I gave up!

We got back to the club and downloaded the Cambridge logger, and found that I had done 51.8km and that the one per cent rule did not apply as the height I had lost was not more than one per cent of the total distance – I had 200m to spare! It was lucky that I had released early off the winch launch and landed on top of a hill! I found out that, unfortunately, the other two pilots who had set out did not do their 50km, so good luck to them for the future.

Having previously done my height, I had now completed Silver and sent the forms back to the BGA. I'm looking now to do some longer cross-countries this season and maybe even fly a competition on my own. Let's hope for more 1,000km days!



Clockwise from top left: Sally at Portmoak, during her Silver duration, and the field she landed in for 51.8km

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Overseas Nationals

Al Clarke reports on this year's Senasa Challenge at Ocaña

THE BGA sanctioned the first Overseas Nationals at Roanne, France in 1991 after a run of poor British summers in the late 1980s and the successes of the RAFGSA in running competitions in France. There followed a succession of French and Polish events in the 1990s when the only consistently dry event was Phil Jeffery's sense of humour (Phil has, remarkably, flown every Overseas Nationals, the only pilot to do so).

The only safe bet in the spring was Spain, and the competition moved to Ocaña in 1998 where a combination of good weather and an on-site hotel with swimming pool made the competition an instant success.

Not content with this formula, director Brian Spreckley has expanded the contest to make it a truly international event, inviting pilots from around the world to the Senasa Challenge. In 2004 pilots from nine nations competed with good-natured rivalry on a nearly level playing field. (In true stiff-upper-lip style we make sure that the handicapping favours Standard Class gliders, a restriction not lost on the French, who flew consistently – but their wings were too big!).

Of course, it didn't start like that this year. All the UK-based pilots left Blighty under cumulus-dappled skies on the best weekend in living memory, only to drive into murk and rain in France and Spain. This continued well into the first week before normal service resumed with the first of eight consecutive flying days on Thursday 27. The day was quite challenging with a large shower blocking the path to the first sector of the three-hour assigned area task (AAT). Mel Dawson won by flying well to the south and just nicking into the first sector for 304km. The flight traces produced big differences in choice of route but the half of the field that avoided landing out enjoyed better conditions on the second and third legs.

On day 2, a three-hour AAT was flown. After a slow start due to some patches of cirrus cloud that drifted over Ocaña in the morning, the start line was eventually opened at 14.30. The conditions improved rapidly with a good base of 6,000-7,000ft. Most pilots had excellent flights with Mike Young fastest at 108km/h after running a convergence line for 50km into the second sector.

Day 3 brought more reliable Spanish conditions with the Crabbs' "telepathic" team flying bringing the third different day winner. Steve won the 317km speed task at 118km/h with Paul close behind. The team flying debate was tested with pilots invited to declare they would not co-operate. Many took up the challenge and radios were eerily quiet for a 50-glider competition.



The airfield at Ocaña photographed by Al Clarke at the Overseas this year. The comp enjoyed eight days racing

Day 4. A 417km speed task to the south was set and launching started at 12.15, when wispy cu started to appear. Thermals locally were not well formed, causing a few pilots to start later than they really wanted. The first leg across the Sierra Toledo was more difficult than it looked, but after the first turn the eastern leg got better and better with the run home in excellent conditions. The fastest pilots came home in just over four hours but slower ones took more than five. Kim Tipple won the day at 108km/h in his "vintage" 20, an impressive performance.

Day 5 was another racing 400km. Mike won a second day at 114km/h followed by a fast-improving Martin Smit. Martin would have finished near the top had he not been caught out on day 1.

Day 6. Another racing 400! Leigh Wells fastest at 120km/h and snapping at Mike's heels; Paul Crabb was still in with a chance in third but there was a gap to 4th place.

Day 7. Inspired area task-setting along the ridges allowed Paul Crabb to go 470km hardly turning at all for 131km/h! Richard Browne and Gill Spreckley thought they had done okay at 125km/h and 123km/h for second and third. Most people had a fun romp with the first 30 getting round at over 110km/h. The points spread between the top three narrowed further.

Day 8 was not so good: a 270km speed task in the blue with fairly weak thermals. Old age and treachery triumphed over youth and skill with Martyn Wells winning the day. Mike Young was fastest of the contenders in 5th and that settled it as the inversion came down on Friday and the day was scrubbed.

Overall an excellent competition, as usual, and well worth the drive south. The team/individual flying debate was tested but in the end raised little comment. The AAT rules allowed some excellent flying without the restriction of airspace to worry about and allowed the lower handicapped gliders the luxury of shorter flying times towards the end of the comp. Same time, same place next year!

	Pilot	Glider	Reg	Points
1	Mike Young	Discus 2	57	7286
2	Leigh Wells	LS8 (15m)	LS	7197
3	Paul Crabb	LS8 (15m)	C64	7075
4	Martyn Wells	LS8 (15m)	321	7030
5	Russell Cheetham	ASW 28	E1	6776
6	Stephen Crabb	LS8 (15m)	C65	6676
7	Gill Spreckley	LS8 (15m)	59	6664
8	Marc Seretti	LAK19 18m	TZ	6651
9	Kim Tipple	ASW 20	930	6626
10	Martin Durham	LS7	952	6276
11	Sylvain Gerbaud	Ventus 2c (18m)	172	6269
12	John Roberts	LS4	LS4	6158
13	Richard Johnson	ASW 28	J1	6132
14	Martin Smit	LS8 (15m)	SM	6090
15	Graham Smith	LS8 (15m)	42	6068
16	Gary Stingemore	LS8 (15m)	X1	6021
17	Mel Dawson	Ventus 2a,b	W2	5989
18	Marcel Soler	Discus 2	MF	5844
19	Richard Browne	LS8 (15m)	L58	5817
20	John Whiting	Discus (w)	H2O	5789
21	Phil Jeffery	LS8 (15m)	64	5624
22	David Findon	Nimbus 4d	48	5598
23	Rooij / Vd Zwain	Duo Discus	421	5574
24	Aert Mante	Discus (w)	IKI	5552
25	Steve Olender	Ventus 2c (18m)	63	5445
26	Al Clarke	Duo Discus	R2	5334
27	Alan Binks	LS4	PF	5302
28	John Glossop	Discus	291	4946
29	Rose Johnson	DG-100/101	435	4776
30	Manfred Scholtz	DG-800 (18m)	TOY	4735
31	Jerry Langrick	LS8 (15m)	781	4563
32	Jorg Hermann	LS3 (15m)	CH	4539
33	Mike Pope	Ventus 2c (18m)	46	4438
34	Patrick Onn	LS8 (15m)	P4	4388
35	Francisco De Almeida	LS7 (w)	7	4375
36	Jon Wand	Ash26	BY	4374
37	Eric Heinonen	LS4	H4	4344
38	Terry Slater	Duo Discus	WE4	4219
39	Ray Payne	ASW 27a,b	140	4217
40	Bill Inglis	Ventus 2c(15	X4	4133
41	Peter Baker	LS8 (15m)	144	4056
42	Graham Hibberd	LS7	L57	3891
43	Frank Jeynes	Ventus 2c (18m)	X11	3655
44	Reb Rebbeck	LS4	ETG	3644
45	Iain Evans	LS8 (15m)	EZ	3248
46	John Birch	Duo Discus	72	3245
47	Pepe Gresa Valero	Nimbus 4d	AV	2893
48	Nina	Duo Discus	HNN	2315
49	Eduardo Gandia	Nimbus 3d	KB	1996
50	Ramon Grimalt	LAK17a (18m)	C17	1420
51	Mike Mee	ASW 28	MM	67
52	Stephen Ell	LS8 (15m)	E11	0

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To solo

Arwen Hunt's Lasham diary describes how an intensive five-day gliding course enabled her to realise a childhood dream

MY FIRST taste of gliding was about 14 years ago, when I was 12 or 13. Mum was a recent solo pilot and was hooked. One hot summer's day, she dragged me away from my music and took me along to Lasham airfield where, after taking one look around, I decided that this day was going to be as exciting as an episode of *Coronation Street*. After hours of sulking and making daisy chains, I was told that Mum had arranged for me to have a flight in the T-21 with some tearaway who went by the name of Mike Young. The open top idea was slightly more appealing to me so, reluctantly, I agreed.

How wrong had I been? I can remember looking down at the world as if I'd just seen it for the very first time. It was captivating. I just gazed around in wonderment, breathing it all in. Why didn't everyone do this? Mike let me take control of the glider for a while and then, in a moment of insanity, decided that I was going to land it! The rest is a blur, although I do remember my Mum's face, as we came in on finals, when she saw Mike waving both hands at her as he was shouting instructions through his gritted smile!

The whole experience had been amazing. I had flown like a bird, just like in my childhood dreams. It was so surreal that I locked the memory away in a little bubble with all my other dreams and left it there until it felt like it had never happened at all.

I grew up after that... as you do. I finished school, went to college, got a job in London and then what should happen? I started dating a bloody glider pilot! After almost three years of watching Howard Jones take to the skies I gave in to temptation this April and booked myself on a course. The first of its kind at Lasham: an intensive, one-to-one course called *Aerotow to Solo in Five Days*. My instructor was to be Bob Bickers. It was time to recapture my dream.

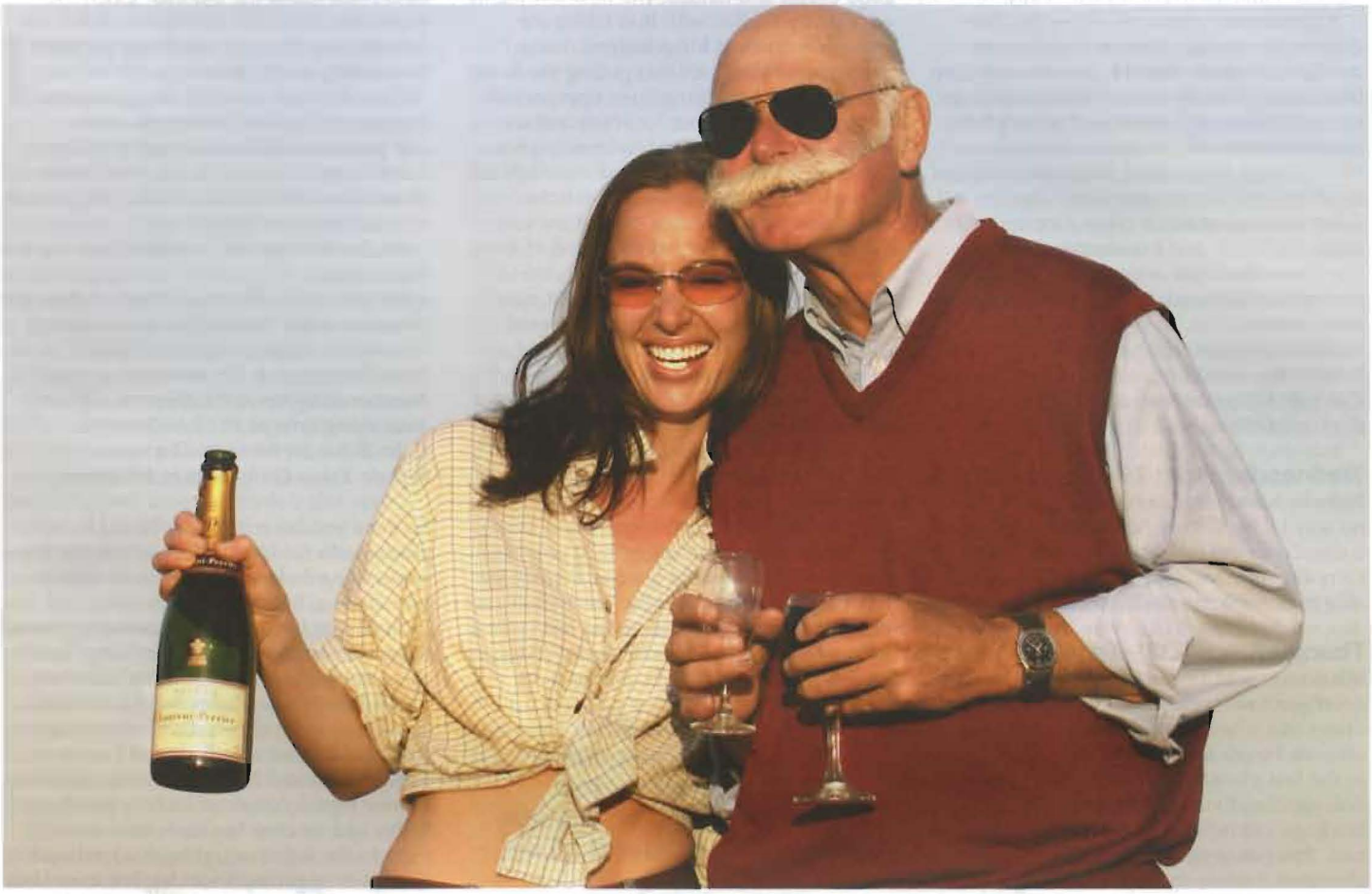
Here is my diary of what happened.

Monday, April 19 – Day 1

8am. Oh no! What on earth was I thinking of? Help! Maybe I can fake an illness...

Afternoon: Okay, so it wasn't that bad but my, oh my, do I have a lot to learn! I had a lot of fun though. We had four flights in the Falke motorglider today. I found out very quickly that you have to use the stick and pedals together, not in opposite directions as my instincts seemed to want to tell me! I have that under control now, although I find that the pedals are a little stiff compared to the stick so I'm having to find the correct

in three-and-a-half days



Champagne all round as Arwen (left) and Bob Bickers, her instructor on Lasham's first five-day-to-solo aerotow course, celebrate her success (www.whiteplanes.com)

force to keep everything co-ordinated. My turning feels quite good although I'm not sure about really steep turns. It feels like I'm going to fall out of the sky.

We spent a lot of time today learning how to do good circuits and landings. Having the motorglider for this was absolutely fantastic. It was take off, circuit, land, start engine, take off, circuit, land, and so on. So now I know how it is supposed to be done.

Unfortunately having this knowledge does not mean I'm actually getting it right. I think my landings are okay (for a newcomer), but my circuits – hmmm! I'm like a young bird not wanting to fly too far from the nest. I'm hugging the edge of the airfield like I'm in love with it. It's annoying because I know I'm doing it but I can't seem to change it. I hope Bob wasn't too disappointed. It's really hard to tell what he's thinking. He has a very good poker face.

Hey ho, it's only my first day.

Oh, I almost forgot to say. My biggest fears before today were stalling and spinning. Now my biggest fear is just spinning, which we haven't done yet. The negative G that you get when you recover from a stall is excellent! It's like the sensation I used to call "tickle tummy," when I was a kid and I used to beg Dad to speed up to go over humps in the road, only it's better! So that's one fear gone at least. I kept asking Bob to do it again... and again... and again! Yay!

Number of flights: four (Falke)
Total flying time: 3 hrs 15 mins
***CBSIFTCB E** – **C**rafty **B**ird **S**oars **I**n **F**alke **T**o **C**heer **B**ob **E**ndlessly*

Tuesday, April 20 – Day 2

Today I went to Hell and back. The morning started okay. We had two flights in the Falke to go over everything I learned yesterday. I felt pretty good about it all. My circuits were better and my handling felt good. Then we got into the K-13. The aerotow was so frightening. I couldn't keep straight behind the tug, Bob was shouting at me and all of a sudden it felt very wrong. By the time we had pulled off tow I had gone to pieces. The controls felt very different to the Falke's. Instead of the pedals being stiff and the stick light, it was the opposite way around. It was noisier and bumpier and I was sick with fear. I was dealing with a completely different animal and I felt out of control and very, very out of my depth. I convinced myself that I didn't want to fly any more, that I'd made a huge mistake believing that I could do this. We kept finding thermals but I didn't want to be in them; I just wanted to get back on the ground, where it was safe, and never fly a glider again.

At one point I actually refused to fly so Bob turned around and said: "Well I'm not flying, either, what are you going to do now?". I had no choice but I was certain that as soon as we were on the ground, I was walking. Then the fear of landing crept in. There was no engine if my judgment was out, no second chance. Thankfully, it was fine and I got out shaken and tearful, but relieved that it was over. My unforgiving instructor gave me a harsh talking-to whilst I made my feeble excuses for being what I can only describe as a wuss. Afraid of using the words: "I quit," I requested a break. Request denied! Bob ordered me back into the glider and with my bottom lip firmly sticking out, I obeyed.

What a difference a flight makes! All of a sudden I knew what to expect and I was

fine. The jitters had gone and I just got on with it. Bob was right and I was wrong. (Don't you just hate it when that happens?) We broke for lunch and when we came back I did my first unaided aerotow to 2,000ft. Quite proud of myself, really.

A quick word about my instructor, Bob Bickers. I've known Bob for a while now and he is a lovely man. He and his wife Joan have been good friends and sources of help since I've been at Lasham and although I've seen his firmer side, I have never been on the receiving end... until today. He managed to silence me like no man other than my father has ever done. It takes a lot for me to listen, but I did, and I understood. It took one look – that look – that made me shut up and realise that actually he probably does know better!

Number of flights: six (two/Falke, four/K-13)
Total flying time: 3 hrs 4 mins
***C**an't **B**e **S**itting **I**n **F**ear, **T**he **C**umulus **B**eckons **E**nticingly*

Wednesday, April 21 – Scrubbed

Rain, rain and more rain. I'm gutted. There's no way I'll be solo by Friday now we've lost a day. I'm going to ask at the office if we can carry on into Saturday. Not sure Bob will be able to put up with me for that long, though.

Thursday, April 22 – Day 3

What an eventful day! Seven flights, seven good aerotows. I guess it's one of those things that when you get it, you get it, and you can't work out why you found it hard in the first place. Out of those seven flights, Bob says I did five good approaches and landings. Let me tell you about the other two. Bob put wing tape over my ASI and altimeter; I mean, that's just downright cruel, isn't it? I found keeping flying speed under control easy even when thermalling, but my circuits...? Let's just say that on the first one I started my final approach at 900ft and the second was only marginally better at 700ft! I knew I was high but didn't feel comfortable any lower. I guess trust in my judgment will improve as my confidence does.

One of the flights today is down in my logbook as a mere three minutes long. Bob pulled the cable at 300ft and guess what? I didn't panic! I just said: "That wasn't very nice," turned the baby around and landed downwind. (Another thing I had a hang-up about that turned out to be fine). Ha ha!

One more thing. I still have one hang-up. Spinning. We did it. I don't like it. I know how to recover from one and I did it well when asked to but you won't catch me doing it when I'm solo. I never want to do that again. There's something about being in a glider, as it spins out of control at high speed towards the ground that just doesn't do it for me. Surely I'm not alone there!

"A good day all round," my lovely instructor has written in my logbook. I think so, too!

Number of flights: seven (K-13)
Total flying time: 1 hr 54 mins
***C**razy **B**ob **S**ends **I**nsane **F**emale **T**o **C**loud **B**ase **E**ventually*

Friday April 23 – Day 4

We got up really early this morning, gave glider B its daily inspection and launched from the edge of the airfield before the bus had even made it to the launchpoint. I did a good circuit and landed. The next few flights were pretty similar, with Bob taking me through everything I had learned. I was beginning to feel that I was getting the hang of it all when something quite unexpected happened. It was about 11.30am and we were second in the queue to launch when Bob took his parachute off and started doing up the straps in the back seat. I felt the blood drain from my face. "What are you doing?" I asked shakily. Bob replied: "I think it's time you did this on your own". WHAT!!! @*+%! I don't think so! "But I'm not ready," I protested. Bob gave me *that* look again and said that if I didn't go when he told me, he wouldn't instruct me anymore. I looked at Howard, who was standing to my right, for help, to which he said casually, "Have fun, babe", and promptly walked off. SH*T! Did nobody understand? "Have fun, babe?" I wasn't about to go to a bloody party, I was about to fly a glider *on my own*, and land it... *on my own*. Aaaaaargggh! I'd only had three-and-a half-days of lessons; I'd paid for five. %^*@*! Bob screwed in the ballast and after a little pep talk I was on my own.

I went through the checks slowly, trying to delay being hooked on. I could hear my

'It was beautiful. There I was at 2,000ft, flying, all by myself. And to think that on Tuesday I was going to give it all up'

heart beating as clear as a drum. I took one final deep breath as "all out" was called and I was away. Almost straightaway, without the extra weight of Bob in the back, the glider came off the ground. I eased the nose forward and got the glider under control and in a straight line behind the tug. I was off! I could almost hear Bob's voice still shouting instructions as I went through the motions. It was beautiful. There I was, at 2,000ft, flying, all by myself. I just wanted to get it right so I got straight into the circuit as soon as my height was right and, talking myself through it, set up to land. My best circuit and landing so far. Three-and-a half-days to solo! *Fanbloodytastic!* When I got out of the glider I was shaking like a leaf. I had done it!

And to think that on Tuesday I was going to give it all up.

No time for congratulations! Bob sent me straight back up for solo flight number two. I kept it brief again and did another circuit and landed.

We broke for lunch as I did my best to calm down. Bob suggested that I have one more flight before I call it a day so after lunch, there I was again, taking to the skies on aerotow. This time I thought I'd have a go at soaring. It was a blue day so it was going to be a bit of potluck for someone of my experience. I flew off so I was north-east of the airfield and what should I find but a 5kt climb? It didn't take long before I was at 4,500ft and to my joy I looked down to see that Howard, in his Discus 2a, and a few others had found my thermal. Catch me if you can, boys! Of course they didn't and they gave up trying to match my superior thermalling skills! Ha ha!

Then the most amazing thing happened. A group of buzzards joined the climb and as I watched them, for just a moment, I was 12 or 13 again, back in that bubble of a dream, where I was a bird, using nature to make miracles happen.

Oh, by the way, that last flight was my first Bronze leg!

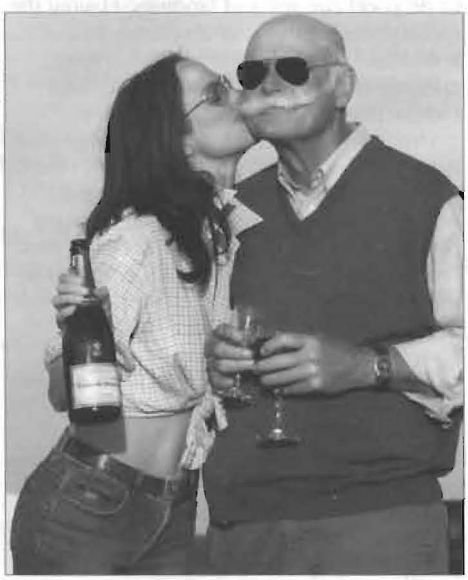
PS: I'm a bit tiddly now. It was champagne all round at the bar tonight. Very exciting!

Number of flights as P2: five (K-13)
Total flying time as P2: 48 mins
Number of flights as P1: three (K-13)
Total flying time as P1: 1 hr 34 mins
***C**alm **B**rave **S**ophisticated **I**ndependent **F**emale **T**akes **C**rafty **B**ronze **E**ffortlessly*

So there you have it. I actually did it. Bob put up with me for long enough to teach me some valuable lessons and I'm chuffed to bits. Thanks, Bob.

Since that amazing day I have also learned to go solo on the winch (something I'll only do until my bank balance looks healthier). I have had 10 solo flights in total (I would have done more if it weren't for my huge flying bill). Those solo flights add up to a total of 9 hrs and 22 minutes. I have both Bronze legs, a couple of healthy two-hour flights and an even healthier three-hour flight in the K-8. I would have stayed up for five hours to get my Silver leg but it was too bloody cold. I did gain my Silver height on my last flight, though, which was rather wonderful. I know I have a long way to go and a lot of hard work to come to pay for my progress but I have wings now and I can't turn back.

I wonder if Howard will let me fly his Discus 2a in the regionals next year...?



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Sarcasm and sweetness

Mike Terry *(below)* and Kate Rodham *(bottom of page)* explain how *her* launch failure injured *him*...

IT WAS a wonderful day, with conditions good for training and early solo flying: the wind about 7kt from the right, myself as Duty Instructor Number One, and our Old But Wise instructor kindly winching in his inimitable style. Now, he is important in this tale for three reasons. Firstly, he often gets upset – rightly – when the field is not being run efficiently (although his expletive problem has now been largely cured). Secondly, when things look serious his mode is silence, just watching and taking in every detail. Thirdly, he made a decision based on safe practice (well, he *is* Old and Wise).

One of our experienced solo pilots wanted to fly our Janus B and, being short of hours for the type, he asked me if I would mind sitting in the back. Just sometimes, with hindsight, you wish you hadn't said yes! He flew a lovely circuit and landing and I was relaxed. Those of you who instruct (and pilots observed when sinning in the air) will know that one of the skills an instructor develops is the ability to fly, talk, think, and still be aware of what's going on elsewhere on the airfield. This skill becomes fully functional only when as an Old But Wise instructor you develop a third eye near a fundamental rear orifice that enables you to see things even when you're 300km away cross-country or sitting in the pub.

We had landed on our second strip, which is into wind, allowing the longer strip to be used uninterrupted for launching.

I was aware that the K-7 was about to launch; craning my neck round, I managed to see it. I knew the pilot was an attractive blonde lady, who had not long flown solo, and I watched with great interest, both as the duty instructor and as her partner.

As the aircraft climbed, it became obvious that there was a problem. The airspeed was not quite right. At the other end of the wire the Wise Old Instructor realised that there was a problem with the gas feed. He made his decision. He nursed the aircraft to a little under 300ft and, as a launch failure was inevitable, he aborted the launch to encourage the pilot to land ahead.

I watched the cable fall away and started to worry when the nose did not go forward. My blood ran cold as the K-7 turned *into* the crosswind with the nose high and I immediately realised two things:

1. With the aircraft in that orientation, a spin was very likely.
2. Failing to turn downwind left my partner nowhere to land ahead and no safe options.

By this time the canopy of the Janus was up and I was screaming advice/instructions.

Perhaps it was telepathy, but the nose came down as my partner realised she was too slow. She was now faced with what looked like an inevitable crash on the industrial estate. However, she just did not fancy that option. The nose came up and the K-7 started another 90° turn to starboard. This presented a new course with two possible outcomes:

1. Overshooting the spray booth and unlandable areas (including power line) and landing over a hedge in a landable field. This would be very difficult from the height she had remaining.
2. Crash.

These were – I considered – the only two possible outcomes. *Wrong.*

At this point, I made my own big mistake. Shedding the parachute and seat harness I stood up in the rear cockpit, trying to jump out to run to where my partner was going to arrive or crash. Unfortunately, my right leg caught in the seat strap and I autorotated out of the cockpit to land on my left leg. The pain was immediate but most of my mind was concentrating on the fate of the K-7 and my significant other.

Remember I said I was wrong about the two possible outcomes?

Significant other turns 90° starboard, flying over the top of us, and above the local high-tension cables. As I straightened out my leg (observing the crepitus and thus confirming that it was broken) I watched what should have been a low glide into a landable field outside the peritrack.

Wrong. The K-7 turned 90° to starboard and I watched a pretty good final turn – wondering if she would get round it before the wing hit the ground.

The K-7 lands back at the launchpoint.

Now, I'm told that wind tunnel studies demonstrate a Bumble Bee can't possibly fly. My significant other can't possibly have just flown a circuit from 300ft in a K-7. I guess the answer to both is that as long as nobody tells them it's impossible then they might just manage it.

So, Wise Old Instructor, perhaps I should have learned by your example.

There's no point shouting: all you can do is watch – and perhaps pray a lot.

I learned about instructing from that.

My partner learned a great deal about launch failures.

The last line just has to be hers. When she heard I had a broken leg, she said: "When I flew over him and saw him lying under the wing I thought he was taking the piss because I was low".

***Kate writes*: Another solo in my favourite K-7, Foxtrot Lima Kilo (I call her Flying Little Kate). Wire tightens and we are off, wings level, gently let her climb to safety height/speed and then a little more back pressure on the stick. Climbing nicely and then... Something's not quite right... not climbing... better pull back some more... Still not... airspeed's a bit low... lower the nose a bit....ah, that's better... now try to climb... no, that's worse. *What's wrong*? Better abandon the launch. I know it's a right-hand circuit so turn right (on the ground I was to be reminded that a downwind turn IF ANY is usually required). SH*T! My nose is high, too high for a turn, and the speed is falling... nose down, that's better. What else should I do?**

At this point I just talk to FLK; I always do, and she seems to listen. What next? Right hand, right hand and that's the industrial estate in front so turn right again. This is looooooowwwwwww. There is the Janus in front on the grass runway with that sarcastic bugger of a partner of mine crawling under the wing... *All right*, I *know* I'm low – no need to rub it in.

Need to turn again... those cables are close below but I can just get to the landing area... must try and keep the speed right, it came off a bit on that last turn. "Come on, FLK," I say (talking aloud as we head towards the last turn) "we can make it." FLK agrees with me in that quiet whispering voice of hers (perhaps too quiet). One last turn picking up the wing as I go and a nice flare to a spot landing. FLK shudders gently to a stop as I sit there, still trembling from a rather frightening experience.

Outside the canopy congregates my reception committee.

"SORRY, folks: I know I f**d that up".**

"Don't worry," says Craig. "I think we'd better do another to settle you down a bit". The CFI tells me that my sarcastic partner has had a bit of an accident. Probably cut his finger or something, thinks I. Well, doubtless he deserves it for his pee-taking.

The next flight with Craig was fine; I began to relax but wondered why Mike was still lying down. All was revealed as I saw the ambulance cross the field and stop by the small gaggle of pilots round Mike. "I think you'd better go over to him, Kate," said the CFI. "He's asking for you".

What did I learn?

- Eventuality planning is critically important.
- if possible to land ahead, do so.
- Launch failures don't always happen with a bang – our winch LPG system sometimes has feed problems, giving a progressive loss of power.
- Don't think the worst of folk on the airfield. My "sarcastic" partner was just thinking about me. Ain't he sweet?

Silver lining to Norwegian

Fresh from the Club Class Worlds in Norway, former Junior World Champion Jay Rebbeck takes a look at three defining moments in a team performance that secured a hard-won Silver medal for the Brits

IT'S DAY ONE of the World Gliding Championships. I've been on task for half an hour and I'm plummeting below the Norwegian hill tops in the lee of my second turn point. A moment ago my team mate Pete Masson was on my wingtip. But now, as I descend towards the chair lifts of the local ski resort, his radio has packed up. I've no idea where he is or where our next climb is coming from. It's not looking promising.

There's one spur on the hillside facing vaguely into wind and I pin my hopes on it working. Skimming a few feet over the trees and rooftops I find a broken bubble of lift in which to climb. Half a dozen hopeful competitors join me overhead but Pete is ominously absent. The thermal drifts back from the spur and drops away to nothing. I know I have to punch back into wind and hope for another bubble to slide up the hill side. Heart in hand I dive back at the ridge and hook thankfully into a weak but solid climb. I'm still looking up at the turn point several kilometres ahead, wondering if I'll ever get high enough to make it round. I'm juggling the stress of the situation with the knowledge that a land out here would destroy any chances of overall success.

My second team-mate Rich Hood is faring a bit better and calls me to a climb at the turn point. Tentatively, I head into the rising ground and swing into lift a few hundred feet above the rising plateau, breathing an enormous sigh of relief. The immediate danger has passed and I'm back in the race. Unknown to Rich and me, disaster has struck for Pete, and he's been forced down at Rena airfield in the valley.

A few minutes later my situation is yet again critical. Having joined two gaggles at the bottom and failed to climb on both occasions, I'm forced to glide downhill into the wide river valley that meanders into Elverum town. At 1,000ft, with only scrappy blue thermals and an encroaching warm front cutting off heating fast, I'm behind almost everyone, completely isolated.



'When I looked back at how close I had been to landing out, I felt very lucky to still be in the game'

Finally, I realise that it's time to put my precarious position to the back of my mind, to ignore the other competitors and to concentrate on getting out of this problem. It's time to get back to basics. I check the wind direction on my Winpilot, and when a fraction of a knot dies off completely I start weaving into wind. I'm amazed to then fly 10km into wind at low level without losing any height, before pulling into a welcome 2kt thermal. Climbs aren't even getting me above the top of the local terrain, but I must press on. I catch up with the German team for the first time since our early struggle. Having been off radio for some time I switch on to the British frequency and find Rich around 20km ahead of me. What happens over the next hour is textbook material for how team flying can pull a straggler back into the game. Paul Crabb had shown us how to use the Winpilot team flying function before the competition, and here it came into its own. With Rich calling back his grid position, I could plot his thermals on my moving map, and use the hotspots he found even after he had moved on. When Rich told me that conditions were improving, I was able to start racing with confidence, and pulled quickly away from the Germans. the next day, they told me that they couldn't understand how I got past them in their higher-performance gliders: "One minute you were with us, and then you were gone!"

With his information being passed back, I managed to catch Rich, and by the end of the flight we were at the top of the lead gaggle. Unfortunately for us, it found one more climb behind us and managed to glide out a few extra kilometres, with Czech Petr Krejcirik nearly making it home. I wound up in the same field as Rich. Annoyingly for us, our different start points meant that our scores weren't identical, but we both knew



Team member Pete Masson, Gold medallist in 2001



Rich (right) flew neck-and-neck with Jay but was an unlucky 13pts below Bronze, after two previous Club Class Silvers

clouds...

it had been a steady first day and we were well in touch with the lead. When I looked back at how close I had been to landing out early, I felt very lucky to still be in the game.

Nowhere to run

The snow on the leading edge of my Cirrus is turning to ice. A fork of lightning has just struck the ground *en route* to our first sector, and torrential rain has hit the airfield. "The start line is now open." Oh joy. Team GB's carefully rehearsed start code swings into action:

Rich: "Let's get the Hell out of here."
Pete: "Agreed."
Jay: "Leaving."

We all set off for our separate start points, with Rich having to dive under a 1,000ft wall of cloud to get into his start cylinder. Fortunately we all meet up quickly running along a decaying gust front that leads to the first sector. Unfortunately 30 other pilots have the same idea. With scrappy clouds lying in front of a line of showers, we face an unenviable decision. Do we run over the fields in front of the storm line, hoping for lift to be kicked up in front of it, or do we turn right over the unlandable plateau where there are some isolated cumulus?

We try to keep both options open. Two pilots ahead are diving low into the gust front, so we watch eagerly to see if they climb whilst we head to the first isolated cloud on the edge of the plateau. When the two pilots disappear behind a low-lying hill it's obvious that the gust front isn't working. As we arrive under our first cloud, our situation starts getting desperate. We've led half the competition into this mess and now 30 gliders are milling around in a broken area of turbulence with nobody actually climbing. The outflow from the gust front



all pictures: www.whiteplanes.com

Jay (above) flew Cirrus KM (right) to Silver in the worlds

A team effort



The British team pilots and the SsangYong Rexton retrieve vehicles, sponsored by SY Cars UK

DESPITE the weather, it was great to be a part of this British team. Gill Spreckley was an inspired choice of team manager, keeping us cool and sorting our logistical lives out. Somehow I persuaded Ken Barker to lend me his new Cirrus. Despite never having flown the glider himself he even told me: "If you have to crash KM on the last day to win then go for it." Jon Meyer, Neil "white planes" Lawson, Neil Goudie and Nick Smith were awesome crews and I also have to thank Spud Hallam, Pete Wells, Alan Duerden, and the team at Tango Two Aviation for over 100 hours of work in turning this Cirrus from a 7,000-hour club glider into a sparkling world championship machine.

One of the things that makes gliding such a great sport, and Great Britain such a top competitive nation, is the spirit of co-operation in the gliding world. To this end I'd also like to thank Paul Crabb for lending me another Volkslogger, Shaun McLaughlin for lending me his Cambridge, and Dickie Feakes for all his last-minute help getting my kit calibrated.

Finally, we were extremely fortunate to have three brand-new SsangYong Rexton 270 Xdi 4WDs for the trip. As well as providing salvation for dozens of stricken pilots in Pete's now-infamous field, the Rexton was an immensely comfortable and practical tow vehicle. In a recent road test in a national magazine, the Rexton beat the Jeep Grand Cherokee by miles, and from our experience in Norway, we can see why. We certainly hope that this is the beginning of a long and mutually beneficial partnership.

– is blowing us away from the only obvious landing fields, and we're drifting on to a high plateau of only swamps and lakes.

The British team are at the bottom of the pack. Pete decides that enough is enough and heads west for the landable fields. The herd of competitors follows obediently. Meanwhile, looking east, I reckon the only way to stay airborne is to backtrack over the edge of the plateau, where wind is blowing up the rising ground and there's sunshine feeding into a scrappy cloud. I turn my back on the field everyone else is heading for and after a couple of kilometres find a broken climb. I call Rich back to it. He and two other brave souls join me. Our best option now is to climb away.

The next 20 minutes prove to be the most eventful of the whole world championships. Whilst Rich and I climb away slowly, a mass land-out drama unfolds beneath us. On approach to the first available field on the valley side, Pete runs into rain and heavy sink. Using ground effect in the trees before the field, he manages to squeak over the boundary to land safely. More than a dozen others make it to his field in increasingly desperate circumstances. Philip Ritchie from Australia is not so lucky. Hitting the worst of the gust front's rain and sink, he realises that he can't make the field and is about to hit 100ft pine trees. He salvages a survivable crash from the situation by turning away from the field, ducking under high-tension power cables and mushing into an area of head-height trees. Thankfully, he was able to walk out of the woods unhurt.

Meanwhile, as I'm climbing away, I'm about to witness the day's second Australian adventure. Terry Cubley, director of the first Club Class Worlds in South Australia, is busy demonstrating that the marshy plateau *is* landable after all. Relieved by his successful (if damp) arrival, we focus on getting away. By the time we get to cloudbase, our gust front has recycled and provides us with a route into the first sector. Unfortunately, once in sector, the energy line collapses into a curtain of rain which now blocks our path back over the plateau into the second sector.

We're now committed to making what distance we can before gliding back into the rain. Heading over Lillehammer, we have a good run to the far edge of the assigned area, then choose to convert height into distance. This leads us to a long scenic run down the Gudbrandsdalen valley, a final glide over 5km of icy water and into a field on the shores of the massive Lake Mjosa. The extra 60km we've squeezed out of the day will be critical in the overall scores. By bringing the sole New Zealand entry, Allan Barnes, with us, the requisite 15 competitors exceed 100km for the task, which makes it an official contest day. A handful of pilots get home and complete the minimum distance for 250pts, but we've grabbed 150 of them – and 100pts more than the majority of our competitors.

Final day final glide

The forecast looks horrendous for the rest of the week; we're convinced this is the last contest day. The Czechs have set one of their flagging pilots to follow us in a bid to protect their Silver medal. We try the usual techniques to lose him but to no avail. We later discover that he is a fast jet pilot in the Czech air force... Fifty kilometres into the flight and I'm playing catch up. We're running a classic street into our first AAT sector with only forest and lakes beneath us. As is becoming familiar, everyone is above me and nobody's looking down. Except, that is, for the German team. Whilst Michael Streit holds his nerve and goes on to win the day,





Above: Jay's crew Jon Meyer, who tells the story of the comp in Variable weather, intimidating terrain *(right) Podium: 1, Sebastien Kawa, POL, SZD 48-3M, 3,494pt; 2, Jay Rebbeck, GB, Cirrus, 3,408pts; 3, Arkadiusz Downar, POL, SZD 48-3M, 3,398pts. Rich came 5th (3,385pts) and Pete 44th (2,362pts). For full results, see* http://wgc2004.won.no/default.asp?id=35&mnu=35

Christoph Nacke and Andreas Nagel break right for fields as the day's only outlanders.

Pete agrees to turn early in order to feed information back to Rich and me. By the time we turn, I'm back in the running with Rich. As the end game approaches we're forced to take a weak climb to get on to final glide. It's only a two-hour task, so we can turn short in the last sector. Inside the sector, we're on a fat glide if we turn now, but I want to eke out extra distance by running to one more cloud before turning. Disappointingly, the cloud gives us nothing and we're forced to turn for home a hundred feet below glide into a 15kt headwind.

The angle to the airfield looks horrific but there's a nice street leading from the last good fields home. At this point, Dutch pilot Ferdi Kuijpers was contemplating outlanding as his glide home looked too marginal, but then he saw me and Rich skimming along the hilltops way below him. "I thought I had problems until I saw you guys," he told me later. I finally contact the street 12km out, and manage to pull up enough of a safety margin for a fast run home. Rich, a little more intimate with the local terrain, has to take two turns before heading home.

When the results came out it couldn't have been closer. The Czech plan backfired, dropping Petr Kreijeik out of the medals. Rich was only 23pts behind me in 5th, and I moved up into 2nd. The disappointment of seeing Rich out of the top three was massive, as we had flown neck-and-neck the whole competition, always landing in the same fields, and were never more than 1.5km/h apart in speeds. It was a brilliant team performance, and Pete did a great job of putting his day one disappointment behind him and doing everything he could to get a medal for Great Britain.

Variable weather, intimidating terrain

AFTER impressive performances in recent World Championships, *writes Jon Meyer*, and with two World Champions in the team, the expectations for the British Team at Elverum in Norway were high. The standard of flying this year, as always, was extremely high, with 57 pilots from 23 countries competing in an increasingly popular class. The young British team for this year's competition have an almost unparalleled wealth of experience in the class. Two veterans of both Club Class Worlds, Pete Masson (Champion at Gawler, 8th at Musbach) and Rich Hood (2nd at Gawler and at Musbach) were joined by Jay Rebbeck (Junior World Champion 2001), creating a formidable team.

After mixed weather in the practice period, it was clear that Norway was going to present big challenges, with variable weather conditions and intimidating terrain, not to mention an impressive list of competitors. The terrain made 4WD vehicles almost essential, and the British were extremely fortunate to be sponsored by SsangYong. The value to the team of having well equipped and reliable tow vehicles was enormous.

Opening Ceremony – Saturday, June 12: The day of the opening ceremony raised hopes of a superb contest, with cloud streets as far as the eye could see. Everyone agreed it was probably the best day they had ever seen, and with the long Norwegian days, a flight of 1,200km would probably have been possible. Unfortunately, we were stuck on the ground, taking part in the usual parades and listening to speeches while staring longingly skywards. After a rather bizarre air-show, including a rigid wing hang-glider being towed by a weight-shift microlight (absolutely terrifying – trust me), and a rather unplanned display by an Extra 300, the team returned to base for an early night.

Day 1 – Sunday, June 13: The first contest day was something of a disappointment: weak blue thermals and an approaching warm front. After lots of low gaggling before the start, Pete had the worst possible luck, a complete radio failure (making it impossible for him to know when the start line had opened) and getting separated from Rich and Jay. After a struggle with top cover, he landed out with several other gliders about 35km down track. Rich and Jay had a slightly better run, staying in the sunshine ahead of the front, but the day was still a tense struggle, always low and with very few landout options. Eventually they hit the spuds (literally) about 45km short of the finish. There were no finishers. One American competitor, Tim McAllister, had a superb day in his Libelle. (His wife's comment: "Even a blind squirrel occasionally finds nuts".) Petr Krejcirik (Czech) won the day with 1,000pt.

Day 2 – Thursday, June 17: A welcome racing day. Conditions were superb with 6-8kt climbs to 8,000ft. The boys had a great time, making full use of the better weather. The standard of competition was clear from the results, with Petr Krejcirik winning again with a speed of 117km/h; even 110km/h got you only 39th place! Some very capable pilots suffered airspace penalties, severe enough to effectively end their comp. Jay and Rich came 4th and 5th respectively, with Pete 23rd. Overall positions changed significantly, but the points spread was very small. Petr Krejcirik was first overall with a maximum of 2,000pt going into day 3.

Day 3 – Friday, June 18: Variable weather continued with a very dodgy day that began extremely moist and unstable and just got worse. As the pilots started on their Assigned Area Task to the west, the airfield was being pelted with heavy rain from a storm that had formed in the start area. Somehow, most pilots got away and started, but conditions were truly dire, with low weak thermals over almost totally unlandable terrain. Pete was the first British victim, landing in a field with 12 other gliders. Unfortunately, Australian pilot Philip Ritchie didn't make it to the field they were in, hitting rain and heavy sink, and ultimately the trees. Fortunately he managed to walk away without so much as a scratch, although the glider did not fare so well.

The SsangYong saved the day in the field, pulling out cars and gliders that had become stuck in the soft ground. Pete was hailed as a hero, although at the time of writing we have still not received any beer as a sign of gratitude...

Meanwhile Jay and Rich were struggling low down over the marshy plateau, where they saw another Australian, Terry Cubley, land. They managed to keep going to the north of the first sector, where conditions improved, but ultimately they were forced to glide out to a good field by the lake near Lillehammer. Three pilots completed the task by doing minimum distance. Certainly a challenging and eventful day.

Day 4 – Tuesday, June 22: After a long break of bad weather, including a visit to Oslo to see the Munch gallery, we finally had another decent-looking day. The air was unstable and moist, but during the afternoon climbs improved and the showers became few and far between. Rich and Jay flew consistently, putting them into 7th and 3rd overall. Sebastian Kawa (Poland) in a Std Jantar had an excellent day, winning by some margin. He moved into 1st place overall, relegating Petr Krejcirik to 2nd. Pete made slightly less distance in the first and last sectors than Rich and Jay but it was a good overall team performance.

Day 5 – Wednesday, June 23: With the last two days forecast to be washed out, most pilots rightly predicted this would be the last day. After initially looking too showery, the air dried out; and conditions improved significantly in the afternoon. An AAT with a first sector to the south was set. Pete, Jay and Rich all started together and had an excellent run into the first sector, despite some irritating tactical following by the Czech team. Jay dropped slightly below, and Pete elected to turn early in the first sector in order to relay information back to the other pair. Pete ended up having a superb run towards the last sector, but Jay and Rich's was slower as they ran a cloud street lower than they would have liked with lakes as the only potential landing options. After running in good air without a decent climb for 50km they eventually turned for home below glide. A nail-biting final glide ensued, with a line of energy in the last 10km bringing them back safely Pete, who had been having a storming run, finished seven minutes early because of a timing error, which ruined his chances for the day. When it rains it pours. I just hope all the bad luck coming at once means he will have a long spell of good luck in the future.

This was indeed the final day, leaving Jay 2nd and Rich tied 5th with Petr Krejcirik. It was incredibly tight at the top, with only 40pts separating 2nd and 7th, and Rich only 13pts from bronze. The contest organisation was superb, and they did everything they could to keep the competitors happy despite the poor weather.

Exciting flying, a fantastic atmosphere and plenty of socialising will make the third Club Class Worlds memorable for all involved.

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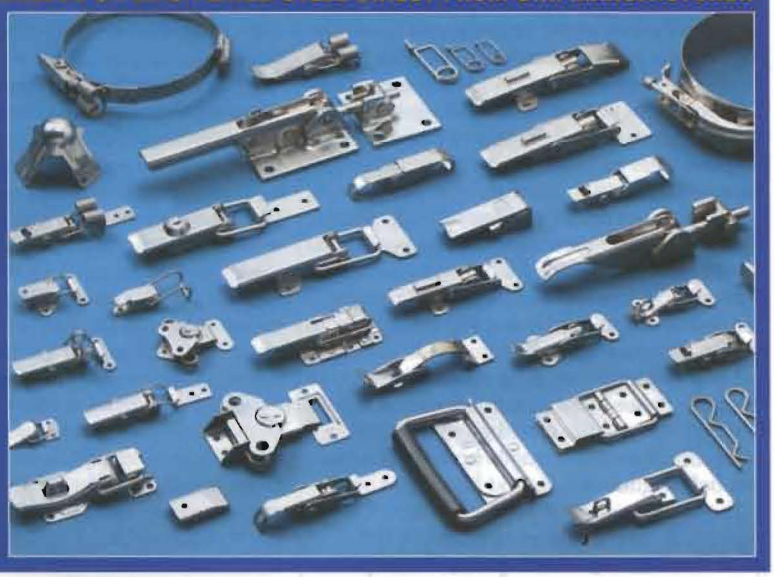
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Gliding continues at Bicester

After a gap of nearly 50 years, Windrushers GC has been resurrected, joined the BGA and begun operations on the historic airfield at Bicester. Emily Bryce describes the club



THE RAFGSA Centre's planned move from Bicester airfield had been on the horizon since the mid-1990s – would it relocate to Little Rissington, Enstone or Halton? But the varied mix of servicemen, ex-servicemen and university students that flew from Bicester each weekend could be forgiven for a certain complacency in recent years. It was difficult to imagine a terminal end to gliding at one of Britain's most historic and well-equipped airfields. For this reason, the campaign to re-establish the Windrushers GC has proved to be very powerful...

Official confirmation came in late 2003 that the RAFGSA would depart from Bicester in mid-June 2004 – and that the airfield, surplus to MOD requirements, would be sold eventually. There has been no shortage of glider pilots and members of the local Bicester community wishing to retain the long tradition of aviation at the site.

Early meetings to discuss the options attracted large numbers of interested people – from pilots who had flown at the airfield as members of the original Windrushers GC (the first gliding club to fly at Bicester, back in 1956), to neighbouring farmers and young gliding hopefuls.

A new idea was soon hatched... in November 2003 the Windrushers were reformed. A steering group was nominated to lead the campaign to lease Bicester airfield from Defence Estates and, under the diplomatic chairmanship of Roger Crouch, a comprehensive business plan has been developed to make a civilian gliding club work at Bicester.

All involved in this enterprise have been amazed by the wealth of support on offer from both locals and the wider gliding community. Advice and resources have come from a variety of channels – the outgoing RAFGSA have been patient and co-operative, Lee on Solent GC provided much invaluable guidance, and individual pledges to fund club gliders and equipment have all made this venture practical.

The BGA, through the Planning and Environment Fund and using the services of Louis Chicot (Chartered Town Planner) has supported the retention of gliding at Bicester. In 2002, Cherwell District Council published a local plan in which they promoted a major new housing development on part of the Ministry of Defence land and sought the cessation of gliding at the site. Following representations from the BGA and many concerned local pilots, the council has revised its intentions. The housing site has been relocated and support for continued gliding at Bicester is now in the Local Plan.

Above: Bicester airfield, familiar to many non-members who have been on courses there (Ken Hartley)
Below right: some of the young club's young members

Bidding for and obtaining the lease of Bicester airfield has been an infinitely complex process, involving much delicate negotiation and hard work – but the result is that Windrushers was due to start operations on July 2004. We have a three-year lease, with the option of five years, it includes the entire airfield to the site boundary and a large WW2 hangar. Oxford University GC and the Faulkes Flying Foundation are planning to glide alongside Windrushers at Bicester, too.

The re-formed Windrushers GC draws upon the experience and enthusiasm of pilots who have flown at Bicester for years – a former BGA national coach will remain, alongside many renowned instructors and competition pilots. What's new is that, unlike the RAFGSA, Windrushers will welcome new members from the general public. We aim to establish strong links with the local community, offering training and flying facilities for all – and particularly encouraging local young people to take to the skies with special junior rates. Windrushers GC will provide a significant addition to the range of amenities available in the Bicester area.

At a glance

Full membership cost:
£250 pa + £30 joining fee. Junior/student rate: £70

Launch types/cost *(subject to adjustment)*:
Winch £5 (junior/student, £3); aerotow from £15

Club fleet (as at June 15): K-13 x 3, DG-500, K-8

Instructors: more than 20, BI to Full rated
CFI, Gary Binnie; DCFI, Ron Smith
Tugmaster, Derren Francis

Types of lift: thermal, occasional wave

Operates: Seven days a week
Aerotow-only weekdays; plus winch at weekends

Contact: *enquiries@windrushers.org.uk*
www.windrushers.org.uk

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Club news

Andreas (Isle of Man)

WE were delighted to take part in a science week at the local primary school. Dave Wiseman kindly took his L33 Solo and rigged on the playing field, which in itself created great curiosity during the lunch break. We had a great time – the parents and staff of Andreas school looked after us well and we are sure the pupils got as much out of the occasion as we did. Children of all ages showed lots of interest and asked many and varied questions. Other local "science experts" also spent time there including a British Airways captain and a Met Office forecaster from the Isle of Man Airport, oh, and a birdwatcher, so aviation was well represented. Hearty congratulations to Graeme Howie, who has just gone solo and to Derek Callister, who soloed while on a course at Aston Down. Our newly acquired second two-seater remains in the UK pending the outcome of the AAIB investigation and the lifting, hopefully, of the BGA's K-7 grounding notice.

Brian Goodspeed and Bob Fennell

Bannerdown (RAF Keevil)

KEITH McPhee (ASW 20) and Stewart Renfrew (Discus) completed their Golds with 300km flights. Stewart also rounded off a successful Basic Instructors course, for which we congratulate him. The 60th Anniversary of D-Day was celebrated by residents of Keevil village and by a fly-in of a Hercules and other aircraft to remember the airfield's significance in the glider-borne operations.

Derek Findlay

Bath, Wilts & North Dorset (The Park)

SO far the weather has been good for cross-country flights of 300-500 plus. Mike Jenks has flown his 500km Diamond in his LAK 12. Several very enthusiastic Bath University members are making their mark in the club. Among them, Michael Schlotter is the most recent solo and Danielle Hancock re-soloed soon after joining. Tom Bell flew his Silver distance one day, five hours the next, and height the following weekend (unfortunately – no barograph!) He also took part in his first inter-club in June. We are now, at last, reaping the benefit of having two Puchacz for *ab initio* training. Our airfield manager, Dick Yerburgh, has acquired a new tractor for grass mowing, which will make life much easier for the stalwarts who keep our airfield like a bowling green. Our group who made a visit to Sutton Bank had a very successful week. We have just hosted a large number of gliders and teams for the Inter-Club League.

Joy Lynch

Bidford (Bidford)

THE summer is now well upon us, and as I write this our comp is in full swing. It is being well run with our 'new' team for this year and all the competitors and crew seem to be enjoying themselves. Thanks in advance to Al Farmer and Dickie Feakes for directing and scoring respectively. We have new entrance and general signs around the airfield and thank Allan Wallace for making and erecting them; they look very smart. Al Cook has finished his Gold with a 300km back in the good spell of weather we had at the end of May. He was so pleased with himself that as a reward he upgraded his glider to a share in a Ventus. Here's to many more good cross-country days this year!

James Ward

Black Mountains (Talgarth)

JOHN Clark has had to relinquish the post of CFI at Talgarth and is being replaced by Don Puttock, our summer resident instructor at Talgarth. Also, Charles Baker has decided that, after more than three years as our treasurer, it is time to concentrate on the flying side of the business and is handing over the reins to Don Gosden – no stranger to the financial side at Talgarth. Many thanks to both John and Charles for their valuable efforts. It's hard to believe, but on July 24 we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the first glider flight out of Talgarth. Launches are up on 2003 and average flight time per launch stands at 90 minutes... and that includes training flights! Our efforts to lure expeditions from other clubs to our fantastic site seem to be paying off with visitors from the navy, Oxford, Dunstable, Nympsfield, Long Mynd and Lasham. Our local inter-club weekend, Rockpolishers, at the end of May was a great success with the Hangar Band, a great barbecue and the obligatory magnificent Talgarth sunset. The task week at the end of August is now fully subscribed.

Robbie Robertson

Please send news to *editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk* or Helen Evans, 7 Ollney Road, Minchinhampton, Stroud GL6 9BX to arrive by **August 10** for the next issue (October 12 for the December-January issue)



***Andreas GC**'s Dave Wiseman rigged his L33 Solo to display at a science week at the local school*

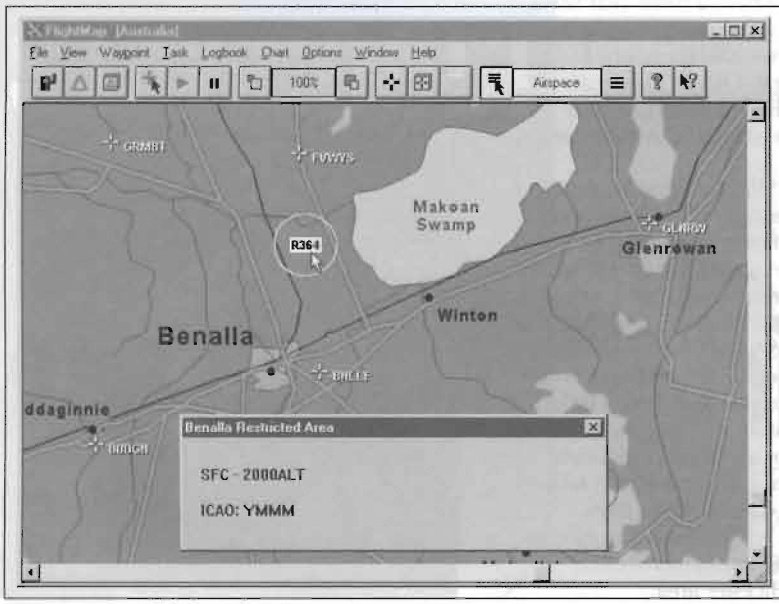
Booker (Wycombe Air Park)

RECENT weather has been excellent and May produced some exceptional flights. We had two 750s by Paul Brice and Jez Hood, and numerous first 500km and 300km flights. It would be impossible to mention all who did something this month, so a huge well done to everybody who achieved something. The three Cirrus pilots (the Worlds Club Class Team) flew around 700-730km of an attempted 750km. The intermediate soaring group is doing very well, at last putting into successful practice what they have been learning. The places for our usual annual Aboyne expedition are filling up and some members are also off to Jaca in September. The spring expedition to Shobdon was very successful and enjoyed by all who went. We are operating – including the BBC one – four K-21s this summer, as well as our Duo and three K-13s, so that with up to six tugs, training at all levels should be easily available, especially with all our new instructors.

Roger Neal

Borders (Milfield)

OUR flagship, the splendid 22-glider, private owners' hangar, was officially opened on June 25, 2004, by



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FlightMap is being upgraded with new planning and analysis features that include more comprehensive airspace information. The emphasis on ease-of-use is retained as are the existing facilities for:

- ❑ Task preparation.
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The new features will become available in FlighMap Version 2.1. For information on availability and offers for purchasing the current Version 2.0 with a free upgrade, visit:

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Illustration shows the Inspect facility being used to interrogate the airspace map layer.

Alan Beith, the Member of Parliament for Berwick upon Tweed. We are about to take delivery of a Pawnee 235, currently being prepared in the USA. It will supplement our tug fleet of the Super Cub and 160hp Baby Pawnee and eventually replace the latter. Mark Williams soloed in April. Between May 31 and June 4. Mike Charlton ran a successful *ab initio* week. Some moderately decent wave climbs, up to a maximum height of 10,000ft (Cheviot wave, and Borders pilots, usually do much better than this!) have been made of late and the resident punditry of Andy Bardgett, Derek Robson, Andy Henderson and Mal Parkes (there may be other light-under-a-bushel pilots) have been piling up kilometres around triangles and multi-leg tasks of circa 200km. The 300km Diamond remains elusive. On one of these peregrinations, Mal Parkes landed out at Duns on May 3, in his PIK 20B. Dave Wilson, in his newly re-covered and smoothed wing Skylark 3, sometimes with, and lately without, winglets, has frequently flown long, far and high, thus matching the achievements of the glass-horne gang. Gordon Pledger has become a tug pilot and Kevin Charlton (son of Mike), having completed his NPPL, is converting to this task, as is George Hall. The elderly gentlemen owners of the Magnificent Seven (K7), (Denis (sic) Driver, Ron Davis and Len Dent) being deprived of the use of their beloved machine, have used their freed time to complete their annual checks.
Leonard Dent

Bowland Forest (Chipping)

OUR third K-13, having been stripped down and totally refurbished, is now online and is a joy to fly – thanks to Reg Wooller and his team of helpers for all their time and hard work. Congratulations to Caroline Weston on her first solo; to Graeme Alexander for Gold height (at Feshiebridge); to Henry Stott for Silver height and to Graham Settle for Silver duration. We are sad to report the recent death of Tommy Gornall *(see p61)*.
Eileen Littler

Bristol & Glos (Nympsfield)

THE winching regime has been tightened up and we are trying a launchpoint controller system again. A 20mph limit was introduced for club vehicles after one speedster was caught doing handbrake turns! New lighter north hangar doors have been fitted. On April 24 about 10 people did the 256km task Nympsfield-Silverstone-Chieveley-Nympsfield. Ray Payne won at 95km/h, putting the rest to shame. Well done, Tony Gillett – Gold distance/Diamond goal after how many years? Also Gill Starling did two 300s after 20 years, Jon Baldock and Ed Wright also did 300s. Martin Talbot achieved Silver distance and Cross-Country Endorsement. Fred Ballard fetched the wooden trophy from Lasham in a K-6CR, only to have them snatch it back next day in a Swallow. We'll have to send the Prefect there! Well done to Jon Coote on Bronze with Cross-Country Endorsement and new solo pilots Pete Stevens, Steve Leslie, Julia Dawson and Juan Toledo (plus Silver height). Jon Marson did his Silver height on his fourth solo. Greg Nunan flew all three Silver legs on a five-hour trip to Edgehill and back. Alison Mulder did 150km of a 300 in an Oly and then an aerotow retrieve that probably cost more than the glider! We were sad to hear of the deaths of Patrick Martin in a winch launch at Halesland and of former CFI/manager Tony Pentelow (obituary in the June-July *Sailplane & Gliding*).
Bernard Smyth

Buckminster (Saltby)

DURING May and June we held a task week, hosted the National Glider Aerobatics Championships and a Fournier Fly-In, and had a BI course during which Barry Beadsworth, Trevor Henson and Martin Hands qualified. John Smith has completed Bronze whilst Chris Prideaux and Steve Dodds have done their five hours. New members Dave Prosolek, Andrew Cluskey, Paul Machacek and Dave Murcott have injected a welcome shot of competition into our cross-country activities. Andrew also retrieved Rasher the Pot Pig from Kirton-in-Lindsey at the end of April. (Rasher being a trophy that travels regularly between Kirton and Saltby). The rest of the year still looks busy, we will be hosting a task week from August 16-20, having our 1940s Big Band night in the hangar on September 3, and the Saltby Open Aerobatics Competition is on September 11-12. Visitors are most welcome at all these events.
Martin Hands

Burn (Burn)

OUR CFI for four years, Dave Peters, has stepped aside; our thanks to him for doing the job in such a positive manner. Our new CFI is Alan Jenkins and members will be wondering what sort of hoop they will have to jump through at the next round of annual checks. Matt Raywood completed his Silver distance in the club PW5, Stephan Zatorski did his but because his recorder was not functioning flew back to complete a 100km. High cloudbase had us skimming the bottom of the airway which had gone up with the higher pressure. A day of trial lessons for Jaguar car owners was a great success, as was the reunion held by 578 squadron, our WW2 airfield occupiers, who flew Halifaxes during the war. We had a useful day with BGA executive members, who talked to about many of our problems. Our negotiations for the use of the airfield seem to go forever as we fight for a reasonable lease.
John Stirk



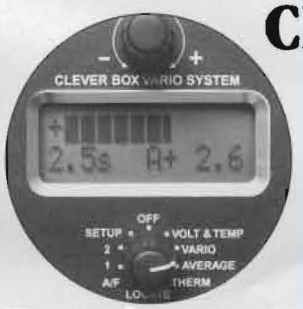
*Caroline Weston pictured at **Bowland Forest GC**, after having been sent solo by Bob Pettifer on April 23, 2004*

Cairngorm (Feshiebridge)

WE flew and soared all sixteen days of our superb Mayfest with many memorable flights to record. Nick Norman and Bob Forrest took the ASH 25 up to 16,000ft from a low point of 700ft near Aviemore, but I won't mention that – oops, too late! Mike Morrison flew 100km triangle for Silver distance, Don Grant flew two Silver legs, Sarmed Mirza completed Bronze with two Silver legs, Pete Thompson also completed Bronze, Steve Derwin achieved Silver height, Graeme Alexander achieved Gold height, Andy Farr flew 50km, Bob Forrest flew 300km for Gold distance, Andy Warbrick flew 500km for Diamond distance, and CFI Andy Carter has buried himself in a mountain of paperwork and badge claims! Needless to say, the bar did a roaring trade! Thanks go to instructors Bill Longstaff, Ian Trotter, Jo Fisher, Bob Petrie, and overworked tuggies Ian Carruthers and Chris Fiorentini. We welcomed back for their second annual visit the flying for the disabled association "Walking on Air" along with their K-21 and instructors/helpers and enjoyed their company enormously and we look forward to seeing you all again soon, and by the way thanks for the new tow rope! "Octoberfest" this year runs from September 25-October 10 and enquiries are coming in thick and fast. Please bookings directly at *chris@capercaillie.flyer.co.uk* or 01540 673231. There is no booking fee but reservations are taken on a first-come, first-served basis and spaces are limited. Check out *www.gliding.org* for full details.
Chris Fiorentini



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At a glance

Full membership cost: £200 pa

Launch type and cost:
Winch: £6 ; Aerotow £20/2,000ft

Club fleet:
Twin Astir, K-7, Astir, K-8 (x3), Motor Falke

Private gliders: 35

Instructors/flying members: 28/174

Types of lift:
thermal, ridge (in strong north-westerlies)

Operates:
Seven days a week, March-October
Weekends and 2-3 weekdays in winter

Contact:
Clubhouse, 01295 688121; Office, 01295 680008
www.gliding-club.co.uk

Lat/Long (WGS84): 52 04.912N 001 28.486W

SHENINGTON airfield was built during 1941 as a training station for Wellington bomber crews. Our landlords managed to buy back their land in the 1950s, but the quarrying rights were sold elsewhere and the original third concrete runway was lost as hardcore for the M40. During the 1950s and 60s the airfield had occasional light aircraft use, and was temporarily the base for Coventry GC (now The Soaring Centre at Husbands Bosworth). It became better known in the 1970s for the kart track that was established at the south end of the original north-south runway and is still on the UK race circuit today. Altair GC began operating here in 1984 and, when this disbanded, Shenington GC was started in March 1990, comprising of about 20 dedicated members, who had a loaned K-8, a K-2 and a T-21.

Three years later, when Mike Cuming saw the advantages of the site and brought The Gliding Centre here, the club numbered about 30 and had a K-7, plus access to Mary Meagher's supercub G-OFER. Mike's arrival proved a powerful catalyst. With courses running mid-week from spring to autumn, more and more people were introduced to the delights of gliding and the friendliness of Shenington. Within a couple of years, membership was more than 100 and the kit and facilities were expanding in line. It was during this period that Edgehill airfield was renamed Shenington Airfield.

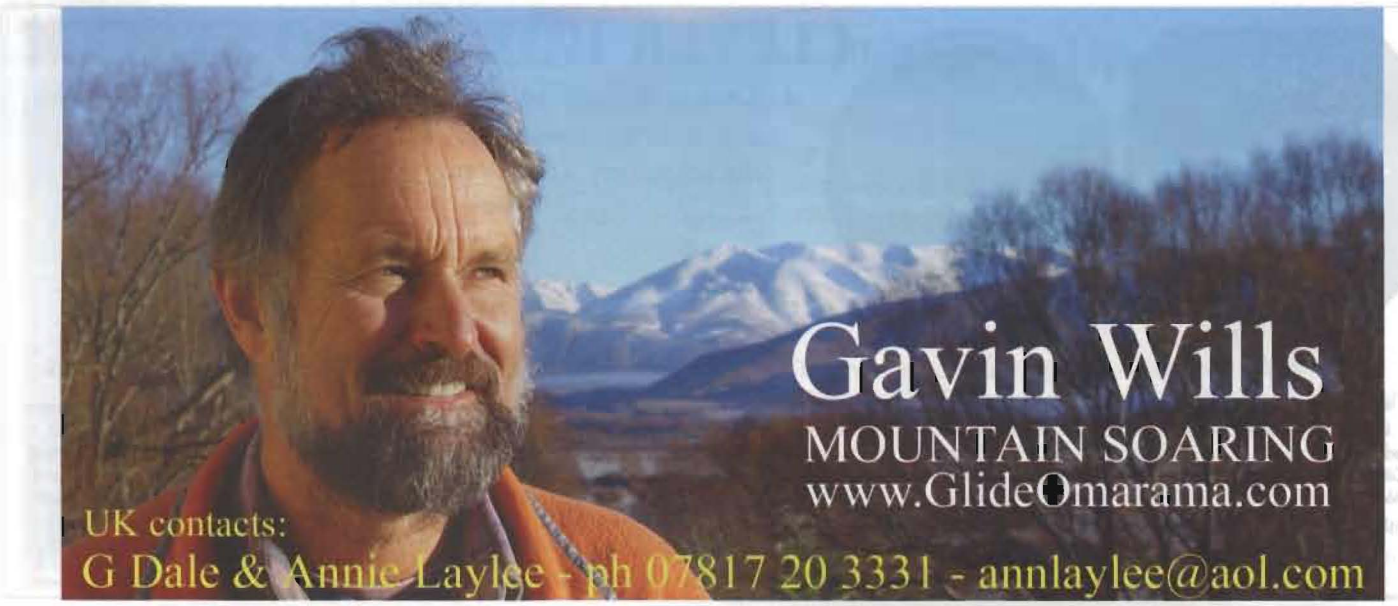
When The Gliding Centre left Shenington in 1996, the club decided to take over mid-week and keep the seven-day-a-week operation for our members. We gained a Skylaunch winch as well as members when Turweston GC relocated two years ago, and the club has continued to grow. The airfield is at the top of a small (c300ft high) ridge, which in the right weather (that is, strong north-westerlies!) works to 1,200-1,500ft, and is also a useful thermal generator at those times of the year when we see sun.

Being right in the middle of the country we generally avoid sea breeze effects, and the more awkward airspace restrictions. UK conditions permitting, this is excellent soaring country! We are fortunate in retaining two concrete runways as well as a grass strip to complete our triangle so are inconvenienced not stopped by waterlogging. We use mainly winch for launching (we are one of the UK's busiest winch sites thanks to our training operation) but also have the use of Mary's tug.

There have been two major changes this year: the fenced and cropped triangle in the centre of the runways is now part of the airfield, and the cows (who walked up the main runway for milking) have gone. We will all need to step less carefully now, though we are looking for a lawn mower!

We have an active social life with organised events all year round. We participate in the Inter-Club League, and have regular expeditions from other clubs. Our members are from all backgrounds and ages (12-89 at present), and we have a higher than average percentage of active female members.

Our outgoing and incoming CFIs – Phil Brennan and Mark Stevens – are keen to broaden horizons so that we continue to develop our facilities with more cross-country training and club expeditions. Whether you're a landing-out competition pilot (we seem to be in prime position for mass landouts) or a shy *ab initio*, you'll get a good welcome at Shenington. We enjoy welcoming visitors and only ask that you take us as you find us. *Tess Whiting*



Club news

Cambridge (Gransden Lodge)

AT the end of May we held our first Inter-Club League heat at Gransden Lodge for several years. We've been active participants but not hosts. Colin Cownden and Richard Baker did an excellent job running the show and task-setting. Sadly, our pilots (your humble correspondent was one of them) allowed courtesy to overcome competitiveness and let the other teams win. The weekend before that was The Weekend. May 22, saw a number of people attempt and achieve personal cross-country goals. Well done. Particular mention has to go to Phil Jones, though, who landed after 7pm less than 20km short of 1,000km. A fantastic achievement. We are continuing to train new instructors. Bob Berry, George Knight, Christoph Ramshorn and Keith Turner have all recently qualified as Basic Instructors, and George Sanderson has regained his rating. Around the club the three water ballast tanks in the trailer parks are now plumbed in and in use, and new lighting and electrics in the Romney Hut should allow a more professional environment for working on the ground equipment. Andy Jude is staying on top in his battle to keep 100 acres of runway grass short enough to be usable. Steve Longland and Steve Foster will be running a cross-country training course between July 24 and July 30 and we will be holding a task week soon after that.

Gavin Deane

Channel (Waldershare Park)

THE tragic news from Lincolnshire and the subsequent grounding of all K-7s knocked us sideways, but we managed to salvage the activities planned for National Gliding Week. Rather more urgent was the need to find aircraft immediately; grateful thanks are therefore due to those who dropped everything to help organise this and thus keep the club flying. At the time of writing, the long-term implications, financial and otherwise remain to be seen, and with them, therefore, the future plans for the club. This spring, we've not only seen more than the usual quota of foxes and badges, but have been adopted by Mr and Mrs Duck, who preferred our puddles to their traditional haunts, and a nestful of thrushes emerged from one of the Falkes. The flying progress of the fledglings proved more interesting than that of their temporary homes. The greater-dappled Streeter was seen almost daily, taking mowing to a new art form. Heroic working parties are starting on improvements to our famous track and we hope that by the time this is published our access will be less adventurous. Prettification of the clubhouse seems to happen by stealth, so names cannot be named for the praise they deserve. The best soaring days continue to fall neatly on those for which we have no instructors.

Nic Orchard

Chilterns (RAF Halton)

WELL, they arrived in early June (though not as early as originally planned), so this is the first entry for the RAFGSA Chilterns Gliding Centre. We had a very good longest day, with thermal soaring commencing at 0815 (quite a rarity that some pilots had completed 100km before breakfast!) and continuing throughout most of the day, until past 1900. Flying was curtailed for a party (with excellent food – thanks very much in the main to Moira, with Steve assisting in barbecuing) to celebrate the day and welcome people from Bicester. The following day, June 20, (after a late start, it must be said) also benefited from excellent, though cyclical, soaring conditions, which was fitting, as it was the club's last flying day. Good news is that our neighbour has removed his leafless trees from the undershoot/approach to 20 (two-zero) – so there has been one less flight safety issue to worry about...

Andy Hyslop

Clevelands (Dishforth)

ACHIEVEMENTS have been coming thick and fast owing to the outstanding conditions during May and early June (and, of course, the skill of the pilots). Emma Salisbury has completed her Silver, Karl Dagger has his first Bronze leg and Cross-Country Endorsement. Dave Chisholm achieved a Silver distance, and son Dominic his first Bronze Leg. Nick Smith did his 300km. The club has been well represented at the Inter-club League and is lying second. The second day of the Sutton Bank contest saw a whitewash by Dishforth pilots, winning all three classes.

Polly Whitehead

Cotswold (Aston Down)

STEPHEN Cook and Rob Corbin have flown 300km for a first Diamond. Paul Gray, Sally Longstaff and Barry Key have completed their Silver Badges while Graham Davis has Silver height. Bill Gribble has gone solo. David Roberts completed Sutton Bank out-and-return from Aston Down while Andy Smith flew almost 700km of an attempted 750km. The Easter expedition to Portmoak was enjoyed by all. One day we will get the weather absolutely right. Our first open day was marred by less than favourable weather but we had a very successful evening meeting when we entertained the local parish councils. Courses are progressing smoothly thanks to Pat and Bo, with a number of course members soloing or resoloing. We are doing very well in the Inter-Club League and congratulations to those pilots who flew at Talgarth. Congratulations to our club president on his 70th birthday, celebrated in fine style.

Frank Birlison

Cranwell (Cranwell)

ANGUS Watson and Mike Derwent completed the season's first 300km triangle on a difficult day. The club has a newer Motorfalke T61F, for those who need navigational/field landing training or to refresh their skills. A welcome back to those members (competitors and crew) Al Clarke, Rick Jones, Richard Browne and



Mike Phillips soloed at Crusaders (RAFGSA Cyprus) sent by Ian Gallagher, who was "taking time off from eating Halloumi and drinking Keo," says Nick Aram

Mick Baker, who recently took part in the overseas nationals in Spain and despite adverse weather did well. In the father and son gliding stakes, Mike and James Hale appear to be fairly evenly matched, despite Mike having a head start in terms of the numbers of flying hours and aircraft types! Colin Watt, who as a Lancaster pilot was based at RAF Waddington, has been a visitor to our club for two years while attending squadron reunions. He still enjoys his flying at the Adelaide Soaring Club (who said there are no old bold pilots?), but is unable to be with us this year – our best wishes go to him. Wing polishing, task planning, task practice, "in flight catering", is all moving forward at a frenetic pace ready for that day it all comes together – and they can buy a round of drinks in the bar!

Zeb Zamo

Dartmoor Gliding Society (Brentor)

WE have notable successes and disappointments to report: on an exped to Lasham our CFI Roger Matthews attained Gold distance and Diamond goal but was

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Club news

denied by being less than a wingspan over the turning point over Salisbury; Mark Gatehouse did achieve the aim, however; our gypsy of the skies, Trevor Taylor, did more than most towards his 500km but landed out in Somerset. Other successes were Ged Nevinsky (K-6) with the first 50km of the season (Brentor to North Hill) whilst Steve Clark did the reverse (Discus) on the same day. Gavin Short (Cirrus) managed 227km of a declared 300km O/R on that Sunday, May 23. Contenders for the wooden spoon include Trevor Taylor, who tried a Silver distance in the T-21, which resulted in a 24-hour retrieve from Okehampton (binding trailer bearings, burst tyres, you know the routine...). In light of the grounding of the K-7s we have managed to procure a K-13, which has enabled flying training to continue. On June 16 we flew four Canadians on secondment to the MoD and on June 17 we flew 10 naval personnel from the naval base at Devonport. Our ground equipment continues to remain reliable thanks to the TLC applied by John Bolt and Iain Reedie. By the time you read this we will have hosted our Open Day on July 3; thanks to Seahawk for the loan of a T-49 Capstan. We are converting one of our K-7s for use by the disabled.
Martin Cropper

Deeside (Aboyne)

ONE of our Puchacz has returned from Poland as new, having been re-lifed, and a second one has gone for a similar makeover. Colin Dewhurst and Roy Garden have gained their Basic Instructor Ratings and Roy Wilson has renewed his Assistant Rating after many years of keeping his head down. Two of our instructors, Alex Maitland and Tom Holloway, are instructing at Camphill for the summer; we wish them well and look forward to their return. Tom Hansford went solo just after his 16th birthday and has since completed his five hours and Silver height. Alex Smith also achieved Silver height. Our Bronze course is fully subscribed through to the autumn for the fifth year running and our newly started New Members Scheme is fully booked this year. Both successes are a tribute to the enthusiasm of all involved. During the May Bank Holiday we hosted a round of the Inter-Club League, which was blessed with decent weather, competitors flying a total of 3,367km. The same weekend we also hosted a BGA Safety Meeting, which was naturally well attended with a captive audience! The club outing to the Isle of Skye at the beginning of June was spoiled by bad weather. However, during a sunny interval on the Saturday, all eight gliders launched and everyone saw the Cuillins, albeit briefly. We still have spaces left for the September/October wave season and for the Mountain Soaring Championships. After November this year the lower level of controlled airspace comes down to FL195, so this is your last chance to come and get your Diamond height without speaking to Scottish Control!
Mary-Rose Smith

Derby & Lancs (Camphill)

WE welcome Alex Maitland, Tom Holloway and Robin Dransfield as our summer instructor, BI and winch driver respectively, all from north of the Border; this is a return for Alex who was with us last year. Several pilots and gliders made a successful visit to the Long Mynd. Congratulations to Trevor Butcher, who completed his Silver during the visit with a flight to Bidford, to Chris Worrall who almost completed an out and return to the Mynd from Camphill, and has also completed his 100km triangle and five hours, and to David Morton who has just rejoined us and has re-soloed. By the time this appears, the Vintage Rally will have come and gone, this year being combined with a celebration of our 70th birthday, and of the Camphill World Championships of 1954. Mike Armstrong is getting value for money out of his new Ventus 2CT, 40 hours and 2,000km in May. Come to think of it that's only 50km/h – must try harder! Peter Gray completed another 500km. Everyone enjoyed the task week though



Trevor Butcher after his 50km from the Mynd to Bidford during our visit from ***Camphill*** *(Malcolm Blackburn)*

the weather could have been kinder, and a Bronze course got Graham Dean and Peter Mylett the badge.
Dave Salmon

Devon & Somerset (North Hill)

THAT weekend! With the best of the weather in the west, to judge by the stream of gliders coming toward us as we headed east, we had our best cross-country day on record. Saturday: 2,400km including two Diamonds, goal for Roger Mathews and distance for Phil Morrison, apparently the first time this has been done from the home club. Sunday: 5,300km including four Diamonds, goal for Pete Startup and Mark Gatehouse and another two Diamond distances for Malcolm Chant and Simon Minson. The weekend also saw Steve Clark achieve his Silver distance flying to Brentor plus 600km and 550km two-seater flights from Ron Johns in the ASH, for another club record. We like this global warming!
Phil Morrison

Dorset (Eyres Field)

APRIL and May saw some good days, with plenty of long flights. One day in April saw three flights in excess of five hours, with our chairman, Doug Every, achieving his Silver duration. Local soaring for five hours is fairly difficult at our club, due to our close proximity to the coast (five miles), and having to stay well north of our field when the dreaded sea breeze comes in. Several pilots have attempted cross-country flights recently, unfortunately none quite achieving their goal. However, Dave Bamber has completed Silver, and also won the 'Boomerang' trophy, presented by Rob Linee, for the fastest out and return to Salisbury. We held the annual club Bash on May 21, and trophies were awarded as follows: Barry Hurst trophy (instructing) to: John Swayles. Bovington Garrison trophy (best endeavour) to: Guy Jarvis. Under-21 trophy (for watching 'Smoking Vid' 3,000 times) to: Tim Linee. Geoff Warwick trophy (tug and glider maintenance) to: Bill Cook, Barry Thomas, Chip Brain, and Alan Coatsworth. John Hanks trophy (best achievement) to: Rob Linee. Local Soaring trophy to: Gerry Cox. Height trophy to: John Halford. John Garood trophy (cross-country) to: Rob Linee. the CFI's trophy (basic instructing efforts) to: Carol Marshall, Gerry Cox, and Nathan Hanney. Congratulations to Guy Jarvis for gaining his full rating, and to Jon Marshall for unselfish behind-the-scenes effort keeping all the logs and stats safely in his laptop. Also thanks to Gary and Jim for their endless supply of tea, coffee, and bacon butties.
Colin Weyman

East Sussex (Ringmer)

WE welcome new members under our scholarship scheme: Olly Davies, Chris Fleet, Jason Harrison and Anna Kay. Also welcome to Chris Yarrow, who is an ex-microlight pilot. Creditable performances at Inter-club League meetings have placed us twice on both occasions – congratulations to all who took part. Kathy Scott has her Silver height; Andy Cole has landed out. Field levelling continues and the fuel farm should be fully operational by the time this goes to press... at last! Evening flying is progressing well. Club trips are planned to Jaca and to the two-seater competition at the Wolds GC, Pocklington. Task week was severely hampered by poor weather – the gruelling 38km triangle remained unconquered!
Adrian W Lyth

Essex (Ridgewell/North Weald)

OUR first club week at Ridgewell this year was very successful with good cross-country flights. Ralph Hawtree just missed 500km (Sheffield East, Graffham Water, Saltby, Hus Bos), finally having to land at Gransden Lodge 20km short. Peter Gill achieved 285km visiting Hus Bos and Saltby. Tony Brook and Steve Cotter managed 75km of a 100km task in the club K-13 having to land at Rattlesden. Geoff Martin completed a 96km out and return to Gransden Lodge (not declared) and finally Chris Nicholas took his LAK 12 on 390km, landing at Saltby. Congratulations to all of them; they will have encouraged others to break the "apron strings". Our thanks to Gransden Lodge, Saltby, and Rattlesden for all the help they gave to our pilots. The club week ended with a barbecue; our thanks to Sue Martin for yet another very enjoyable feast. David Jones has done a tremendous job making our new winch – it proved its worth during the flying week. Well done.
Peter Perry

Essex & Suffolk (Wormingford)

THE continuing good weather is letting our more able pilots venture far and wide - hope it lasts. We have finally finished rebuilding our main winch, a project beset with problems. Not before time, as our second threw a con rod on the day the rebuild was back in service. I think it was trying to tell us something. Ken Rogers and Andy Joslin have joined the ranks of our BIs and Andy Booth and Eric Hibbard both achieved Assistant ratings. Two of our cadets are making great strides: Alex O'Keefe and Richard Crockett both completed Bronze in February and Silvers in May. Other Silver achievements were Richard Robinson, height and Graham Drinkell, height and duration. Peter Hibbard flying his syndicate SHK (restored to flying condition after 12 years in storage) Gold distance and Diamond goal. Finally, two new solos: Ian Mitchell and Carol Mckintosh
Steve Jones

Fenland (RAF Marham)

THERE was a late flurry of activity before deadline as people tried to get their names in *S&G*. Three badge attempts on the glorious June 13: Matthew Summers achieved his five hours, this time taking a whole barrage of alarm clocks with him to let him know when his time was up, unlike last time when he landed 15 minutes too early due to no watch! Pete Harris sped his way to Coltishall for his 50km and the final tick in the hook for his full Silver. Well done Pete. Timmy bless him, planned his usual field landing, this time taking the Discus instead of his beloved K-6 on a 300km attempt, no field this time, instead an aerotow retrieve to make things easier for his long-suffering crew. Anybody seen his hat, by the way? Earlier, both Pete Stafford-Allen and Paul McLean made valiant attempts at 750km, with both achieving 707km. Del has staked his claim for the speed trophy by going round a small task at 107km/h. Donny Johnstone has also been racking up the distance with a magnificent 370km. Thanks to everyone who has been helping out on Friday nights. AJ has arranged a new deal for club T-shirts.
Graham French



What you see is what you get! David Jones with the winch he has built for ***Essex GC*** *(Sue Martin)*

Four Counties (Barkston Heath)

WE are settling in nicely at Barkston Heath, which is a great place to be. There has been a host of badge claims with Peter Davey, Chris Emerson and Frazer Harland completing Bronze. John Vodden and Scott MacLeman have gone solo and Ian Dawson has completed his Silver with five hours. Sue Armstrong flew 543km on that superb weekend in May for her last Diamond with other notable flights by Pete Ballard 300km – logger off, Paul Armstrong 493km – hacked off, and Simon Taylor five hours – chucked off (oops, I mean up!) A great start to the season and a new phase in our history.
Sue Armstrong

Fulmar (Easterton)

WE were pleased to start a new financial year in good shape at our AGM in May and to see the return of our motorglider. We do still, however, suffer the problem a shortage of members. We hope that National Gliding Week will help. We struggled to field a full team in the Scottish Inter-Club League but congratulations to those who took part. Notable achievements have been made by many of our members, badges and conversions; I hope to have more of them to report next time.
Mark Brown

Highland (Easterton)

THIS can be a cruel sport. Tony Butler who went solo just three years ago at the age of 67 was robbed of his Silver distance just three days short of his 70th birthday by a rain shower when only five miles out and with almost enough height for a final glide. His retrieve crew commented that they had no trouble finding him as the field he landed in was opposite the old folks home so they knew where to look! Pete Smith was caught out by the same shower and was likewise robbed. Jim Ross missed his first Bronze leg by two minutes after making a wise decision not to get caught in cloud in developing wave but came down just that wee bit too quickly. We won the first leg of our Inter-Club League but it looks like we could struggle to put a team together for the next leg due to people being on holiday! During our ASH week Geddes Chalmers converted to it and promptly took it into wave doing a couple of hours out in return; Brian Burnell got his five hours in both ridge and wave. Finally, Colin Conti has converted to the K-8, in which he has bought a share. You can easily spot Colin on the field, he's the one with the big smile.
Roy Scothern

Imperial College (Lasham)

DESPITE most of our members having to go through the trauma of end-of-year exams, this has not prevented members from enjoying as much soaring time as possible. This has included two new Silvers (Shaun Murdoch and Sejul Shah) as well as Jamie Denton getting Diamond goal and continually increasing the length of his cross-country flights. We are all looking forward to the summer expedition, which is now going to the Czech Republic again, based on the success of last year.
Luke Cooper-Berry

Kestrel (RAF Odiham)

AFTER major refurbishment, we have our K-13 back in the air and a better understanding of just how many hundreds of hours effort such a project takes. Thanks in particular to Barry Sealey, Bernd Vermeulen and Marc Morley for all the expertise and time they have donated. Neil Armstrong was able to arrange good weather for the three courses he has organised so far this year. Our Astir trailer is receiving a makeover in anticipation of cross-country retrieves, thanks to Fred Field. The C of A programme is now complete thanks to Bernd and helpers. Congratulations to George Blundell-Pound on his second Bronze leg proving that age is no barrier to keeping it up for half an hour.
Simon Boyden

Lasham Gliding Society (Lasham)

WE welcome two new members on to the Management Committee, Gary Pullen and Mick Wells. The dining area and the washrooms have been completely renovated and redecorated. A very successful assistant category instructors' course resulted in eight newly qualified instructors. May 22 was an excellent day for Lasham's cross-country pilots. Chris Garton fulfilled a life's ambition by flying an out-and-return, Lasham-Lands End-Lasham, in his Ventus 2C. He reported not circling for the last 150km to Lands End. On the same day, Afandi Darlington flew 802km, Mike Clarke 703km and Alan Nunn 690km. We sadly report the loss of Alan Purnell, our good friend and ace cross-country pilot. A memorial fund has been set up *(see also his obituary, p61).*
Tony Segal

London (Dunstable)

CONGRATULATIONS to Ed Downham, who flew 1007.8km in South Africa (LS8) confirmed as a UK 15-metre free distance record. Robin May and Ed Downham led a team to Switzerland to fly in the Alps in late May. Setting off early on May 20, Robin and Ed flew the channel and across most of France before landing just short of the target, Schanis, south-east of Zurich. Over the two weeks the team took in several countries and enjoyed the most spectacular mountain soaring and scenery available. Our man Duggie had his wooden peg leg lost during a late night session in the bar one night but proved himself well next morning as usual at 7.00am seen driving a tractor mowing the airfield grass. We are pleased and thankful to say he is back normal now on two legs. At the recent AGM, we welcomed new boy Dave Brown on to the committee. Many thanks to Richard Cooper for his stalwart work as a committee member over the years. LGC operates within the Luton Control Zone. We can only accept visiting pilots who have been appropriately briefed by phone or in person: any infringements of the zone will adversely affect our future at Dunstable. LGC operates on a letter of agreement with Luton and the details of this agreement are quite complicated; however, a simple briefing can be given to pilots wishing to visit us.
Geoff Moore

Mendip (Halesland)

PATRICK Martin was a member of the brotherhood of glider pilots. Although we had not known him before the day, the shock and distress following the tragic accident in which he suffered fatal injuries will remain with us particularly as it was witnessed by so many of our club members. We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife and family and his fellow Nympsfield pilots.
Keith Simmons



Barry Sealey and Bernd Vermeulen put faith in the K-13 they worked long and hard to refurbish at ***Kestrel GC***

Midland (Long Mynd)

HIGH summer on the Mynd and high jinks at the parties not to mention high points in the flying. Ian Mac flew 500km, two fixed-price-to-solos soloed and JS went on yet another thermic tour of Cader Idris and the Welsh coast, only he cheated and did it in glass. Young John Roberts came 12th in the European Nationals in Spain, outranking many of high reputation. Keith Mansell's long-awaited 70th birthday party was on June 27 and a distinguished past was much recalled by an aviation Time Team (well, the rustics looked similar). Keith has now retired from instructing. There is much brave talk of an out-and -return to the Isle of Wight to celebrate the club's own 70th, as if the weather had nothing to do with it. Our own Task Week is from August 21-29. In the words of director John Parry we hope to provide the organisation of a regionals with the relaxed atmosphere of a task week.
Roland Bailey

Needwood Forest (Cross Hayes)

A WELL-attended open evening resulted in several new members, who are now enjoying the summer soaring. The May flying week was, for once, blessed with good weather and resulted in several Silver legs and Bronze soaring flights. The first flights round the newly designated 100km 'club Triangles' have been made. Dave Bowden in his K-6cr enjoyed the first one so much he continued to fly the other one as well. A cadet selection day was held and two new cadets have been chosen for subsidised flying training. We have been granted seven days a week winch launch permission from August which should allow us greater flexibility with flying weeks and additional flying days.
Ian G Walker

Nene Valley (Upwood)

HAVING been absent from *S&G* for some time NVGC is back! After an eventful first few months the members are looking forward to the summer season. Our annual club dinner dance was successful and we wish to express our thanks to the staff of Olivers Lodge, St Ives. With two new K-7s recently acquired, a new engine for the second winch and a Junior on order the members have been kept busy. Congratulations to Steve Jarvis, Fay Keddie and Darren Moloney for passing the Bronze ground exam. Some members are now in training for Silver Badges and instructor ratings. Our Open Day is on June 20 and our cross-country task week for novices and pundits is in August 7-15. A new website is in place at *www.nvgc.org.uk* so why not check it out?
Darren Moloney

Newark & Notts (Winthorpe)

MAY saw the first of our courses, which are run throughout the year. May Bank holiday saw a large

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L-R: Ken Harris, Colin Phipps and Ray Browning met at ***Oxfordshire Sportflying*** *to mark a special occasion...*

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contingent camped out at the club for the first flying week of the year. The week started with a visit from the Lord Mayor to present Eric Boyle with an award for his services to gliding. Later that night an expedition was mounted to the annual Newark Beer Festival with some of the advanced party not arriving back until the next day. Flying was blessed with reasonable weather, on the one day that was rained off congratulations go to Amy Sentance and Roy Kempton who completed their Bronze exams. Thanks to Mike Evans for the barbecue on Friday night. The week ended with two days of aerotows. Congratulations to the treasurer who declared his first ever cross-country, 50km to Crowland, and successfully made Coddington (2.1 miles down the A1).
Noel Kerr

Norfolk (Tibenham)

WE'VE gone professional! Well, we have our first employed instructor in the form of Flying Scot, Bob Grieve. Tim Davies and Ben Magnani are now Basic Instructors and just prior to the course Ben completed Silver with a magnificent – although perhaps somewhat excessive – Silver distance of 280km. John Roche-Kelly has gone solo and Barry Marcham sweated blood over his five hours, but unfortunately his logger ran out of memory! On the big weekend in May the following was achieved: Gold distance/Diamond goal by Tom Smith and Will Day, Gold distance by David Blyth and Diamond distance by Steve Bradford. Ian Hembling also did his five hours and NGC members flew over 6,000 declared kilometres. We hosted the first weekend of the East Anglian Inter-Club League, with Andy Smith as Director. Saturday was scrubbed, but NGC took the lead on Sunday with Tom Smith (novice), Tim Davies (intermediate) and Ray Hart (pundit) all winning their classes. Essex and Suffolk fought back to draw level on Monday, with Rattlesden lying in third place. Sterling work has been going on behind the scenes too, with excellent refurbishment in our clubhouse (including extending the bar) and grass cutting on an heroic scale by Phil Morgan. One of our veteran members, Doug (Griff) Griffiths, was a WW2 troop-carrying glider pilot, who saw much action. He celebrated D-Day's 60th anniversary by donning full uniform and flying our Grob 103. If anyone on D-Day had suggested that |60 years on he would still be flying gliders, and German-built ones at that, I wonder what he would have said?
Ray Hart

Northumbria (Currock Hill)

CADET Ryan Palmer went solo in March, and followed that up with his Bronze Leg off the winch in May. Cadet Emily Gooch – who leaves us soon for a year's voluntary work in Africa – also achieved her Bronze Leg off a winch launch in May, while her dad Steve has made his first flight in the club's Astir. Four members made great progress in a four-day intensive course with



*The seven candidates at the cadet selection day at **Needwood Forest GC** – two were chosen for training*

instructor Eddie Stephenson, with one of them, Martin Palmer, going solo at the end of it. Eddie achieved his Gold height to 12,000ft QNH off a winch launch, while Jim Smith flew two hours in the Astir for his Cross-Country Endorsement. More than 60 people flew on our open day, which resulted in several new members and got us lots of useful publicity in the local press. We've had lots of interesting people visiting us since then too – including 75-year-old Dorothy Bennett, who said: "It's the best thing I've ever done" after a flight with instructor Steve Fairley, and 82-year-old Bob Willis, a WW2 fighter pilot, who impressively took the controls during a flight with Eddie Stephenson.
Richard Harris

Oxford (RAF Weston on the Green)

A flurry of activity at OGC has seen Dave Vinyard go solo, Dave Bray complete his Silver and Gina Pattisson complete her Bronze. Congratulations to all of them. Ex OGC instructor Martin 'FSJ' Cooper has realised that life just isn't the same without it, has dusted off his wings, and joined Bowland Forest. Good luck, Martin, and watch out for the curlover. Truly valiant efforts by Neil Turner and Carole Shepherd refurbishing our tractor and grass cutting equipment mean that we can now stem the tide of nature and stay safe. More deserved back slapping must go to a team, led by Dave Weekes, who fitted a C of G hook to Daisy, our T-21. Carole has already managed 1700ft on the launch. Our Friday night flying is well under way now and we all owe a big thank you to the teams who cook, clean, fly, organise and generally make this important revenue earner for the club possible. The VGC boys have been hauling their assorted steeds to rallies far and wide and with Skylark 4 BLW newly refurbished and sprayed blue we are expecting many tales of derring-do from them.
Simon Walker

Oxfordshire Sport Flying (Enstone)

A WET and windy April 18 brought together two stalwarts of the flying fraternity at Enstone, Colin Phipps was celebrating his 50th anniversary of being sent solo at Weston on the Green by Ken Harris, WW2 Hurricane pilot and latterly a gliding instructor with 130 Sqn, ATC at Weston. They managed to get a flight, in between the showers, before the weather stopped flying for the day. Colin was one of the few lucky ones who was selected to go on the advanced gliding course at Halesland (now Mendip GC) where he obtained his C Certificate in August 1954 and he then continued at Weston as a staff cadet until the squadron was disbanded. Colin then transferred to South Cerney as a trainee instructor. Ken was featured last year in S&G celebrating his 60 years of flying, what was not said was that he trained in Rhodesia and then flew behind the Japanese lines in a tropicalised Hurricane fighter bomber and has many fascinating tales to tell, one of which was of bouncing bombs (not Barnes Wallace) destroying Japanese munitions dumps. Also present was Ray Browning, CFI of Oxfordshire Sport Flying. responsible for converting a great many gliders to SLMGs and again with many a tale to tell.
Colin Phipps

Peterborough & Spalding (Crowland)

FIRSTLY, we must thank our retiring chairman, Manny Williamson and acknowledge his hard work and commitment to advancing our club. We have made great progress under his guidance. Robert Theil has now taken on the mantle of Chairman and we give him our full support. Congratulations to our three new solo pilots, Brian Wingate, Ant Halifax and Justin Lamb. Justin is one of our Cadets and soloed shortly after his 16th birthday. We are delighted that our new Cadet, Lucy Isley, will boost the female membership. Our first flying week of the year took place at the end of May, however, the weather was not kind. Our next flying week will commence on August 30 and, as usual, we welcome visitors. We are fortunate to welcome several new members to our club this year, amongst them, Mark Johnson who has won a gliding scholarship sponsored by the Royal Navy. Finally, all members here extend their sympathy to our neighbouring club, Strubby, for the tragic accident earlier this year.
Joan Pybus

Portsmouth Naval (Lee on Solent)

WE have had some good soaring weather of late, which amazingly has even coincided with the weekends. Several members have made some outstanding flights. Foremost was Keith Walton who made the first ever 750km flight from Lee in 9.5 hours. The same weekend of extraordinary soaring weather saw Andy Durston and Dave Hopgood claim Diamond goals. Chris Hensman completed his five hours as did Siggi Ingason, who has now completed Silver. We have had a couple of busy weekends with the Faulkes Flying Foundation introducing Scouts to the delights of gliding. We have had enjoyable expeditions to Keevil and Yeovilton. Many thanks to both clubs for their very kind welcome.
Steve Morgan

Rattlesden (Rattlesden)

TASK week, held May 24-28, was a great success with every day being flown. Two 500kms, four 300kms and many smaller tasks were flown. All our member's achievements are now being displayed on the Thermalmeter in the clubhouse. A 1cm strip represents 10km flown, and currently it is over 7m long. (Double the height of a female giraffe.) Paul Steggles has become a BI. Keith Goldsmith is celebrating his Cross-Country Endorsement by seeing how many fields he can land the two club single-seaters in! David Salvage has passed his Bronze paper and is well on his way to getting his Bronze Badge. The inside of the clubhouse has been given a fresh coat of paint thanks to Helen Varley and Dawn Goldsmith. And the kitchen has been refurbished thanks to Paul and Stella O'Leary, and Helen Varley. Welcome back to returning members Mark Manning, Stella O'Leary and Stuart Janes; and welcome to new members Kevin Maloney and Phillip Kirby.
Cathy Page

Scottish Gliding Centre (Portmoak)

WE were all sad to hear of the death of Betty Barr in May. Many of our regular visitors will remember Betty as our clubhouse manager. As I write this, it is early June and we are experiencing summer wave well in excess of Gold height – and there are still places on our courses, see *www.scottishglidingcentre.co.uk* for details. By the time you read this, we will have had our 70th anniversary celebrations coinciding with the official opening of our new hangar (more details next issue). Before listing the latest band of achievers, I have to apologise to Bob Walsh for missing him off our



*82-year-old WW2 former fighter pilot Bob Willis went flying with Eddie Stephenson at **Northumbria GC***

achievers list a couple of issues ago. Bob completed his 50km to finish his Silver Badge in October and while in America, he sought out a copy of *S&G* in anticipation of seeing his name in print – oops! Sorry Bob. Having double-checked the current list, here are the latest people with smiles on their faces: Dave Tuttle – first solo aerotow; Les Ladomery – Silver height; Sarmed Mirza – Cross-Country Endorsement; Gary Scott – Silver duration; C. Chatburn – Silver duration; Tony Taylor – friends and family endorsement; Evan Pole – 50km to complete his Silver; and I topped out a climb at over 11,000ft hoping to claim my Gold, but on landing found out that my "low point" was not recorded (30-second interval on the EW!) and the barograph's calibration deducted another couple of metres or so – Ah well, there's always next time.
Ian Easson

Shalbourne Soaring Society (Rivar Hill)

SHALBOURNE'S pilots have been busy with inter-club, and excellent flying weather had been booked by our own Met man, Steve Barber. Mike Truelove bagged his Silver distance. First 50km distances were bagged by Greg Rybak and Richard Thevenon, with Randal Theobold completing his five hours. In mid-April we welcomed the editor of *S&G*, Helen Evans, to the club, who spoke to us about building up membership. After a break of several years, Phil Morgan returned to gliding and resoloed within a few weeks – congratulations and welcome back. Jeff Goodenough has joined the committee as Airfield Officer, and we have two new BIs: Clive Harder and Pete Smith. First entry in the CFI's Challenge was submitted by Steve Barber, who did the 100km club triangle in the K-8 in 2hrs 44 mins. The air cadet flying continues and Andover Air Scouts are regulars on Sundays. In May a band of intrepid Shalbourne pilots enjoyed a week flying at Denbigh.
Liz Seaman

Shenington (Shenington)

"I THOUGHT the GPS had it wrong," remarked John Rogers as he went round NHW instead of Northampton South in the Shenington Wooden Ships tournament. Despite the grounding of the K-7 fleet, nine gliders took part, from as far afield as Wormingford and Ringmer. Director John Watson had trouble finding his caravan the night of the barbecue: it had been kidnapped and relocated. The Shenington Palace Bunkhouse was chocca, and the campgrounds dotted with lovers' tents in every corner. Also on Bank Holiday Monday, 84 local villagers were treated to free flying to celebrate our first 20 years. Children, dogs, picnics, and a change of runway in the middle of the morning kept us all busy. Eric Lown and Geoff Powell are working hard as newly qualified Basic Instructors. G-OFER is back, with a zero timed engine and prop. *(See also* Club Focus, *p54).*
Mary Meagher

Club news

Shropshire Soaring Group (Sleap)

AS I write, Ric Prestwich, Colin Ratcliffe and Dave Triplett are on their way to Spain for a few weeks at Jaca. We have had some good flying at Sleap recently with three 300kms on one weekend. The Twin Astir's 300km was flown by Alistair Gilson with young Matt Woodiwiss within weeks of his first solo on type. Pretty good fast tracking. Nick Peatfield in addition to returning to active gliding has taken over from Pete Whitehead as tugmaster. Peter runs the maintenance base at Sleap and has been very busy, but still manages to put in time tugging. After 60 years of gliding Charles Webb has decided to hang up his beanie hat at Sleap. Vic Carr, also, after a very distinguished career in gliding, is selling his share in the Twin Astir. Some very altruistic senior members have purchased a single-seat Astir to form a syndicate to encourage our youngsters.
Keith Field

South London (Kenley)

THIS year's excursion to Jaca provided some excellent wave flying but those who went have now got used to the more restricted airspace around Kenley again. We've been doing reasonably well in our local inter-club. The recent grounding of K-7s has been awkward since they were our principal training aircraft but we have been coping well with our Grob Twin Acro, our motorglider and a T-21. You can't say our members don't have variety. Congratulations to all those who helped with this year's charity day on May 3, which raised £900 for NCH, the children's charity, despite abysmal weather. Congratulations also to Michael Pointon, Trevor Fielder, Mick Ely and Adrian Hewlett – all are now keen solo pilots. Our dispute with the Ministry of Defence about the size of our flying fee has been resolved for the time being, and we are now discussing a long-term lease as a basis for some constructive development.
Peter Bolton

South Wales (Usk)

OUR evening flying has started with the extended hours of daylight, which is proving successful, and we are continuing to attract new members. Congratulations to Simon France and Dave Jeffreys on 500km flights, which complete their Diamond Badges and to Rob Hines, Paul Sweeting and Jan Phillips on their 50km. George Robertson has his Bronze. Tony Howe and James Collins have gone solo – well done to all! James has already benefited from a £200 bursary from the Caroline Trust and qualifies for another £200 to enjoy the soaring season – lucky him! Our club Task Week is during the first week of August.
Janice Phillips

Southdown (Parham)

THE superb June weather enabled us to harvest a crop of 500km flights, with Ian Ashdown and Craig Lowry circumnavigating the London TMA. This is a record for Southdown, and it has fired up the cross-country squad to attempt ever more challenging and novel tasks. Nevertheless, we are well aware that the training of *ab initios* is a priority for the long-term future of the club. Our evening courses provide opportunities for those who find it difficult to turn out at weekends, and our bursary scheme gives local youngsters the chance to solo free of charge. Martin Rayner has joined us from Kent GC, complete with an Instructor rating. He won the Intermediate class competition in the recent Inter club tournament. Graham Smith flew to Lasham to achieve Silver distance, and Malcolm Blows, disdaining all offers of fibre-glass, successfully flew the Olympia 2B over the same course. Meanwhile, a flock of hang-glider men descended upon us from the Devil's Dyke. Among their number was Johnny Carr, a former member who has made the transition from conventional gliding. They observed all the rules, flew perfect circuits and we were delighted to see them. Finally, congratulations to Geoffrey Burtenshaw, Head of Avionics flight testing at the CAA, who has been awarded an OBE for services to civil aviation.
Peter J Holloway



James Collins following his first solo at ***South Wales***

Staffordshire (Seighford)

THANKS to recent favourable weather, we have seen good flights entered on the club cross-country ladder. Rangi de Abaffy is currently top, with a best flight of 420km (LS4). Rob Lockett has a 500km, whilst Derek Heaton (K-6) and Paul Cooper (Std Cirrus) have both flown 300km to claim Gold distance (Paul also Diamond goal). Brian Pearson (DG-400), Glyn Yates (DG-400) and Simon Watson (Kestrel) have all flown 300km this year from Seighford. Congratulations to Simon Plant for his first solo. Matthew Woodiwiss has a Bronze Badge, and has flown his Dart 15, Tony Moore has a Bronze leg. This summer we are now operating on almost a full time basis. Thanks to Chris Jones and Chris Johnson for their continued efforts on the publicity front. Air experience evenings and corporate days continue to be a great success – many thanks to all those involved. SGC is again running a Cadet Sponsorship Scheme – the winner (aged 16-18 yrs) will be awarded all flying costs to solo standard (see *www.staffordshiregliding.co.uk/*). Many thanks to all those involved in regular grass cutting and kit mending.
Paul (Barney) Crump

Stratford on Avon (Snitterfield)

THE K-21 is back flying after total refurbishment and final fettling by our members. We also have another K-8 which is proving very popular plus K-13 HSM back on line refurbished and recovered to our colour scheme. This now gives us a fleet of four two-seaters and four single-seat aircraft. Various site improvements are continuing under Barry and Martin's watchful eyes with a wind generator for battery charging on the roof of the main hangar and a power line to the control bus when at the east end for a booster charge if required. The new fuel store is completed and by the time you read this I suspect the steel door project will be in place courtesy Peter Kenealy. Congratulations to Dave Benton on two 500km flights on consecutive days in May, and to several pilots achieving 200-300km. Several Bronze legs and two-hour flights are yet to be confirmed with the bonus of some Silver heights in the bag. Membership is healthy with a trend towards the occasional ex-member rejoining after families or career priorities intervened, one or two actually flew with us at Long Marston or Bidford! In fact, we celebrate our 30-year anniversary from April 2004. The seven day operation will continue until early September with Phil Pickett as resident instructor and regular winch drivers. Congratulations to Ian Kennedy, who was ordained into the Church of England on July 4 at Coventry Cathedral. We wish you well, Ian, in your new vocation.
Harry Williams

The Soaring Centre (Hus Bos)

CONGRATULATIONS to: Alan Munro and Paul Howard, who both completed their Silver distance; Rolf Tietema, who flew his Diamond distance; Paul Coulson, who went solo; and Martin Turnham, who completed his Silver. We have two new Assistant Instructors, David Hodgson and David Cooke. The Vintage GC held their rally at the club during the last week of May. A great time was had by all, with a barbecue and barn dance on the last evening. We will once again host the Hot Air Balloon club, on September 10-12. Our new K-21 should be with us by the time you read this. The Midland Regionals/2004 Junior Worlds Training Week is from July 31-August 8. There are currently 62 entries, including 14 overseas junior pilots. The annual club task week will be from August 14-20.
Siobhan Crabb

Ulster (Bellarena)

THE annual Portrush airshow, organised by Coleraine Borough Council, ran over the weekend of June 5-6 and was opened on both days by a very impressive formation flypast of our two K-13's on aerotow followed by three motorgliders. The static glider ground display with John Lavery's Astir complemented our participation at the event and attracted a lot of genuine interest including "JAWS" from the James Bond movies! A special word of thanks go to Fred Parkhill and Bob Cochrane, who helped man the display over both days. The club's airfield was awash with colour and activity as it facilitated stopovers and refuelling for a number of a visiting aircraft participating in the airshow, including a superb flying machine – the Russian Sukhoi SU26 constructed of carbon-fibre, kevlar and titanium. In line with rising fuel costs the committee have had no alternative but to marginally increase club flying charges from June 1. Arrangements are well in hand for the National Gliding Week activities starting with our annual Open Day on Saturday, June 19, and a dawn to dusk event on the longest day. Bronze training continues apace and the following are to be congratulated for achieving the standard: Mary Mc Sorley, Moore Cambell, who also fitted in his five-hour duration), Herbie Mc Cullough and Graham Crawford. Congratulations also to Gary Mc Laughlin on going solo and to Owen Anderson and Dave Webster, who have re-soloed.
Seamus Doran

Vale of White Horse (Sandhill Farm)

OUR two open weeks in May and June were well received. Over the second of these we held our first nine-day competition, with a mix of gliders ranging from a Sie3 to a DG-800. This proved to be pretty hard work but worthwhile, despite the weather resulting in only four contest days, and it seems likely we'll aim to hold another competition in 2005. The club's congratulations go to Ed Foggin and Tony McNicholas on their 300km Gold distance and Diamond goal flights, to Peter Scheiwiller for his Silver height gain, and to John Heath on going solo.
Graham Turner

Welland (Lyveden)

AT our recent EGM dangerous implements were left at the door while the club decided to vote against the proposed private/club partnership in favour of the existing private aerotow facility. The April *ab initio* course saw Charlie Greer fly three solos in its final hours and only had to buy eight drinks at the local. Mark Rushden is now a Basic Instructor and is still paying for dual flights but as P1. Mark Prickett took a break from tugging and took his new share in a Nimbus around a 300km triangle. Jane Cooper has finished her Bronze. Early cross-country flights have taken club members over the last resting places of our recently lost members. Several claims have now found their way on to the National Ladder under threat of a 10 per cent lateness reduction and as this doubles up as the club

Obituaries

Tommy Gornall – Bowland Forest

TOMMY (1928-2004) was always interested in aircraft, and during the war regularly cycled from his home in Goosnargh to Inskip, where Mitchell bombers were based. Tom joined BFGC at Salmesbury, and was deeply involved in the move to Chipping and the subsequent works to bring the site and buildings to their present state. He completely built a Skylark tailplane after its pilot landed out – and blacked out Chipping village – and the work was so good he was nominated as an inspector from then on! He was renowned for non-stop talking, and once had to be silenced because his voice was impeding a noise meter measuring the decibel output of a tug. Tommy was greatly interested in the vintage gliding movement, once taking a T-21 to Germany and flying it up to 14,000ft over the Hartz Mountains. Our deepest sympathies go to his wife, Joan, and his family.
Dave Brown

Alan Purnell – Cambridge, Surrey, Lasham

ALAN (1936-2004) was a most extraordinary glider pilot, amassing more flying per year than many clubs do. I first encountered him in a T-49 for a check flight in July 1963. He wrote: "OK to fly Skylark in calmer conditions" in my logbook. In his, he put: "Made a hash of first circuit". Alan's flying began with the Cambridge club expeditions to the Mynd in 1956, going solo and gaining his Silver there. He recalled towing a trailer with a tractor from the Mynd to Cambridge at 15mph, taking two days. His scientific jobs at Aldermaston and other nearby establishments brought him to Lasham in 1959 and very soon he began to make his mark. At weekends he had a dilemma with cricket, which he played at Cambridge University. Nice flying days were nice cricket days. He was a good player but gliding won and his Ford V8 Pilot in bilious green was often outside the hangar doors at 06.00hrs so that in the days before soaring ballots he would be first on the list for the SGC's new Skylark 3F 147. It became his "personal" aircraft. For many years he was a trustee of the North Downs Gliding Trust and Chairman of the Surrey GC, later Surrey & Hants. He was an excellent instrument boffin, giving the club aircraft the best panels possible. His home in Fleet became a mine of electronic bits and pieces with experimental boxes with knobs on going for test flights. He was very successful in competitions, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, gaining Nationals titles teaming up with David Kerridge. He won 26 trophies and cups, including the Douglas Trophy eight times, the aggregate distance of the three longest flights by three different club members in club gliders and at one time held the UK out-and-return and triangular distance records. He was one of the instigators (with other Surrey members) of the Portmoak expeditions in the 1960s and 1970s, eventually organising a tug to go there and back as well. The expeditions moved to Aboyne in the 1980s and 1990s and on many days Alan maintained a dawn to dusk patrol half way to the stratosphere, just missing out on a 1,000km on one flight. He went to Austria in the 1970s, sampling mountain flying. There is an 8mm film somewhere of cumulo-granite scenery and an inside cockpit view of Alan "flying" taken from outside with him trying not to laugh at the cameraman lying on the grass by the glider canopy. His sense of humour was legendary, always ready with a one-liner to bring a laugh to clubhouse chat. Recently he took to flying from Fuentemilanos


Alan Purnell

in Spain, doing many long flights, one of which was 950km, and on poor days touring landing fields to cut high weeds to make it safer for Open Class gliders to land out. The statistics of his flying are amazing. He was the first UK pilot to do all three Diamonds in Britain, Diamond no.16 in 1970. He achieved his 750km around the Trent Valley power stations in 1995. Alan flew over 10,200hrs and 410,000km cross country (10 times around the world) from 2,600 launches – that's 155km for every solo flight. He made more than 100 flights over 500km and 10 over 700km with 229,000km in his Nimbus 340. He wrote many articles for *S&G* – one could fill a complete issue with his exploits. Alan will be greatly missed throughout the gliding world.
Chris Lovell

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ladder the Wacky Races have begun. Werner Leutfeld has taken an early lead in an attempt to retrieve his lost trophies. With the K-7 grounded we are trying to borrow other two-seaters. Unfortunately we were unable to field a team over the Bank Holiday weekend East Anglian Inter-Club League due to the demands of family holidays. We now have reduced club subs for family membership. Our flying week is, as Upwood, beginning August 7, sharing festivities as well as the local sky. Our thoughts go to Strubby over the loss of their pilots in their K-7.
Strzeb

Windrushers (Bicester)

TERMS have been agreed with ATIS REAL Weatheralls, agents acting for Defence Estates, for a three year lease of Bicester Airfield, which remains Ministry of Defence property. Windrushers GC was originally formed in 1958 at RAF Little Rissington and then moved to RAF Bicester before co-locating with the Royal Air Force Gliding and Soaring Association Centre that was created at Bicester in 1963. After 41 years at Bicester the RAF Gliding and Soaring Association is moving its operation to RAF Halton near Aylesbury in June 2004. RAF Bicester is deemed to be of historical importance by English Heritage as it comprises the best-preserved and most strongly representative of the bomber stations built as part of Sir Hugh Trenchard's 1920s Home Defence Expansion Scheme. The late Lord Trenchard was one of the founders of the Royal Air Force. Windrushers GC has been re-formed as a civilian club and will be open at Bicester Airfield from 1 July 2004. Further information via enquiries@windrushers.org.uk or call in at Bicester airfield just off the Buckingham Road and follow the written instructions at the gate off Skimmingdish Lane *(see also* Gliding continues at Bicester, *on p51 of this issue of S&G).*
Ron Smith

Wolds (Pocklington)

PREPARATION work on the hangar extension is proceeding well and plans are laid to replace the clubhouse. Members are bubbling with excitement due to the prestigious competitions to be held at Pocklington: the Club Class Nationals from July 10-18, and the now world-famous Two-Seater Competition from August 22-29. Both of these popular competitions are filling up briskly, so book early to avoid disappointment. Due to pressure of work Jon Smith has had to reluctantly resign as CFI. Thanks for the good work, Jon. The mantle has been taken on by young Chris Price, who, I'm sure all members will agree, is a reasonable, fair and popular member of the instructing team.
Tony Kendall

Wyvern (Upavon)

FOR the first time Wyvern GC has entered the south-west area Inter-Club League to compete in cross-country flying with Shalbourne, Bath, Wilts & North Dorset, Mendip, and Devon & Somerset GCs. After the first meet at Rivar Hill, Wyvern held a narrow lead, which they just managed to retain on that bumper weekend of the year (May 22-23) at Upavon when even the novice competitors were tasked with 300km. On that weekend over 8,000km was flown from Upavon by competitors and members, which we believe to be a record. The third meeting at The Park has just been held, again with both days being contest days, and provisional results indicate that any of the four leading clubs could easily take the honours at the final meet at North Hill in July. The competition has promoted much interest from pilots not normally into cross-country tasks, let alone competitions, and has hopefully already achieved its purpose of raising club standards. Normal club flying continues at weekends and Wednesday afternoons and three of the six week-long *ab initio* courses are completed. On the equipment side, the three new Range Rovers have been converted to LPG to reduce running costs and simplify fuel storage. There are several recent new first solo pilots (in fact Wyvern now has very few pre-solo students), Will Chappel and Andy Gibson completed their Bronzes and Andy also his Silver and first 300km goal flight.
Andy Gibson

York (Rufforth)

THE new clubhouse received planning permission, and the building was installed accurately onto its pedestals with George McLean, Howard McDermott-Row and Richard Smith in charge of an expert and beautifully co-ordinated team at both ends of the transport operation, which included the hire of professional crane drivers. The large area clubhouse will now be made safe against the weather, and the interior designed to optimise its effectiveness for our operations and members. This work will be done over an extended period as funds permit. Congratulations to many of our members for achievements this summer. Barry Douglas, Pete Arthur and Geoff Brady all completed Bronze, and Barry Smithies and Sergio Salicio Bronze legs. Keith Batty did his two-hour soaring flight for the Cross-Country Endorsement. It is a pleasure to welcome Dawn Hammond as a BI after finishing her rating at Saltby.
Mike Cohler

Yorkshire (Sutton Bank)

APRIL, May and June have been busy. Firstly, I suspect I may have forgotten to congratulate Paul Carter on his Bronze and Cross-Country Endorsement. Bravely in the Inter-Club League he flew 11km into flat weather and made his first field landing. Well done also to Taff Keane and D Lawson for their solos, John Russell for completing his Gold distance and Diamond goal. The same weekend also brought Rory O'Connor and James Ewence Diamond legs. Geoff Palmer finished off his Silver in three days while Martyn Johnson claimed his 100km diploma parts 1 and 2. Oliver Cotterell, our new resident tuggie, has also finished off his Bronze and Cross-Country Endorsement, as well as his five hours. In one storming weekend, May 22-23, we saw three 750km flights from Derek Taylor/Chris Teagle, Derek Taylor/Paul Foster, and Richie Toon. John Ellis made 728km a week later and John Russell managed to amass 1,677km in three days. Mention must be made of Joe Westwood, who flew what looks like a 400km. Finally, Andy Wright reached 19,000ft on June 11.
Alex May

BGA Badges

	No	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
DIAMOND	672	Luke Roberts	DSGC (Omarama)	27/2/04
distance	1-984	Luke Roberts	DSGC (Omarama)	27/2/04
	1-985	Mark Davis	London	20/6/03
goal	2-3013	John Russell	Yorkshire	13/4/04
height	3-1627	Ralph Bowsfield	Cotswold (Omarama)	24/2/04
	3-1628	Peter Kynsey	Kent (Jaca)	6/4/04
	3-1629	Simon Withey	Mendip (Omarama)	22/3/04
GOLD	2324	Ralph Bowsfield	Cotswold (Omarama)	24/2/04
	2325	John Russell	Yorkshire	13/4/04
	2326	John McWilliam	Lasham (Jaca)	24/3/04
distance	John Russell		Yorkshire	13/4/04
	John McWilliam		Lasham (Jaca)	24/3/04
height	Ralph Bowsfield		Cotswold (Omarama)	24/2/04
	Simon Withey		Mendip (Omarama)	22/3/04
	Edward Stephenson		Northumbria (Omarama)	14/4/04
SILVER	11369	Andrea Borsoi	London	6/4/04
	11370	Michael Wood	York	1/11/03
	11371	David Bamber	Dorset	9/4/04
	11372	Chris Moore	Portsmouth Naval	14/4/04
	11373	William Bullimore	Cambridge	13/4/04
100km	Pt2	Nigel Cottrell	East Sussex	1/4/04
AERO	Std Known	Jeremy Anscomb	Lasham	14/9/03
	Std Known	Christopher Redrup	Lasham	8/4/04
	Std Known	Hendrik Stheeman	Lasham	4/6/04
	Spt Known	Nicola Mills	Booker	6/6/04



Accident/incident summaries by Dave Wright

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	BGA No	Damage	DATE Time	Place	PILOT(S) Age	Injury	P1 Hours
022	Falke	G-BPZU	Substantial	10-Mar-04	Parham	–	None	3380
	Motorglider		–	None	50			

The very experienced pilot approached the congested airfield. Anticipating a possible go-around, he flew the motorglider with his left hand, keeping his right hand on the spoilers and near the throttle. (The opposite hands from his normal glider flying.) In the flare he pushed the stick forward as he "closed the brakes," landing very heavily.

023	Pegase 101A	3107	Minor	29-Feb-04	Graffham,	52	None	96
				1350	West Sussex			

While ridge flying the South Downs the lift decreased and the pilot had to make a field landing. The selected field was small and sloped uphill into wind. The glider lost speed before touchdown, leading to a heavy landing which damaged the underside of the fuselage.

024	Grob109B	G-SAMG	Minor	31-Mar-04	Bicester	42	None	–
	Motorglider			1400		38	None	–

The motorglider was being used for circuit training when the instructor received a radio call to abort the next circuit as the aircraft was trailing smoke. Coming to a halt, he shut down the engine and turned the fuel and electrics off prior to vacating the aircraft. The engine had dropped a valve.

025	Ventus BT &	3295	Write off x2	26-Apr-04	Lasham	68	Fatal	–
	Skylark 4			1500		45	None	

This FATAL MIDAIR COLLISION took place near Lasham. One pilot landed safely by parachute but the other was killed. Subject to AAIB and BGA Investigation.

026	ASW 28	4829	Minor	09-Apr-04	Husbands	42	None	3500
				1700	Bosworth			

The experienced pilot was making a "practice long final approach as used in international competitions". With sufficient energy he cleared this by radio and flew the last 2km at low level and high speed. He opened the brakes to land but mistook the undershoot field for the airfield and damaged the glider in a ground loop while avoiding posts.

027	RF4D	G-AWLZ	Minor	13-Apr-04	Nympsfield	55	None	289
	Motorglider			1930				

After a normal approach and landing the motorglider's undercarriage collapsed. Investigation revealed that the undercarriage operating lever had broken. The crack was rusty, showing fatigue and corrosion. The wooden swinging arm stop was also found to be compressed, which allowed the arm to over-rotate and prevent the locking pins engaging.

028	Janus CE	4472	Minor	07-Apr-04	Keevil	–	None	231
				1645	–		None	56

The winch cable broke at 900ft on the launch and P1 raised the gear and rejoined the circuit. He lowered the gear and checked plus 8 flap. Turning base at 600ft he selected full landing flap and flew a normal approach. However, when selecting airbrakes he did not check which lever was held and, operating the flaps, overshot the runway.

029	PA25	G-BFEV	Minor	04-Apr-04	Kirton	42	None	300
	Pawnee Tug			1300	in Lindsey			

The pilot had just landed the tug in the strong, gusty, crosswind conditions when, while braking, he started to turn right to clear the runway. As the turn started he became aware that the tail was starting to lift so applied full back stick. This had no effect and the aircraft tipped on to its nose as the pilot shut the engine down.

030	K-7	3783	Minor	17-Apr-04	Lleweni Park	60	None	911
				1107		44	None	0

After launching the glider ran into heavy sink and P1 took control for the final approach and landing. Because of the soggy state of the field he elected to land on the Macadamed tow-out path but encountered turbulence caused by trees running alongside it. Despite a satisfactory roundout the glider landed heavily on the path, causing minor damage.

031	Sie 3	–	Minor	Apr-04	Incident Rpt	63	None	712

The tug took up slack then, as the all-out signal was given the glider overran the rope, possibly partly due to a slight down slope into a depression. The pilot back released but the rope end and links became entangled in the wheel-box. The alert launch controller shouted "stop" and forward signaller quickly halted the launch.

032	Glider	–	None	May-04	Incident Rpt	–	None	–
	Trailer							

Upon arrival at the club the glider trailer was found to have a 9mm diameter hole, which passed through the skin, just missing the main wing spar. It was possibly caused by a gun shot. People had been seen hunting rabbits around the gliding club area on several occasions prior to this. All other gliders were inspected but no damage was found.

033	K-18	2149	Write off	16-May-04	Halesland	36	Fatal	100
				1735				

This FATAL ACCIDENT took place after a failed winch launch, after which the glider was seen to spin in during an attempted circuit. Subject to BGA Investigation.

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	BGA No	Damage	DATE Time	Place	PILOT(S) Age	Injury	P1 Hours
034	Falke Motorglider	G-BSWL	Minor	07-May-04 1416	Talgarth	71	None	2978

This very experienced glider and power pilot was flying the motorglider on his first flight after a dual check. He flew an intentional go-around off his first approach, then made a second approach. During a drop in the wind he approached rather fast, touched down on wet grass, on a slight downslope and had to groundloop to avoid the far fence.

035	K-13	1446	Minor	24-Apr-04	Kirton	47	None	1044
				1130	in Lindsey	16	None	8

P1 had briefed P2 on his intended demonstration of a very low winch power failure. As he rotated the glider in the very light wind, the winch driver cut the power as requested. P1 responded by initiated a steep descent but could not roundout, resulting in a heavy landing. He considers the cause was an early rotation and inadequate speed monitoring.

036	K-7	3957	Write off	26-May-04	Strubby	55	Fatal	–
				1208		63	Fatal	–

This FATAL ACCIDENT took place following a normal winch launch after one wing suffered a catastrophic structural failure. Subject to AAIB and BGA Investigation.

037	K-13	2533	Substantial	12-May-04 1716	Cyprus, Kingsfield	56	Minor	0.15

This was to be the pilot's third solo flight. After a normal launch and short flight he returned and made a normal circuit and approach. On final approach he failed to correct for drift and landed while crabbed. The glider left the runway and hit a large lorry, which was driving past the launchpoint.

038	K-8	2849	Minor	03-May-04	Trent Valley	16	None	10

After two previous flights the pilot took a third launch, not realising that the wind had picked up. Looking for lift he allowed the glider to drift downwind. Realising that he might not reach the airfield he decided to land in a ploughed field. On the approach he saw it had deep furrows and, despite landing along them, they damaged the glider.

039	Duo Discus	HB1	Minor	26-May-04	Husbands	83	None	3059
				1401	Bosworth	52	None	80

Immediately after landing, the glider encountered several deep depressions and rises in the normal landing area. The undercarriage collapsed causing minor damage to the doors. This was the second time this had happened to this aircraft.

040	Astir	2345	Write off	22-May-04 1500	Loch Laggan	48	None	95

In strong thermic conditions the pilot flew along a loch, where he encountered strong sink and had a very limited choice of fields. His chosen field was small and, after trying to regain height, he flew a wide circuit. He overshot the field, despite sideslipping, as he landed downwind, and crashed in a river bed after hitting a wing on a tree.

041	Discus BT	4687	Substantial	22-May-04 1645	Booker	33	None	435

The pilot returned from a cross country flight and made a low and slow circuit. Distracted by another glider ahead, he opened out the circuit until he could not make the airfield. The glider was seen to flare just as it flew into the trees just short of the runway threshold. Despite the glider sustaining substantial damage, the pilot was uninjured.

042	SZD Puchacz	3830	Write off	18-Jan-04	Husbands	65	Fatal	1120
				1330	Bosworth	15	Fatal	0

This FATAL ACCIDENT took place during a spin training exercise. Subject to AAIB Investigation.

043	PA25 Pawnee Tug	G-BDWL	Write off	01-Feb-04 1400	Crowland	81	Fatal	

This FATAL TUG ACCIDENT took place during the early stages of an aerotow when the tug was seen to veer off to the right and crash. The glider released and landed safely. Subject to AAIB Investigation.

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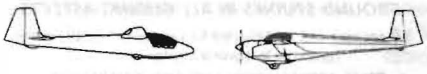
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Notice of Share Buy-Back

In the 1960's Lasham Gliding Society raised funds through the sale of 5 shilling shares. This form of fund raising is now considered to be redundant.

In order to simplify the share structure of the Society the following resolution was passed at this year's AGM:

> ***By a resolution of the General Meeting of the Society on 12th April 2003, all certified shares in issue are cancelled and their par value is refundable from the society.***

Lasham Gliding Society will buy-back all such shares at their face value.

Please note that the deadline for claims is 31st October 2005.

For a Share Redemption form please contact the Secretary, Lasham Gliding Society, Lasham Airfield, Lasham, Hampshire, GU34 5SS. Tel: 01256 384900

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Please remember that, if you are emailing text, your advert may not appear unless we have received payment by post or credit card by the deadline. The deadline for classifieds to be included in the October-November issue of *S&G* is **September 3** after which any adverts received will be published in the following issue.

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VEGA. Port wing with flaps, undamaged. £1100. Undercarriage box + undercarriage, + wheel = £550. Tel: 01592840454. Email: niallsuilven@aol.com

PW5 1997. Only 20 hrs. Mint condition, no accidents, rigging, tow out gear and parachute. Based Cambridge. £13500. Just not enough time to fly. Tel: 07812 174378

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WANTED Trailer suitable for Skylark 2. No fittings required. Reasonable condition please. Tel: Hugh 01799 525084. Email: hdm@ctg.co.uk

British Gliding Association

THE 1000 CLUB MONTHLY LOTTERY

A great chance to win substantial cash prizes and at the same time enable the Philip Wills Memorial Fund to make loans to clubs for site purchase and development.

This monthly lottery started in July 1992 and has room for many more participants. Starting in February 2003 the first prize winner drawn will take half the prize money each month and the next two drawn will take a quarter each.

HALF of the proceeds go to the Philip Wills Memorial Fund to help with its work in developing BGA clubs and the other HALF is distributed each month in the form of 3 CASH PRIZES. The more participants we have, the greater the prize money pool.

1st PRIZE – 50% of the prize money pool.
2 Runner Up Prizes of 25% each of the prize money pool.

Chances/numbers can only be bought from the BGA at £1.00 each. Those whose money has been received at the BGA by the end of each month will then participate in the draw on the first Wednesday of each following month. Tickets will not be issued in order to keep the administrative costs low but each member will purchase a "number" which will go into the draw. It is hoped that members will purchase 12 months' worth of tickets at a time. Winners will receive their prizes direct from the BGA and a list of their names will be published in S&G.

Please complete the form below and return it to the BGA with your payment. Please note that only BGA members and their families may participate and that the BGA is registered under the Lotteries And Amusements Act 1976 with Leicester City Council.
Pete Stratten, Promoter

To: Pete Stratten, British Gliding Association, Kimberley House, Vaughan Way, Leicester LE1 4SE

Please include me in the "1000 club" and I enclose £12.00 (payable to BGA) for twelve months of entries, or multiples thereof.

Name ..... Signed .....

Address .....

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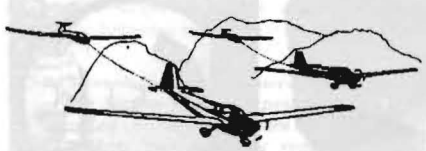
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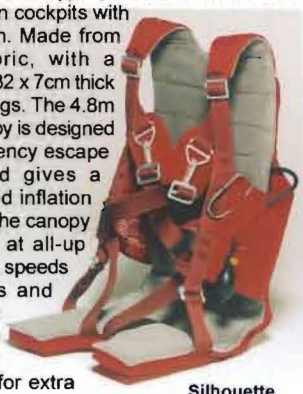
Shadow

Irvin-GQ Parachutes

RD Aviation is proud to announce its renewed distributor contract for Irvin-GQ safety parachutes. Irvin-GQ was formed in 2001 from the merger of Irvin Aerospace Ltd and GQ Parachutes Ltd. For more than 65 years, these two companies have been at the forefront of parachute design and technology. With many thousands of safety parachutes sold world-wide, Irvin-GQ deserves its reputation for innovation, quality and reliability.

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Silhouette

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69 minutes, video. Available on DVD or VHS (PAL)

"The best film I have ever seen on contest flying. The photography is super and the story line perfect."
CHARLIE SPRATT, Competition Director

"Juan Mandelbaum's new film, A FINE WEEK OF SOARING, is a must-see for anyone interested in sailplanes, especially contest flying. Filmed at the Mifflin Regionals, it is marked by stunning photography, much of it featuring the famed Pennsylvania ridges, up close and personal. In the 70 minute film, producer/director Juan, an accomplished soaring pilot as well as a professional movie maker, flies with Karl Striedieck in his Duo Discus on each contest day, and we get to listen to The Master's laconic and often amusing commentary on why he does what. Several other pilots are featured, showing varied viewpoints on each day's flight, with experience varying from a World Champion down to a relative newcomer. An interesting and helpful added feature is the use of SeeYou animation to show the tracks of some of the gliders. This film is a highly professional job and a delight to watch."
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