Sailplane & Gliding



Fun in the Fox

Guy Westgate flies Farnborough

Expo in the City

SOARING GIBRALTAR

845km – thanks to a little bit of optimism

Plus: Mode S Nationals reports Flying with Flarm

Oct-Nov 2006
£3.99 Vol. 57 No. 5
ISSN 0036-7230

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followed by the Annual

Awards Ceremony & Dinner

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Saturday 10 March 2007

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The magazine of the
British Gliding Association
October ~ November 2006
Volume 57 Number 5

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Deadlines

December 2006 ~ January 2007

Articles, Letters, Club News	October 17
Display advertisements	October 27
Classifieds	November 3

February ~ March 2007

Articles, Letters, Club News	December 5
Display advertisements	December 22
Classifieds	January 5

Publisher
British Gliding Association,
Kimberley House, Vaughan Way,
LEICESTER LE1 4SE
tel: 0116 253 1051 fax: 0116 251 5939
www.gliding.co.uk
email: *office@gliding.co.uk*

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

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***S&G* annual subscription:**
UK – £22.75
Overseas airmail – £39.00



Guy Westgate, sponsored by gliderаerobatics.com, *practises towing inverted over Worthing before his first Farnborough Air Show; John Gowdy is flying the Extra 300L. It's Guy's last season in the Fox; a Swift is on order. More photos on p34* (Peter Atkinson)

Sailplane & Gliding

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Royal Aero Club
and the
Fédération Aéronautique Internationale

How to improve your club's chances of funding

WOULD you give money to a stranger? Silly question, really. So the next is – if you were a grant funder, who would you choose to award a grant to: a club doing a sport you had never heard of or one you knew something about with a proven track record in successful projects?

Did you know that the *Directory of Social Change* has information about more than 4,200 grant-making trusts with a total of over £3.1 billion worth of grants to make each a year? Although each trust has strict, limiting criteria, this money exists purely to be given away and does not include any of the European or government funding on offer.

In the last 12 years Ulster GC, a small club with fewer than 70 full members, has secured a total of £174,000 from seven grants, one of which was from the Department of Education and another was an EC tourism fund. They have recently celebrated the securing of £67,000 from Sports Council for NI Lottery Fund (SCNILF) to buy a new K-21 adapted for the disabled. Whilst the prevailing funding conditions in Northern Ireland represent something of a special situation, their recently retired secretary, Tom Snoddy says that there are valuable lessons to share with other clubs.

Tom maintains there are a number of key activities that a club should undertake if it is to successfully extract quantities of money from the public purse: networking; demonstrating good administration and accountability; and that your gliding club is already successful.

Networking: This is vital if gliding is to be able to punch above its weight at the funding table. There is a whole development community local to your gliding club covering funding and the voluntary and sports sectors. This is the arena where you can improve contacts with branches of central government, local councils and a variety of quangos involved in sport. These bodies generally have funds to distribute and you will find that it's a small world. Crucially, every region has a Sports Federation and regional Sports Council structure that can be accessed via your local council Sports Development Officer. Ulster GC ensures that it attends meetings, seminars and courses run by the Sports Council for Northern Ireland and by convening the airsports group it has a seat on the Executive of the Northern Ireland Sports Forum.

Demonstrating good administration and accountability: This is about having clear and transparent administrative procedures such as audited accounts, a proper constitution ensuring that funds cannot be passed to individuals and clear statements about officer duties. It is about publishing your club's policies on matters such as Health and Safety, Child Protection, Equality and the like. It is also about showing your records of development to date, which brings me on to...

Demonstrating that gliding and your club are already successful: We have three current world champions! Your club has been run for donkey's years – almost certainly by volunteers – and has a track record in training people (of all ages and backgrounds) to pilot an aeroplane all by themselves (wow!). Your club is likely to have overcome major constraints or setbacks. Think about your successes and remember that money follows success and is unlikely to go to a whinging bunch of strangers who are complaining about having a hard time. The voluntary sector is a hard sector to operate in – everyone struggles. That is why funders have to be so very careful whom they give to.

Tom has kindly supplied us a reference copy of Ulster GC's latest successful bid. The *BGA Funding Guide* has been re-written. It now places focus on devising important projects in such a way that they are attractive to potential funders. In addition, there is a two-page guide on *www.gliding.co.uk* to accessing funding. The BGA Development Committee is available to offer advice and support. There is no doubt that this is a long, tough path to follow, but for those willing to apply themselves to the task, the rewards are there to be reaped.

Alison Randle
BGA Development Officer
alison@gliding.co.uk

Dates for your diary

UK Nationals

Overseas Championships	TBA	21st May - 1st June
15 Metre Class	Tibenham	23rd June - 1st July
18 Metre Class	Hus Bos	7th - 15th July
Standard Class	Pocklington	21st - 29th July
Club Class Nationals	Lasham	4th - 12th August
Open Class Nationals	Lasham	4th - 12th August
Junior Championships	Tibenham	18th - 26th August

CAA Safety Evenings

AN updated list of dates and venues for this winter's series of Civil Aviation Authority safety evenings is at *www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?categoryid=224&pagetype=69* As always, everyone involved in GA in the area is invited and strongly encouraged to attend these evenings, which are relevant to all forms of GA no matter what the host organisation. Most are free.

New venue – BGA AGM and Conference

DON'T MISS the 2007 BGA AGM and Conference at Hellidon Lakes Hotel and Country Club, Daventry, on Saturday, March 10. For more information, see the advert on the inside front cover of this issue of *S&G*.

Royal Aero Club Awards Ceremony

THE annual Royal Aero Club Awards Ceremony will take place at 7.30pm on October 4 at the RAF Club in Piccadilly. Tickets, priced £35, are available from the RAeC Secretary (*secretary@royalaeroclub.org*).

RAFGSA welcomes its friends from Chile



OVER the past decade, the Chilean Air Force and the RAF have developed a very strong relationship. As you will have read in previous S&Gs, *an exchange enables five RAFGSA members to fly in the Andes, at up to 25,000ft, while members of the Chilean Air Force experience the delights of gliding in the UK without a mountain in sight! For 2006, the Chileans' second visit, the RAFGSA hosted an eight-day stay at RAF Halton and RAF Wittering. Pictured from left at RAF Halton are: Martyn Pike, Dave Chappell, Colin McInnes, Alejandro Chanes, Jon Arnold, Phil Sturley (RAFGSA President), Eduardo Pena, Dave Fidler (RAFGSA Chairman), Claudio Avendano and Arturo Diez. The visitors managed more than 75hrs airborne in excellent weather in late June/early July (Peter Kingwill)*

Treasurers, please join your chairman

BGA Club Chairmen's Conference; Saturday, October 28; Kegworth, Leicestershire

THIS year the conference is moving to allow for larger numbers of delegates. In addition to the usual programme focusing on management issues and current "hot" topics, there will be separate sessions for club treasurers. If club chairmen have not yet received their invitation pack, please contact Debbie Carr at the BGA office or email *debbie@gliding.co.uk*

Airport security

THE European Parliament is proposing new regulations "on common rules in the field of civil aviation security" requiring strict security at all: airports (defined as any area specially adapted for the landing, taking-off and manoeuvres of aircraft); airfields, including unlicensed fields; farm strips and the like. What's more, all pilots and trainees for pilot licences for motorised aircraft would be subject to uniform background checks, to be repeated at regular intervals. Europe Air Sports is raising its members' concerns at European level about the impact these plans would have on GA, while in the UK the GA Alliance is lobbying at national level.

Mode S: the story so far

THE exact number of responses to the Civil Aviation Authority Mode S consultation had not been formally released as this issue of *S&G* went to press, but it's clear from figures revealed by the CAA earlier that glider pilots have been at the forefront of fighting the plans. By mid-August, nearly half the responses received by the CAA were from the gliding community.

S&G's request for final totals for the consultation, which closed on Tuesday, August 29, was declined by the CAA on Thursday, September 7.

A CAA spokesperson said: "The response has been significant, as we would expect from a consultation that is significant and that we promoted so extensively.

"The consultation only finished at the end of last week and DAP [the Directorate of Airspace Policy] want to go through the responses carefully and make sure they have collated everything from the web, mail, etc, before we go public on any figures just to make sure the numbers we do give out are 100 per cent accurate".

He added that the average response to other recent CAA consultations has been fewer than 20, while the controversial "costs and charges" consultation – one of the larger General Aviation-oriented reviews – attracted 219 responses.

Industry sources suggest that the Mode S response could be significantly more than ten times that latter figure.

Previously, the CAA revealed that about 900 replies had already been received by mid-August, of which roughly 400 were from glider pilots. Of the small businesses that had replied, they added, three-quarters said they would be adversely affected and a quarter indicated that they would go out of business if the CAA proposals – to require all aircraft to carry Mode S transponders in all UK airspace – were adopted.

A project team of BGA volunteers and staff worked hard over the summer to ensure that glider pilots were adequately informed as the highly damaging nature of the proposals – officially known as: "Amendment of The Air Navigation Order 2005 For The Purpose Of Improving The Technical Interoperability Of All Aircraft In UK Airspace" – became clearer.

The BGA's own response, detailing both its concerns about the consultation process itself and about the threat that implementing these proposals poses to UK gliding, is at: *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/airspace/transponders.htm*

Meanwhile, the BGA Executive Committee at its September meeting agreed a number of actions that are designed to ensure that associated BGA concerns continue to be carried through at the appropriate level.

At the time of writing, BGA club chairmen were due to receive a letter describing the BGA position and explaining how further response by clubs *may* be required in future.

The CAA's proposals can be found at *www.caa.co.uk* (click on "Airspace Policy" then "DAP consultation exercises"). If you are not already familiar with the issues, please do at least read the BGA response and check *www.gliding.co.uk* regularly. This is just the end of the beginning of this particular story.

Elsewhere in this issue:
For the BGA Chairman's perspective on Mode S, see p10
For an overview of proximity warning systems, see p20
For two personal accounts of flying with Flarm, see p23



Mary Allen

Standing room only at Lasham (see p10)

...and other current regulatory activity

BGA staff and volunteers are also working on a number of other national and European consultations, which do not require individual responses at this stage. They include:

EASA NPA (Notice of Proposed Amendment) 14/2006, about the regulation of GA. This is of the utmost importance for the future of gliding as it summarises the proposals made by the MDM032 working group for better regulation of light aviation. The paper is at: *www.easa.eu.int/home/rm_npa_en.html.*

The **Light Aviation Airports Study Group** (LAASG) was formed in 2005 and invited to review the use of licensed aerodromes as required by the ANO. The group has now recommended (1) a review/possible revision of Article 126 of the ANO, taking into account International Standards, European Requirements and its own findings; (2) that the CAA develop proposals for alternatives to the present requirement for flying training to be conducted at a licensed aerodrome and (3) suggested that licensing criteria for Rescue & Fire Services be reviewed. Terry Slater, BGA representative on LAASG, says the recommendations are a significant liberalisation of the current position. The CAA consultation on them closes on October 6. LAASG's report is at *www.caa.co.uk/laasg*

EASA NPA 06/2006, regarding regulation of airfields under the title "Basic principles and Essential Requirements for the Safety and Interoperability Regulation of Aerodromes" seeks to increase and formalise the level of regulation (and by implication safety) on all airfields. Consultation closes on October 16. **EASA NPA 09/2006** about Permits to Fly is at *www.easa.eu.int/home/rm_npa_en.html* and closes on October 5.

A NEW version (Edition 32a) of the 1:500,000 Southern England and Wales chart was published on August 31. This coincided with the significant changes being brought about by the introduction of the new Bristol/Cardiff Class D airspace, which came into effect then. The Letter of Agreement between the BGA and NATS Bristol, which defines the permitted areas of operation for gliders is now available for download from the BGA website at *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/airspace/bristol-loa.pdf*

STEVE Fossett and Einar Enevoldson have claimed a new world absolute altitude record of 15,447m (50,671ft). The claim, if ratified, will beat the previous record of 14,938m set in 1986 by 1,662ft (507m). The flight took place on August 29 at El Calafate in Argentina. See *www.perlanproject.com*

THE Soaring Society of America is communicating with its members about financial problems described by C. Dianne Black-Nixon, SSA Board Chairman, as "clearly the single most serious challenge the Society has faced in its 75 year history". SSA members can find out more by logging in at *www.ssa.org*

THE closing date for nominations from BGA clubs for the Ann Welch Memorial Award is October 31. An application form and details are at *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/documents/annwelchawardf.pdf.* The award is open to those whose activity has made a significant contribution to education and training in gliding, hang-gliding and paragliding and microlight aviation. This will normally be in flying instruction but, exceptionally, may include associated subjects such as navigation and meteorology.

THE NTSB's preliminary report into a collision in August between a Hawker 800XP transport airplane and an ASW 27-18 glider, near Minden, Nevada, is at www.ntsb.gov/NTSB/brief.asp?ev_id=20060906X01297&key=2 It reports that the glider was equipped with GPS and a transponder but the pilot did not turn them on. The NTSB – the US Government's National Transportation Safety Board – advises that all its preliminary reports are subject to change.

THE BGA has received a request from Manton, near Marlborough, asking if gliders would try to avoid landing on this microlight strip. The planning permission that Manton have for the field does not extend to glider movements and they have some neighbours complaining, resulting in the local council serving enforcement. You should also be aware that at Finmere, near Buckingham, the microlight operation there has also advised the BGA that the strip does not have permission from the landowner for glider movements.

THE old Scheibe Flugzeugbau GmbH at Dachau has been closed since mid-May. All the rights, customer support, parts and drawings for Scheibe's 'wood and steel tube' gliders and motorgliders have been taken over by the new Scheibe Aircraft GmbH at Heubach, east of Stuttgart, which is continuing Falke (tug) motorglider production. See *www.scheibe-aircraft.de*

The winner of the BGA 1000 Club Lottery for August 2006 was K Balcombe (£33.50), with runners-up D Shepherd and P Arthur (each £16.75).

Your letters

Flights of a lifetime

FOLLOWING your article in February-March 2006 on gliding in Canada (*Prairies and mountains*, p32) I contacted three sites that we could visit on our trip from Winnipeg to Vancouver over a three-week period.

Our first stop was Black Diamond on the eastern side of the Rockies, super spot, great people, made us very welcome, only problem was the next day we had snow followed by rain, which was forecast to last for at least three days, so we had to move on. The next airfield on our route was Invermere in the Columbia valley, and what a spot! It ticked all the boxes and more. The scenery was fantastic, everybody was so friendly, the accommodation was superb and there was an abundance of wildlife.

I have only my Bronze and cross-country endorsement so I flew for two days there with CFI Trevor Florence in his Duo (great guy). The first day we did 310km ridge flying between Golden and Fairmont at an average speed of 99km/h. I had previously flown in the Pyrenees but this was on a different scale. The views were very special and the lift fantastic! On the second day the cloud-base was just a little higher, which gave us enough altitude to cross the Columbia valley and fly west into the Purcell range. We flew approximately 40km into the range and saw the most fantastic glaciers and mountain peaks. We went to 12,500ft (airfield elevation 2,820ft). In these areas you always had to be mindful of escape routes back to the valley, as landing out was not an option! All flights are logged on the "online contest" and can be reviewed at a later date back home (see *www.soartherockies.com*).

The views I saw during those two days will be with me for ever and of course were only made possible through the sport of gliding. Also, had we not planned our trip to include the airfields we would most probably not have visited the Columbia valley and in so doing missed what we concluded to be one of the highlights of our trip, gliding apart.

We did visit our third field option, which was Pemberton. Again super location and a very friendly group but we could not stop to fly due to time restraints.

We had a great time in Canada and would recommend the Columbia valley for a complete experience.

Martin Lawson, *via email*



An S&G article earlier this year prompted Martin Lawson, of Essex & Suffolk Gliding Club, to take to the Canadian skies – and as his photo shows, he was thrilled by the great flying and the magnificent scenery. On a bigger scale than Spain, he says. See Flights of a lifetime, *left*

Going even further

ANTHONY Edwards, "The Arm-Chair Pilot", is correct in that the theory behind the MacCready ring solution was known before Paul MacCready invented the ring (*Going further and faster*, August-September 2006, p7). But there is at least one source from much earlier than 1947. This speed-to-fly theory was described in *Handbuch des Segelfliegens* by Wolf Hirth, published in several editions 1938-1942. Father of the speed-to fly theory was Wolfgang Späte, who used his knowledge to win the Rhön competition in 1938 in a DFS Reiher.

According to an article in *Aerokurier* many years ago, there was much cloud-flying with strong climb rates during the contest, and Späte's contenders were surprised to see him plunge along at 150km/h between the clouds while they were flying at best L/D. Spate used a table showing speed to fly for the different climb rates. It interesting that many top pilots today recommend using a more or less fixed speed for a certain climb value, like Späte did in 1938, instead of chasing the value shown on the MacCready ring (or the glide computer) when flying through lift and sink.

By the way, The Arm-Chair Pilot wrote an interesting article named: *A stochastic cross-country* in *S&G* sometime in the 1960s. Although that article does not provide any useful numbers for speed to fly, it shows very clearly that it is useful to fly slightly slower than the MacCready ring tells (or use a slightly lower setting than the actual climb rate), because the cross-country speed is nearly the same but the probability to find a good thermal increases quite a lot.

I have been surprised that this work by The Arm-Chair Pilot has not been referred to in any literature I have read, except for a translation into Swedish by Yngve Axner that appeared in *KSAK-nytt* (at that time the official magazine of the Royal Swedish Aeroclub) after it was published by *S&G*.

Åke Pettersson, HANINGE, Sweden

Winch driver shortage

OUR tug has needed some work over the last few weeks, mainly undercarriage refurbishment and new bungees fitted, and this has forced us to make more use of the winch. We are thinking of making it mandatory for solo pilots to have to learn to drive the winch, as we have a distinct lack of members who are willing/able to drive the winch at the moment. (But no lack of pilots waiting at the launchpoint to be launched, of course!) I don't expect we are any different from many other clubs, and if any members from other clubs have any suggestions how to solve the problem, please reply (A real, back-to-basics gliding problem, and a good article for *S&G*, perhaps?)

I think the basic problem is the fundamental difference between aerotowing and winching. On the one hand you have someone who doesn't want to get stuck driving the winch for most of the day (and who can blame them, speaking as someone who has been a winch driver for the last 30 years or so), and the fact that winching is more labour intensive than aerotowing, and takes a lot longer to set up: checking two 1,100-metre cables for crimps that may need redoing, and maybe having to reposition the winch during the day as the wind changes, and dealing with cable breaks and horrendous cable snarl-ups at the winch after a pilot pulls off under tension and throws a loop down the cable, usually culminating in a pile of tangled cable, and so on, and so on...

Don't get me wrong. Sometimes driving the winch can be very rewarding. When you see the pilot you have just launched scratch away from 1,000ft, after you have given them what you consider a good launch (at a quarter of the price of an aerotow).

And sometimes at the end of the day someone will come up to you and thank you for their launch. Usually the ones that manage to stay up.

Aerotowing is so much simpler all round. Only one tug pilot is needed to get the show on the road (or off the ground would probably be more apt). Usually the tuggie is reasonably happy, as he is actually flying whilst towing the gliders, whereas the winch driver is sitting stewing on the winch wondering why there has been no activity at the launchpoint for the last half hour or so (I bet that rings a bell with a lot of winch drivers?) Also, of course, when the tug pilot wants a relief or wants to fly in his/her own glider there is usually no shortage of relief tug pilots ready to take over (try getting some of them out of the tug!).

Most club members are of course grateful for those who launch them, especially one in a tug who can take them exactly to where the lift is, whereas the poor old winch driver is a kilometre away at the other end of the field, and usually completely forgotten about (out of sight, out of mind). He gets blamed for poor launches, even when it's partly the



The Skylark 2c at its home in North Wales. See Skylark mods, *below, for more on this unique sailplane*

pilot's own fault, and even gets blamed when the pilot finds no lift in the area that the winch launch takes him to. Which, of course, is always the same place, regardless of where the lift actually is!

I'll also bet that the following is something that most winch drivers can relate to.

You've just spent a long stint driving the winch, getting your usual 'fix' by breathing in all those exhaust fumes, and consoling yourself with the thought that you may get a nice evening thermal flight at the end of the day (after going to the clubhouse and washing all the oil and dirt off yourself). The radio crackles into life with the message that "they" have finished flying for the day, and are flying the gliders in, and could you please pack the winch up and put it away? THANK YOU!

Colin Weyman, *via email*

Political ploy on transponders?

THERE will no doubt be a storm of protest over the CAA's proposal to make Mode S transponders compulsory in all classes of airspace and for all aerial vehicles, as this would presumably apply not only to training gliders and tugs, but also to paragliders and microlights. However, the General Aviation movement should beware that this may be a political ploy, as often used by council planners, Government departments and many other legislative bodies.

The scenario is as follows:

1. Legislative body wishes to introduce controversial policy.
2. Legislative body publicly proposes a totally outrageous policy far in excess of their real intent.
3. Storm of protest ensues over the proposal.
4. Legislative body graciously reduces their proposal back to exactly the level they originally intended.
5. Protesters back down believing they have achieved a great victory.
6. Prohibitive legislation is introduced with the blessing of all involved.

As a movement, I therefore believe we must continue to object to the introduction of transponders under any circumstances.

Sid Smith, *via email*

Skylark mods

IT was good to see Tony Cummins getting a mention in the North Wales club news (June-July 2006, p58) for the splendid restoration he made of the Skylark 2c. May I make a few corrections to the report? The glider was bought as a standard Skylark 2 by an eight-man syndicate, which included a number of notable pilots such as Keith Turner and John Cochrane as well as Denis Corrick.

The idea of modifying the glider came from Denis, and he did all the design work. The actual modification was done by Denis and Ted Chubb with moral support from Gordon Fisher and myself. Slingsby was not involved, apart from being kept informed, though he did give us the designation 2c. When the job was done he took a multitude of photographs of the glider from all angles and we believed that some of the ideas were incorporated into the Skylark4 and the Dart.

Ken Brown, *via email*

New heights

AS A recent convert to gliding I appreciate the joys of the sport and the skills of the glider pilots.

My first flight was just over three weeks ago, on a warm and sunny evening at Booker Gliding Centre, Wycombe Air Park. The exhilaration at take-off was equally matched by the sheer joy of gliding some 3,000ft in the air. The feelings of peace and quiet can barely be described.

My instructor was a class act; she handled the glider expertly and put me totally at ease. I was confident enough to take the stick to do a slow turn to the right and left as well as perform speed control to make the glider go faster and slower.

My second flight just last week was thrilling and I experienced a 360° loop. What a rush! I would recommend gliding – it's great fun.

Ade Adeniji, *via email*

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* **October 17**

A great talk for your club

KEVIN Moloney, the Chairman of the BGA Safety Committee, delivered his Safety Presentation to a packed Southdown clubhouse on February 4, 2006. The audience included welcome guests from Kenley and Lee-on-Solent.

Kevin, a former army helicopter pilot and gliding CFI, employed his clear and forceful style of delivery to good effect to put over his message with the aid of photographs, slides, video clips, animations and commentary, thus holding the attention of an audience with widely differing levels of experience.

The wise and, sometimes sobering, advice and information in his excellent talk was indeed thought-provoking. He covered matters such as pilot currency, competence and confidence; self awareness and experience. Safe conduct of a flight depends on such aspects and includes preparation, care, effective lookout, inadvertent stall/spin avoidance, careful field selection, the ability to land in the chosen place (!) and ongoing analysis of one's own performance.

Winch safety was discussed in some detail. In particular the need to release immediately if a wing touches the ground, avoid rapid rotation and be thoroughly familiar with the BGA Winch Safety leaflet and advice in the *BGA Instructors' Manual*. Safe aerotowing, whilst perhaps easier to achieve, nevertheless held some dangers. Avoid becoming high out of position, especially in a "zoom" and be aware of the lateral upset scenario.

Early recognition of the approaching stall or spin is vital and it is recommended that pilots become thoroughly familiar with the further stalling and spinning exercises, all detailed in the instructors' manual.

Above all, perhaps, Kevin stressed the absolute need for continual, thorough look-out. He described the relationship between the eye and the brain, and its limitations. (The brain can be very selective in what it accepts from the eye!). To be safe, pilots must understand these limitations and develop an effective scan. This needs practice and persistence. The video which demonstrated how easy it is NOT to see a glider approaching head on until it is too late was especially worrying.

If you have not yet had the privilege of attending one of Kevin's safety presentations I strongly recommend you take the trouble to do so, when the next series of club visits takes place. This could be one of the best investments in time you will ever make!

Dick Dixon, Southdown GC

To book a free BGA Safety Presentation for your club contact Kevin via the BGA Office

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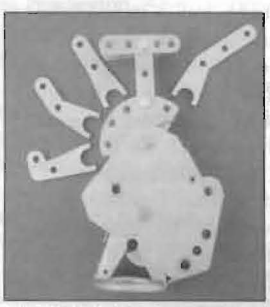
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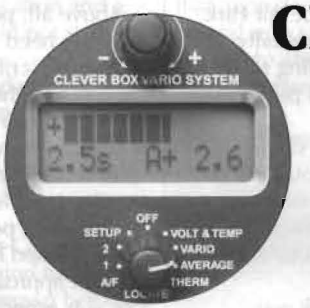
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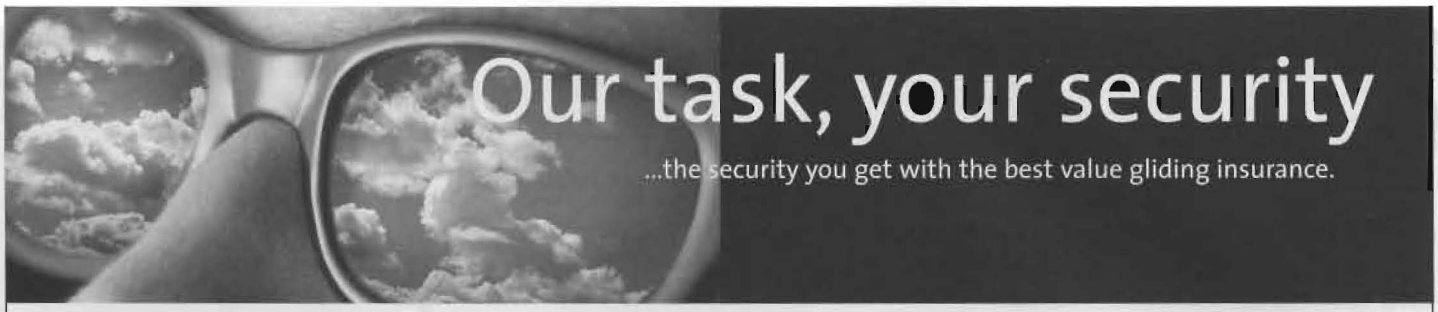
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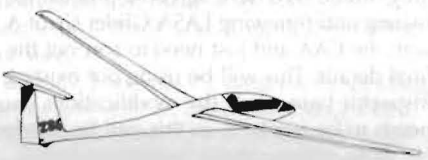
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Update on new European maintenance procedures

Changes to the maintenance and certification of gliders and motorgliders in the UK will soon be upon us. Jim Hammerton clarifies the situation so far

YOU may have read the continuing articles in S&G by BGA volunteers and staff, some of them on various EASA working groups discussing and negotiating on your behalf and on behalf of gliding in the UK as well as the rest of Europe.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has hosted a number of roadshows alerting General Aviation – including gliding – to Part M (Maintenance); some of you may have attended them. This article is the result of that roadshow and discussions with the CAA and the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). It concentrates on the maintenance issues only as they stand now, and may be subject to change.

Gliders

By the time that this article is published ALL post 28/9/2003 "new to the UK" gliders will be CAA registered, and it is anticipated that the CAA will be issuing EASA Cs of A some time during early 2007 as part of an ongoing programme. We have agreed a process for issuing and renewing EASA Glider Cs of A with the CAA and just need to sort out the final details. This will be using our existing inspector base. Only the modifications issue needs to be resolved, as this will be needed for those gliders whose instrument panels were fitted in the UK. Gliders that had instrument panels fitted prior to import and are included in the EASA form 52 or Export C of A do not need modification approval.

Annex II gliders

These gliders are exempt from EU regulation and will remain under national rules. We anticipate this will mean BGA registration and C of A indefinitely. I am pleased to say we have agreed an extensive list of types with the CAA and, together with those types already declared Annex II by the LBA, it will mean that the majority of vintage gliders will be exempt from EU regulation.

The list of types will be published on the BGA website at www.gliding.co.uk as soon as we have confirmation.

As for the remaining gliders – that is, the majority of the existing fleet – we are discussing with EASA an acceptable process where all these aircraft can be accepted into the EASA airworthiness system with the minimum of disruption by some form of "grandfather rights".

EASA motorgliders and tugs

Part M will be in force by September 2008. That means that the CAA will be issuing non-expiring Cs of A with Airworthiness Review Certificates (ARC) starting September 2007. This is why the motorglider and tug C of A validity has gradually been reducing. After 2008 all maintenance organisations wishing to renew ARC (same as C of A renewal) will need to be a Part M Subpart G "Continued Airworthiness Management Organisation" as this replaces the M3 approval. To certify maintenance of any substance, you will need Subpart F "Maintenance Organisation". There is a further complication where the aircraft needs to be managed in a "Controlled Environment" by the Subpart G organisation. This will allow effectively a three-year C of A renewal very similar to what we do now. Failure to adopt this principle will mean costly one-year Cs of A with CAA involvement.

Non-EASA motorgliders and tugs

These aircraft will remain on the existing M3 system and certification basis. The BGA will retain M3 approval for these. In the future, the CAA is expected to merge the present M3 system to parallel the Part M system so there is only one procedure to use.

What is the BGA doing?

The BGA is currently discussing, with the CAA, an acceptable process (on both sides) for the introduction of Part M based on a similar concept to the existing BGA M3 philosophy where the BGA holds the approval and uses satellite facilities. We are also discussing how to make the "Controlled Environment" achievable within our system. The BGA, as part of the European Gliding Union, is also actively discussing with EASA the introduction of a "Part M Light" or some other changes to make Part M more appropriate to GA levels of activity.

We can foresee there will be changes in the way we manage airworthiness and process "C of A" renewals and this may mean additional work for the maintenance organisations. There will be a more formal arrangement between owner and maintainer with a realignment of some responsibilities.

Please keep an eye on S&G and the BGA website for more news as it develops.

Jim Hammerton
BGA Chief Technical Officer
cto@gliding.co.uk

BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli reports back on a hectic three months, when the Association, clubs and individual pilots have rallied round to fight a major threat to gliding's future

THE relationship between gliding clubs and the BGA is, by and large, relatively straightforward. The clubs are the fundamental basis of the sport; they provide the environment – social and operational – within which gliding can be enjoyed and the needs of the individual met. The BGA maintains and develops those aspects of our sport that need to be consistently followed – for example: safety, training, technical and operations; it provides a range of central services to clubs, individual pilots and glider owners; undertakes development initiatives in the interests of the whole movement, and represents British gliding in a variety of domestic and international arenas.

This relationship works very well – an appropriate division of responsibilities based on comparative advantage, regular dialogue and considerable trust.

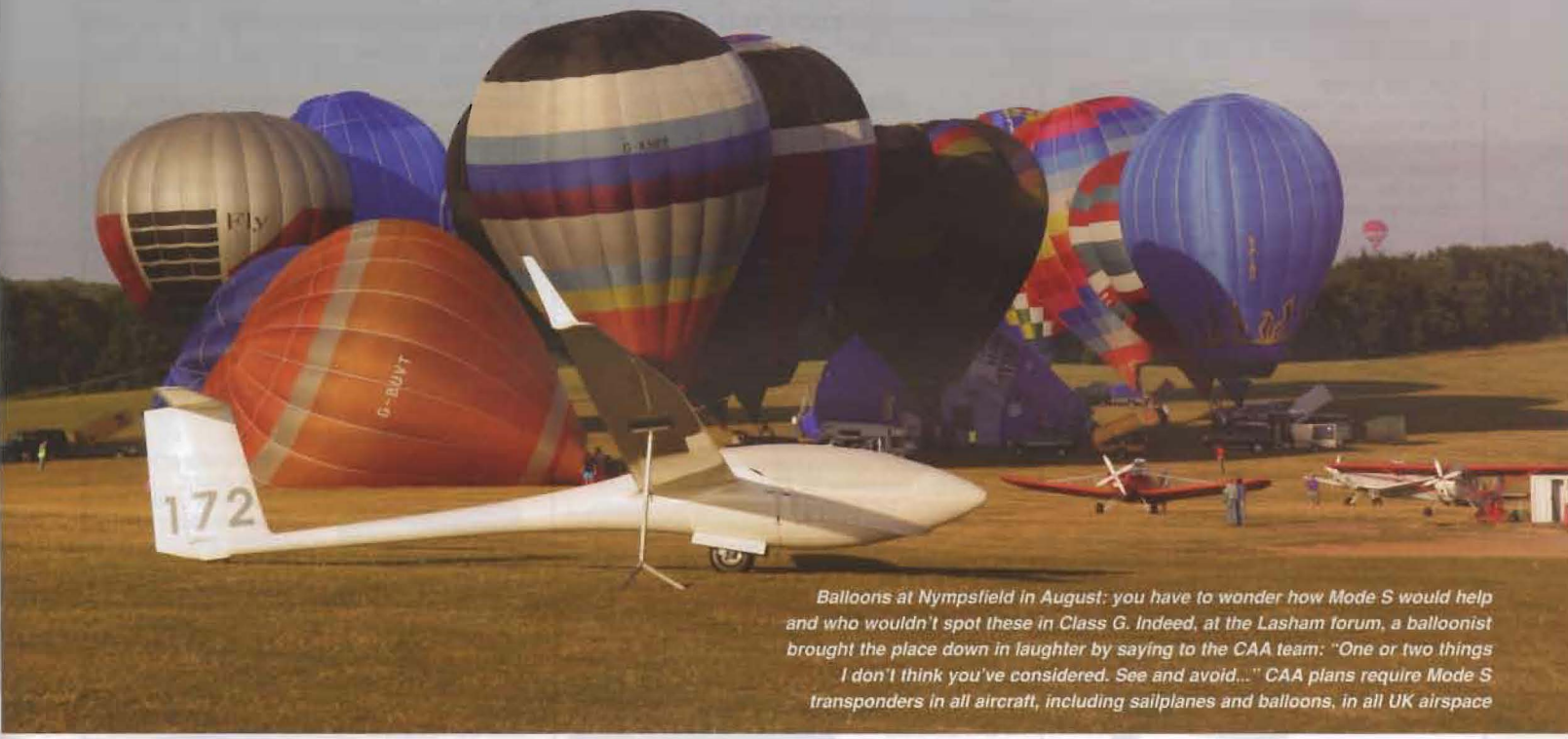
The current CAA consultation on the "technical interoperability of all aircraft in UK airspace" – Mode S, in common parlance – has proven to be a real test of how well the gliding movement can respond when something presents a serious challenge and requires us to work across our normal boundaries.

Carr Withall and Bruce Cooper – the senior core of our Airspace Sub-committee – flagged up the true significance and potential implications of the CAA proposal immediately on its publication. They had quickly recognised what must now be clear to every one of us: that if the CAA proposals were implemented as stated then the technical, operational and economic issues would be so significant that the viability of UK gliding would be seriously threatened.

Since Carr and Bruce sounded the alarm a major and truly impressive effort has been under way to ensure that British gliding makes its views clear to the CAA. The BGA's own response was carefully researched, phrased and drafted. The essence of its content was made available to clubs and individuals in order to help them develop their own responses to the consultation process. The BGA also liaised closely with other airsport associations so that both we and they benefited from as broad a range of analyses as possible in what has been a very short period in which to respond.

An open meeting at Lasham – attended by more than 320 glider, hang-glider, paraglider, microlight and balloon pilots – gave the CAA consultation team an opportunity to explain what prompted the initiative in the first place, the options they had considered, and the rationale for their specific proposals. The answers they gave to a wide range of questions have enabled us

Mode S: the balloon goes up



Balloons at Nympsfield in August: you have to wonder how Mode S would help and who wouldn't spot these in Class G. Indeed, at the Lasham forum, a balloonist brought the place down in laughter by saying to the CAA team: "One or two things I don't think you've considered. See and avoid..." CAA plans require Mode S transponders in all aircraft, including sailplanes and balloons, in all UK airspace

Stephen Cook

to understand just how weak the basic case for the mandating of mode S transponder technology is and how poor their analysis of the implications for different aviation groups has been.

CAA consultations typically tend to draw several tens of responses from interested parties. Reliable estimates suggest that it has received more than 3,000 in this case. The level of response and the strength of opposition to the proposals must have caused the CAA some surprise.

We are, however, merely at the end of the beginning and I suspect that there will be more twists and turns before the final outcome is decided. The CAA is busily working its way through the mountain of responses and we expect to understand what its further thoughts are on the subject shortly. Much as we would like to imagine that common sense will prevail and the current proposals will be set aside in favour of a joint re-examination of the original imperatives, we are not banking on that. I cannot go into the details of the further campaign we are waging; needless to say the resolve of the movement to secure the right outcome should not be underestimated.

I would personally like to thank everyone that has helped in the effort thus far, whether you did so by responding to the CAA, by attending the Lasham meeting, or by giving up a large part of your summer to work on the BGA's national project team. A phenomenal amount of exceptional commitment has been shown by a large number of people – too many to mention here, unfortunately. True teamwork.

It is easy to feel pressured by external threats but, at the same time, one can only be encouraged by some of the initiatives under way aimed at materially developing the movement. On August 19, on my way home from the PFA Rally at Kemble, I stopped by at Bicester where Andy Perkins, working with the Air League and other volunteers, had organised a day aimed at giving young aviation enthusiasts a direct experience of gliding. I was impressed by what had been an obviously successful day – and also by the initiative, energy and motivation that made it so. Well done, Andy and team – thank you. A replicable format for sure.

Finally, I am making progress in speaking personally with all club chairmen – albeit somewhat slowed by the intrusion of Mode S over the last three months. Nevertheless I am continuing with what is proving to be a very valuable exercise and look forward to meeting many of you face to face at the BGA Chairmen's Conference at the end of October.

Patrick Naegeli
chairman@gliding.co.uk





Right: Patrick (far left), *whose chairing of the Lasham meeting drew widespread praise, talks to the CAA team. 320 people from a range of airsports attended to hear the CAA case and to make their own views clear*

Left: BGA Chief Executive Pete Stratten (standing) *at the August meeting – this is* before *the room filled up*
(Photos: Mary Allen)

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GA reviews: the inside track

David Roberts chairs the BGA Regulatory Group, which was established in 2005 and aims to achieve the best framework for gliding by representing our interests to national and European authorities. As an insider on both the recent CAA reviews of General Aviation, he now updates us on what they are about

IN JUNE 2005 the Chairman of the UK's Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) invited the UK General Aviation (GA) community to join the CAA in carrying out a Strategic Review (GASR) and a Regulatory Review (GARR) of GA.

This followed concerns voiced during the preceding study of future CAA costs and charges, the need for the CAA to better understand GA and to demonstrate its commitment to better regulation.

The GARR was also timely given the rate of change emanating from the EU – EASA, Single European Sky, etc – on which much has been written in the last few years in *S&G*. This was the first such exercise conducted by the CAA in relation to GA, ever.

I was invited to sit on both Reviews, and also to represent the wider membership of the Royal Aero Club. Twelve representatives from the wide spectrum of GA were co-opted but only AOPA CEO Martin Robinson and I, from 'industry', were common to both. From September to June, 18 meetings were held; terms of reference including the scope and structure of the workstreams were agreed, papers were written and discussed and, in June 2006, two final reports, with 33 recommendations, were submitted to the CAA Board. The Reviews were conducted in a constructive manner, but the breadth of subject matter and issues were daunting, particularly in the Strategic Review.

Topics covered

The GASR dealt with an overall description of GA (it is very wide) and analysis of trends; the economic and social impact of GA; infrastructure access, especially airfields, and which affects powered flying more than gliding; the regulatory and tax regimes in the UK; the future role of the EU; consultation structures and mechanisms between the GA community and government; the shortage of specialised labour in certain areas (licensed engineers in particular); the impact of innovation and new technology and finally some international comparisons. The GARR outlined the current regulatory framework as it affects various GA sectors; the influence of EASA; sectoral trends; fatal accident rates – a comprehensive 10-year analysis; and proposed regulatory options for UK GA.

Key issues arising

Much of this did not affect gliding overly because until the advent of EASA UK gliding has been largely outside the CAA's regulatory scope. However, many issues were of collateral interest, such as the comparison of fatal accident rates between GA sectors. Of the 33 recommendations these (abbreviated) are *some* of particular interest to gliding:

1. GA to co-ordinate and present itself better to put its case to government – a strong hint for fewer GA representative bodies to work with government and its agencies;

2. Government to adopt a national planning policy on the value of retaining a viable network of GA airfields;

3. Need for increased awareness by air traffic controllers of GA needs, and GA pilot education about risk of infringing airspace;

4.Use fatal accident rate statistics to identify high-risk areas for attention in, for example, flight training, and any correlation between regulatory regime and causal factors;

5. Increases in controlled airspace not to exceed the minimum that is required for demonstrated safety reasons;

6. CAA to consider re-aligning the current UK four-classification of sailplanes with the two-classification European model;

7. CAA to align, in due course, its C of A and Permit to Fly policy with Europe;

8. Establish an Issues Log *(see below)*. One item already in it is my recommendation that, following the consequences of gliders being within the scope of EASA and thereby state registration, the CAA devolve to the BGA the registration of gliders (which the Association has done since the year dot).

Next steps

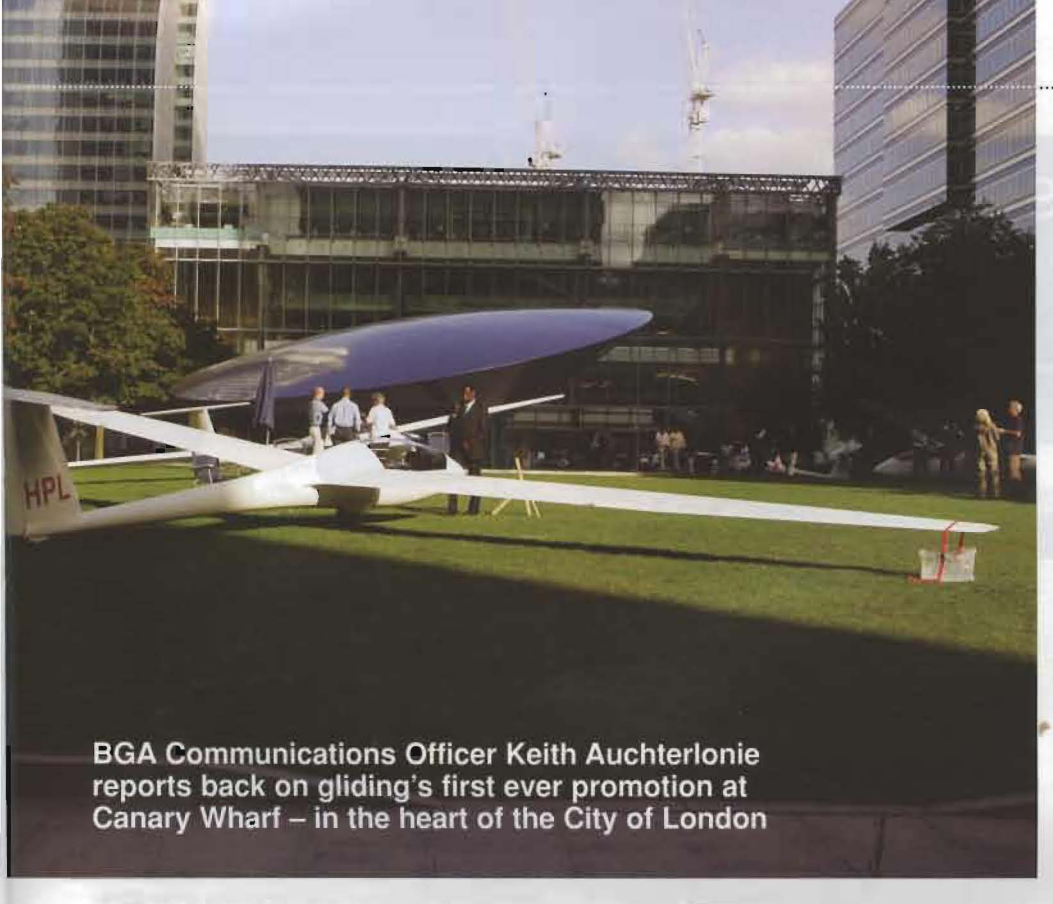
At the GACC (General Aviation Consultative Committee) in July, it was agreed how the recommendations would be taken forward and to establish a GA Strategic Forum involving seven individuals (including myself!) representing GA. Secondly, the creation and progression of an Issues Log was agreed, a mechanism through which the GA 'industry' can bring any relevant matter to the CAA for discussion. There will be a GA Conference on 21 November at the Royal Society of Arts in London, at which the two reports will be presented.
Both reports can be downloaded from the CAA website (SRG/GA link) at:
www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?categoryid=224&pagetype=87



Pictured, from left, are Regulatory Review team members: David Chapman, CAA (GARR Chairman); David Beaven, CAA; Lee Balthazor, RAeS; Joji Waites, CAA; Tom Hardie, BHPA; Jim McKenna, CAA; David Roberts, BGA/RAeC; Robin Allan, CAA; Martin Robinson, AOPA; Chris Finnigan, BMAA; Alan Robinson, GAPAN; and Peter Norton, BHAB



All photographs courtesy of Paul Morrison





BGA Communications Officer Keith Auchterlonie reports back on gliding's first ever promotion at Canary Wharf – in the heart of the City of London

Gliding goes to meet the public

TWO years in the planning, eight clubs, eight gliders, more than 60 volunteers, 125,000 target individuals. These are the stats behind one of the largest promotions ever undertaken by British gliding.

The BGA, together with eight clubs from around London, mounted a major exhibition in early September – right in the heart of the UK financial services industry at Canary Wharf. Seven gliders ranging from basic trainers and an entry-level single-seater through to the BGA's Duo Discus X were on display in Canada Square, together with a Discus in the foyer of HSBC's headquarters building. The square was transformed from an urban park into a gliding expo, with members from Cambridge, Essex, Essex & Suffolk, Kent, Lasham, London, Southdown and Windrushers gliding clubs on hand to answer questions and generally enthuse about the sport. The expo was open each day from 7am until after 7pm – long hours designed to catch workers on their way to work and as they headed home.

We had decided that this was a good focus for so much of the Communications & Marketing Committee's 2006 marketing effort and budget. Canary Wharf's 125,000-plus workers matched the profile of person we wanted to attract into gliding. We knew that to work, the image we presented had to be spot on (the show's theme was *Gliding – the ultimate aviation adventure sport*) and what we did had to match the surroundings, and the expectations of our target audience.

It took long hours of planning and effort from all the clubs involved. We had worked hard to promote the expo in the preceding weeks (including flying the creative director of the glossy magazine *E14* in the sniffer aircraft at the 18-Metre Nationals – thanks, Kim!) and we had received tremendous help from the estate management team at Canary Wharf. However, as nothing like this had ever been tried before, we didn't really know how it would work.

In the event, the show surpassed our wildest expectations. It looked great (the view looking down from the roof of One, Canada Square – the tallest building in the UK – was amazing), the numbers visiting were enormous, the level of interest among people who had had no previous exposure to gliding was incredible, and the feedback was great. All participating clubs were delighted with the response. One visitor actually telephoned the Windrushers office on the first afternoon to join the club!

Taking gliding out to meet the people works and some of the participating clubs are already planning to work together next year to repeat the exercise on a smaller scale at local venues. The BGA would welcome the chance to roll the initiative out to other parts of the country if suitable venues can be found and if clubs are willing to support it.

Too many people were involved to thank individually – they know who they are. Above all, it was a great team effort and proof that gliding can successfully present itself to the public, raising awareness and attracting business – courses, corporate days, trial lessons, or new members. We achieved all these at Canary Wharf.





Main picture, opposite: perspective from the top of One, Canada Square, in the City – the UK's tallest building – and (top) the view down in the square itself

Above: London GC was one of eight clubs participating in the event, whose initial inspiration was an idea from Richard Brickwood of Cambridge GC. Discus DM was rigged in the foyer of HSBC's headquarters building



A Stigler for accuracy

IN THE letters page of the last issue of S&G, discussing MacCready theory, the enormously distinguished Armchair Pilot, recently retired from Caius College Cambridge, writes, "Stigler's Law states that no law is named after its true discoverer."

I pondered this for a while (well, about five seconds) and concluded logically that whoever discovered Stigler's Law, it cannot have been Stigler, but someone else. C'mon Stigler, wherever you are, 'fess up – from whom did you pinch that idea?

It's not often one gets the chance to put one over a Cambridge professor, and no doubt the Armchair Pilot will get his revenge soon.

It also follows from Stigler's Law that if I want Plat's Law to become as famous as MacCready theory and incorporated into the entire culture of gliding in the way that MacCready has done, then somebody else has to discover it, and only then can I appropriate it for my own.

To give you a hint, it could maybe have something to do with the relationship between cross-country kms per pee-bag and the age and sex of the pilot divided by the square root of the handicap of the glider. "It was a stonking day: I was flying at MacCready six and Plat four!" and the other envious pilots, especially the male, hydraulically-challenged Geezerglide crowd, will whistle through their teeth in admiration. How to record the statistics on the logger for ladder-recognition purposes is a minor technical challenge for the nerds to work out. Working out the details is beneath me, and, besides, may cause me to fall foul of Stigler.

Geezerglide 2006

IN MID-MARCH this year, Plat flew shotgun with John Earlywine in John's DG-1000 at Seminole Lake Gliderport, where Knut and Ingrid Kjenslie were hosts yet again to the US Seniors Championship, known unofficially but affectionately as "Geezerglide." (John and Plat came 47th out of 54, and we have our excuses ready later. John has only flown in one competition before – with Derek Piggott – and not surprisingly did rather better on that earlier occasion.)

Let me say that this is not a contest report. I am writing this chiefly for those of you who are contemplating a winter soaring vacation in the Northern Hemisphere and, if you are approaching 55, thinking of taking part in the US Seniors Championships – incidentally the only US gliding competition I know of that a foreigner is allowed to win.

Early-to-middle March is an ideal time of year for a soaring competition in Florida, since it is so miserable everywhere else. Temperatures are in the 20°Cs; the air is balmy. The Canadians and New Englanders come rolling down from the frozen north with snow on their monster motorhomes and colonise a space where elegant and sociable outdoor cocktail parties are conducted after soaring is done.

The ethos of the Seniors is that it should be fun. Gone is the grim seriousness of so many national championships. The Seniors are not only fun, but civilised. I would not glibly apply the word civilised to many other contests I have flown in during the past 46 years. So, for example, the organisation mercifully forbids the drawing, lugging or pouring of waterballast, out of respect for time-ravaged hips and knees, some of which these days are replacements that need to be treated with special care. (And out of respect for the pilots' wives, some of whom these days are replacements that need to be treated with special care.) Secondly the tasks are kept short, typically two and a half hours – so road-retrieves are either not necessary or, when they do happen, are not the endurance tests that we old soaring folk remember with mixed emotions. A rest day is mandatory, so crews can taste Disneyworld and the other attractions.

The fact that the Seniors is fun does not mean that it is easy to win. Au contraire. There are too many former world champions, members of the US Team or record-holders taking part – Karl Striedieck, George Moffat, Tom Knauff, Doug Jacobs, Dick Butler *et al.* You are liable to get eaten alive – but I'll come to the alligators in a moment.

The contest area is orientated north-south, partly for airspace reasons – Orlando and its international airport lie quite close to the east of Seminole Lake – and partly because the peninsula has its best soaring weather down the middle, where Gulf of Mexico air and the Atlantic air converge, often producing continuous lift for a hundred miles or more. Well, during the practice period, anyway.

I'd like to say something complimentary like grand, or spectacular or lush about Florida scenery when viewed from the air. But sorry, it isn't. Swamps and supermarkets comprise much of the visual feast presented to the aviator. But nowadays pilots don't need to map-read any more, but navigate entirely by GPS, so looking at the ground is not a necessity. Little is missed in this instance. Florida skies in March are, however, very attractive to the glider pilot, and the juiciness of the cumulus and their bases and strengths equate to the best days you see in England in July or August.

I had better say just a little about the 2006 competition. We had six contest days – the maximum possible. This year, there were no spectacular prangs – last year, two pilots piled into the trees that surround the field, though without injury. There was not even

'The French cheerfully call doing a field landing *se poser aux vaches*, but *se poser aux alligators* is no joke'

the ravishing of a helpless glider by an amorous bull, as happened the previous time I flew there.

I always thought the front end of the glider in question looked like the back end of a cow, but was surprised it turned out to be literally true. The choice of a brown canopy-cover was with the benefit of hindsight (sorry) a mistake; I suggest sky-blue in future – or even stripes, in the hope that the next bull to come along says "I don't do zebras!"

Like Britain, Florida has had a drought in the first half of the year and whether or not that is good for farmers, it was certainly good for the glider pilots. Launch-rates were rapid, without any apparent strain, the organisers getting 54 gliders airborne from the small grass field in under an hour.

All the tasks bar one were AAT (Assigned Area Tasks), which I came to like very much, since it meant that each pilot could tailor his choice of turn-points to his sailplane and to his own skills. Gliders as diverse as the ASW 19 and ASW 22BLE (Dick Butler's 28-metre hand-finished, no-winglets special)

could be accommodated in the same event and both have the same chance of getting home after covering very different amounts of terrain. The exception was Day 4, a conventional speed triangle to the south of Seminole Lake; we clawed our way warily through some very congested thermals, especially near the turns. I do not enjoy Fighter-Pilot's Twitch, which is hard on the neck muscles. Having witnessed three mid-air collisions in UK Nationals, I was hoping the competition director would revert to AAT for the rest of the competition, which he did.

Doug Jacobs brilliantly and consistently flew Seminole Lake's DG-1000 to victory, with three first places, two third places and only one minor lapse to 8th. Early on Karl Striedieck looked as if he could win – also flying brilliantly, winning two days plus the practice day. But on Day 6 he landed the Duo Discus a little way down the road on the first leg and ended up 27th overall. For Karl it's all or nothing, and that makes for an exciting competition.

For health reasons I no longer fly as Pilot-in-Charge these days, but I hope from time to time in future years to be allowed to clamber into the passenger-seat of a two-place ship and get that contest-adrenalin coursing through my veins once more. They say a little bit of stress is good for one.

Let me warn you that the US Seniors is fast becoming so popular that they may have to ration places – though the fairest method of keeping the swelling numbers in check is still in debate. One idea is to allocate by age, with the oldest being preferred. I'm not so sure about that. Once the average age gets to 85 I only hope they don't have any more conventional speed tasks, or those honeypot turn-points will get far too exciting, though they could have the unintended effect of thinning out the ranks for the following year... In the meantime I suggest that would-be entrants bleach their hair white, walk slowly with the aid of a stick, and lie about their age.

Hey, what about your poor placing – and those alligators? Ed.

Well, John and I had a couple of final glides which would have worked (might have worked, more like) if we had been prepared to dive beneath the treetops and pull up over them at the last second. Instead we went back several miles to a safe airport, and aero-retrieved later, though there were lots of what looked like landable fields amid the swamps. We used to joke at Seminole Lake about the need to watch out for alligators if you land out in Florida – but two months after the contest, three adults were killed and eaten by alligators. The French cheerfully call doing a field-landing se poser aux vaches, but se poser aux alligators is no joke, not now anyway.

We still joke about disgruntled farmers with guns as the other risk in Florida. I wondered if it would be better that the farmer be drunk or sober. If drunk he is more likely to shoot, but then again he is also more likely to miss. And conversely if sober. As formerly with the 'gators there is scope for lots of laughs, until someone gets shot, maybe on Finals, by a very sober farmer.

But it would help keep the numbers of entrants down, I suppose.

Soaring passion

Thinking of that amorous bull in Florida, I remember the formidable Monsieur Hersant, master of all he surveyed at Angers in 1974 (during *Les Huit Jours d'Angers* or as we used to call them, The Eight Days of Danger) telling us all at the first briefing, "Now, pilots, please mount your sailplanes." I said to Mrs Platypus, "Well, we all love our gliders, but not that much!" I think Monsieur meant us to rig them, though I have never been totally sure. Those French, y'know.

The old, the bold...

Talking of ageing pilots, I agreed with everything Lemmy Tanner wrote in the last issue about the need for relevant, meaningful tests of health and flying skills for senior pilots.

What I did not agree with, having been trained as a statistician, was Lemmy's interpretation of the graph which shows the 71-plus age group having about one-sixth of the accidents of the 51-60 age group. Since we don't know from that graph how many launches and hours are done by each group, it could indeed be that the geezer-category is indeed safe and sagacious, but, in relation to the number of active pilots and the amount of aviating the over-70s do, it could equally be that they are a menace.

Without that essential background data, you just can't tell.

... and the tall

If you are not a very tall pilot yourself, you may still find there is something to be said for very tall pilots. This year I had ten cross-country flights in Florida and two in Scotland where in each case the pilot-in-charge was so tall he had to fly in the back seat of a DG-1000 and a DG-505 respectively, leaving to me the luxury of the front seat with its great view. When our syndicate sold the Janus C that was based in Minden for some years, the buyer was a Belgian who was so tall that the Janus C was one the few affordable gliders he could fit in without discomfort. He too always flies it from the rear seat, and if I accept his kind invitation to fly with him on the Continent I shall, again, be privileged to enjoy the view from the front.

Except that I don't expect to be flying cross-country very much in Belgium, where most of the airspace for the entire country has for some years been solidly blocked out by control zones and airways with low bases. Would-be cross-country pilots in Belgium usually have to drive (or motor though the air below the airways if their ship has an engine) to more glider-friendly terrain in other countries. But the food is terrific.

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The first sailplane to ridge soar this historic fortress

Philip Sturley outlines what it was like to add this unique site to his gliding logbook, thanks to an RAFGSA expedition in June



Opposite page: Preparing ASH26E for the first sortie; Above: Keeping well clear of the resident seagulls; Below left: Spectacular views over Gibraltar into Spain; Below: Old guns protecting the Straits of Gibraltar.

The surface wind at Gibraltar is nearly always west or east due to the venturi effect of the Straits. Any genuine wind direction from west to north-west produces good wave, especially from the north-west, when day after day classic lenticulars building one on top of the other can be seen. Thermals also continue throughout the winter. Although south-west winds are from Morocco (a mountainous area) wave activity is quite rare, indeed all they get from south-west winds is severe turbulence on the approach to RWY 27. Spring sees really good cumulus stretching horizon to horizon: by the middle of the afternoon the area is affected by convergence zones with towering cu. Much of summer is the same, but by late July, August and September winds are becoming predominantly easterly – warm moist air travelling across the Med until it meets the Rock. This gives rise to the famous Levanter cloud (orographic) which sits like a cap on top of the Rock. The humidity also rises sharply and can become very uncomfortable, with poor vis and thermic blue days. In late September and October it is still humid with easterly winds predominating, and thunderstorms are common. November is wet and dismal, then we are back to December/January, which are normally dry with good weather. These months produce the best wave, whilst May, June and July are the best for thermals





WHEN, in 2004, I visited Gibraltar on RAF Association business, I asked whether anyone had ever soared the Rock. I was told that no-one had ever tried, because there were several obstacles to overcome. First, the Rock is separated from Spain by the runway of RAF Gibraltar which juts into the sea at both ends and has very hazardous approaches due to rotor effects behind the Rock in south-west wind directions (I remembered this from visits in my Jaguar days, when you could not land at Gibraltar unless you had landed there before!); in order to fly to Gibraltar from Spain, you must land first in Morocco; and finally it would require specific permission from the Governor and Commander in Chief of Gibraltar, under the Air Navigation Order (Overseas Territories) Order 1989. Solution: use a self-launching high-performance glider, and organise an RAFGSA mini expedition on the military net.

Earlier this year, the opportunity then arose to take advantage of my ASH26E's being in Ocana for the UK Overseas Championships to make a grand tour to Morocco, and back to the UK, stopping off in Gibraltar to do the deed. More on the grand tour perhaps at a later date, but I applied for and was granted one-off permission for Chris Heames and me to fly on the Rock as an RAFGSA Expedition on two days in June. I was given a great deal of help and advice on the weather by John Sullivan, a Full-rated Instructor in the tower at RAF Gibraltar, who had introduced me to gliding in Germany 20 years ago, and by the can-do people on the ground there.

I flew the ASH from Jerez to RAF Gibraltar via a short stop at Tetuan in Morocco, while Chris arrived by car. The weather was not





Gibraltar is a small British Territory on the tip of the Iberian Peninsula, with a rich history due to its position dominating the western entrance to the Mediterranean. It was ceded to Britain by Spain in 1704, and has provided a garrison for British troops ever since, playing a major role in British victories in World War II. It is brimming with history, and the Rock itself is honeycombed with tunnels, making it a formidable bastion. There has been a continued dispute with Spain over sovereignty (Maps: Steve Longland)

ideal, with temperatures in the high 20s and a stormy weather forecast for both days, due to a large area of low pressure lingering over Spain. However, we timed flights for when there was a healthy 10-15kt on the Rock's westerly face, giving good ridge soaring.

On each flight, we self-launched, climbing above the Rock to test the lift. We decided to start well clear of the Rock face because of the extremely high density of seagulls roosting there. It was easy to establish a beat along and above the whole 3km of ridge joining the pinnacle of the Rock to Europa Point using simple ridge lift of 2-3kt, and experience spectacular views of Gibraltar, the Spanish border area, and the northern Atlas Mountains across the Straits. Each time we reached above 2,000ft amsl, some 500ft above the top of the Rock, and this kept us well clear of the swarming gulls, which seemed to be limited to ridge height.

After a couple of sorties on the Rock itself, as the weather was not going to improve, we decided to use it as a jumping-off point for sorties into the northern Atlas mountains, where on each flight we enjoyed classic ridge and valley breeze conditions – quickly followed by large cu-nims, from which we bravely retreated to Gibraltar.

Our flying caused mild amusement to the Gibraltarians, who had never seen a glider before. Some of the local residents were not always amused, however, as the main road joining Gibraltar to Spain, which cuts across the runway at RAF Gibraltar, had to be blocked off for every take-off and landing (even though the ASH 26E took only 200m ground roll), and this caused the inevitable traffic queues. We therefore tried to time our departures to tie in with the daily shuttles by BA and Monarch from London, which were the only other movements we saw.

It was a pity that the weather did not allow us to explore the unique conditions on Gibraltar a little further, but we were well satisfied to have been the first to soar the Rock. It does not really compare with flying in the Alps or the Andes – where Chris and I both have extensive experience of soaring, thanks to other RAFGSA expeditions – but in the right conditions it could provide some spectacular wave flying to the east and south-east of the Rock. Sadly, under present conditions, it would be difficult for this to be repeated, but RAF Gibraltar does welcome visitors, and it is quite possible for an SLMG to use the airfield, as the Germans sometimes do on their migration south into Morocco. Also, with the advent of a new Trilateral Airport Agreement, which may be implemented shortly, airspace restrictions may well be eased, bringing Gibraltar into reach for many more pilots.

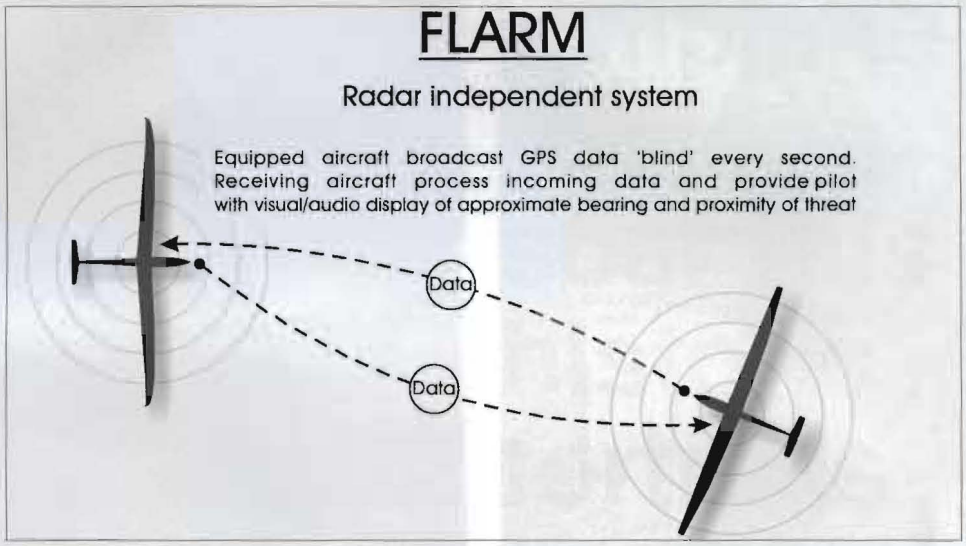
Philip Sturley has recently retired from the RAF, after a long flying career, mainly on fast jets. He began gliding seriously in 1987, has all three Diamonds and is a Full-rated Instructor with Four Counties GC and the RAFGSA Centre. He is President of the RAFGSA.

Chris Heames is also a fast jet pilot, still serving in the RAF as Chief Instructor of the Air Cadet Central Gliding School at Syerston. He is the Vice-Chairman Ops of the RAFGSA, and is a Regional Examiner, having all three Diamonds and n thousand hours gliding.

As well as exploring Morocco, they sampled the delights of the Pyrenees on their way home

Mode S, Flarm, and ADS-B

Dickie Feakes offers a personal overview of the technology that underpins electronic proximity warning devices for aircraft



Dickie's personal view is as follows: "The CAA's proposals for the universal carriage of Mode S transponders," he says, "are a short-sighted solution to a long-term problem. Such a solution confers no obvious benefit to the gliding community. For technical reasons, I think Flarm is unlikely to become universal and is not backwards-compatible with Mode S. Mode S is a development of WW2 technology, while ADS-B is a 21st-century solution. Currently ADS-B equipment has similar costs to Mode S, but there is the possibility that lower-cost, lightweight units would be developed, something that would be difficult with Mode S. ADS-B has some attraction to gliding as it offers development opportunity and may offer other attractive features that can be developed to enhance our sport"

AS YOU will be aware, the CAA have announced plans to require all aircraft to carry Mode S transponders in all UK airspace. There are many technical and cost problems that still need to be clarified if this requirement is to be implemented and I understand the British Gliding Association is dealing with these at Executive Committee level.

This article does **not** discuss the pros and cons of the CAA proposal, but rather attempts to give a brief overview of the technical characteristics of the three main systems so that readers are more able to understand the technology involved.

With the rapid growth of GPS receivers, which are now carried in some form in the majority of flying machines, GPS co-ordinates can provide a basis for effective proximity warning between two aircraft on a potential collision course, provided that the relevant GPS data can be exchanged by some form of active data link. Following the introduction of Mode S transponders, the CAA have seized this opportunity to integrate the enhanced Mode S capability to provide some form of proximity warning. There is no doubt that an effective potential collision avoidance system is attractive to the gliding community, but is Mode S the way to go? Mode S is not the only system to provide this capability: two others specifically designed to operate in this environment are ADS-B (Automatic Dependent Surveillance Broadcast) and Flarm.

Secondary Surveillance Radar

Before a detailed overview of these three systems is discussed, it may be helpful to provide some background. The IFF (Identification Friend or Foe) system that was developed in World War Two was subsequently adopted by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) for universal civil use and is still in use today. The present system, usually referred to as a Mode A/C transponder, is used in conjunction with a primary air traffic radar system. A transponder antenna, co-located with the ground radar antenna, transmits a pulse on a frequency of just over 1GHz, which is received by the aircraft transponder. The aircraft transponder processes this signal, adds its coded pressure altitude, and then transmits a reply pulse on a slightly different frequency. This reply is received by the transponder antenna co-located with the ground radar and is processed so that it enhances the primary radar return on the radar controller's display, adding a label that denotes the interrogated aircraft's identification and height. As it is historically used to enhance the returns from a primary radar system, it is commonly referred to as Secondary Surveillance Radar (SSR).

However, most Mode A/C equipment has a number of shortcomings. It is power hungry, as electrical power is needed to generate the high-power transmitted pulses, as well as a heater to maintain the altitude sensor at a constant temperature. The amount of information that can be encoded on to the Mode A/C transponder signal is minimal and is limited to 4096 discrete codes. Although pressure altitude is encoded on to the returned pulse, there is no possibility that GPS positional information can be added. Finally, it is not selective; every transponder within range replies to all interrogations, resulting in overload of the system in areas of high traffic density.

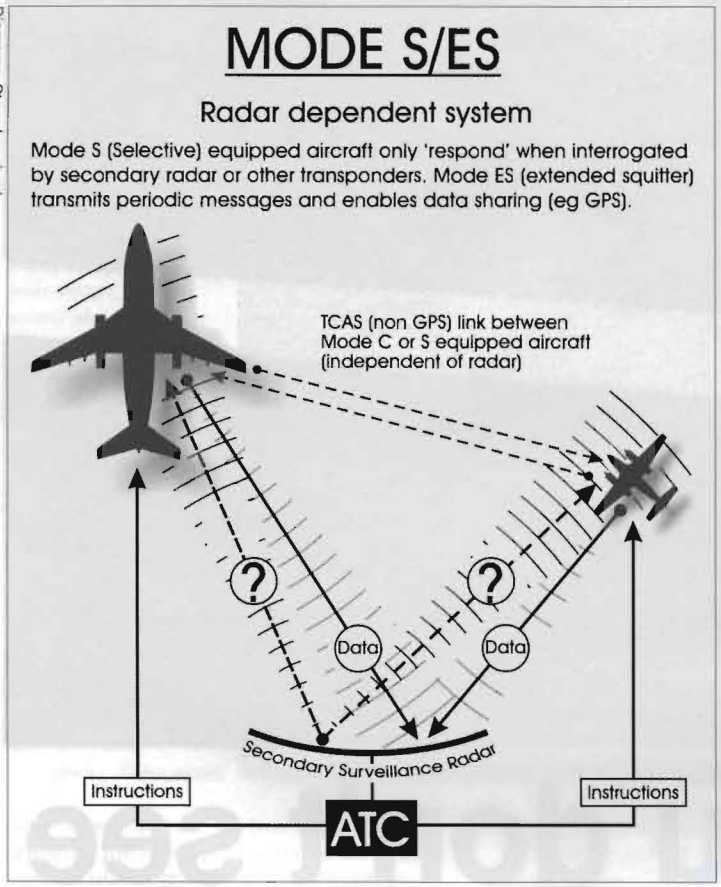
While Mode S is a very similar system, the transmit power is generated by efficient solid state devices, the altimetric pressure sender does not need to be held at a constant temperature in an oven, and considerably more information can be encoded on to the pulses.

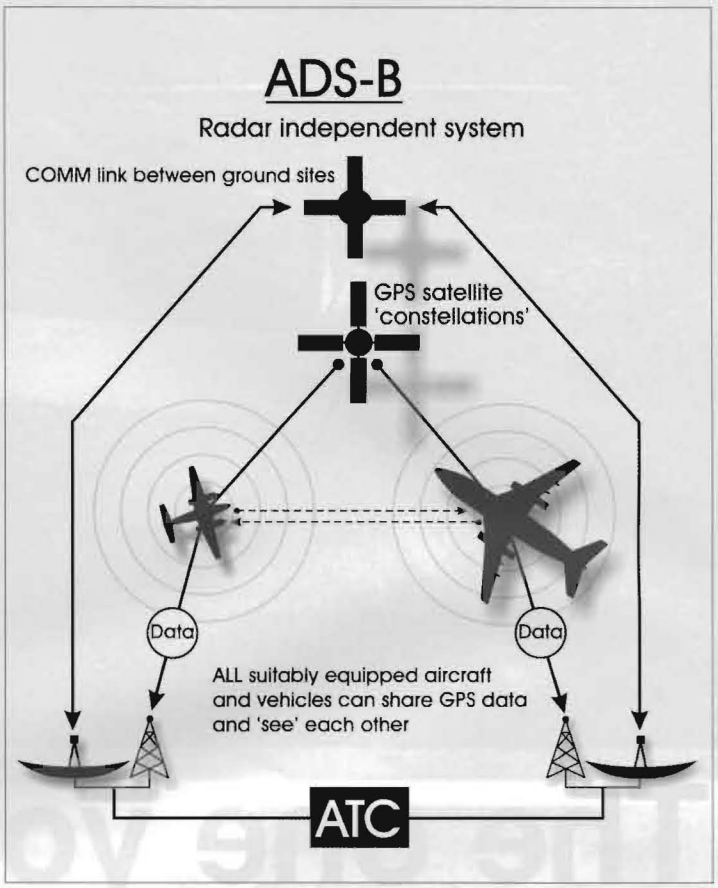
Finally, it is selective (the origin of the 'S' in Mode S), in that only those transponders that are specifically addressed actually reply. This means that less power is needed by the airborne equipment, an almost unlimited amount of information can be encoded on to each pulse, and replies are selective (for instance a controller could select that only gliders are interrogated). As a minimum, a unique and permanent aircraft identifier together with the aircraft's pressure height is encoded on to the return pulse.

Normally Mode S does not include any GPS positional information in its return. Accordingly some Mode S airborne transponders are equipped with an "extended squitter" (ES). This capability causes the airborne transponder to transmit enhanced replies encoded with GPS position and velocity vector at regular intervals irrespective of whether or not it is being interrogated , thus providing positional pulses that can be decoded by suitable receivers. This means that not only can the ground controller have a continuous record of the aircraft's GPS position and height, and hence its track and groundspeed, but so can any other aircraft that has the capability of receiving and decoding the pulses. This is the basis of an electronic anti-collision system as, if every aircraft's data is processed in a computer, those tracks showing a potential confliction can be used to provide a timely warning for avoiding action to be taken, thus minimising the possibility of a collision.

A development to the airborne transponder is TCAS (Traffic alert Collision Avoidance System). TCAS is a system whereby an airborne transponder can be interrogated by another airborne transponder and evaluate the reply to determine whether there is a collision hazard and provide the necessary warning. With Mode A/C and Mode S, the receiving aircraft's TCAS computer is able to determine the relative bearing and height of

Diagrams: Steve Longland





the transmitting aircrafts's pulse and, by integrating successive replies, is able to compute and display that a conflicting situation exists. Similar devices exist that are a little larger than a thick credit card and which can be mounted in General Aviation aircraft to provide proximity warning against transponder-equipped aircraft.

The primary function of a Mode S transponder is to provide highly detailed SSR returns to augment the ground primary radar returns and thus ease the controller's task in providing an effective air traffic service. In order to carry out this function, the Mode S airborne equipment has to have a transmitted pulse power of between 70 and 200 watts at a frequency of 1GHz. Such equipment has a high initial purchase price, requires costly professional installation, and is subject to expensive regular checks. Its power consumption is significantly lower than for early Mode A/C equipment and it will normally operate for some 6 to 10 hours on a standard glider 7 A/H battery.

The secondary function of a Mode S transponder equipped with an extended squitter is to provide GPS-encoded pulses that can be interrogated and decoded by other aircraft and ground stations equipped with suitable decoders, thus providing real-time proximity warning information. This second function, however, may be provided by other potentially cheaper, less complex devices such as Flarm and ADS-B.

Flarm

Flarm was developed by the Swiss to provide short-range collision avoidance in the European Alps. The hazards of flying in this environment are characterised by high-density glider flying with minimal ground clearance along well-known and popular routes. Flarm consists of a low-power datalink coupled with a GPS receiver that transmits a pulse containing the glider's GPS position and height. This pulse is received by other Flarm units within range, which then decode the GPS data and compare it with their own position. If a conflict is detected, then a visual and audio indication is generated to provide collision avoidance guidance. The datalink power is low, which gives a range of a few kilometres in ideal conditions. The frequencies, algorithms and protocols are unique to Flarm and are currently not compatible with any other proximity warning system. Furthermore, the unit does not currently have approval from any airworthiness authority.

While Flarm is a practical system in an environment such as the European Alps, where the flying machines are predominantly gliders, for any proximity-warning device to be 100 per cent effective, its carriage must be universal.

ADS-B

ADS-B is a system initially developed to provide three-dimensional "radar" cover in areas where it would be very expensive to install a ground-based radar environment. In its simplest form it is a datalink transponder operating on the same frequencies as SSR. The airborne station transmits regular pulses encoded with a unique identity, GPS position, velocity vector, and pressure altitude. While these pulses can be received and decoded by any Mode S equipment, the big advantage is that it is possible to receive the signals via a simple ground receiver and processor so that, when coupled to a PC, it can produce a three-dimensional picture showing the positions of all ADS-B equipped aircraft. Additionally, ADS-B equipped aircraft are able to process both Mode S and ADS-B signals to provide an effective proximity warning device. A further feature of ADS-B is that it is currently capable of receiving data transmissions giving current meteorological information and warnings as well as traffic advisories. ADS-B is currently being trialled in Alaska and Australia, where the cost of upgrading the ground radar environment is considerable. An excellent overview of ADS-B can be seen at *www.garmin.com/aviation/adsb.html*.

The ADS-B airborne transponder has a similar spec. to a Mode S transponder, and will initially be subject to similar costs, both for purchase and installation. However, I believe it has inherently a greater attraction for gliding. Unlike Flarm, it can provide effective proximity warning information for gliders, which will also include warnings against other GA and some military aircraft. It has significant development potential, including a solution to provide remote tracking information for gliding competitions such as the recently introduced Gliding Grand Prix.



The one you don't see

Richie Arnall describes what it's like to fly with Flarm, the Swiss-developed glider-specific collision warning system

RETURNING to Sisteron after a long flight, further north than I had been before, cloudbase lowering, soaring the western slopes of Blayeul Mountain to get enough height to comfortably glide to the airfield. Suddenly a small warning siren chirps out, followed by Paul in the rear of the Janus saying: "12 o'clock. Slightly low".

"Got him!" I reply, as I sight a glider coming towards us, camouflaged by broken patches of snow. The chance of collision reduces rapidly as I move away from the mountain.

I have flown in the French Alps quite a lot and last year had a very near miss whilst flying along a mountain ridge without the benefit of collision avoidance equipment. I am sure that the other pilot did not see me either as our closing speed was around, I guess, 150kt. I remember physically ducking in the cockpit – not that it would have done me any good.

With that experience last year and hearing about new equipment developed especially for gliders called Flarm from Jacques Noel – the CFI at La Motte du Caire – I decided the best thing I could do was to get one for this year's RAFGSA expedition to Sisteron.



The green LED light at five o'clock on this Flarm indicates the presence of another Flarm-equipped aircraft within about 2km that is not a current collision risk. If there is a chance of collision the green turns to red. The next warning is then a flashing red light that increases in frequency as time to collision decreases. The warnings are accompanied by an audio signal
(Richie Arnall)

Flarm is a small lightweight collision avoidance device developed in Switzerland by a non-profit-making group, to reduce the incidence of mid-air collisions and also to provide obstacle warning.

How it works, simplified: the equipment transmits a low-power radio signal containing GPS position and situation information. Reception of this information by another Flarm will enable the calculation of any conflict.

Hiring one was a non-starter so I decided to bite the bullet and order one. My first attempt was from Germany from a very helpful company; however, they had a backlog of orders that could not be satisfied within the expedition timescale. Luckily, the French agent had stock... but he didn't take credit cards. Time was a problem for money transfer and postage. This was resolved by a slight deviation via Valence en route to Sisteron, to meet the agent, exchanging cash (646 Euros) for a brand new Version 3 Flarm.

Because of the trailer length, we agreed to meet at a roadside location on the outskirts of Valence, appearing dubious, exchanging a wad of notes for a relatively small polythene bag.

In true development style, the installation was a little "Heath Robinson". Instructions provided were in French; however, I had downloaded English instructions from the excellent website. Self-adhesive Velcro is a godsend: the unit weight was light enough to fix to the top of the rear instrument coaming of my Janus. This seems to be the



Left: Nick Smith took this photograph during the RAFGSA's spring 2006 expedition to Sisteron in the Southern French Alps. Flarm, if fitted, would alert a pilot in this type of situation to the presence of another Flarm-equipped sailplane, even though, being behind him, it is outside his field of view

Right: this sailplane is using Flarm and, while the glider on the ridge below left is clearly visible, what's happening below and ahead? The lights on the instrument's "clock face" are red, indicating that a collision is possible. The four green lights on the left in a vertical row are, from top, Receive, Send, GPS and Power (photo: Richie Arnall)

best common place for two-seater gliders, allowing the little radio aerial to be in the vertical plane, giving the best reception. Power came from a small dedicated gel cell battery installed in the luggage compartment (55mA@12V). The GPS aerial was likewise secured with Velcro to the coaming.

The display on the front of the Flarm unit consists of a clock face display of bi-colour Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs). The centre of the clock face has four of them: two for indicating above and two below, at different angles. To the left of the clock face display are four status LEDs. The *Power* one is obvious. The *GPS* light indicates steady when GPS reception is okay and flashes whilst acquiring satellites.

The *Send* light indicates that the unit is transmitting after getting a valid GPS fix. The *Receive* light indicates that another Flarm is transmitting in the immediate area (circa 2km). This is the first indication of another Flarm-equipped glider.

On switching Flarm on, the GPS fix was very quick, normally within 30 seconds. Any other transmitting Flarm gliders on the ground would be detected by the Receive light but there would be no clock code indication unless you were about to tow your glider into another.

In flight, the first indication was the Receive LED, followed by a green clock code indication, followed if there was a chance of collision by a steady red light, followed by a flashing red increasing in flash frequency as the time to collision came down. All red warnings are accompanied by audio warnings of increasing pitch.

I found in flight that I received almost no false alarms, flying in thermals with other Flarm-equipped gliders produced only steady green warning despite the proximity if you were racked into a thermal together. More erratic circling did produce warnings. One of the drawbacks of Flarm is that both (all) gliders must be fitted and functional for the system to work. However, if you get a warning, you can be sure that the other glider will get one as well, which is reassuring. The warnings are suppressible with the push button on the Flarm front panel, but in practice we never used the facility, just leaving the Flarm to get on with things.

On clear days, often you would see gliders prior to any presence warnings but invariably under poor conditions such as at cloudbase the Flarm was markedly superior. I estimated that in the Alps every Swiss glider was equipped; most of the German ones were, whilst the French had a slower uptake. They were fitting them to Sisteron Aeroclub single-seaters during our two-week stay this spring.

One of my justifications for purchasing a Flarm was as a back-up logger, although not approved at the moment the system records .igc files, which can be downloaded. There is a barometric pressure sensor within Flarm but no engine-running recorder.
An obstacle database is stored in the Flarm, which provides collision warnings for obstacles such as masts or electricity transmission lines across valleys.

The biggest problem is the requirement for all gliders to be equipped in order for the system to be fully functional.

The continentals seem to be addressing this problem with over 3000 Flarms delivered to date, particularly to mountain areas. The Flarm does not give you steering directions in the event of a collision warning, presumably to avoid turning you ➢



Above: Although it is not a universal system, many Alpine sailplanes are equipped with Flarm, which (below) gives warnings from a database for obstacles such as masts or wires across valleys (Jay Rebbeck)



into a mountain. It is up to you to resolve the conflict.

For the UK the main problem is that the unit transmits on a frequency that is not approved for aeronautical transmission, being reserved for ground-based short-range devices. However, the European Union harmonisation may actually be in our favour here as we are now all using the same frequency spectrum; therefore if a device is allowed on the continent, justification for not allowing its use in the UK is tenuous given the numbers in continental use.

Recent developments; the new LX7007 vario system can now be delivered with an integral Flarm module. SeeYou Mobile and StrePla Mobile PDA software will display Flarm warnings transmitted by NMEA data. Remote displays are available for two-seat aircraft or for hiding the Flarm unit behind the instrument panel. This display is remarkably compact and fairly priced. Another development is a voice synthesiser device, which will tell you of any conflict. Also I believe the Swiss Helicopter Rescue Service is using the system for glider and obstacle avoidance.

Future developments: it may be possible to replace/incorporate the obstacle database with an airspace database to produce an autonomous airspace warning device, which would be more applicable for the UK. A ground-based system is potentially under development in South Africa, which could be used to track glider movements in a local area, relatively cheaply. The Australians are developing their own variant, which has some interesting potential.

'About ten different pilots flew with Flarm in my Janus. All of them expressed praise and enthusiasm for the system, especially for mountain soaring'

About ten different pilots flew with Flarm in my Janus. All of them expressed praise and enthusiasm for the system, particularly within the mountain soaring environment.

The Flarm system will not change the ongoing EASA/CAA Light Aviation Transponder requirements but it does however introduce a cost-effective and low power consumption collision warning system.

I feel should it be given permission by the appropriate frequency allocation agency and the principles of Flarm be adopted by the UK gliding movement.

For more information see: *www.flarm.com*

Richie, 46, has been gliding since 1976 and is a full-rated instructor. He has all three Diamonds and 2,600hrs, of which 300hrs are mountain soaring in the Alps and Andes. An avionics engineer in the RAF and DCFI of Bannerdown, he owns a share in a Janus C

Next issue: what's happening with ADS-B?

Another pair of eyes

MY LOCAL airfield, *writes Simon Waddell*, is Bex, east of Lake Geneva, just one of a dozen or so Swiss clubs launching gliders into our region of the Alps. To this you can add a number of French clubs to the south. On any good weekend in the season there will be scores of gliders airborne. We have approx 70 members, of whom about 40 fly regularly. On any flyable weekend, we have 12-15 gliders in the air.

Although the Alps are a relatively large playground, there are a number of points where traffic tends to congregate – airfields, cols, well-known hotspots, ridges, trophy mountains, and so on – creating areas of increased risk of collision. I personally know two pilots involved in two separate mid-airs – luckily all survived – and the same would be true of most pilots. In my 20 years of flying (in the UK and Switzerland) I have also been involved in a couple of near misses at cloudbase.

During the winter of 2004, together with three or four other clubs in the area, our committee took the decision to equip all club machines with Flarm and make it mandatory on all privately-owned machines using club tugs. It was not made mandatory on self-launchers. It would be fair to say that was some initial resistance to the idea – along the lines of many of the arguments recently featured on internet chatrooms – but the committee carried the day, and we have now accumulated a season and a half of experience.

Many other Swiss clubs adopted the same measure, as did most German and Austrian clubs flying in the Alps – the French appear to have their own administrative problems that have limited adoption – so now the majority, but by no means all, of the gliders one encounters in flight in the Alps are Flarm equipped.

As far as I am concerned, the experience has been 100 per cent positive. I cannot instance any occasion where Flarm has prevented a mid-air involving me, but there have been many where it has pinpointed traffic I had not seen, and perhaps would not have seen. I think I have average "see and be seen" skills and Flarm forms a very useful complement to them.

When flying with a passenger, every pilot appreciates the contribution of the extra pair of eyes, and that is what Flarm has provided me. I find it a very useful addition to my equipment. In casual conversations around the club I have never heard an "anti" comment (other than concerning a software problem) – except from two self-launcher owners who don't have it installed and who appear to have infallible 360° vision.

It is worth saying a few words about the warning display. This was originally a horizontal strip of 10 LEDs, although a separate plan position display, like a clock face, was released as an accessory by the time I bought my Flarm. I found the linear display difficult to interpret in a hurry but the plan display was easy.

If I have a criticism, it would be the following: during normal flying, there is little need to include Flarm in the instrument scan – so none of the feared (by some) increase in heads-down flying there. However, when an alert IS generated you do have to look at the panel just at the very instant when you SHOULD urgently be looking outside. To alleviate this problem I installed my display in the glare shield.

Furthermore, last winter I discovered an accessory called TR-DVS made in Switzerland (*www.triadis.ch*). This connects to the Flarm and provides a synthesised vocal warning (eg: *beep-beep eleven o'clock 400 metres*). My wife offered this to me for my birthday (luckily in February) and I haven't looked at my Flarm all this season except for periodic status checks. At the moment, DVS also warns of attempts to land wheel-up (not yet done that). The next version will warn of attempts to take off with airbrakes open (done that) and flying with the wheel down (and done that too) – this all assumes the necessary switches and wires are installed in the glider. At the moment, DVS is available in English, French and German.

As regards ergonomics, it has been easy to incorporate into the panel. Those who reject Flarm on the basis that their panel is already full clearly have no understanding of the system. My Flarm is fitted behind the panel, with a remote antenna. The circular warning display, about the size of a British 50p piece, is incorporated into the edge of the glare shield, practically in my line of sight – I keep it installed despite the DVS since the hole is already there. On the operational side of things I would say:

1. While Flarm represents a tiny additional current drain on the battery, it has eliminated the need for a separate GPS for Winpilot. FAI approval is of little interest to me.
2. The first annual software update was painless for me, a lapsed computer engineer. For the less technical, the club gave a free update service.
3. There were reports of some instability with the new software. I didn't experience any and a later release of "bug fix" software eliminated it.
4. It has proven reliable in operation.

On the downside, the Flarm organisation arose out of one of the Swiss technical schools and lacks some aspects one might hope for of a support infrastructure. For example, the website and all their documentation is German-language only. Some documents are available in English but these are benevolent contributions from third parties in the gliding community.

I find the recent internet discussions about Flarm, TCAS, ADS-B and MODE S confusing, both technically and logically. As I see it, Flarm provides increased protection against the greatest risk in my flying. It is not a universal panacea and I don't care. I know that I will probably have to replace it (or complement it) with something else in a few years but that is the nature of life today. My Flarm cost me £250 in 2004 and will last for at least 4-5 years. £1 per week for the increased security – it's a no brainer.







Main picture: Moyra "all glammed up" on the front of the Daily Mail *in August 1935; Above right: she was the only woman pilot when she joined YGC; Right: seen with Kelly Teagle, one of YGC's instructors, this year*

Richard Harris

Once you get the bug...



... you're stuck with it. Richard Harris (pictured left) interviews Moyra Johnston – who joined Yorkshire GC two years before Amy Johnson did and, 71 years on, is its honorary president

WHEN Moyra Johnson was a little girl, she caught measles – so her father strung a toy aeroplane above her bed to give her something to play with.

Today, more than 80 years later, she looks upon that as the start of her lifelong passion for flying – a passion which now leaves her probably the oldest woman glider pilot in Britain and honorary president of her "heaven on earth", Yorkshire GC.

For a small child dreaming of flying like that toy above her bed, any old aircraft would probably have done.

But when a few years later a friend of her father's allowed her to help him build an American kit glider in the garage of their home in York, the young Moyra knew where her future lay.

Not in powered flight, in the sort of plane her dad gave her as a toy, but in the shape of the strange beast being built in the garage.

Even though that glider never really flew – "When it wasn't breaking it was having heavy landings," she says – it was enough to convince her that flying without an engine was the challenge she craved.

"It's something you get smitten by," says Moyra, who lives in a lovely old town house in the heart of York, 25 miles from the club. "Once you get the bug you're stuck with it."

It was in 1935 that the 19-year-old Moyra Horsley first came to Sutton Bank, home of Yorkshire GC, not giving a thought to the fact that in those days gliding was a firmly male pursuit.

"I have always been a bit of a tomboy," she says. "I was an only child and I was a girl and I think my father taught me all the things that that boys did rather than girls.

"Gliding was just something I wanted to do – and anyway it was one of the cheapest sports you could go in for!"

Moyra was, not surprisingly, the only woman member at Sutton Bank, although Amy Johnson (the first woman to fly solo from England to Australia and the most famous female aviator in history) joined briefly a couple of years later.

These days Moyra tends to minimise the pioneering nature of her early flying, dismissing bit as "just something I had to do". But her bulging scrapbook gives some clue to how unusual it was for a woman to be flying gliders back in those pre-war days.

It wasn't just that she was extraordinarily good looking ("pretty" and "blonde" were two adjectives never far away from any newspaper reports of the day), although that undoubtedly helped.

But the very fact that a young woman was indulging in such a pastime was enough to turn her, as one newspaper admitted, into "the darling of the press".

"Soaring Into the Wind" said a front page headline in the Daily Mail on August 26, 1935, where a photograph of Moyra – "all glammed up," as she puts it – adorned a report on the national gliding meeting at Sutton Bank.

And the club – founded just a couple of years earlier by enthusiasts who included the likes of former world champion Philip Wills and Fred Slingsby, founder of Slingsby Aviation – banned her and other women from its summer club meeting on the grounds that they would be "too much of a distraction".

"I was pretty unusual in those days, I suppose, but it was something I wanted to do and I wasn't going to let the men beat me," she says. "In my own mind I was better than the lads anyway!"

Not that it was all plain sailing. One of her earliest appearances in the local paper came under the headline "Woman Pilot's Pluck After Landing On Cliff Edge", an account of a hard landing which left her with a 12 shillings and sixpence (that's 62p) bill for a broken skid. "I was more interested ➢



Moyra at Sutton Bank this summer with a two-seat high-performance sailplane that's a far cry from her experience of training – on a Primary

Richard Harris

in the technical cause of the accident," she calmly told the local reporter.

Even so, she says, such experiences meant that for a long time afterwards she made the journey to Sutton Bank with butterflies in her stomach.

"I defy anyone to say they have no fear," she says. "Everyone has fear and sometimes I would be terrified."

In the early days Moyra was accompanied to the gliding club by her parents, who stayed there in a caravan and effectively put an end to any "canoodling" with the younger male members. She did though strike up a promising friendship with one young pilot, Henry Blakeston (much later the club's joint president with her until his death in 1994).

But he married her best friend Esme Forster, whom he met when Moyra took her to Sutton Bank one day to introduce her to the new world of gliding.

Moyra's early training on a basic Dickson Primary – little more than a chair on wheels – led her to her first gliding qualification, an A Certificate which she achieved for staying airborne for 30 seconds on July 14 1935.

Less than a month later she got her B Certificate, for turning left and right, and, on September 29, her C Certificate, for keeping off the ground for a full five minutes.

Those were the last gliding qualifications Moyra ever bothered with, because she has "somehow never quite got round" to such things as Bronze or Silver Badges."I just enjoy flying," she says. "I don't need anything else to make it any better."

For someone so absorbed by gliding, it is ironic that Ernest Johnson, the man Moyra married in 1938, never shared his wife's enthusiasm for flying."Ernest really didn't like flying at all so he had no interest whatsoever in gliding," she says. "He was not at all like me. I feel I've been able to fly all my life – I even fly in my dreams!"

Despite her age Moyra – a Freeman of the cities of both York and London, thanks to her great great grandfather's prowess as a gun-maker – shows no sign of slowing down.

She still plays an active part in the gliding club and, although a nasty virus brought a temporary stop to her flying last year, she is looking forward to getting back into the air again soon.

"I have always adored Sutton Bank," she says. "I love it. It is my heaven on earth. I love the atmosphere up there. I like the countryside and I like the people. There is something different about glider pilots and I've hardly met a bad one yet."

She takes satisfaction in knowing that more than 70 years ago she blazed a trail for today's female glider pilots.

"I've never believed that men make better pilots than women," she says, "and I've never believed they learn quicker either. They're just better at pretending that they've learned it!"

The Yorkshire GC's only woman instructor, Kelly Teagle – who went solo 11 years ago when she was 16 – is one of those who has benefited. "It's pretty impressive, isn't it?" she comments. "I'd like to go on flying for as long as I can – but another 60 years? I doubt it!"

A bit of

Lasham pilot David Masson explains the forecasting and the psychology that lay behind his 845km flight on July 11, 2006

BACK IN 2002 I wrote an article about my first 750km on a fantastic day in April of that year. I ended that with the intention of doing a 750km triangle, a 750km in 15-metre mode and a crack at the big one (1,000km) when the opportunity presented itself. I've failed. The attempts have ended in quite a few flights over 720km, often on not-entirely-good days. I think there have been two 1,000km days since then, but I couldn't go for it on either one. I have got better at weather forecasts (spotting potentially good days), planning big flights and quite a few mates now have their 750s with a bit of my input.

2006 has not proven good for "possible 750" days and I missed those earlier in the season. To my knowledge no-one had yet done a 750 in England and I had been stretching the meaning of "possible" and "optimism" to try to get the first. This article describes the met I looked at and the task planning I did, but undoubtedly the biggest factor is the high level of optimism I needed. To set the scene, I must add what a flight I'd made three days earlier had reminded me...

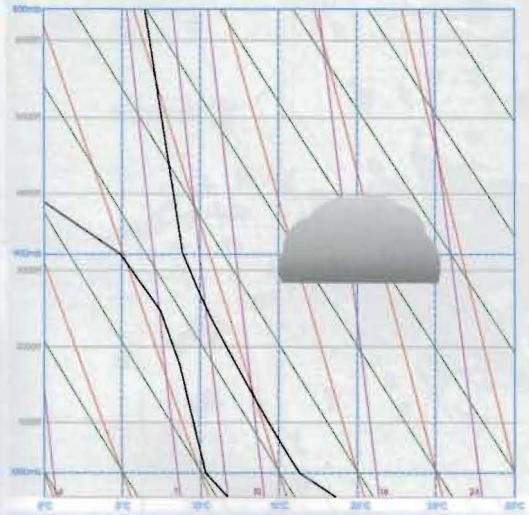
Though the weather wasn't going to be epic I had planned a double O/R 750 into East Anglia with a remote (from Lasham) start and finish. With a front coming in from the north-west quicker than expected (or hoped for) I fell back and completed a 516km task. I'd taken off into a duff sky, struggled doing only 50km/h for two hours before connecting with the "good" weather, 200km downwind, then back into a 17kt wind along broken streets under a very spreadout sky and cirrus from the incoming front.

No-one else did much from Lasham that day. It reminded me how much could be done if your task coincided with energy lines and you could avoid the slow bits. With a better start and finish point on that day, a 750 would not actually have been that far off. And it reminded me of the levels of optimism you need to have on some days.

Weather

As Tuesday, July 11, approached several people had asked me what I thought about it. I wasn't that committal. It wasn't clear if the cold front was going to go through early enough and each run of the model I looked at gave slightly different answers. Putting my thoughts into words gave something like: *"It should be good after the front with cu and an early start. But I'm not sure at what height the inversion is going to form. I'm pretty sure it's going to get too stable and*

met and lots of optimism



N52W1(around Buckingham): typical of the forecast soundings for 10am

blue at Lasham, but across the middle of the country it may be good enough. It can also go blue in the middle, but East Anglia and towards Wales should retain cu most of the day." I really didn't want to think that a 750 wasn't a possibility. I had to remain optimistic until I knew otherwise.

Most of my mates who wanted 750s were away at comps so I was glad I didn't need to send a "possible 750 alert" – I'd probably make a fool of myself again. On Sunday the only person I gave any warning to was my syndicate partner, Al Nunn, who has a share in a Nimbus 3 and has been trying hard for his first 750: *"Not sure about Tuesday as a potential 750. Last time I looked it didn't quite look there (because of the air around Lasham), though it could be in the middle of the country. Let me know if you could fly and if you could be warned at short notice."*

Jack Harrison was rating the day as a 2. I could see where he was coming from, but I was sure he was placing too much emphasis on a low inversion and the probability of its being blue. I had been too busy to do a proper Lasham forecast, but I couldn't stand the thought of people missing this potentially good day. So on Monday evening I did a quick note suggesting it wasn't that far off a possible 750 day across the middle of the country and what I was unsure about – how the forecast soundings could be misinterpreted and hide an inversion that actually allowed cu below it. With my lack of time to put any detail on it and inability to say "it's definitely going to be good", I ended by stating I was going to fly whatever and put the onus of decision on the reader: "If you go with me you're an optimist as well". I'm glad to say quite a few Lashamites took heed.

One detail I didn't mention was the fact that post-cold front I thought there was the possibility of cold air advection taking place aloft, most likely north of London, giving increased thermal strength and depth of convection in that area. I did not keep the forecast soundings that suggested this, so I cannot present them as proof. This heavily influenced my decision to do the bulk of my task in that area (so what if it's a bit blue round some of the rest of the task!)

Right: N52W1 at 1600. Realistic temperatures and dewpoints suggest this was blue or nearlly-blue. There was probably an inversion at 4500-5000ft. but slightly cooler below, allowing some hazecaps

All diagrams and maps enhanced by Steve Longland

The satellite images on p29 overleaf are courtesy of MODIS Rapid Response Project at NASA/GSFC

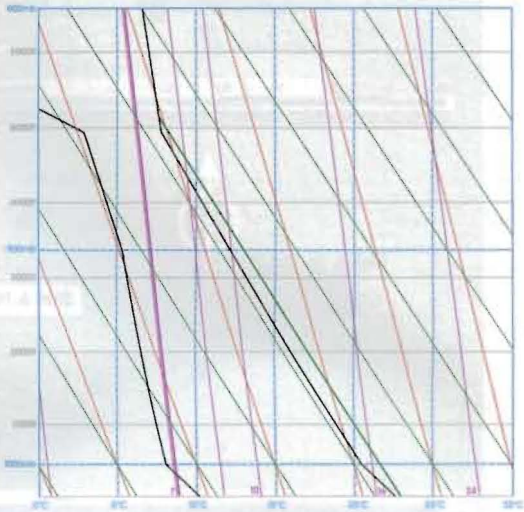
Early on Tuesday I looked briefly at the met, then went to Lasham to rig and water. I had already looked at a lot of soundings around the already-decided task area and had kind of made my mind up anyway. In print, without being able to vary temperature and dew point and give you a feel for the results of those variations, it is hard to convey my real feelings for the day.

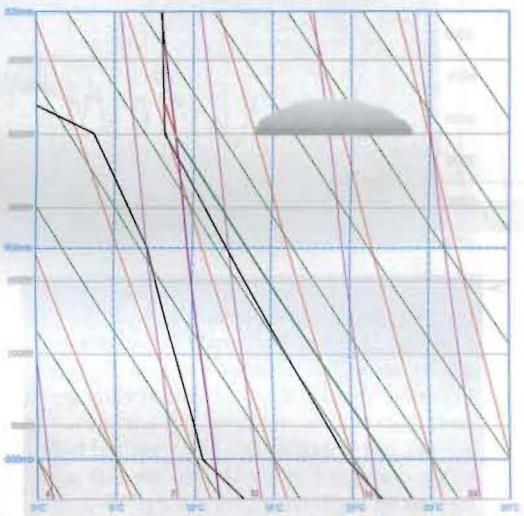
But here are a few of the deciders for me. First are the 09Z soundings *(above left)*. They all showed early cu with convection already going well, cloudbase approaching 3,000ft. To the east dewpoints were higher (and cloudbase lower) towards the receding front. I wasn't sure how early that front would clear East Anglia. I won't present the 12Z soundings. They suggested it going well over the whole task area, but with the risk of it bluing out in the middle. The 15Z forecast soundings *(right)* show a cross-section across the task area, indicating the tendency for or probability of its being blue in the middle but with cu in the east and west of the area.

Task planning and a fall-forward

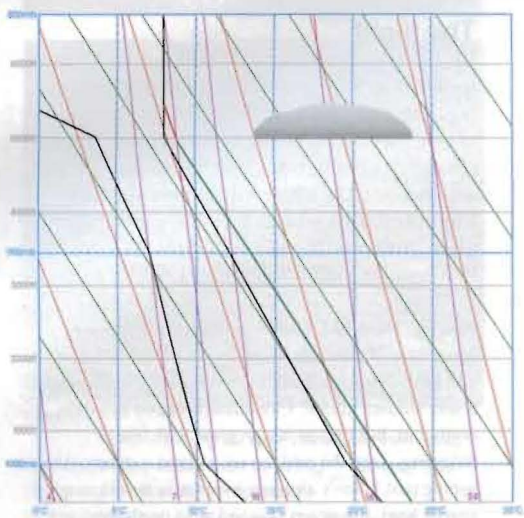
It still wasn't going to be a straightforward 750 day – I needed to give myself a helping hand. So I planned around 780 on the basis:
– that I wanted to fly as much as possible in what I thought was the best air (East Anglia);
– task alignment could exploit any streeting;
– the first leg was downwind to help cover early distance, especially as the wind was forecast to reduce during the day;
– I'd go towards Wales, where there'd be cu, but not too far because there'd be too much;
– I'd have to cross the possibly blue bit in the middle of the country;
– I didn't want to start from Lasham: going round the LTMA would cost me too much distance and I couldn't go downwind first;
– Didcot might help with first/last climbs.

On the day itself cu formed early and I found myself ready at 9am. I always ➢

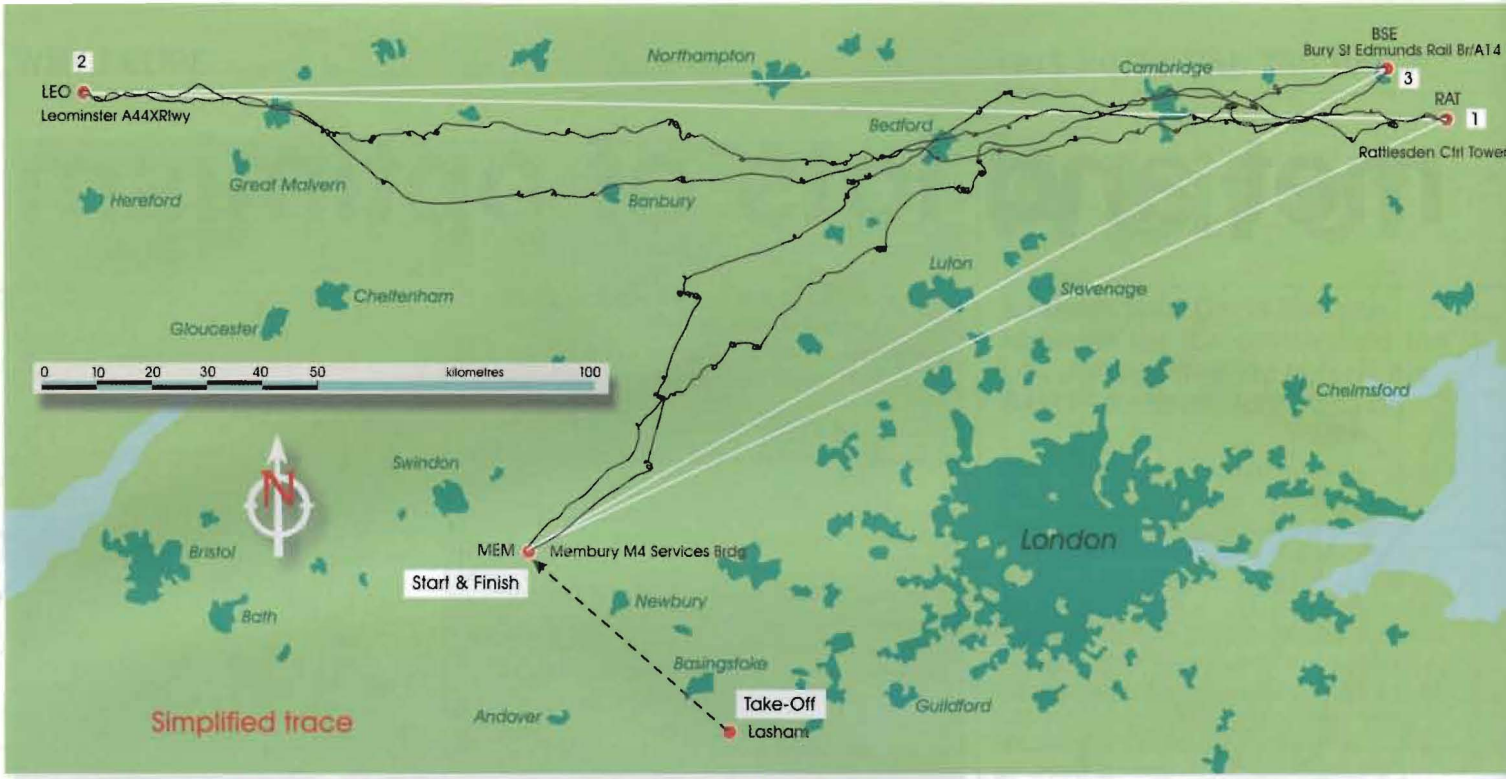


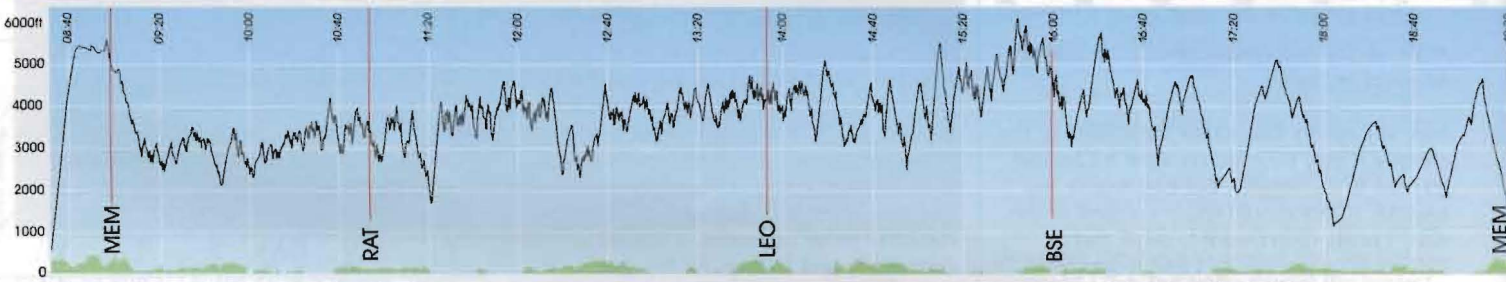


N52E1 (Suffolk) at 1600. Higher dewpoints in the east suggested there would retain cumulus for longer. This still goes blue if dewpoints drop much



N52W2 at 1600. Near blue, but further west (Leominster) it was almost definitely going to retain cu at 4,500-5,000ft





bear in mind I can fall forward if an earlier-than-expected start is possible. A phone call from the Standard Nationals at Bicester, asking about the weather, gave me the gen I needed (thanks, Kay) – it was already going well there with some streeting. Uncanny – I was just about to call her! I rushed back to the computer and stretched the task a little to let me have a crack at the 15-metre distance record, but still allowing a 750 if I ended up at, say, Bicester. I came up with Membury – Rattlesden – Leominster – Bury St Edmunds – Membury (845.8km).

The flight

I got a tug very quickly (thanks, Nick). We took off at 9:30am and headed north-west, passing cloudbase at 1,500ft QFE, and then above the cu for really beautiful tow into a strongish headwind. I elected to pull off at around 5,000ft a few kilometres short of Membury. This would give a long initial glide with a tailwind but meant I'd have to finish quite high (due to the 1,000m rule).

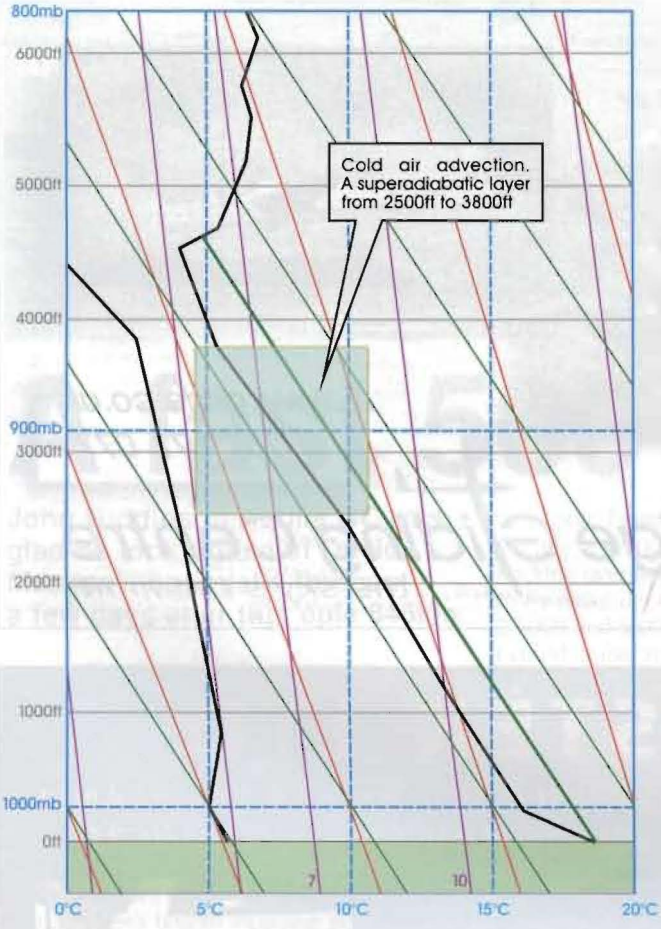
First leg: MEM-RAT 184km at 96km/h: There were some hints of wave above the cu, but I ignored them and fell below cloudbase to the north of Didcot where it was around 3,000ft. Cloudbase dropped as I went north-east, but I made fair progress with bits of following – and the odd top-up to cross – streets. After getting past Luton's airspace it was easy to follow good energy lines, the streets (aligned west-north-west) got better, the thermals got better and I was really motoring. The streets fell apart a little before the turn and, in the distance to the south-east, I could see the back end of the cold front that had cleared earlier (phew – I hadn't been sure whether or not I'd catch it up).

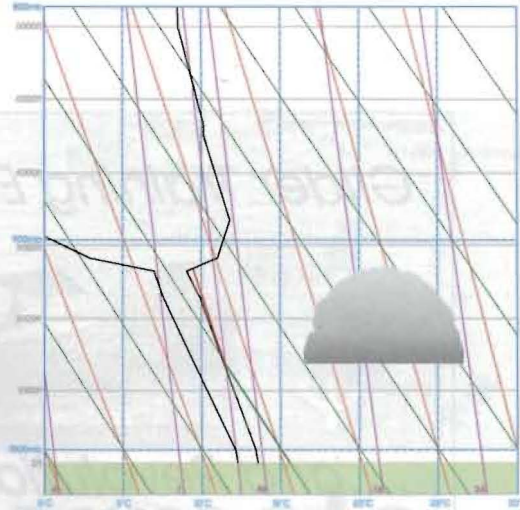
Second leg: RAT-LEO 247km at 84km/h: Back to the streets, but it took me a bit of time to work out that their orientation had changed dramatically. I suspected this was wave influence aloft. They still gave some very good following up to around Newport Pagnell. Here it began to show signs of bluing out, the thermals lost their form and it felt like I slowed down a bit. Around then I heard people starting/re-starting at the Standards. I sniggered as I'd already done around 300km. The nearly blue bit didn't last that long and I hooked into some excellent streets to take me the last 50km in and out of Leominster. It was about five hours into the flight before I finally got above 4,000ft Lasham QFE.

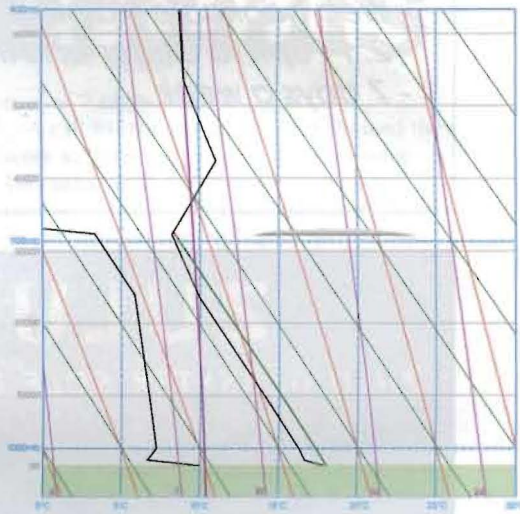
Third leg: LEO-BSE 236km at 110km/h: Downwind again and I started thinking about timing. I figured I could turn BSE by about 5pm, in which case this task was well on – it should leave me at least two hours for the last 180km. The nearly-blue wasn't a problem this time as there were haze caps and the thermals had organised themselves better. Looking east, the sky was fantastic with booming cu – bases up to 5,500ft – and 5kt-plus climbs. This was the cold-air advection I'd been hoping for doing its stuff. Around Newport Pagnell I was joined by Al Nunn in a 5kt thermal. I felt I had nagged him a bit into this 750 attempt. As we parted, I thought: "Good, he's going to get it at last – another job done". Unfortunately, as I approached BSE the clouds stopped looking so good. I didn't expect that. Still I turned almost dead on 5pm and still thought the rest would be a romp...

Fourth leg BSE-MEM 179km at 53km/h: It wasn't. I couldn't believe that a sky that looked so good half an hour ago could die so quickly. I had one more reasonable climb (3.5kt) and then struggled to find 2kt. I limped on into a mainly blue sky with a few haze caps, but always out of reach. Down to 1,200ft on the edge of Milton Keynes, I pushed over the edge of the town in the knowledge that I couldn't go too far, but could turn back and land at Cranfield. A 2kt climb and a couple of weaker bubbles got me high enough for a glide to Bicester. That would get me past the 750 mark. I began to think "evening thermals, towns". Around 7pm I arrived over Bicester at about 900ft AGL. The Standard Class was all parked up and it did look very inviting. I explored over the town and found something very weak. I was so, so close to giving up the task, beating up in front of the bar and dropping in on some mates. But it picked up and after 20 minutes of grinding away I was on glide to Abingdon. I had to go on. The sky was completely devoid of cloud. Except one – Didcot – the power station was still on! There was still hope. Ten minutes in 0.9kt over Headington and then another over south Oxford. I thought: "If I can just get another 500ft, I'll go for Didcot". Another 10 minutes in 0.8kt gave me that. And Didcot was working. Four separate bubbles and I climbed high enough for a comfortable glide back to Membury, arriving overhead at about 1,000ft at 8:20pm. I'd done it! What an effort – only 45km/h for the last two hours!

Fifth "leg": MEM-landing – a bit of a lesson: I suppose I had better mention this... I had run out of drinking water two hours before and, after an 11-hour flight, I was very tired and dehydrated. Despite plenty of time to look around and plan my approach, my judgment,







Top right: Larkhill 06Z
Shows the air just post-front (it is still quite moist) and an inversion at around 3,000ft. Trigger temperature of 16°C gives cu at 1500ft.
Below right: Larkhill 09Z
Only three hours later and lots has happened. Cold air advection has occurred above about 3,000ft, raising the inversion a little. The surface dewpoints have dropped dramatically. Convection is going well. but higher temperatures and lower dewpoints mean it is about to go blue. However, this could retain cu if cold air advection were to continue aloft
Left: Nottingham 12Z
Showing a superadiabatic layer from 2,500 to 3,800ft, which would give thermals a tremendous boost (they become super-buoyant). The temperature at 3,800ft is approx 0.5°C less than it "should" be. This is the first time I have ever seen this on an actual sounding. This is what I think happened around Cambridge during the afternoon

decision-making and reactions were badly impaired. I changed my mind about where I was going to put her down and my arrival on the ground was less than elegant. The resulting groundloop caused some damage to my baby. It spoiled my day somewhat. I thought I was pretty good at looking after myself over a long flight and I was shocked at how little I had left. I could have made a much worse mess of it. And to think I had had asked for an aerotow retrieve back to Lasham. Utter madness! It's not going to put me off long flights – I must learn to look after myself even better. Please learn from me: don't let it happen to you!

Results

There were quite a few near misses for 750s from Lasham that day – most just failed at the end as the day died rather too quickly. I'm really pleased that Al Nunn completed his. They all went north-west first and were slow for the first hour or two.

The contrast in our fortunes demonstrates the importance of task selection in getting the most out of a day. I got the met about right and matched a good task to it. If ratified, my flight will be a new 15-metre, three-TP distance record of 844.0km. It turns out my finish altitude was slightly too low (18 metres over the 1,000m rule). Allowance is made for this for distance attempts and it slightly reduces the distance I can claim.

In retrospect, someone fast in an Open Class glider could have done a similar, but bigger task. 1,000km would probably have been possible on what, really, could not be regarded as an epic day. This re-confirms to me that 1,000km-plus is well possible in an 18-metre, or even a 15-metre, ship in thermals on a really good day. I hope my next article will be about that...

Conclusions

Well, I am a weather man. I try to make my forecasts as accurate as possible – a realistic prediction of what the day should bring, along with the possible variations. If I am any good we should be able to put a broad brush over what I say should happen and what actually happened and say: "Yes, that was about right". I think we can do that.

BUT, I KNOW, I WILL BE WRONG OR INACCURATE – about what happens where and when. Any forecast has its limitations. I trust my own ones to a large extent, but basically refuse to trust them implicitly. I still choose to remain optimistic: it may start earlier; it might end later; it might be better over there; I might be able to go closer to that; and so on. With the weather information that I had it was very hard to say to others that it was a "possible 750 day". In retrospect, I made a lot of correct/lucky choices about the weather and the task. I have to admit I was incredibly lucky to have completed it. One thing is certain – there is no way I could have gone for it or done it without a big dose of optimism.

David, from Lasham, flew his LS6 for 10hrs 24mins on task, averaged 2.6kt in thermals and gained a total of 4741 BGA Ladder points for this flight





Top: 12.30hrs, showing cu over the whole task area, with good west-south-west streeting in the east and beginning to blue out in the middle
Above: 14.15hrs, nearly blue in the middle, but still good cu and some streeting at both extremes of the task area. Spreadout further west

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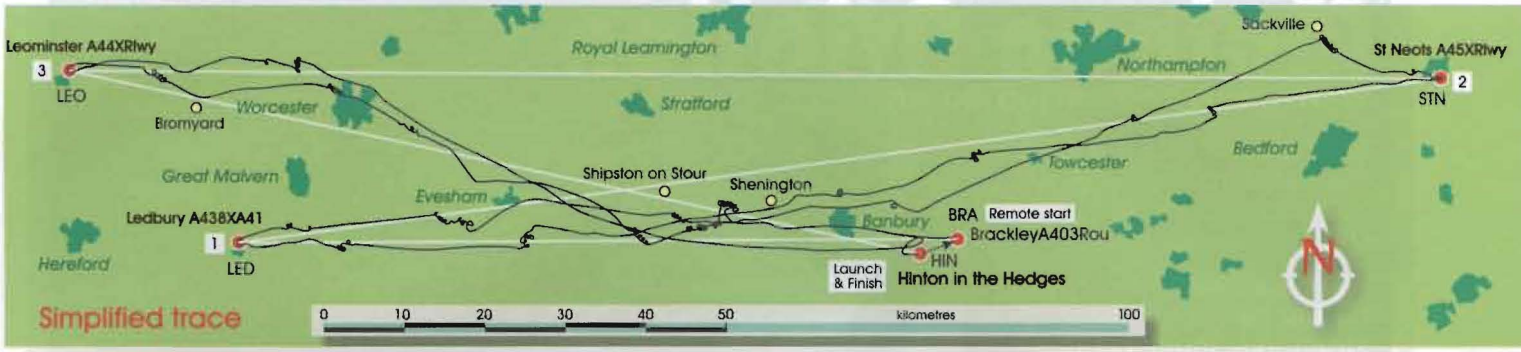
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Steve Longland

A fast 500 in thermals

John Giddins of Aquila GC was glad he took notice of David Masson's optimistic forecast a few days after that epic 845km

THE early part of July saw days with excellent soaring conditions, high cloud bases and not temperatures. My regular review of soaring forecasts indicated that July 19 was likely to be a good cross-country day with a high cloud base in the south. Tuesday evening's update suggested that the wind would be 130/10 (not always a good direction) with high pressure moving east and a sea breeze incursion possibly reaching St Neots. Blue thermals were forecast but in the west cu bases might reach 7,000ft. Lasham's forecast was quite specific on the eastern and western boundaries of these conditions. Telephone conversations with Aquila GC members on Tuesday evening discussed possible east-west 500km tasks within the constraints of the forecasts. A further check was made early the next morning, but nothing had changed.

Aquila was holding its soaring week at Hinton in the Hedges. Several club members and visitors were enthusiastically rigging their gliders, including Andy Preston's Discus, Howard Stone's LS6-17, Martin Hasting's Mosquito, Jeff Luck's Nimbus 2 and my Ventus 2C. The merits of six different 500km tasks were discussed with Brackley North (BRA) – Ledbury (LED) – St Neots (STN) – Leominster (LEO) – Hinton (HIN) being settled on. A downwind first leg followed by an into-wind one during the strongest part of the day seemed to be in order. It would then be necessary to stay high in order to get round St Neots if the sea breeze had reached there before heading back into the better conditions to the west.

However, of the four pilots attempting a 500km task, two decided to go into wind to Bury St Edmunds on their first leg.

A late start to thermals was expected due to the need for a high trigger temperature. Launching started around 13.30 into blue conditions. The two gliders heading east reported good climbs. My initial climb in my Ventus 2C, 584, was at an average of 3.6kt to 4,700ft. I made a start at 14.02, crossing the line at 4,500ft and cruising at 80kt, tracking over hot spots in the blue. Over the Cotswolds I decided to operate between 2,500ft and 5,000ft and with 5kt climbs I could cruise at 90kt. Reassured by the absence of any signs of sea air encroaching up the Severn estuary, I was able to climb to 5,300ft east of the M5 and almost as high just east of the Malverns before turning Ledbury just 27 minutes after starting.

The second leg was slower due to the headwind component but I was now able to operate between 2,500ft and 5,500ft using the haze caps that marked the lift on track. Keeping south of Towcester to avoid airspace problems, I had a fast run to Bedford where I kept high in anticipation of sea air problems around St Neots, indicated by deteriorating visibility. To the east conditions looked dead, confirming the soaring forecast for the day. I dashed into the sea air to turn St Neots at 3,700ft and sped out with relief to a thermal near Sackville Farm, which took me to 7,100ft at 6.7kt. Climbs on track were now limited by the Daventry CTA but I noted with satisfaction that at a point abeam Hinton I had completed 300km at 126km/h. What speeds, I wondered, would have been achieved under competition conditions?

So far I hadn't had any low spots but I had now raised my operating height band as the climbs were a long way apart and cloudbase was well above 6,000ft. It doesn't pay to get complacent! I made for a cloud over the Cotswolds, arriving beneath it at 4,000ft only to find it weak and dying. After gaining only 300ft I pressed on towards Shenington which was now in the shadow of a large decaying cu. As I overflew at 2,100ft I sought comfort in the thought of the sunshine on the ground towards Shipston. Increasingly anxious, I flew at best glide down to below 1,400ft over a field being harvested, where I sensed the air was slightly unstable. I didn't want to dump my water ballast so accepted a weak but developing thermal which took me to 2,200ft to give me the legs to reach another cu now forming south east of Shipston on Stour. This one took me to 3,200ft and I started to breathe again. The next was a 4-5 knotter to over 7,000ft – saved again!

A call to Howard and Martin showed they were to the west where conditions were very good with a cloudbase of 8,000ft but inevitably scrappy low down, so they recommended staying high. I was blessed with a cloud street on track that enabled me to cruise at 90-100kt, at the same time finding the base going even higher: 6,100ft; 9,580ft just before Worcester and 8,150ft north-east of Bromyard. A cloud street let me race into Leominster and return to Bromyard to climb to 9,900ft, which was sufficient to let me start my final glide for a 1,250ft finish at Hinton to comply with the 1,000-metre start/finish difference rule. My time for the task was 4 hours 30 minutes, giving an average speed of 113.9km/h.

The day had proved most successful. The forecast had been sound; task planning had been realistic; tactics in going down-wind first and using the strongest part of the day to counter the sea breeze problems in the east were justified. But because inter-thermal distances had been very long, it had been important not to miss a climb at the bottom of the operating height band.

The pilots who went to Bury St Edmunds had a good run to Cambridge but serious problems with the encroaching sea air thereafter, causing them to abandon their tasks. Howard and Martin completed their 300km tasks while Andy had a relight before completing 200km at his best-ever speed.

It never ceases to amaze me how you can be barrelling along completely on top of the situation one minute, and the next be in the weeds. That's gliding for you!

I hope this article will encourage pilots to make use of the excellent websites available and to plan, fly and complete more and larger cross-country flights.

John, a full-rated gliding instructor and a motorglider instructor as well as chairman and tugmaster of Aquila, has two Diamonds and a 750km Diploma. He checks weatherjack (www.itadvice.co.uk/weatherjack/STARS.htm), Nympsfield (www.bggc.co.uk/met/today.html), Dunstable (www.instructor.andrewroch.co.uk/weather.htm) and Lasham (*via Weatherjack*). The latter was the forecast which was specific about the area to fly in and, John says, "is the one I find most accurate – if slightly optimistic".

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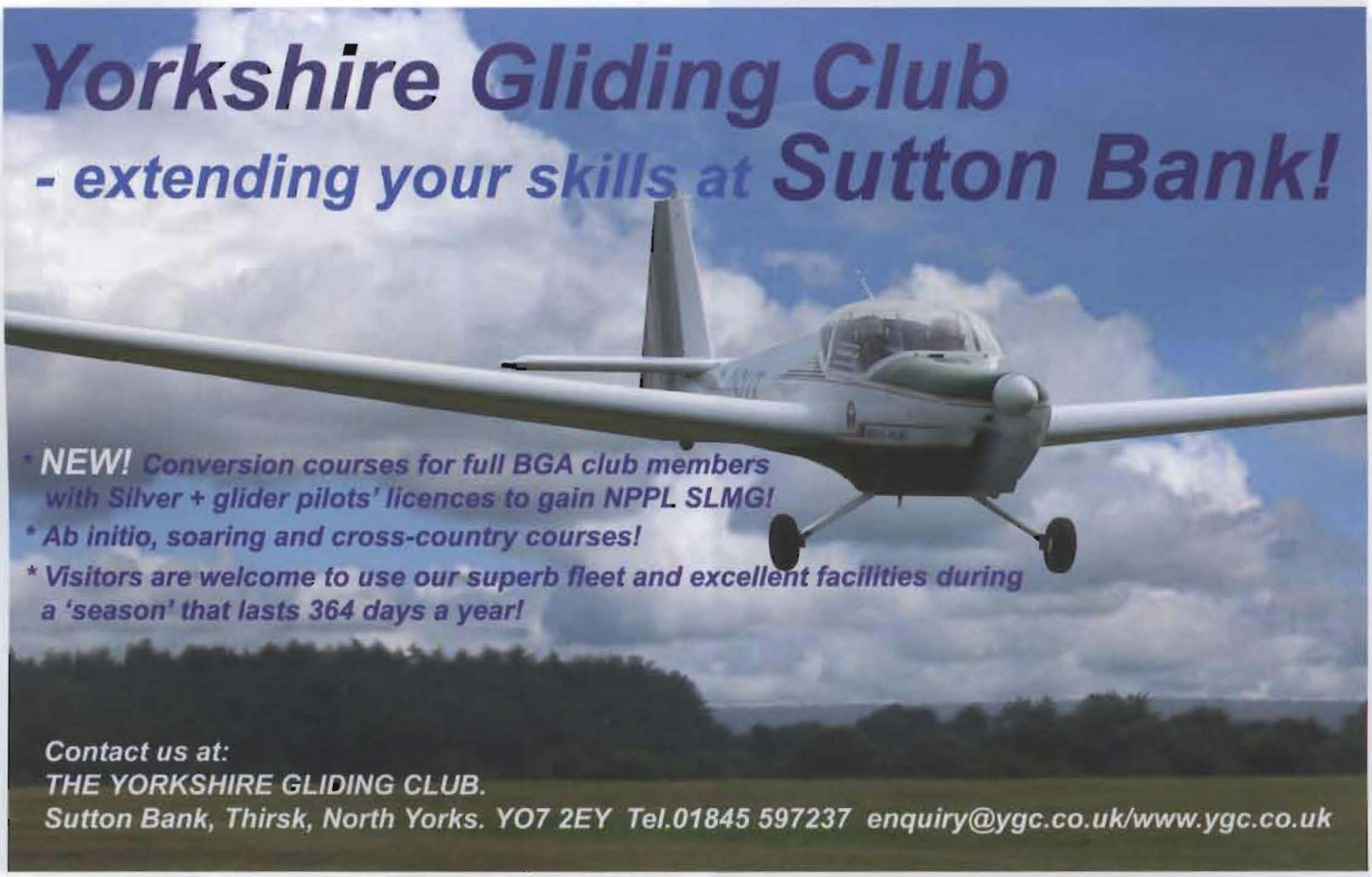
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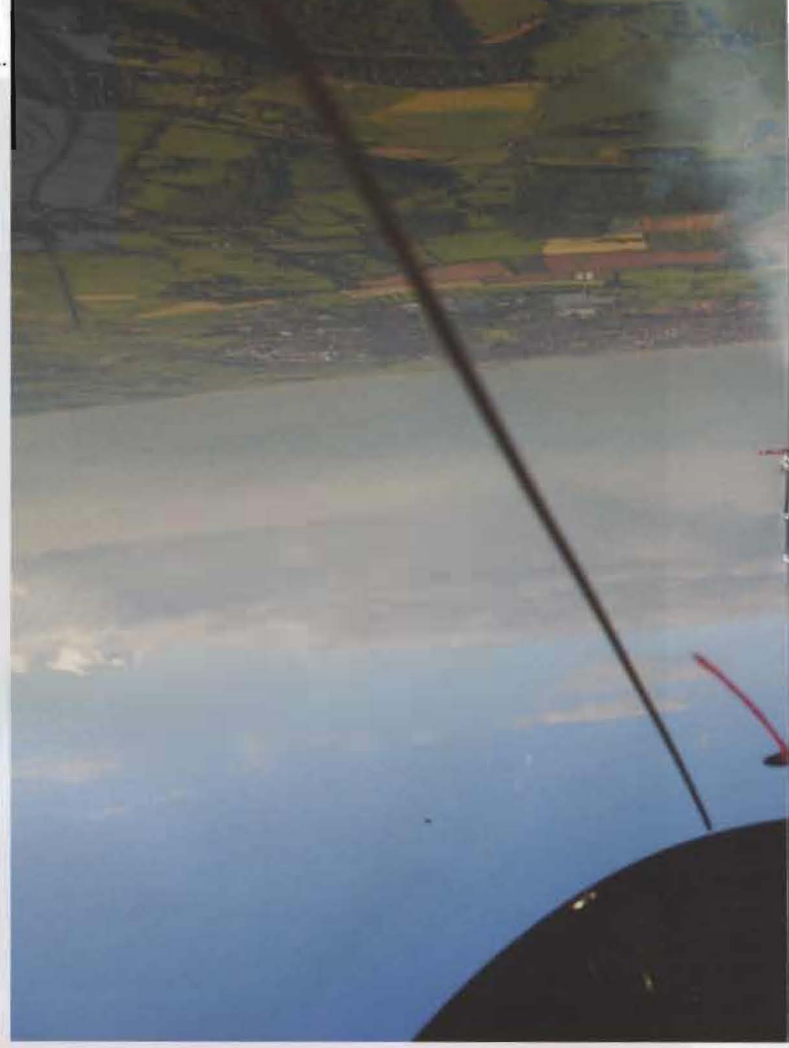
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Farnborough: a first for Guy

MANY thanks to glider aerobatic pilot Guy Westgate and photographers Peter Atkinson and Paul Morrison for allowing S&G exclusive use of this insider view of Guy practising for and then flying his first-ever Farnborough Air Show display. There, this July, he flew the Fox glider, which was towed by an Extra 300L. The photos below and top right are Paul's; the others are Peter's






OMEGA TANKER







Storms and mountains

Jay Rebbeck reports on some frightening flying, exceptional British teamwork, and how the Brits just missed Silver at Vinon



FLYING in the French Alps is fine so long as you don't have any storms, Brian Spreckley told me before Vinon. Unfortunately the Club Class World Gliding Championships saw the stormiest July in 20 years and became a unique emotional rollercoaster like nothing I had experienced before. The flying was challenging, the competition fierce, the scenery stunning and the extensive storms were just plain scary.

Having talked to a number of top British pilots who had competed in the Alps it became clear that our main aims were to come back in one piece whilst learning as much as possible from what was sure to be an amazing experience. Rich Hood's local knowledge from having come second in the previous year's Pre-World contest proved invaluable, whilst my brother Luke and myself were having to learn fast with only a week's practice at Vinon under our belts before the Worlds. We quickly learnt as a team that MacCready theory goes out of the window when you're racing in mountains. As Rich told us before the contest: "Glide slowly uphill but go like Hell when you're flying downhill!" It was vital that you climbed high enough and flew at whatever speed you needed to arrive at the next mountain above the peak. When that wasn't possible you had to know which hills worked from low down and what your escape routes were so you could run to some smaller hills...

The first two contest days saw the three of us averaging around 112km/h in our wingletted Cirruses. With only a few km/h separating the top 20 pilots around these two very short Assigned Area Tasks no serious points differences were traded. Large storms in the afternoons meant we were landing at 3.30pm before gust fronts hit the site. Storms continued on Day 3 but a longer 300km racing task was set. The first turnpoint was deep in the valley leading to Briançon. We faced the first key moment in the contest after climbing up on to the high ground at the Ecrin. From there it was critical that we picked the right route in and out of the turn with enough height to clear the lowest 9,000ft col.

As a first-timer to this trick, I watched, followed and learned while Rich led the way. We made a clean transition back on to the high terrain, from where we could see a cu-nim wiping out a large area before the second turn. We deviated to the highest local cloudbase we could find and topped up to 11,000ft. We took a slow 50km glide to the last turning point at Col de Cabre, overflying the mountain pass to contact the building edge of the storm. Clearing a 5,000ft ridge by around 20ft we just hooked on to the storm edge, climbed at 7kt to cloudbase and ran along the storm edge for home. We had narrowly avoided a trap that sank 16 pilots, including France's golden boy Olivier Darroze and Luke, who missed the critical climb only 10 minutes later.

As we approached home, our stalwart captain Neil Goudie began relaying news that a violent storm was sweeping across the airfield. He described the scene: "Passing weather information to Jay and Rich on that final glide, which I was describing as heavy rain, light hail and number of lightning strikes per minute at the airfield, I felt like telling them to turn around, but understood

'Despite the torrential rain, heavy sink and several close lightning strikes, the airfield eventually came into view'

that their decision to continue rested with them, not me. It was bad enough being in a caravan, let alone gliding into that."

Neil's synopsis didn't sound good, so we took what height we could. When our last climb finally gave up 20km out, I had a 2,000ft safety margin and Rich was 500ft below me. Pressing for home with Rich behind, we ran into a wall of water 8km out. Despite the torrential rain, heavy sink and several close lightning strikes the airfield eventually came into my view 1km out. After realising that the lake in front of me was actually Vinon, I splashed down gratefully on to the submerged field. My crew Jo Murdoch risked life and limb to rescue me off the airfield whilst lightning struck all around us.

Rich was not so fortunate: 3km from home he hit the gust front speeding out from the storm. From 600ft the plummeting air was so bad that he was on the ground within 500 metres. It was really tough luck for Rich. We had flown a day-winning performance together, but whilst I took the day's 1000 points and moved into the overall lead, Rich had to sit out a massive storm, watch 20 pilots streaming overhead and lose 400 speed points.

Day 5 was the next memorable moment for the team. After rounding the top turn at Briançon with the next turnpoint to the west, Rich made an audacious decision to fly direct towards the 12,000ft mountains. Avoiding the more traditional detour, the rest of us decided to stay on top of the terrain; Rich scored an 11kt climb to haul himself on to the Ecrin and out in front for the rest of the day. He flew an absolute blinder from there on to win the day. Luke and I spent the last 120km running the ridges home and had to make do with 800 points.

The Assigned Area task on Day 7 was our worst daily result. Running into the first area before Briançon we looked west to the second sector and thought the storms were too widespread to get through. It looked impenetrable and we thought it was going to be a distance day so decided to make maximum distance into the first sector.

I watched the gaggle turn for the second sector but couldn't see how they could get through the storms. At the top of the first sector, however, we could see a corridor of light leading into the Modane valley that looked like it might link to the second sector. We had never flown there before, but it appeared the only option. Rich and I went for it whilst Luke turned back to try and find a route through the storms. In the end this didn't work out for him – when faced with an opportunity to glide through the raging electrical storms he sensibly elected to turn back and land at St Crépin.

For Rich and me, the combination of





Left: grid at Vinon, where Club and World Class Worlds were held in July. Club Class winners were: 1, Sebastian Kawa, Poland, Jantar 3B, 9,129pts; 2, Benjamin Neglais, France, Std Cirrus, 8,733; 3, Petr Krejcirik, Czech Republic, Std Cirrus, 8,720. Jay was 4th (8,611). Above, from left: Jay, his brother Luke (28th), GB team captain Neil Goudie, and Rich Hood (11th). Right: Jay's shot of Luke practising earlier this year. The UK did not enter the World Class, won by 1, Christophe Ruch and 2, Didier Hauss, both French; 3, Milos Dedera, Czech. All results at www.wgc2006.fr

flying off the top of the map, knowing that our retrieve would be an all-nighter, an intermittent radio problem and having to ridge-soar around the cable car at l'Alpe d'Huez all made it difficult to focus on racing effectively. Although we did make it into the second sector, find a way around the storms and make it home, having had one of the most rewarding flights of our lives, our average speed was only 100km/h. What we weren't to know was that the gaggle we'd been with did in fact brave it through the storms and, whilst nine pilots landed out on the way, all our main competitors hooked on to the west side of the storm line and raced home at 120km/h.

Our cautious route around the storms cost us 270 points. It was a real kick in the guts after what had been an incredible flight.

On Day eight we were last to start on a 500km and had a fantastic run up the first leg, which was the milk run to the world famous Parcours. We enjoyed a 12kt climb with Mike Young (who was flying out of his home club at Grenoble) who then barrel-rolled past us and waved us on our way. By the third turn near Vinon we were leading the pack and chose to take a massive glide in and out after a storm had wiped out the area. Our gamble cost us the day win – when we arrived at the first good cloud the sun feeding our climb got cut off by a towering storm, leaving us only a few hundred feet above the valley floor. We were forced to take a weak climb to survive and it was desperate for around half an hour as we jumped along unfamiliar low ridges towards the decent weather.

Once established again it was a race against time to complete the task before the day collapsed. My final climb died 55km from home at 4,000ft and I left with the eventual competition winner Sebastian Kawa to see how far we could get. By some miracle we managed to work a tailwind and some low-level hills to pull on to glide, clear the final set of ridges and make it home with 100ft to spare. I finished at 8pm and Rich was 8 minutes behind. We scored 900 points but kicked ourselves for wasting an opportunity to win the day. Luke's run of bad luck continued and after an epic struggle in the day's dying thermals he finally landed 10km short at 8.30pm.

Day 9 ended up being a salvage job after a poor start. Falling out of cycle with the developing showers we dropped off the back of the gaggle and I ended up way behind Rich and Luke. Fortunately for me, Rich fed back some key information that enabled me to claw back some time to finish 18th for the day. As we moved into the closing stages of the contest I was lying in 4th place with 150 points to the medals. Our early start on

'What should have been a romp home, a day win and a Silver medal all went horribly wrong'

the penultimate Day 10 was the key to a fast flight and in one go I made up the bulk of the points deficit to second place. Running in and out of the last turn before Briançon, Rich and I had a heart-pounding moment running up to a critical col before Tet de Lucy. We decided to avoid a lower col because of heavy rain and aimed to clear a higher 9,000ft col that looked horribly marginal. Approaching the col I radioed Rich to say I couldn't make it, but at the last possible moment the air improved just enough for us to both fall through the pass. It saved us 20 minutes and only Rich, I and the Poles made it through before storms cut off the route. Luke just failed to clear the col, got dumped on by the storm and spent an hour ridge soaring at 300ft above the massive Lake Embrun. As a professional kitesurf designer he was low enough to see the make and size of the kites being surfed under him. Remarkably, after an hour trapped on the ridge the storm shifted slightly and he suddenly found himself climbing at 7kt on to final glide!

Going into the last day, although Sebastian Kawa had stitched up first place, I was only 50 points off second. On a three-hour Assigned Area task I pushed out from the pack on the first leg and was rewarded by a good climb from low down that put me out in front. Rich and Luke turned back with me in the first sector and called two fantastic climbs that put me into a day-winning position half an hour from home. What should have been a romp home, a day win and a Silver medal went horribly wrong when I missed two chances to climb on to final glide. Leaving the Parcours I ran under two cracking-looking clouds. Under the first I misread the cloud whilst Jaroslav Tomana cored 8kt about 100 metres behind to my right. When I arrived at the second I was just below ridge top and got dumped on. I had to deviate 90° off track for 15km to climb on to final glide at the Coupe. To add insult to injury the final glide was in horrendous sink and I only just squeaked over the hedge on to the airfield. I'd blown 16 minutes in 60km and had to make do with 22nd for the day and 4th overall.

Luke was a great team-mate throughout despite the luck consistently running against him and Rich's brilliant flying would have seen him into second place had he made it 2km further on Day 3. Writing a month after the contest it's difficult not to feel a bit gutted at having come so close to a medal, but when I look back at what we achieved as a team it was quite remarkable: with a fraction of the Alpine experience of our main rivals we learnt how to deal with the tricks of the mountains and the trials of the storms and were medal contenders from start to finish.

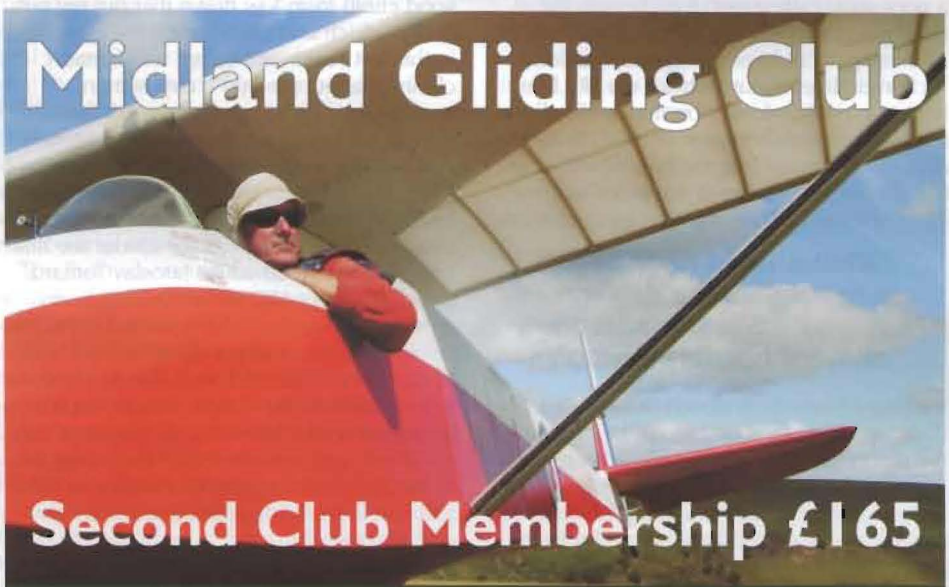
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Flying premier League

Andy Perkins pulls together feedback from the happy winners of the inaugural gliding scholarships of The Air League

THANKS to the inaugural award of The Air League Gliding Scholarships, ten ambitious young glider pilots took to the skies in 2006, receiving tuition in aerobatics, advanced cross-country techniques and motorglider flying. Scholars received either six aerobatic flights, two cross-country flights (or a combination of solo and dual flying to further their cross-country skills) or SLMG tuition towards the NPPL.

The experience level of scholars has been diverse, to say the least – winners included early solo, experienced power, British Team and expert motorglider pilots! Extremely impressive when the oldest member of the group is just becoming a time-expired Junior... Ha ha! Sorry to mention that, Jon, but it's your turn to join me in the relegated depths of being a Juniors hasbeen!

So who are the scholars and how did they find their flying? A few share their experiences:



Liz Mockeridge – Aerobatic

Age: 20
Best Flying Move: the (nice and simple) loop
Flying Hours: 340-plus hours
Qualifications: 'C' Cat Instructor on the Vigilant
Gliding Club: 612 Volunteer Gliding Squadron
Future Aspirations: To continue flying with the Air Cadet Organisation, achieve higher instructor qualifications and my PPL

"My past experience of gliding has nearly all being flying the Vigilant motorglider at 612 Volunteer Gliding Squadron (VGS), so an aerobatic training scholarship was very different. The course was great fun and gave me the opportunity to learn various aerobatic manoeuvres.

The first of these manoeuvres, and my favourite, was the loop and it was my introduction to something unlike anything I had ever done before! In order to get high enough to do this I had to fly an aerotow, this was, for me, one of the hardest parts of the course and took a bit of practice. Having only flown aircraft with engines before this I can now appreciate how much more complicated it is for glider pilots to get into the air! I love that the fact flying allows me to challenge myself and this course offered me the opportunity to do this,





Above: Emily Todd. Right: could help from The Air League launch you on the next stage of your flying?

especially as it is a completely different type of flying to what I regularly do. Having returned to the squadron I can see that it has given me more confidence in my gliding and motorglider flying and hopefully it will enhance the experience I can give the students with whom I fly at the VGS."

Emily Todd – Aerobatic

Age: 22
Best Move: Anything that involves going upside down!
Flying Hours: Gliding 40 hours, Powered 200+ hours
Gliding Qualifications: Bronze Badge
Gliding Club: Cambridge University/Booker
Future Aspiration: Flight Test Engineer... Test Pilot...
"I was awarded an aerobatic scholarship. I have been undertaking this at Booker under the expert tuition of Graham Saw (previous British Aerobatic Intermediate Champion). Graham is a legend, who's showing infinite patience and immunity to my giggles when things don't quite go to plan! I am working towards my Aerobatic Sports Badge, which I hope to complete by the end of the summer. Learning to run a sequence of aerobatics and spending lots of time upside down has been awesome. Many thanks to The Air League for their support in making the blood rush to my head!"

Rebecca Ward – Cross-Country

Age: 18
Flying Hours: Gliding 25 hours, Powered 4 hours
Gliding Qualifications: 4 minutes short of Bronze
Gliding Club: Hullavington (621 VGS)
Future Aspiration: RAF Engineering Officer
"I have just returned from an amazing week spent at Bicester with Windrushers GC completing my cross-country scholarship. As all of my current qualifications and experience are military, my main aim for the week was to gain the BGA Bronze Badge, or get as close to it as possible. I'm pleased to say that I only need one more 'leg' – a soaring flight of at least half an hour! Hopefully I will achieve this at the Air Cadet expedition to Portmoak at the end of August.

My week started off with conversion training to the K13, where I experienced spinning for the first time and eventually went solo. I was then allowed to fly a club single-seater, a Skylark 2. After a few circuits getting used to it (my first impression was of a small T21 with a canopy) I came to really appreciate the little glider; it was a pleasure to fly. I then had a short soaring flight, an annoyingly close 26 minutes.

On Wednesday the weather was not on our side, but I was offered another new opportunity, flying in the club's motorglider to complete the field landings requirement. This was certainly an experience; I had no idea that choosing a field was so involved! A poor decision meant I had to make one approach over power lines. This really highlighted to me how important field landing training is.

The real highlight of the week was the final Friday. I finally passed the written exam in the morning, had my first aerotow experience for my general flying test, followed by some solos in the Skylark, finishing with a 1h 19min soaring flight – a personal best!

I'm very grateful to everybody at Windrushers for making it such an enjoyable week, especially Dickie Feakes for letting me see what a real cross-country is like by taking me for a ride in his ASH 25.

As for the future, I am off to university this autumn, either Cambridge or Southampton. I will certainly be joining the university gliding club, if they'll have me!

Thank you very much to The Air League for supporting me for this week of gliding, I really enjoyed myself, learnt a lot and would not have been able to do it otherwise.



Stuart Clark – SLMG

Age: 21
Flying Hours: Gliding 10 hours, motorgliding 36 hours
Gliding Qualifications: Solo, SLMG NPPL is in the post
Gliding Club: Enstone, 1228 Sqn ATC
Future Aspiration: Commercial Pilot and Instructor
"Greetings from sunny Enstone Airfield! Thanks to my Air League Scholarship I have just finished my NPPL SLMG. I completed my training at Oxfordshire SportFlying, who were very helpful, and I'm sure if it were not for the top class instruction and excellent instructor availability I would not have been able to complete the licence in two weeks, which I've been told is very quick indeed! I enjoyed my training immensely, especially the solo cross-country. At last I was in total control: in charge of my own destiny and free to roam the country. It was great. I have been inspired to continue and to gain further experience to go on to bigger and greater adventures. This award has jump-started my career, and within 18 months I plan to convert the licence to a JAR PPL, then CPL and Instructor rating. I would like to offer my thanks to The Air League and all the members of staff at Oxfordshire SportFlying who made it possible and such good fun."

Florence Maybury – Aerobatic

Age: 21
Best flying move: Inverted 360°
Flying hours: Gliding 2 hours, powered 53 hours
Qualifications: A Badge
Future Aspirations: RAF Pilot
"I have had a lot of firsts to thank the Air League Gliding Aerobatic Scholarship for: first aerotow, first humpty bump and first time inverted for any extended period of time. I also experienced the world of civilian flying for the first time as all other flying I have ever done has been military. Initially I found civilian flying the less stressful environment of the two but when I was 90° to the ground building speed and feeling as if I could almost see the leaves on the trees I had to revise my opinion. It's thrilling and empowering to hold your nerve: playing chicken with the ground in an unpowered aircraft as you wait for the speed you want. That's how it seems anyway, when you're used, as I am, to having a minimum of 4,000ft difference between body and ground when at that attitude. As someone who suffers from airsickness, the hardest part of the course was fighting against my body's instincts. Having such a challenging, not to mention enjoyable, task meant I was concentrating on other things, which certainly made it easier. Nevertheless, when I was asked if I wanted to do 'just one more loop', it was through gritted teeth that I said yes. And I'm glad I did.

I took up gliding as a result of an Air Cadet Gliding Scholarship as a teenager and loved it. For me, it holds a sense of freedom over and above that of powered flying, so I will get back into it properly as soon as I leave full-time education. There's so much less to go wrong in a glider, no matter what they say about it being 'controlled falling' and there's no engine noise or vibrations to detract from the magic of soaring through the blue. The Air League Gliding Scholarship gave me an opportunity I wouldn't otherwise have had; I had fun, and I think (or hope) that my overall flying improved. My confidence certainly did."

This year has proven a huge success, enabling these young pilots – and the five other winners, Mark Palmer, Jon Meyer, Nicola Pursey, Stuart Gooch, and Andrew Langton – to expand their horizons. Having been updated about their progress on the way, it sounds like they all had a brilliant time, the experience igniting or fuelling existing passions and ambitions in gliding and aviation for the future. The intention next year is to develop these awards further, giving more aspiring glider pilots the opportunity to flourish. If the funding can be arranged and the set-up confirmed, several additional and farther-reaching scholarships could be available in 2007. Keep your eye on the website for more news as it happens: *www.airleague.co.uk*



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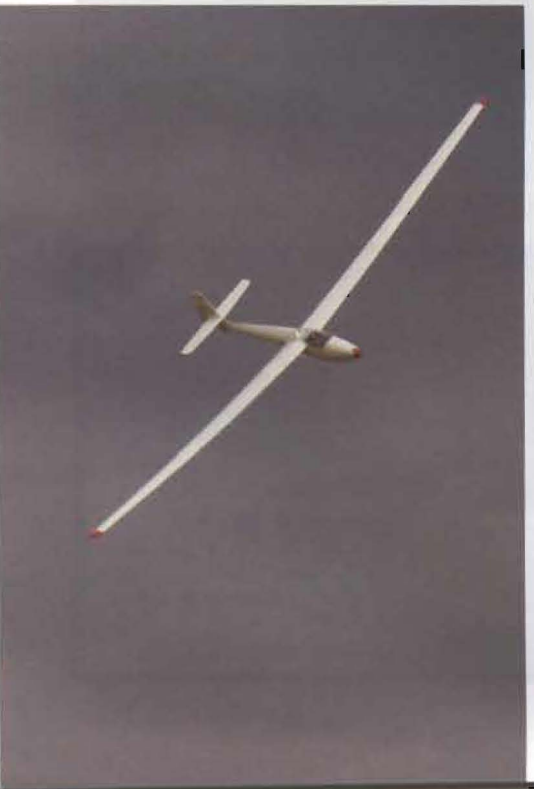
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Memorable moments from the 2006 competition circuit

OUR thanks and appreciation go to these contributors, who took their cameras around the competitions this summer:
Above: Winner Russell Cheetham finishing in his ASG 29 at the 18-Metre Nationals (see p44) at Lasham (Steve Kirby)
Left: Helen Jenkins with Inca, her captive-bred Blue-Fronted Amazon parrot. Helen, crewing for Steve Woolcock at the Standards (see p45), wanted a parrot since she was a little girl, after reading Swallows & Amazons *(Bernard Smyth)*
Below left: Libelle catches the sunlight at Nympsfield during the Club Class Nationals (see p46) (Alison Randle)
Below: Howard Jones at the 18-Metre Nationals. His brother Phil is the 18-Metre World Champion (Alison Randle)
If you'd like to see your – previously unpublished – photos here, please email them to editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk











Top: Paul Brice, second at the 18-Metres, in 629. Two ASG 29s entered, coming 1st and 2nd (www.flightbox.com)
Above left: David Watt, Booker Regionals winner, won a day in the 18-metres and came 4th overall (Stephen Kirkby)
Above right: a spectacular display over the site by the Blue Eagles helicopter aerobatic display team was a highlight of the Inter-Services Regional Gliding Competition, organised at Middle Wallop by the Army Gliding Association (S&G)
Right: Hannah Hay relaxes at the 15-Metre Nationals (see p48) while Matt Cook came 7th overall (Stephen Cook)
Below, from left: Ralph Jones with sons Howard, Phil and Steve, at the first UK Grand Prix, where Phil came 2nd and Steve 3rd. Phil and winner Pete Harvey qualify for the world GP final in December 2007 in NZ (James Kellerman)
Full results for all BGA-rated regional and national competitions will appear in the December-January issue of S&G





Relaxing and enjoyable

Mike Brooks explains why racing, for him, isn't about whether you win or lose – it's whether you enjoy the game



www.flightbox.com

From left: Phil Jones (3rd), Russell Cheetham (1st) and Paul Brice (2nd). The rest of the top ten were: 4, David Watt; 5, Steve Jones; 6, Pete Masson; 7, Rich Hood; 8, Derren Francis; 9, Zenon Marczynski; 10, Paul Fritche

THE roots of this report go back to a conversation I had with G Dale a few years ago. I said I would be flying a regionals with the 18-metre tips on my LS6. "No, no, no!" he said: "You want to fly with the lowest handicap, so that when you win, you win with a bigger margin." "But I find flying with the bigger wings more relaxing and enjoyable," I replied, to which he countered: "I find winning relaxing and enjoyable". And that highlighted to me the difference between what I do, and why I fly, and the motivation of the top pilots.

Now don't get me wrong, I admire and respect the excellent pilots this country has. The point I am trying to make is the age-old one – we fly to enjoy ourselves. There are no big cash prizes and no-one's livelihood depends on the outcome, so the only difference is the way in which we derive our pleasure, some by winning, others by just going along for the ride. Both are valid.

When I bumped into *S&G*'s editor at Lasham in July, she reminded me of this conversation (our editor has an impressive memory, so be warned: what you say to her in an unguarded moment will come back to haunt you later!), asked how I was approaching the 18-Metre Nationals – and would I write up my experiences for *S&G*, giving the perspective of someone who got in off the reserve list, and is flying for the fun of it, rather than one of the top pilots? (Of course, I suspect that the real reason is that she hadn't got anyone else to do it, and I happened to be there!) So, now a health warning. Following any of the ideas in this article can seriously damage your competition placing...

Day 1, Saturday, August 5: LAS-BRL-UPW-CAL-LA5-LAS, 331km. At briefing Hugh Brookes, the met man, pointed out a warm front sitting west of a line running north-south from Southampton to Birmingham. He warned that this was creeping east at 4kt, so there was a risk that the latter part of the day would suffer from this, and we were to expect an early cut-off. Launching at 11:30, climbs were reasonable, but with warnings about the likely early cut-off ringing in my ears, I left as soon as possible, knowing I would be slow, and being concerned that this could mean running out of day. This usually has the benefit of letting the top racers catch up, and as they go whizzing past, they highlight thermals ahead for a while. If you time it right, there is a steady stream of gliders coming past you and showing you where the next climb is. This is the reverse of the fast pilots' belief that they trick us slow ones into going down track and marking the thermals for them. A truly symbiotic relationship? As soon as we turned the corner and headed into East Anglia things took a turn for the better and became classic soaring weather, with good climbs up to over 5,000ft. However, the return journey took a disagreeably overcast look to it past Milton Keynes, with an accompanying lowering of the cloud-base by 1,000ft within a couple of miles. From here it seemed like a slow slog home, but the great majority made it back, with the winner (Paul Brice) achieving 103km/h for the trip in his new ASG29.

Day 2, Sunday, August 6: LAS-BUB-DEV-DID-NOS-BUL-LA7, 333km. Overnight a front had passed over the area, placing Lasham and the task area firmly in the warm sector. The satellite pictures showed a triangular section of the country covering the Midlands (but expanding) clear of cloud, so would hopefully give us a task. However, with a moist inversion at 6,000ft, we were warned to expect spreadout, and a quick cut-off in the evening with the potential arrival of some cirrus. After a great run to Devizes, things started to go wrong coming up to Didcot, a story repeated by many of the other competitors. The run up to and back from Northampton was reasonable, but I had to deviate from track to find the climbs until Didcot, where the spread-out started to dominate the sky ahead. Many reported slow climbs around the M4 junction at Chieveley to get them close to glide slope, and careful dolphining runs down to the final turnpoint, and into a slight convergence zone for the final run home. Day winner was Russell Cheetham, with a speed of 106.6km/h, also in an ASG29.

Day 3, Tuesday, August 8: LAS-LED-KIM-PIT-OXF-BUL-LA7, 418km. A ridge of high pressure covered the area, giving light north-easterly winds. Good climbs were forecast, but we were warned that it might turn blue in the afternoon. The run to Gloucester was uneventful, with everyone squeezing through the gap between Lyneham and Brize Norton airspace. As we came over the Cotswold edge the Severn Valley was blue and uninviting. One of my lasting memories of this run will be glancing north and south and seeing gliders every mile or so grovelling their way up, to gain enough height to cross the valley. From here it was mostly a blue grovel, with the majority dumping their ballast on this leg. The run into Pitsford entailed a lot of gaggle flying, with the last 15km being under a grey overcast. A good climb over the power station at Didcot once again got people to 5,000ft, and needing only one more to get round the final turnpoint and home. Day winner was Russell Cheetham again, at 108km/h.

Day 4, Wednesday, August 9: LAS-BUG-ISL-HUR-LA7, 342km. A cold front had passed the area, leaving us in a new airmass with brisk north-westerlies. A moist inversion was predicted, so again we were warned of the possibility of spreadout. However, on the plus side a late finish was forecast, so there should be no problems getting back. Soon after starting I found out what my digital averager does when it goes above 9.9kt. For two turns it showed an average of 11kt! Today was going to be interesting. The next bit of excitement came from the fact that the streets were forming up perfectly on track, and that it was possible to go almost the entire first leg (including through the Lyneham-Brize gap) without turning. Having battled into wind to the first turnpoint without turning, I (like many others) thought the next leg would be even easier, but for some reason it seemed to go wrong around the Malvern Hills, and several competitors reported having to climb away from low down. However, in general this was THE day, with the winner (Phil Jones) managing over 144.2km/h. (No, you didn't misread that!). It is days like these that make you realise just how good it can be in the UK.

Day 5, Thursday, August 10: LAS-HNN-PTW-RIV-POP-LA7, 200km. And today reminded us of how capricious it can be as well! A very small window of opportunity was open to us today, due to a front moving down over the region from the north west. In addition there was a lot of cloud from the Cheshire Gap effect, which was reaching down as far as London. Task-setter Dave McCarthy selected a "bow-tie" task, which exploited the soarable area well, but even so, about half the fleet landed out, and many could be seen trying to climb away from low down. In the strong gusty winds, the thermals were being broken up, making it a very tough day. The winner was once again Russell, at 107.9km/h.

Day 6, Friday, August 11: LAS-GAY-NOS-RIV-BUL-LA7, 302km. A stationary occluded front lying out to the west, and a trough line to the east resulted in a narrow north-south window of fair weather, but with a fairly brisk north-westerly wind. There were warnings of potentially thick upper cirrus being formed by the jet-stream, which could cut off heating periodically. A patch of spreadout on track caught several people out, forcing them down around Oxford, but keeping west seemed to be the best course of action, enabling people to again use lines of energy to beat into wind up to the first turnpoint. The day winner was Dave Watt, at 111.4km/h. This turned out to be the final day, despite an attempt on the Saturday, which got scrubbed half way through the grid launch, due to an increasing crosswind that caused several worrying launches.

So, did I enjoy it? Yes. Without hesitation, it was great fun. Lasham did an excellent job of launching 49 gliders and giving us a good task each day. Through the week we had 307 launches, flew 88,945km, and had only 43 landouts. This by any measure is a great accomplishment by Bob Bickers and his team, all of whom are volunteers, so a great many thanks to everyone. It also shows the standard of flying we can expect at nationals level, with incredible performances from some of the best pilots in the world.

Will I do it again? Yes. I had some great flying, and with the organisation behind the competition, it is the best way to get a good weather briefing, be set a good task, and if it all goes wrong, everything is geared up to getting you home and happy (Lasham's restaurant even take orders for late food so that there is something to eat after a long retrieve). For those who are interested, I came 46th out of the 49 entries.

Will I do better next time? Who cares?!

Comps are okay, really

Paul Fritche looks back upon a comp that, unusually, produced a French winner alongside a National Champion

I STEPPED out of the glider and on to the stubble. Gliders passed overhead, wings level, calling final glide. After all these years of comps maybe it was time to quit. Six landouts and seven retrieves (don't leave bits of glider in the field). What sort of holiday was this for the family?

That was the last day of the Standards last year. But come December, a comp at Bicester looked oh-so-tempting. Great site, great soaring country and no sea air! Let's give it one more go, eh! As I towed the LS6 to Bicester, I remembered the LS8 demonstrator arriving there 10 years ago. Someone told me:"don't get excited, it's not a new glider" just a Standard Class LS6... The thing I like about the Standards is that it is a very level playing field: all the kit is of very similar performance – indeed, much of it is identical.

Day 1: A tricky first leg then an improving second leg but still not going above 2,500ft, then 8/8ths for the final into-wind leg. I gambled a 60° detour to follow a good line of energy, which conveniently bent back on to track. It was a joy to be on final glide and to see and hear Gary Stingemore and Derren Francis struggling 1,000ft below. For a minute I allowed myself to think I could have won the day, but as I returned to an empty airfield Ed Johnston's 28 was almost in the trailer. Ed had stormed the day with a fabulous first leg. It sounded like it had been flown on a different day. The Sunday and Monday were scrubbed. A French bloke watched the World Cup with a few of us in the bar. I didn't know who he was but soon would do. Inspired by Zidane, Dave Draper headbutted the bottom of a canal while bike riding; he was fine, but it made him realise flying is safer than scrubbing!

Day 2: A good racing day with no real snags and at 400km, the longest of the week. David Masson had forecast a 750 day. Met man Graham Wright said it wouldn't be that good but I knew it would be, because Dave's been spot-on recently. The 12.45 start seemed a bit late but was okay. Mike Young sprinted off at 100kts. At 2,000ft at the Malverns I was pleased with 4kt, but Andy May turned his nose up at it and got 5! Ed was flying really well again. Lots of people seemed to just follow for the whole comp. Ed never followed but used the gaggle, often finding better cores on its edge. Many a time I thought "that's Jay over there" seeing a glider banked at 89°. The Standard Class gaggles were all okay but why did a Duo join us and get in our way? Ed won the day – again! The next day Graham did congratulate Dave Masson on his new 15-Metre distance record of 854km. It was hard to hear him, though: he seemed to have his mouth full of some kind of pie!

Day 3: Bye bye cu, hello Blue. The rest of the week was good blue. This and 47 Nationals pilots should mean only one thing, but task-setter Max Kirschner had other ideas and set an Assigned Area Task, which seemed to break up the gaggles (hooray!). I met Gary Stingemore and Paul Crabb and we all went deep into the upwind sector looking for the big climb off Corby, which didn't happen. We then had a good run south until we got back to Bicester. Paul Crabb pushed hard and low, but the rest of us changed down a gear just in time to limp to Oxford. It was here that I picked my only field of the comp. Somehow even at 900ft in the blue I sensed we'd be okay, and sure enough Cowley obliged with a welcome 4kt. Didcot did the rest. Paul Shelton forgot the last turn point was a 5km sector and so had the delight of suddenly realising he was on a marginal glide home instead of a field. Nice! Simon Badner won the day.



Bernard Smyth

Standard Class National Champion Gary Stingemore...

Day 4 started with a run around the airfield with Howard and Derren. A clearance was forecast so we rigged in the drizzle. As we launched I thought we should be doing a 250km task in stead of a 150km. I started last, hoping to catch the gaggle, but didn't. It's hard work on your own in the blue and I had a poor day. What do you do when you get to 2,000ft and you're climbing in 2kts? In a way you'd rather get 4kts or nothing. You know it's going to hurt the speed but it's risky not to take it for a bit. Dan Pitman won the day – but I haven't got a clue what he did because I was in too bad a mood to talk to anyone. The only underset day: still, better to have too little than too much.

Day 5: Arguably the most exhilarating flight of the week. Far too exhilarating for the unfortunate few. After briefing local girl Rose Johnson gave an impromptu briefing on landable areas at our first turnpoint. (Abergavenny). It didn't take her long – there aren't any. The operating band was only 2-3,000ft QFE in the blue, over the Brecon Beacons. The hills looked fabulous in crisp clear air and were working well as thermal bumpers. A handful of gliders were low and hammering along ridges. Not since I flew in the Black Forest have I had that fantastic feeling of climbing in 5kt, in the blue, from low over unlandable terrain. Doesn't get much better. Ken Hartley marked a few for Paul Shelton and me, then 60k from home we joined the main gaggle. It was then the shenanigans started. With big gains to be made from a marginal final glide into a 15kt headwind in decaying conditions, a few front runners landed short. Dan Pitman had been in contention and Ed Johnston leading, but both unfortunately sustained damage and wouldn't fly again that week. There were lots of very good marginal glides. Paul Crabb affirmed his racing credentials: 900ft above glide, with the finish line 1.5km from Bicester, he got her up to120kts! He crossed the finish line and landed in the paddock, saving valuable seconds. Howard Jones won the day and gave the most entertaining *howIdunnit* of the week.



Bernard Smyth

...and Louis Bouderlique, French winner of the contest

Day 6: So how late do you think you could start on a three-hour AAT? 14.50 was definitely a bit too late. I had a good run heading west into the Cotswolds, and should have kept going a bit longer before turning, because east of Bicester the day had died, and so several of us landed under time. Those that went south well into the first sector towards Newbury were rewarded with some six-knotters! Andy Perkins won the day. Leader Andy May landed out.

Day 7: Louis Bouderlique (that French bloke) was leading the comp, 60 points ahead of Gary Stingemore, who had a large lead over third-placed Derren Francis. Dickie Feakes couldn't resist stirring the competitive juices by putting up an overhead showing just how close places 3–10 were, and how any of us in that group could easily finish the day 3rd or 10th overall (as if we hadn't noticed!). People were getting hot and bothered in the start sector. Louis was right on Gary's tail, and it seemed from the radio chat that everyone was trying to help Gary win. I started late and somehow got to the top of the gaggle. It was really odd seeing Gary's LS8 "X1" being flown so slowly: 75kt cruises and leaving gaggles late. Louis stayed really close on his tail. After the last turn, on glide, I realised I hadn't got a fix in the last sector and had to backtrack 2km into 15 oncoming gliders. It cost six minutes, that. Derren, unusually lost for words in his *howIdunnit*, won the day.

So Louis won the comp but – since only Brits can be National Champions – Gary won the title of Standard Class National Champion. Congratulations to both. (The French had to win something that week.) Gary always looks like a top pilot to me, in the climb and in the run. It just seems he has improved his consistency. He's always been very helpful to me over the years. A popular champion.

Windrushers GC looked after us very well. The key personnel – director Dickie Feakes, task-setter Max Kirschner and Met Man Graham Wright – did a great job. The whole success of any comp hinges on these three key people. And we must always thank all the other helpers and crews, without whom none of it would happen. Thanks, Caroline and Charlotte.

The next generation of World Champions is now emerging. Forget Wells, Rebbeck, May et al. With a combined age of one year Guy Allison, Ewan Young and Liam Crabb had their first outings to a UK nationals. Names to watch?

Oh, and the Standard Class LS6 didn't do too badly. Remarkably LS gliders took the top 13 places. (You can give me that tenner now, Martyn.)

On a personal level, I enjoyed the comp a lot and visited no fields. Comps are OK really!

1, Louis Bouderlique; 2, Gary Stingemore; 3, Derren Francis; 4, Andy Perkins; 5, Paul Fritche; 6, Al Clarke; 7, Andy May; 8, Russ Francis; 9, Robert Welford; 10, Martin Durham



Scenic on the ridges

Bernard Smyth reports on five days of racing at the Club Class Nationals

THIS was the comp that sparked the "sportsmanship debate". On Day 4 Gordon MacDonald "lost" both his approved loggers during the task, which he won. One logger failed in flight and a plug fell out of his back-up one. With help he produced Garmin and other evidence that he had done the task. Director Tim Macfadyen was willing to accept the evidence but, after protests from other competitors, Gordon was not allowed to claim the day. Should other pilots have protested? The rules are clear – only IGC-approved loggers count – but some people felt that maybe a blind eye should have been turned to allow Gordon to win. Gordon ended up 23rd overall.

The event was won by Dave Draper in a Std Cirrus with 3630 points. Second was Ken Barker in his much-modified Std Cirrus with winglets on 3558 and third was Rob Nunn, also Std Cirrus, with 3539. The host club's former chairman, Barry Walker, who sponsored the event, presented the winners with crystalware and cheques.

On the first day a 151km task, just about the shortest possible, was set but the day was scrubbed: the clearance was too slow in coming. Day 1, the next day, the task was Heyford Station-Basingstoke-Ilsley Church (252.05km) and Jon Meyer in a borrowed Pik20B won at 85.1km/h. Ken Barker was second and Tim Milner third.

Day 2 was nearly scrubbed, despite the sky being filled with wave bars. Sniffer Steve Parker went through two gallons of fuel in his Discus Turbo to find only zero sink in the wave. But, within minutes of the decision to scrub having to be made, he found a two-knot thermal at 2.25, the field was launched at 2.35 on the C task, to Burley Gate, Stratford-on-Avon and home for 178km. The day was described as "awesome" by one young pilot. It was won by James Ewence, with Mark Holden second and Dave Draper third, all in Std Cirruses. James' opening line was: "Aren't Cirruses great?!"

The third contest day saw ex-world champion Andy Davis helping out with rope running before taking off *hors concours* to get round the 345km task in B20 (Duo Discus Turbo) in 3.5 hours. He was the only finisher. The competitors were strung out in fields along the last 60km of the leg, the nearest being only 25km short of Nympsfield – defeated by encroaching high cover that cut off the lift. Gavin Wrigley (Libelle) won the day, Rose Johnson (DG-101) was second and Ken Barker third.

Day 4 saw a brisk north-westerly blowing and a 235km task was set to Goring, Oxford North and Stratford-on-Avon. There were only three landouts that day and the initial winner, Gordon MacDonald, told briefing next day that he found the day "pretty easy" – except for those logger problems! After the formal protests about his win, he was scored as if he had landed out where the second logger failed and Rob Nunn was declared the winner.

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After all this activity in sunny weather, BBC TV in Bristol decided to accept an invitation to report on the comp and turned up on the Thursday – to find the day scrubbed! But they went ahead with interviews with Director Tim and Jon Meyer, and the sports editor took a small camera up for a ride in the club K-21. The report went out the next day on *Points West*.

Thursday was scrubbed, thanks to 20-knot winds and an almost complete lack of thermals, but competitors and club members decided to try the ridges. On the ridge Dave Draper found thermals and also managed 5,000ft in wave. Rose Johnson enjoyed the Bath-Cheltenham run. Local pilot Trevor Stuart went to Bath in the Nimbus 3DT and managed to get "round the corners" at tree height. He said he enjoyed ridge flying and Nympsfield was a good place to experience it. He offered people instruction in a two-seater in the art of ridge running or on a lead-and-follow basis.

Day 5, Friday – there was a late 2.50pm start for the trip to Honeybourne, Banbury, Broadway for 171.43km. Dave Draper won the day at 105km/h handicapped with Ian MacArthur second at 103.9 and third Rob Nunn at 102.9. The only SHK pilot, Paul Gentil, had problems with his controls and pulled out of the grid. After half an hour he and Tim Macfadyen had sorted the problem and Paul managed to get round the task. Trevor Stuart did the task as a non-competitor and found a nine-knot thermal. Pilots said the task was ideal for the day but nevertheless there were nine outlandings.

On the planned sixth contest day, a 216km task was set to Ironbridge, Hereford and back but the 20-knot northerly crosswind proved too much and after four launches the day was scrubbed. Despite this, sniffer Graham Morris (ASW27) took off on the winch and went round the task ("slowly" he said) with no trouble and was presented with a bottle of wine by Tim Macfadyen for his trouble.

All photographs by Bernard Smyth

I WAS LOOKING forward to the Club Class Nationals this year, writes Dave Draper (pictured above left with contest sponsor Barry Walker), *as the area around Nympsfield has happy memories for me, having spent hundreds of hours flying hang gliders from the ridge. Nympsfield is a wonderfully scenic site and home, as we discovered in the Standard Class Nationals last year, of the buttock-clenching final glide. With a week in the company of a good bunch of mates from Lasham in prospect I resolved to try to avoid the errors that cost me points and places in the Standards at Bicester this year and focus on a podium place. For the first four contest days I flew steadily. Even on the day when we all landed out I was fortunate to lose the equivalent of just four minutes on most of the frontrunners, only Ken Barker and Tim Milner pulling ahead. The key day for me was Friday, the fifth contest day. I was lying in 3rd place, 35 points off the lead but knew there were half a dozen people making hardly any mistakes. The competition was still wide open. Another 3rd, 4th or 5th day placing would not be enough to take the lead, as I would probably be beaten by those already ahead. Stops out for a day win then! Avoiding both the gaggles and the start line waiting game I set off as soon the clouds lined up nicely. The first two climbs on track were 6kts, then low into the upwind turn and climb out in 5kts with the 18kt wind helping things along. I went high into the downwind turn (just like the rule book says) then pushed back upwind, ignored a gaggle at Edge Hill then took a few turns in 3.5kt before pushing on to find 6kt with Rob Nunn. Then followed a 30km glide into wind with Rob sharing the running until another 6kt put us on glide for home. All day winners' speeches sound the same: when it goes right it goes right in spades. The 80pt lead I sat on the grid with on Saturday amounted to a 10-minute advantage and I felt relaxed. Watching six rather hairy aerotows in the 20kt rotor-y crosswind made me feel less so, but minutes later the safety committee stepped in and the task was scrubbed. People started shaking my hand, as the forecast for Sunday was poor. I refused to let myself believe I had it in the bag until the following morning, when I saw the notice on my way to breakfast: "Prizegiving 11.00". Yo!*

Dave started flying (in hang-gliders) on August 11, 1982. 24 years to the day when he took the lead in this contest. It was his fifth year of gliding nationals and he has 950 hours gliding and 2000-plus hours hang-gliding



Results: 1, Dave Draper; 2, Ken Barker; 3, Rob Nunn; 4, Ian MacArthur; 5, Jon Meyer; 6, Jerry Pack; 7, James Ewence; 8, Mike Collett; 9, Mark Holden; 10, Liz Sparrow; Top left: Ken Barker, who was second overall; Left: Rob Nunn, day winner and third-placed overall; Right: Gordon MacDonald, whose double logger failure cost him a lot of points





Two points is all it takes

Jane Randle reports on a close-fought competition for the 15-Metre title



THIRTY-FIVE pilots from ten clubs entered the 2006 15-Metre National Gliding Championships hosted by Cotswold GC at Aston Down, their large airfield in some of the best soaring country in England. It was a small but quality field. Steve Jones was defending his 2005 title; Leigh Wells, current Word Standard Class Champion, was flying his Ventus 2a. Amongst the others were many able contestants, from veterans to ex-juniors. The weather was superb, 73,073km were flown on seven contest days and the final result was one of the closest ever.

An enthusiastic team of volunteers worked very hard for the director, David Roberts, with Olly Ward as deputy director, and Ed Johnston setting the tasks. Chris Swann was chief marshal. David Chapman, the Head of Flight Operations Division of the Civil Aviation Authority, opened the competition. In view of the concern about compulsory Mode S transponders in gliders, it was a timely invitation. He and Mrs Chapman were flown by CFI Simon Buckley and chairman Mike Weston and soared for about an hour during the morning. That morning, we gridded but after lunch, thundery showers developed and the day was scrubbed.

Day 1: Sunday July 23. After a damp start, Task B was selected, a 227km triangle to Abergavenny and Craven Arms. There were 33 finishers. Initially, many pilots had struggled near the river, where there was strong sink. Chris Starkey was stuck there for an hour but Leigh Wells found good lift over the Forest of Dean. This saw him to Abergavenny, then he used a line of lift just east of the second leg. A good climb south of Craven Arms when others were low, and one landed, saw him romping home. Paul Brice, enjoying his brand-new ASG29, was flying alone and having a great time. Leigh won at 102.2km/h. He held a slender lead. 1, Leigh Wells, 102.2km/h, 704pts; 2, Paul Brice, 101.1km/h, 691pts; 3, Matt Cook, 100.4km/h, 683pts; 4, Andrew Hall, 98.6km/h, 658pts.

Day 2: Monday, July 24. A midday launch for a 446km race round Radstock, Chieveley, Eyebrook Reservoir, and St Neots. Steve Jones and Dave Watt sacrificed themselves when they started before the main bunch. "We had over 400km to fly and it was well after 1pm, someone had to go." Steve achieved only 70km/h along the first leg and conditions didn't improve until he got to the Downs near Membury. Dave carried 370lb of water down that difficult first leg, but used it well when conditions boomed at St Neots. Leigh did not have the same trouble on the first leg and he caught the others up and flew with them. Once again, Paul Brice flew very well and was the main opposition to Leigh. One pilot landed out 15km short. Results: 1. Leigh Wells, 106.1km/h, 1000pts; 2. Paul Brice, 105.8km/h, 998pts; 3. Tim Scott, 105.6km/h, 992pts; 4. Matt Cook, 105.3km/h, 987pts. *Overall: 1, Leigh Wells 1704; 2, Paul Brice 1686; 3, Matt Cook 1670; 4, Tim Scott 1631.*

Day 3: Tuesday July 25. 243/463km Assigned Area Task, Aston Down to Bedford Bridge, with an adjustment area centred on Cheltenham. Time: 3hrs 30mins. Ed Johnston told the pilots that the anticyclone was weakening, had moved to the east and aged. The drier air should prevent storms but there was a slight risk at an extreme hotspot. Thermals should go to 5,500ft with an even distribution of 4-5kt thermals. There might be clouds in the east. This was effectively an out and return. Chris Starkey, after his awful first day, was in 23rd place and made what many people thought the flight of the competition to win the day. He modestly said: "The winner never has much of a story!" Flying largely on his own, he had kept north of track away from the airspace so he could use thermals to cloudbase. Having previously marked his map with speed sectors, he found that when he got to the 120km/h line he had actually achieved 130km/h. He continued east until he met sea air near Mildenhall. The return leg was less easy: flying into sun made it hard to read the clouds. His speed of 124.4km/h over 417.4km brought Chris up to 8th overall. Andy Hall, who was second, found some really strong climbs to 6,500ft. He, too, kept to the north, flying mostly on his own. The Booker gaggle with Leigh in the middle were flying to the south. I had asked Dave Watt how they had achieved a blanket finish of about 112km/h for a distance of 370km. He observed dryly: "We were a geriatric gaggle, not flying very well. We had a good start but there were seven of us, we took no risks, we all turned together, and we got what we deserved." The top 25 pilots exceeded 100km/h and one pilot landed out. 1. Chris Starkey, 417.4km at 124.4km/h,1000pts; 2. Andrew Hall, 396km at 113.7km/h, 832pts; 3. Paul Brice, 369.3km at 112.1km/h, 808 pts; 4= Leigh Wells and Tim Scott, 368.8km and 369.3km at 112km/h, 806pts. *Overall: 1, Leigh Wells 2510, 2, Paul Brice 2494, 3, Matt Cook 2459, 4, Tim Scott 2437pts.*

Day 4: Wednesday, July 26. 245.8km polygon to Kidderminster, Winchcombe and Banbury. Ed Johnston told the pilots: we can't go east because of thunder, we can't go south because of rain and the Severn effect – do you want to go to Wales? He showed a map of thermal strengths, and a blue area on the forecast map in the middle of the task is where many pilots were slow. Paul Brice had many weak climbs between Winchcombe and Banbury, but finally at 5.30pm he got to 4,500ft. Andrew Hall, flying an LS6C, watched a patch of cirrus before the start. It moved along the first leg and he delayed his start until it was clear. He caught people up and flew with them round the first turn. When they got back to Winchcombe, conditions became more difficult in the blue and he got low and had to take a weak climb. He met people coming out of Banbury and then found conditions much improved. Three good climbs enabled him to catch up and overtake the others who had gone for a cloud street that gave them little. Roger Hopkinson, Chairman of the PFA, visited the competition that day. He took the opportunity to find out more about gliding and flew with David Roberts in the Duo Discus. They landed out. So did five others. 1, Andrew Hall, 89.4km/h, 905pts, 2, Tim Scott, 86.5km/h, 857pts, 3, C. Starkey, 85.7km/h, 844pts, 4. Kay Draper, 84.4km/h, 821pts.

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Left, from left: Leigh Wells (2nd), Tim Scott (1st) and Andy Hall (3rd) (Robert Davis)
Above: 35 pilots from ten clubs entered the 15-Metre Championships (Alison Randle)
Right: the grid at Aston Down before the competitors launched (Alison Randle)

Day 5: Thursday, July 27. 263.1km polygon to Leominster, Monmouth and Kidderminster. To set this task, Ed Johnston had some careful decisions to make. In the right air, 4kt thermals to 4,500ft were possible but some of the eastern air would give thunder and fronts were lurking in the west. Prospects for the following days were not good. Once more, the chosen area worked very well. Jon Meyer was first back with a very fast time, but both his loggers failed. Leigh Wells had a good start and a good run to the top turn. He flew with Tim Scott to Monmouth and he observed Tim flying really well. On the last leg, most of the pilots took a line down the Malverns. Howard Jones went east and picked up a 5kt climb. It was not quite enough to beat Leigh. Everyone finished. Results: 1. Leigh Wells, 99.3km/h, 865pts, 2= Howard Jones and Tim Scott, 99.2km/h, 862pts, 4. Paul Brice,98.2km/h, 846pts. *Overall: 1, Leigh Wells 4174, 2, Tim Scott 4156, 3, Paul Brice 4104, 4, Matt Cook 4057.* Tim Scott's consistency was eroding Leigh's narrow lead and Paul Brice was dropping away.

Day 6: Friday, July 28. 180.4/500.7km Assigned Area Task through Great Malvern, Chipping Camden and Silverstone. General situation: Ed Johnston reported slow-moving fronts over us for the following day; but a small ridge for Friday. East of Bedford and in the south were the remains of the small thundery low. Using the Camborne ascent as the representative airmass, the air was forecast to give good strong thermals to 4,500ft and possibly to 5,500ft. Some cirrus might form to the west and north by 3pm. Holding the start height of 3,000ft for two minutes proved problematic for all pilots. Dave Watt, who won, observed that he was sure the rules were made with good intentions, but trained RAF pilots would have been challenged in the gaggle waiting to start. The soaring had been superb, anticyclonic continental racing conditions. This time he started late and caught the others up. He was led by Paul, Tim and Leigh into parts of Wales he had never been to before. Bruce Cooper joined in. "The thing about assigned tasks is the change from certainty to uncertainty. After the start you know where you are, but people can turn anywhere in the assigned area and you don't know how you stand with them." Tim Scott and Dave Watt pair flew from Northleach to Silverstone and they had some really good climbs but the lovely-looking cu did not work. Two pilots landed out. 1, Dave Watt, 441.3km at 105.4km/h, 1000pts, 2, Bruce Cooper, 440.9km at 104.6km/h, 985pts, 3, Tim Scott, 438.5km at 104.1km/h, 975pts, 4, Leigh Wells, 429.9km at 102.3km/h, 941pts. *Overall: Tim Scott 5131, 2, Leigh Wells 5115, 3, Paul Brice 5007, 4, Matt Cook 4940.* For the first time, Leigh had lost the lead, 16 points behind Tim Scott. Saturday brought an advancing warm front and every effort was made to get the pilots away east into better conditions with a remote finish at Bicester. It wasn't to be and the forecast was not good for Sunday so it looked as if Tim would win his first Nationals.

Day 7: Sunday, July 30. 250.6km polygon to Bicester North, Ilsley, Calvert Railway Junction and Chipping Norton. Following a cold front, there was a small ridge, with a trough to the south, which might bring cirrus over the task area during the afternoon. Within the ridge there should be no problem with thunderstorms or spreadout and there would be thermals to 5,500ft. If the ridge collapsed, there would be showers. Not all models agreed about the cirrus. Ed Johnston gave the pilots plenty of problems to juggle, and with such a close contest, there were several in a position to steal the cup. On the grid, Tim Scott studied satellite images to check the progress of the cirrus. When he saw the cirrus was not advancing, he began to worry about showers. Leigh and he started at similar times. It was a short task and there was nothing to be gained by waiting. There were problems down the first leg, Jon Meyer landed and Matt Cook got low. Leigh and Tim flew as a team, that way they might beat off the other contenders. They pooled resources but Leigh was not able to get back the 14 points he needed. He thought he was five points short when he finished. Meanwhile, Chris Starkey was planning another coup. He made three starts, trying to time the streets to suit. Steve Jones landed for more water and Andy Smith returned after getting low near Little Rissington. Chris did not have a comfortable first leg but the others were fine, the final one superb with an exhilarating last 15km at 120kts under a well-developed street. Two pilots landed out.

The drama unfolded in the scoring booth. For every logger that came in, Leigh gained a point from Tim and they were level with one pilot outstanding. Andy Smith, who had started late, finally got back. His logger was collected, the calculations made and then came prize-giving. Keith Negal, Chairman of both the Royal Aero Club and the British Microlight Aircraft Association, presented the prizes. Normally, there is an excited babble at the end of such a good comp, but now the atmosphere was hushed, expectant. All the helpers were thanked and then the day winner was announced: Chris Starkey. Results: 1. Chris Starkey, 112.3km/h, 764pts, 2. Leigh Wells, 111.8km/h, 763pts, 3. Tim Scott, 110.8km/h, 750pts, 4. Jim White, 109.4km/h, 733pts.

The overall position was displayed on the screen. 6th, Dave Watt, 5507; 5th Paul Brice, 5575; 4th Chris Starkey, 5596; 3rd Andrew Hall, 5638; then the last two scores were displayed: 5880 and 5881 and no names!

Who was the winner? It was Tim Scott, winning his first nationals by such a slender margin and Leigh took second place in good grace. The single point over seven racing days probably represents 10 seconds. What can you do in ten seconds? (A technicality increased the lead to two points later: well, 20 seconds, then!). It was generally agreed that Ed Johnston's interpretation of the weather and choice of areas in which to race had been exceptional, even inspired.

Tim Scott thanked the organisation and David Roberts for running a happy and safe competition. He paid tribute to Dave Watt and Matt Cook, who had supported him so well and after seven days of flying he had not landed out. Afterwards, he told me that he had been determined to gain a place in the European Championships next year. Leigh already had a place and, if Tim was to join him, he could not afford to let anyone but Leigh beat him. His whole strategy had been focused on that.

1, Tim Scott; 2, Leigh Wells; 3, Andrew Hall; 4, Chris Starkey; 5, Paul Brice; 6, David Watt; 7= Matt Cook and Steve Jones; 9, Bruce Cooper; 10, Wayne Aspland

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What a day

Laurence Desmet – who is Frank Irving's nephew – tells us why he will never forget one special Wednesday









Wave off the winch to 6,500ft is the first of three reasons why Laurence will never forget April 26, 2006. His photos, clockwise from top, show him climbing through the gap in the K-21, Pocklington from on high and the view from the site, looking up at the lenticulars. His second unforgettable moment came that afternoon, when he was sent solo by Chris Price (above left). *That in turn paved the way for goal number three, in July – converting to the Pegase (EQK) that he'd inherited from his uncle, Frank Irving, five years to the day since the aircraft last flew. It was Frank who, 27 years ago, introduced Laurence to gliding and it was Frank's death in 2005 that inspired him to learn to fly...*

WEDNESDAY April 26, 2006, 08.45, outside the hangar at Wolds GC DI-ing the K-21 ready for the third day of our course. With only two of us on the course, Andy and I had both enjoyed intensive training from Chris Price, CFI, and I had already almost doubled the flying time that I had accumulated since joining the club in February.

Chris and Bernie, our tug pilot and winch driver, were already talking excitedly about the masses of wave bars that had filled the early morning sky, but even those left while we checked the glider put a knot of excited anticipation in my stomach.

All set up, we skipped the usual morning cuppa to get airborne as quickly as possible, Chris and myself taking the first winch of the day to 1,200ft. A lower level of cloud was already starting to fill the gaps between the bars and although thermal activity had started, we were unable to contact any wave. Back on the ground, a few short minutes later, I was amused to see many club members already arriving, no doubt having thrown a sickie, muttering some feeble excuse into the mobile whilst mesmerised by that sky!

The second launch on the club's new Skylaunch winch had a more definite plan – use any lift available to get as much height as possible. A short hop from the release position put us over Barmby Moor, the small village at the end of the runway, and its thermal-generating properties delivered on cue.

Looking up I saw a gaggle of birds circling way overhead under a grey cloud; putting the K-21 under them gave us the lift we needed, taking us to cloudbase at 4,000ft in less than five minutes. Chris explained that wave can do strange things to thermals and I guess that would explain such strong lift and a relatively high cloudbase so early in the day.

"OK," came the voice from the back, "we need to push forward now to get to the windward edge of the cloud."

I followed instruction, though in truth, now that we were under its belly, I was not certain where the edge of the cloud was. Slowly the vario changed from a bumpy four down to a smoother zero and then to a silky smooth one, two, then three up.

"We're in it!" said Chris. "Turn left now, parallel to the cloud, and track along the gap".

Again I did as told and had the most extraordinary sensation of seeing the clouds apparently moving downwards as we held our position relative to the ground, with none of the usual sensations that I would normally associate with gliding: no buffet, turbulence, positive or negative G – just a constant rush of air ➢



over the canopy to remind me that we were flying and an unbelievable smoothness and calmness all around us.

As we reached the end of the opening in the cloud, we turned 180° and beat back along the cloud, all the time keeping the airfield in sight below us; Chris encouraged me to explore the lift, moving away from and closer to the edge of the cloud (much more obvious from above than below!) until the vario gave its max reading – rarely much above 3 up. Chris also had to remind me occasionally to watch my speed – with none of the references that I was used to, other than the air rush, I was tending to let my speed drop.

Gaining height to about 6,500ft, now looking down on the wave formation in the morning sun, I had the distinct impression of fresh powder snow in the Alps, waiting for the first tracks of the day to be carved into them. Both of us were silent in awe at this fantastic and most unexpected turn of events.

Chris, a little mischievously perhaps, radioed down to the airfield to inform anyone who was listening that we were at 6,500ft in wave. After a moment's pause, the radio burst into life with people asking others if they had heard Chris' message, did they know whereabouts we were, what were we in and so on. We could almost sense those who had arrived late cursing their extra half hour in bed as they rushed about in haste to get rigged!

A short while later, Chris reminded me that we had been flying for nearly 40 minutes and that poor old Andy would be kicking his heels down below; feeling as though I was committing a crime against man and a sin against God, I opened the airbrakes fully. With many of the gaps in the clouds now closed, we descended into a much greyer world than the one we had left, and one that was full of gliders lining up, launching, circling, desperately trying to find that elusive wave. Excuse me for sounding a little smug, but nobody else managed to exploit the wave that day – one local pundit managed a 300ft climb in wave from an aerotow but stopped when the gap closed on him.

So was that the end of my memorable day? Hell, no!



"The look of delight on my children's faces after their first sortie in the Falke" – an experience that, Laurence says, ranks as one of his most memorable from his first season as a fully-fledged glider pilot, enjoying a wonderful sport

After lunch, still buzzing from the morning's adventure, walking back to the launchpoint after a less memorable flight, Chris quietly spoke those long-awaited words: "So do you fancy taking it up by yourself?".

Does the Pope have a balcony? In what had now turned into a fantastic soaring afternoon, I managed a 70-minute first solo flight ("Cheeky bugger!" was the comment from an instructor who saw my logbook the next day) at the end of which I managed to disprove the "best landing of my career was my first solo" theory!

By the end of the week I had a further four solo flights in the bag, each of which qualified for a Bronze leg and one of which, if I had thought to put a logger in the glider, would have qualified for my Silver height!

In summary, what a day, what a week, what a course: 6,500ft in wave, solo, Bronze legs and a sun tan! Even Andy, who had his *ab initio* flights on the Monday morning, was only spins and a few cable breaks away from solo by the Friday. Living in Liverpool, my weekend trips to Pocklington, East Yorkshire, represent a fair hike but with their own ex-WW2 airfield, a modern fleet of glass gliders, new clubhouse, new winch and with the friendliest, most helpful, professional and welcoming bunch of enthusiasts that I have found in my search for a club, I know that I have made the right choice.

I would just like to mention that it was my uncle, Frank Irving, who introduced me to gliding many years ago and whose death last summer re-inspired me to take up the sport again. On behalf of his family, I would like to thank all of the contributors to *S&G* for the many kind words that have been written in his memory and I would also like to thank his friends at Imperial College and at Lasham – too many to mention but you know who you are – for all of the thoughtful deeds carried out on his behalf.

Somewhere above, in a spiritual thermal, Frank will be smiling

IT IS only ten short months since I was faced with the dilemma – sell Frank's beloved Pégase and acknowledge that the seed sown in me by Frank, some 27 summers ago at Lasham, would never grow... or learn to fly it and cherish this most unusual heirloom.

After my solo in April, flying every weekend I could, I worked my way off daily checks, out of the K-21, into the club Junior and then the LS4; I built up hours of single-seater experience and by early July had both my Bronze Badge and Silver height in the bag. Fulfilling the insurance requirements to fly the Pégase, on the second weekend in July, five years to the day since it last flew and after a few tentative five-minute hops, Peggy (what, your glider doesn't have a name?) and I enjoyed an hour and 40 minutes soaring above the beautiful East Yorkshire countryside.

Flying most weekends this summer has given me many first impressions in this wonderful sport and, writing this, I wonder to myself, which left the greatest impression?

The first flight in the Junior with no empty passenger seat behind me? It was certainly a goal achieved but I don't remember much about the flight.

My first unlogged Silver height and second successful attempt? Fun but again, not memorable.

The look of delight on my children's faces after their first sortie in the Falke? Well – that's certainly up there.

The first flights in Peggy? Memorable but also slightly daunting.

No, the flight that really got me was towards the end of a hot June Saturday, flying the club K-8 in tandem with the beautiful 1956 Slingsby Eagle owned by Tony Kendall and Mick Pagram. The afternoon sea breeze gave a line of convergence that had the little K-8 floating up like a leaf in a breeze. Corkscrewing upwards at little more than 35kt IAS and watching the big K-21s falling below was terrific fun. Not able to use the weak intermittent lift, the glass ships were all soon back on the airfield whilst the Eagle and I sedately drifted up to the hazy cloudbase.

Flying there with the Eagle reminded me of the June 1955 S&G article, written by Frank, recounting the first two-seater crossing of the English Channel, made in an Eagle, with Lorne Welch piloting and Frank navigating. In the story, he tells of eating sandwiches and smoking a cigarette to pass the time whilst crossing the Channel; trying to explain to bemused Belgian officials why they had no passports; the Tiger Moth tug retrieve, flown by Derek Piggott, refuelling in Belgium, France and finally at London Gatwick (can you imagine?) before returning home. All *Boy's Own* stuff, two young men flying the latest hot ship on a summer's day long ago.

Well, okay. Truth is that there never was any dilemma. I couldn't imagine Peggy leaving the family, and deciding to learn to fly her and look after her was the only real option open to me.

Somewhere above, in a spiritual thermal, Frank will be looking down and smiling.

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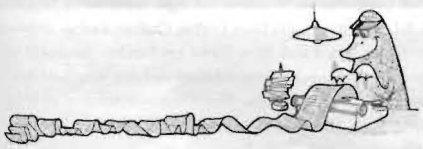
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Club focus



CHILTERNS GLIDING CENTRE (CGCentre) was formed when the Royal Air Force Gliding & Soaring Association (RAFGSA) Centre moved to RAF Halton and merged with the resident RAFGSA Chilterns Gliding Club.

The CGCentre is the full-time home of military sport gliding within the Royal Air Force, and was originally established as the RAFGSA Centre in October 1963 as part of 71 MU at RAF Bicester, where it absorbed the Windrushers GC (later to re-form at Bicester after the Centre's move to RAF Halton). The Chilterns Club began at RAF Benson, before moving on to RAF Weston-on-the-Green and, latterly, RAF Halton. The University College London Union Gliding Club (UCLUGC – no wonder we call them 'UCL' for short), which we actively support, also operates from RAF Halton.

The principal aim of the CGCentre is to introduce young service men/women to the sport of gliding and soaring. To further this aim, we provide a seven-day-a-week gliding site where members of all service gliding clubs can fly. As well as routine task and soaring weeks, courses are also run covering more advanced topics such as cross-country, aerobatics and instructor training. A major element of the tasking of the CGCentre today is the Joint Services Adventurous Training (JSAT), and a number of courses are run each year within the JSAT scheme for students from all three Services.

In the early days of the RAFGSA its membership was almost exclusively Service; however, over the years the Association has come to value the contribution made by retired servicemen and other civilians. This, combined with successive reductions in the size of the Armed Forces, has led to an increase in the proportion of civilian members. However, the Charities Commission have placed limits on civilian membership of service clubs; therefore, when a place becomes available, we generally only accept civilians with specific skills who can actively contribute to the support and running of the gliding activities.

The Centre has been well represented in the annual RAFGSA expedition to Sisteron, and for the past two years some of the civilian members have arranged a separate expedition to run concurrently with their service colleagues' expedition to the site.

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At a glance

Full membership cost: £103 pa

Launch type and cost:
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Club fleet: Pawnee x2, Grob 109B x2, Duo Discus, K-21 x3, K-13, Ventus 2cT, Discus, Astir, K-18

Instructors: 25

Types of lift: ridge, thermal, occasional wave

Operates: 7 days a week, but 'club' flying usually Weds & Fri afternoons, Bank Holidays & weekends

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Club news

Aquila (Hinton-in-the-Hedges)

WE welcome our newest member, Bryan Evans, and congratulate Akos Redey, first solo, Chris Nicholson, Silver badge and 100km diploma, and Louise Walker and Stuart Johnston for Silver distances. Congratulations to Roger Coombs on renewing his inspector rating. A number of members used 9,000ft cloudbases in early July to achieve fast cross-country speeds (see p31). We have continued to organise midweek task flying when weather permits. The club has been well represented in competitions this summer with members competing in the Bidford, Bicester and Gransden Regionals, and the 18-Metre Nationals at Lasham.

Tim O'Sullivan

Bannerdown (Keevil)

FOR soaring week in June we invited Pete Desmond and a party from Bowland Forest to join the fun. The weather was good with a number of tasks flown. Recently, Stephen Bosher and Josh Grios have soloed and Paul McTurk has re-soloed. Neil Geraghty completed five hours, Peter Croy likewise – including a Silver height. And 50km flights were made by Tim Roberts and Brendan Worley. Carl Peters and Jon Arnold flew in France in the service competition at Romorantin. The club has lost Willy and Debb Hackett for the time being. We wish them well during their absence.

Derek Findlay

Bath, Wilts & North Dorset (The Park)

OUR second flying week at the end of June was frustrating, with poor weather, but task week in August was somewhat better and a good social week with members staying on site. Mike Jenks managed to find wave, achieving Gold height, but landing about 8pm. Congratulations to Nick Mitchell, who went solo after 40 launches, and is already collecting Bronze legs. Our one-day courses appear to have been a success with a number of people enjoying almost one-to-one instruction. More members are being encouraged to fly in the Inter-club League.

Jan Smith

Bidford Gliding (Bidford)

CONGRATULATIONS to Mark Winters for completing his Bronze Badge and cross-country endorsement. Many other achievements to mention – Harry Whitehead re-soloed and achieved his five hours, his brother Fergal went solo in a Puchacz as did Nick Harker. Bob Green also went solo; Nick Ghee completed his BI course; Bill Inglis completed a 500km, as did Frank Jeynes and Dave Findon; Graham Barlow achieved the 100km, along with Steve Foster; Les Fletcher completed his five hours and special congratulations to Tuggy Tony, who has completed his Silver Badge. Rod Witter won our annual Turbo Competition. Many thanks to those who helped.

Emily Broadbridge

Black Mountains (Talgarth)

WE'RE ahead of last year for launches and flying hours. Our average soaring time per launch, including training circuits and trial lessons, stands at 1hr 16mins! Following the adoption of a five-year strategy in April, a small team visited Belgium during

Please send news to *editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk* or Helen Evans, BGA, Kimberley House, Vaughan Way, Leicester LE1 4SE to arrive by **October 17** for the next issue (later deadlines at *www.gliding.co.uk*)





*Above: a 4,000ft cloudbase over **Portmoak**, looking south towards the River Forth and Edinburgh, on August 10 – the day John Williams flew his Antares in wave round 303.8km in 1hr 54m 56s to claim a new Open Class record of 158.6km/h (Ian Easson) Right: wave at **Bowland Forest** on August 13, straight off the winch to 10,300ft (Nigel Barnard) Left: Mustang roars over **Essex & Suffolk GC**'s clubhouse at the memorial dedication for USAAF 55th Fighter Group veterans who flew there in WW2 (John Horne)*









*Above and inset: Emma Young soloed at **Wyvern**; Above right: **Clevelands**' Fred Brown gets ready to launch in the Yorkshire Inter-Club novice class as Bob Crick looks on; Right: the new clubhouse at **Wolds** was given a lick of paint by members; Left: Andy Green of Four Counties – the new diesel land speed record holder – launching the RAFGSA's Chilean Air Force guest Alejandro Chanes at **RAF Wittering** (see also p4)*



Club news



Above: Sarah Mitcheson has gone solo at the Nympsfield site of ***Bristol & Gloucestershire GC*** *(Sid Smith)*



From left, pictured at ***Bidford****: Tony Dolan; Lu Kennington; Nick Harker; Harry Whitehead; Fergal Whitehead; and Bruno Brown*







There are three new solos to report at ***Bowland Forest GC****:*

Above left: Andy Stansfield with instructor Phil Punt

Above right: Simon Altman with instructor Clark Bain

Left: Carl Mallinson

August to assess the suitability of the PW6 as a club two-seater and we expect some lively discussions. A steady stream of pilots from other clubs continues to sample our super soaring with many taking advantage of our country membership deals. Seven days a week operation continues under Don Puttock's control.
Robbie Robertson

Booker (Wycombe Air Park)

MUCH improved weather has helped our launch rate recover. Congratulations to Steve Atkinson, Daniel Nye and Barry Michael on going solo and to Adam Kingdom, Jonathan Cave and Bob Griffen for re-soloing, Louis Quartly and Callum Clark for Silver distance, and Chris Young, first flight in the K-18. Booker pilots have done very well in National Competitions, Tim Scott winning the 15-metres, and Paul Brice coming second in the 18-metres, following a fifth place in the 15-metre comp days after taking delivery of his new ASG29. In our Regionals, Dave Watt won.
Roger Neal

Borders (Milfield)

CONRATULATIONS on new solos by Tom Hughes and Mike Smith. Recently some younger members spent some time with the 8 Ball Club at Shipdam. In August Gordon Lawrie, climbed to 6300ft in wave in his Sport Vega, earning a comfortable Silver height gain. Brian Brown attempted a 300km in his DG 300 but landed 30k short. In August we held an *ab initio* course for the pupils of Queen Elizabeth High School, Hexham, and a great success it was – thanks to all who helped.
Leonard Dent

Bowland Forest (Chipping)

SIMON Altman, Carl Mallinson and Andy Stansfield have all gone solo and Ray Braithwaite has re-soloed. Clark Bain has moved to Nova Scotia, we thank him and wish him well. Expeditions have resulted in some notable achievements. At Keevil, Graham Settle, Andy Spray and Henry Stott flew all 50km to complete Silver. We teamed up with Dishforth for the Yorkshire Interclub league, ending up a credible third. Finally, we exhibited our Astir at a local college with 8000 members of the public being subjected to "car salesman" tactics by club members.
Phil Punt/Tracy Joseph

Bristol & Gloucestershire (Nympsfield)

JON Meyer was the highest-placed member in the Club Class nationals at our club, coming fifth. We've celebrated with our new world champion, Leigh Wells. A "new" Grob Acro has been delivered to replace our Hagar. Pete Bagnall finished his Silver and did Diamond goal and Gold distance. Jon Coote got his 100km diploma and Sarah Mitcheson has soloed. Summer instructor Gavin Wrigley's courses were a success, with achievements for Julia Dawson, Bob Page, Simon Bawden, Pete Stevens and Steve Leslie. CFI Tim Macfadyen and Trevor Stuart have been vying for top place in the national Ladder.
Bernard Smyth

Buckminster (Saltby)

BIG news – the new members' hangar is finished thanks to Mike Cook and helpers. Adam Thornton and Paddy Yeoman have done Silver distances, Peter Belham his duration and Stuart Beaumont has his NPPL – well done all. Team Saltby did well at the Midland Regionals, especially Colin and Andrew. Stuart, Dave, Martin and Cathy raised £244 during our sponsored flying week for a local hospice – well done! September saw the ever-successful 40s night and another aerobatic competition to tax those of a strong constitution. It's been a great summer.
Chris Davison

Burn (Burn)

DAVE Bell has been elected our chairman; we all wish him well and are confident he will lead us successfully through what will be some challenging years. There have been an encouraging number of first solo flights this summer. Congratulations to Alan Brownbridge, Shaun Cooper, Graham Higgins, Kevin Moseley and Richard Truchan. We have welcomed seven new teenagers to the club – they are using a grant of £5000 we received from Selby District Council. The club's interest in aerobatics continues to increase with members looking forward to flights in the Dunstable-based Fox when it visits us in September.
George Goodenough

Cambridge (Gransden Lodge)

CONGRATULATIONS to 17-year-old Alex Ward on managing his Silver distance and 100km diploma in a single flight. Kate Woods now has her Gold distance and was the top scoring female at the Junior Nationals. New solos include: Jackie Sparrow, Peter Christmas, Haluk Yildiz and Douglas Brooks. Steve Edwards has organised an expedition to Portmoak for October. We have bought another Supacat winch as a backup and it will ensure that our main winch is always in first class working order. Our online booking system has also brought back some old members, who appreciate the convenience.
Paul Harvey

Carlton Moor (Carlton Moor)

CONGRATULATIONS to Stan Lincoln on achieving his B Certificate. Nigel Ling has been appointed Safety Officer and Kevin Davidson has at last managed to fly at Carlton. Ged Terry, the CFI, has had an hour in a Hawker Hunter (not from Carlton!). Tales of 540kts over the Irish Sea, barrel rolls and 160-knot approaches are enlightening the days when we cannot fly. Will we be the first club with a jet K-13? We have been presented with a new launch parachute. Its Coat-of-Many-Colours design is well in keeping with the spirit of the club.
Nigel Ling

Channel (Waldershare Park)

WE'VE had a busy time between buying a new K-13, gliding week and the Waldershare Steam Rally. The latter a great success, with club members running a taxi service to the gliding club for trial flights. One Kentish stallholder was so impressed that he donated cherries and several gallons of his finest cider to the club. We are fuelling the winch with the cider! Congratulations to Eddie Streeter on his second Bronze leg and to Matt Waters on his Bronze Badge. A sad farewell to two club K-7s, CLF and GAQ, deemed to be beyond economic repair.
Nigel Shepherd

Chilterns Centre (RAF Halton)

SOME club pilots have been enjoying the comps, particularly the Bicester Regionals, where there was a relatively large contingent. Two of our young pilots had fun (and good experience) at the Dunstable-based Juniors in the Duo, flying and being flown around by a couple of (shall we say) 'slightly' older pilots. Back at base the July weather was amazing; August was disappointing – but at least the ridges continued to work occasionally. We are looking forward to – hopefully – an Indian summer.
Andy Hyslop

Clevelands (RAF Dishforth)

FRED Brown fell slightly short of his 50km –1km to be exact. Bob Crick also missed his 50km, ending up in his first successful field landing, and Tiffer Grout was one minute short of his first Bronze leg! Happily, we finished third in the Yorkshire Inter-Club League, thanks to a team effort with Bowland Forest. LUUGS (Leeds University) finished third in the Inter-University contest. Well done to all. Thanks to Dave Campbell, the retiring CFI, for his support; Grinner Smith now takes over. We are taking bookings through the website *www.clevelandsgliding.org.uk* for the annual Christmas wave camp.
Polly Whitehead

Cotswold (Aston Down)

WE'VE had a number of first solos – congratulations Alan Tilbee, Colin Hughes, John Herett and Mike Hayes. Tom Gouch soloed in June and has his Bronze and 50km. Cotswold pilots have also been doing well in both regional and national competitions with Alistair Harrison and Jon Gammage competing in the Midland Regionals. Alistair, along with Paul Gentil, also flew in the Club Class Nationals while Brian Birlison, Andy Smith and Tony Parker flew in the 15m Nationals that we hosted at Aston Down during a week of excellent weather. Thanks to all who flew or helped.
Frank Birlison

Cranwell (Cranwell)

FIRSTLY, well done to members who took part in inter-club competitions. Congratulations Neil Atkins and Devin Giddings who completed five-hour duration flights and gained Silver heights. Our CFI Mark Evans decided that it would be a good idea to be anchored off Skegness pier in a liferaft for 36hrs for the RNLI. Well done to him. Finally a big thank-you to Jon Trueman and his team who organised and arranged a fly-in so that power and glider pilots could gain a greater understanding of each others' requirements. Unfortunately the weather conspired against us.
Zeb Zamo

Deeside (Aboyne)

WE'VE had a busy summer hosting Competition Enterprise and the Scottish Inter-Club League. Congratulations to Justin Wills and Rory O'Connor, winner and runner-up of the former. Ben Nevis and Inverness were incorporated into the tasks, with Scottish castles and the coast as e-turning points. Congratulations to Cairngorm GC, who won the Scottish Interclub league. Now we look forward to the 10th UK Mountain Soaring Championship in early September. Well done Charlie Jordan on his five hours. We







*Above: at **Kestrel**, Andy Lamb has soloed*

Above right: at the same club, Jim Aggis has flown the Astir

*Right: at **Dorset GC**, Paul Kempton (left), an* ab initio *ex-airline pilot, was sent solo in July by Gerry Cox (right)*



*A Kent Coast Task to mark **Challock's** 50th anniversary was won by founder member Dennis ("Nobby") Clark in July*



Flying the flag for gliding at this summer's Waldershare Steam Rally were members from Channel GC (Nigel Shepherd)

would like to record our grateful thanks to the rescue services in Scotland who found our missing Comp Enterprise competitor!
Sue Heard

Derby & Lancs (Camphill)

CONGRATULATIONS to Mike Armstrong for fifth place in the Midland Regionals at Husbands Bosworth and to Jonathan Thorpe for his 300km during a visit to Gransden Lodge. Also to Steve Toms, who went solo five weeks and 48 launches after joining us, and to Peter Willerton on soloing. An expedition to Talgarth resulted in lots of flying in the easterly winds, but not much on their ridges. Our second K-13 is now flying. We said goodbye recently to Miranda and Ray, who have gone back to South Wales.
Dave Salmon

Dorset (Eyres Field)

ONLY one day was "taskable" during our July week. Rob Linee did his third 300km in a time of 3hrs 40mins. Guy Jarvis also did a 300km badge flight, pending ratification. Carol Marshall landed out at Tiverton in Devon. Ab-initio Mark Enfield did the Novice triangle with instructor Gerry Cox. Thanks to Dave Piercy for task-setting. Gerry Cox sent *ab initio* ex-airline pilot Paul Kempton solo in July. We have some good publicity at Monkey World. Apparently the Monkeys point up at the gliders. Thanks to those who keep the club running.
Colin Weyman

Dukeries (Darlton)

DUKERIES GC is now established in its new home with Darlton proving to be a great site with some excellent flying. As of August we were still rigging from trailers as the hangar hadn't been completed and the contractor for ground works hadn't topped off the access road. We share the site with Newark & Notts GC. We are really enjoying their company and thank them for their support. We are sending a combined fleet of five or six aircraft to the two-seater comp at Pocklington and have our usual trip planned to Portmoak in October.
Mike Terry

East Sussex (Ringmer)

ALL change here with new chairman John Weddell and the field looking more like a gliding than a building site. Expeditions to Denbigh and Talgarth were well attended and enjoyed. Congratulations to Terry Banks and Mike Millar for their Diamond goal, Gold distance and Gold badge and to Andy Cole and John Weddell for their Silver Badges. We were grateful to Terry Banks for reaching 20,000ft twice in a week so we could celebrate at his expense! Maintenance work continues under the guidance of John Johnson and Roland Ogden, whom we couldn't do without.
John Weddell

Essex & Suffolk (Wormingford)

WE won the Eastern Interclub League – thanks go to clubs who hosted weekends. Congratulations Markus Klinker, Gunter Seymus and Ben King on going solo and to Nick White, Martin Lawson and Dick Skinner for Silver distance flights. Competition successes for Robbie Nunn, third in the Club Class Nationals; John Gilbert Jnr, third in the Easterns and George Green, seventh in the Juniors. We hosted a memorial for the USAAF 55th Fighter Group veterans who flew here during WWII. Sadly we said goodbye to Pete Wilby, who lost his valiant battle against cancer.
Bob Godden

Essex (North Weald/Ridgewell)

WELL done to Paul Bott, who has completed two Bronze legs, and Sam Fisher, a junior member, who has been given the chance to go to New Zealand to enhance his skills. One of our flying weeks coincided with the hottest day on record. A number of good soaring flights were made, contributing to a very successful period of flying. The last week ended with a superb barbeque – huge thanks to Sue Martin and Lin Brennend. We have flown an increased number of trial lessons and must thank all those whose hard work has contributed so much.
Peter Perry

Fenland (RAF Marham)

LOTS of fun over the past two months, including one weekend with four types of two-seater on the airfield, including Duo R1. Congratulations to Olly Chubbock on conversion to the Astir and to Bob Boughen, who has managed his Silver five hours. The Eastern Regionals 2006 saw our own Don Johnstone as Comp Director. Pete Stafford Allen finished eighth with Paul McLean and Tim Edmunds was also flying. My big 'thanks' this time goes to Bernard Hicks, who arranged the recent successful exped to Halton, never failing to impress with the effort he puts in.
Graham French

Four Counties (RAF Wittering)

THE visit by the Chilean Air Force was a great success, helped by good weather – many thanks to all involved. Our K-21 has returned from refurbishment in Poland, while R35 travels east for the same treatment. The students from Loughborough competed in the Inter University Week, putting in a good performance. Four Counties was at the Wittering Open Day, where a great amount of interest was shown. Lastly, massive congratulations to our chairman, Andy Green, who has broken the diesel land speed record, clocking up more than 325mph. We can't wait for the party when he gets home.
Pete Davey

Fulmar (RAF Kinloss)

WE have said goodbye to our Grob Acro R50 – its swansong and the only time I have known it deliberately go cross-country was when Stuart Naylor and I competed in Comp Enterprise at Aboyne this year. A great competition run professionally by all involved. To our great surprise we won the "Blunt Nails" trophy as the highest-placed poorest-performance glider (thank God for handicap). Our replacement is the shiny Duo Discus R1, which has already put in some hours. We are looking forward to exploiting its cross-country performance exploring the excellent wave at Easterton this autumn.
Billy Fisher

Kent (Challock)

AS our 50th summer ends we can look back on spectacular anniversary events. Further to our Gala Ball, the weekend of 8-9th July formed an action-packed two days, including the flying of the Mayor of Ashford and MP Damian Green, as well as several great aircraft displays. A Kent Coast Task was run, eventually being won by one of our founders, veteran glider pilot Dennis "Nobby" Clark. Further solos include Joe Hobbs, on his 16th birthday, and Mike King. We are one of the founding sites for British gliding. For updates visit *www.kent-gliding-club.co.uk*
Darren Palmer

Kestrel (RAF Odiham)

KESTREL is now established as an RAFGSA club with things moving forward. We get excellent support from RAF Odiham and our membership is growing. We have nine students, four achieving first solo. Bernd flew the local policeman trying to find two escaped bulls! We have just finished the last of our successful weekend courses. Static displays at Aldershot show and Crookham village show generated a lot of interest as did a great display at RAF Odiham's family day. Our first Wednesday introduction to gliding saw us flying eight servicemen. Finally big thanks to all who help keep the club running.
Brian Garston

Lasham Gliding Society (Lasham)

MORE than 300 aviators joined to battle the CAA in August at Lasham, with members and visitors demonstrating concern about the proposed transponder legislation. The CAA promised matters would be looked into. Congratulations Phil Jones – having won the 18m world championship, his 363km dash in the 18m Nationals here averaged 144kph! Thanks go to Bob Bickers as Competition Director. Thanks to Marjorie Hobby for organising the RAF Lasham 1942-1948 Memorial Service and Commemoration. Enhancing the image of gliding here is under way with new signs, gifts and an exciting social calendar.
Mary Allen

Lincolnshire (Strubby)

LINCOLNSHIRE GC now has a working flush toilet, which we can keep secure and clean. Before this we made do with the ramshackle old airfield toilet block which, when it worked, was attacked by vandals. Congratulations to Tim Dobson, our latest solo. The Lincs GC Travelling Wilburys have continued to hit unsuspecting gliding clubs this year with visits to Shenington, Needwood Forest, Upwood, Newark & Notts and Pocklington. Beware: your club could be next.
Dick Skerry

London (Dunstable)

WE are saddened to learn of Terry McGee's death during his French soaring holiday in June. He will be greatly missed as a member, tug pilot and good friend. Our condolences go to his wife Maggi and her family. Valerie Abercrombie has is retiring after more than 30 years in our office. She will be much missed. The Junior Nationals was a great success; we thank our sponsors Wayside for all kinds of support. A group of pilots revisited Saal in Germany, where they flew more than 15000 km collectively, with two pilots completing a 500km task.
Geoff Moore

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*Above: Steve Jarvis and Mike Newbound of **London** flew their Fox aerobatic at the Aerobatic Nationals (Power) at Sywell to promote gliding to our prop-driven brethren (Ian Gallagher)*

Below, from top:
*Well done to Callum Harkness, who is pictured after going solo on his 16th birthday at **Trent Valley GC**;*
*Kevin Moseley being congratulated by instructor Tony Flannery at **Burn**, after soloing in July. "This has been a dream of mine to fly all my life," he says, "and I would like to say all the instructors at Burn have been incredible, patient and understanding – and I now look forward to progressing on and maybe one day passing on those same skills to others." (Ashley Bullen)*
*Malcolm ("Sherpa") Barlow is all smiles after his first solo at **Mendip**'s Halesland site (Keith Simmons)*







Club news

Mendip (Halesland)

MALCOLM (Sherpa) Barlow managed his first solo although we are not convinced that it was that cold! Ed Gardener managed to control his urges to clock up five hours in the club Skylark. The Kestrel Kids have been wandering far and wide and, but for a logger problem, Andy Whiteman would have claimed his first 300km. His disappointment was tempered by finding a thermal and climbing away from the field where club mate Bob Merrit landed out. We have taken our first steps into the 21st century with the purchase of an Astir CS, our first glass single-seater.
Keith Simmons

Midland (The Long Mynd)

THE big news is that after last year's successful Competition Enterprise the Interclub League final was held at the Mynd. Unfortunately that was without the participation of the home team. Two new gliders have by now bedded themselves in the hangar. The Mynd has a new instructor, congratulations to Mike Witton on his BI rating. Well done Cat Machin on her solo and all those members away competing this summer, especially Jonnyboy for his third in the Junior Nationals. Thanks to all who competed and helped out in our task week in August.
David D'Arcy

Nene Valley (Upwood)

TASK week ended with a mixed bag of weather. We managed 1019km for the first Sunday and everyone was in high spirits for a good week, Monday finished wet, Tuesday to Thursday was wet or very windy, Friday looked good but overcast, Saturday saw a 50km Silver leg, a 150km triangle, two 300km and one 500km declared. Again conditions changed, and a total of 2029km were flown during the week. Steve Jarvis and Paul Ridgill got their 100km diploma part ones and Richard Hayden Silver duration.
Dave Mansfield

Newark & Notts (Darlton)

ON June 11 flying ceased at our old site with a final beat-up by the CFI and chairman in the K-13. Thanks to all of the past and present members who renewed old acquaintances at the leaving party. We are now flying at the new Dukeries site. The club office is on site and the steelwork for the new hangar is up. Thank you to Dukeries for accommodating us in our time of need. Coming events include the Wood and Glass competition at Kirton and the annual pilgrimage to the two-seater competition at Pocklington.
Noel Kerr

Norfolk (Tibenham)

CONGRATULATIONS to Paul Wilkinson on going solo, Clive Peterson on five hours and Tom Smith for second in the Junior Nationals. Due to great efforts the new shower block is in operation. We hosted a successful Eastern Regional Competition, won by Peter Baker of Cambridge. Thanks to Pete Ryland for his amusing morning briefings on how to use the showers. During July we had a visit to the airfield by American veterans of WWII and their families. Many took the opportunity to fly again from their wartime base. Well done to Graham Ashworth for his work on Sport Relief.
Mark Wright

North Wales (Llantysilio)

THE things we do in order to fly – we turn into sheepdogs and pen up the livestock. Earlier this year a farmhand dumped a trailer of rotting "mangel-wurzels" in the middle of our landing strip, all to be lifted by hand before flying. The latest hazard was to be left a strip a Skylark's wingspan wide between silage bales. Unless we had the combined skills of Douglas Bader and Brian Trubshaw, we had to suspend operations until they were shifted. Our display at the Airbus family day brought us some trial flights and a few memberships.
Brian Williams

Northumbria (Currock Hill)

WE have welcomed the first groups of disadvantaged youngsters to fly with us under our new Wings Trust - set up by a sizeable donation from past chairman Roy Bousfield. A dozen members of a youth centre in Byker – including some who had never been out of Newcastle – were the first, followed by 12 from Gateshead, so busy caring for sick and disabled relatives that they usually miss out on such opportunities. We would like to make this a regular thing and perhaps other ex-members may come forward to make donations. Congratulations to Steph Burn on going solo before heading to university.
Richard Harris

Oxford (Weston on the Green)

CONGRATULATIONS Paul Smith and Jean Fre Fachon on Silver heights, and to Kevin Noel, who re-soloed. Daisy our T-21 looks lovely after a complete repaint. Thanks to all who helped. We have three new BIs – Simon Calvert, Paul Wilford and Paul Morrisdance. Well done. Congratulations also to Dave Bray, who flew his first 300km at 103km/h. OGC scored more success winning through to the ICL finals – bring on the competition. Thanks go to Neil Turner for keeping the ground equipment on song and all the Friday night flying crews. We all owe you.
Simon Walker

Rattlesden (Rattlesden)

AFTER a hesitant start the thermal meter around the clubhouse is being added to each weekend. Retuning to Rattlesden after her flights in the two-seaters at the Junior Nationals, Dawn Goldsmith has got her Silver height and a one-hour flight for her cross-country endorsement. James Inch has had a two-hour flight and David Salvage has got his five hours. Paul Roche managed his Silver height and a two-hour flight for his cross-country endorsement. The launchpoint vehicles have been upgraded to a coach, many thanks to Steve Wright for all his hard work.
Helen Page

Scottish Gliding Centre (Portmoak)

SUMMER brought a steady stream of visitors. The end of July saw the RAF arrive with their six-drum winch, a fleet of six Grob 103 Vikings and the first batch of eager ATC cadets. Achievements since last issue include: Mags Doig, Brian Colthorpe and Richard Lucas – Aerobatics Standard, Evan Pole – Gold distance and Diamond goal, Alec Stevenson – Silver height and duration. John Williams flew a very fast 300km covering 303.8km in 1hr 54m 56s. Pending all official checking, this looks like a new open class record at 158.6km/h (the previous record was 121.5km/h).
Ian Easson

Shenington (Shenington)

WE have been extending our range. CFI Mark Stevens in the Northerns, Graham Paul and Steve Codd et al at Bicester, Geoff Jones in his first field landing and Les Hatcher in a school playing field, where he gave an impromptu lecture to the crowd! Phil Zelazowski managed Silver height and distance. Clive Smith has soloed. Andrew Salisbury took a 1,500ft tow in his Dart and planked it at the bottom of the hill, rescued by Alan Newman and friends from Bowland Forest. Brian Hucker, with Steve Codd at Bicester, earned his cross-country endorsement with a 300km.
Mary Meagher

Shropshire Soaring Group (Sleap)

WE were all saddened by the death of Frank Humphreys, a member with an incredible range of interests; a member of the Twin Astir syndicate, a model engineer, a loco driver and a member of the George Formby Society. Our Thursday afternoon and evening programme was boosted in July with a meal and flights for former members. It was very gratifying that the family of the late Charles Webb turned out in force. John Catmur has joined the Vega syndicate and, after a few years with the Twin Astir, is enjoying some solo flying.
Keith Field

Southdown (Parham)

WE are pleased to report our membership has increased – fine weather and recruiting officer Julian Hitchcock have made a difference. A new DG-1000T syndicate has been formed, giving some of the junior members the opportunity to fly in the 18m Nationals as second pilot. During the heatwave, Alex McClaran soloed and Colin Winterburn flew his Silver distance. During a club visit to Husbands Bosworth, Clive Bruce achieved Silver height and distance. In the Standard Class Nationals, the club was represented by Julian Hitchcock, Craig Lowrie and Paul Fritche, the latter coming in a commendable tenth.
Peter J Holloway

South Wales (Usk)

CONGRATULATIONS Rob Hines on achieving his first 300km in the Astir during the Junior Nationals. Maureen and Rod Weaver have completed the cross-country instructors course, and well done to Simon Lewis and Mark Thomas, who have completed their BI ratings. Our Rockpolishers weekend went well – big thanks to George Robertson. Task Week was less of a washout than usual – we got some flying in, but not enough to produce an overall winner. Our cross-country week was successful with the majority of the course members experiencing cross-country flights in both the Grob and single-seaters.
Jan Phillips

Staffordshire (Seighford)

OUR 40s hangar dance in June was great – many members dressed in costume for the occasion. Dancing was to the Leicester Big Band and included lessons on the then-current dances. We welcome Ric Prestwich, Daniella Winton, Andrew Mullin, James Chapman and Robert Brown to the club and are very pleased to welcome back Mike Webb. Warren Johnson soloed and Paul Thomson reached Silver height. Just before the end of July, Geoff Sutton made Silver height and five hours – well done. We were flying on a seven-day basis until mid August. Thanks to all instructors and Don, our midweek tuggie.
Colin Ratcliffe

Stratford-on-Avon (Snitterfield)

TWENTY eight pilots flew no less than 2,200km and clocked up 317 hours during our cross-country development week in July. Coaching was courtesy of Martyn Davies, Barry Kerby, Phil and Diana King, Phil Pickett and Pete Stratten, using the BGA's new Duo Discus X. The week resulted in six 100km diplomas, one Silver, one Silver duration and one two-hour flight for the cross-country endorsement. Congratulations to Charles Stearman on Silver distance and to Martin Palmer for Silver duration and height. Previously, Graham Macmillan completed Silver after a break of some 30 years since starting gliding.
Harry Williams

Surrey Hills/South London (Kenley)

IT is with much regret that I announce the resignation of our club manager and course instructor, Mick Hughes. Over the past year, Mick and his wife Pauline have put enormous amounts of effort into running the club and made some serious improvements. Mick has also been a most excellent instructor. They are a great couple to be around and we have enjoyed their company immensely. We all wish them both the very best for the future. This now leaves us the difficult task of replacing them.
Marc Corrance

The Soaring Centre (Husbands Bosworth)

CONGRATULATIONS Ellie Armstrong, Tim Treadaway, Stephen Hipkins and Sean Boustral on Silver badges, Ali Bridges on Silver distance and height, and Stephen Pozerskis on Silver distance. Well done to everyone who has competed in competitions this summer, particularly Gary Stingemore, Paul Crabb, Adrian Hatton, Paul Shelton, Russell Cheetham, John Wilton and Mike Fox. Roy Spreckley is our new club manager and Adam Gilmore the new club committee secretary. Peter Davies is now an Assistant Cat. Instructor. The Duo Discus has been well utilised by junior pilots gaining two-seat cross-country experience.
Siobhan Crabb

Trent Valley (Kirton in Lindsey)

WELCOME to Steve Wilkinson, our new CFI. A big thank-you to Paul Holland, who has stepped down after six years and to Janet Holland, our *S&G* correspondent. Our Dyneema winch cables continue to be successful, and Peter Bellham has introduced computerised logging, which is proving a triumph. Facilities continue to improve and we now provide hot meals in the clubhouse. One of our longest-serving members, "Dixie" Dean, has finally stopped gliding after 53 years, most of these as a full cat instructor. A big thank-you to "Dixie" for all that time and effort.
Ian Johnson

Ulster (Bellarena)

OUR first expedition to Jaca in Spain has come to pass and a great time had by all – many thanks to organisers Jimmy

Obituaries

William John ('Jack') Hammond – Essex, London, The Soaring Centre

JACK had had a long and interesting gliding career in his 96 years. Joining the then Essex GC in 1928, he quickly went solo – as he said, his first flight was his first solo – on an open Primary, gaining A and B certificate (No. 302). In 1936 he joined London GC at Dunstable, where he did his Silver duration on the ridge in a Grunau Baby. It was another 12 years before he could complete his Silver (No. 233) at Hastings. At the outbreak of World War Two he volunteered for aircrew but was rejected as too old so joined the Fire Service, serving throughout the London Blitz. In 1944 he joined the Air Training Corps as a civilian instructor on T-21s and T-31s, retiring from the ATC at 66 after more than 30 years' service, which brought him the award of the BEM. In 1989, now 80, he joined us at Husbands Bosworth and after mastering the aerotow, re-soloed, flying the Junior, Puchacz and Bocian. By the end of his flying career, Jack had amassed a total of 440hrs and 7,100 launches, much of it in the T-21. The last time I flew with Jack was about four years ago, when he asked if I would act as his safety pilot as he said his eyes were not as good as they were. There was little for me to do in the rear seat. I never saw him again but as he left, I remarked to another pilot: "that man intends to live for ever". Thanks, Jack, for showing us that life is for living and age is no bar to living it to the full.

Ron Davidson

'Chas' Morgan – Norfolk

WE were all shocked and deeply saddened to learn of the sudden death of Chas Morgan (1933-2006). He was liked and respected by all who knew him. Chas was an extremely private and modest person – some of his achievements were news even to his family – but he had much to be proud of. Aviation was his livelihood: a long career in the RAF, then an airline pilot with Humber Airways and Air Anglia, where he became chief pilot. His love affair with gliding began with the RAFGSA and his first solo was on August 11, 1954. Most of his gliding was as instructor and he was CFI of numerous clubs, at home and abroad. On November 5, 1962, in Germany, he took a K-7 to 20,100ft, to claim the British absolute altitude and gain of height (16,460ft) records. In 1964 he gained his Gold. In June 1965 he aerotowed a Gull from Feltwell to South Cerney for the World Gliding Championships. He gave a demonstration in the Gull before the international audience and spent the rest of the time giving joy rides in a Blanik to competition helpers. In August of the year he won the Royal Air Force individual gliding championship. By 1971, he had flown 61 glider types and had flown from 44 sites. This handsome, charismatic character always had a twinkle in his eye, and a rare sense of humour. During his time with the RAF as a navigation instructor he set an exercise that resulted in an RAF Phantom leaving a massive vapour trail over Southern England in the shape of part of the male anatomy. The authorities never discovered who was responsible. By the time he retired from civil aviation, he had amassed almost 15,000 hours as Captain, was current on at least 20 types and had visited 128 aerodromes worldwide. Chas joined Norfolk GC in 1997 and was soon deeply involved with the club. He was a dependable tug pilot and as Technical Officer devoted many hours to keeping the fleet in top condition. As a long-standing committee member his wisdom and common sense could be relied on. An extremely safety conscious pilot, his feet were firmly in the present and his face to the future. Chas will be greatly missed and leaves a void in so many areas of our club. Our sincere sympathy goes to Pat and the family.

Graham Ashworth

Chris Stringfellow – Lasham

CHRIS Stringfellow (1918-2006) was born in St Helens, Lancashire. At 16, he started as an apprentice at the British Insulated Cable works in Prescot, and attended night school to work towards a degree. At the same time he joined the Territorials and within a week of the outbreak of war in 1939 was in France, where he celebrated his 21st birthday. After Dunkirk, following which he was mentioned in dispatches for bravery, he was taken back into the power industry, a reserved occupation. Civilian life didn't suit him and he volunteered and joined the Tank regiment – his old friends in the 5th South Lancs having meanwhile been sent to Singapore and Japanese POW camps – and then the Army Air Corps, where he learnt to fly small planes and gliders. Fortunately he was not ready for the D-Day landings and was sent to Burma, where they dropped supplies to forces in the jungle and prepared for an assault on the Japanese. He used to speak of his exploits flying Horsa and Hotspur gliders. When asked if they'd been able to climb in a thermal, he replied that it was quite possible but the troops in the back didn't like it very much! After several years of marriage, children, and no spare money he started to fly at Biggin Hill until a heart murmur was discovered. In about 1980 a gliding club was started at the Central Electricity Research Laboratories, where he was working, and although it failed through lack of support Chris went on to join Lasham. A member of the Tuesday Group for many years, he would attend come fair weather or foul. One blustery and unpleasant October day he was one of only two pilots without an instructor rating who turned up, saying that he'd come to have a flight on his birthday. When asked which one, he announced that it was his 85th! Chris always seemed to find good thermals and usually managed to log the longest flights, which goes to show that experience really does count. The DG-1000 quickly became his favourite glider and he enjoyed many lengthy flights in it. It was while flying it that he suffered a fatal heart attack on July 18, 2006. Fortunately he was flying with a safety pilot, who landed without mishap. We shall all miss his cheerful presence, his tales of life and the progress reports on his allotment. Lasham in general, and the Tuesday group in particular, will be the sadder for his absence.

Geoffrey Miller

'Pete' Wilby – Essex & Suffolk

PETE (1936-2006) enjoyed a wonderfully varied gliding career spanning 57 years; starting with the ATC at Martlesham Heath, aged 13. Whilst in National Service at RAF Lyneham he was once again able to glide and became an instructor. On return to 'civvy street' Pete and a friend formed the Suffolk Gliding Group, using a very cheap Tutor and getting into the air by using a tow car at Debach Airfield. Then followed a gap of several years. Pete married Sylvia and they had two children, bought their first house with all the attendant problems. However, Pete's love of gliding was not forgotten and he returned in 1973 with the Essex & Suffolk, an all-aerotow club at Whatfield. Pete was soon in the back of the K-2, K-7 and K-13, doing more than his share of instructing. For his solo flying he formed a syndicate based on a Swallow, then a Pirat and then an ASW 19. Pete did a PPL and so found himself with one more duty, as tuggie. In the late 1970s he became CFI for seven years. In 1990 the club had an enforced move, to Wormingford near Colchester. Because of planning restrictions, from being an all-aerotow club we had now to winch launch. Pete was of immense help with his knowledge of winching and he saw us safely through the initial transition period. Of all the gliders Pete had flown, including his latest, a DG-202, he was at his happiest thermalling the T-21, outsoaring the glass ships around him and laughing out loud. Pete was a wonderful mentor. He imparted his knowledge and skills in a quiet, unassuming manner, never too busy to do that last instructional flight. He sent many pilots solo on their 16th birthday and the last person he sent solo was just over 80 years old. Our love goes to Pete's wife Sylvia, his constant crew member, Sonia and Clive from all his gliding friends.

Colin Smith

Club news



Paul Crabb, winner of the 2006 Midland Regionals at Hus Bos, with son Liam, and competition director Richard Johnson

Weston and Harry Hanna. July was excellent with two more 300km flights. Congratulations Ricky Logan and Jimmy Weston. We have also experienced an unusually high summer of wave with flights up to 12,000ft. Well done to Jacqui Webster on going solo. Our Super Cub has gone for a complete overhaul and should be back for Christmas. Our Robin has had an internal facelift and it is looking very smart. Thanks to all who helped.

Finbarr Cochrane

Vintage Glider Club

THIS is being written on the eve of our 34th International Rally in France, which promises to be one of the largest ever held and will include for the first time vintage aircraft from Spain. The Minimoa BGA 1639 has had a very lengthy restoration, with work brought to fruition by Peter Underwood. A Mucha 100 and trailer have been found by Jan Sladowski at Dover and taken to our group at Gliwice (Poland) for restoration.

Chris Wills

Welland (Lyveden)

OUR annual flying week has just ended; and in the latter half strong crosswinds and rain grounded the club. Cross-country tasks early in the week were disappointing but Steve Burgess's ambitions resulted in 50km and 100km claims, achieving as much as more experienced pilots in the conditions and earning one of the daily club prizes. Joe Cooper claims his Silver height, as does Dave Willette, together with his duration. Recent solos achieved by Dave Gobbett and our 'one legged' Brian Dobson added our cadet Vikki Asquith at the beginning of the week. The weather has not improved now we are back at work.

Strzeb

Windrushers (Bicester)

WINDRUSHERS became two years old on July 1. Max and Sue Kirschner came back from Australia to man our Monday-to-Friday operation and we are indebted to them for their contributions to an excellent summer. We recently bought a Pawnee tug, so we can now tow any weight glider in any wind conditions. Bicester hosted the Standard Nationals in July which ran for seven competition days and our own Regionals. Our thanks to Terry Mitchell, who led many of the facility upgrades to make our visitors more comfortable. Congratulations to James Wilson, who completed his Silver while crewing at the Club Class comp.

John Staley

Wolds (Pocklington)

WE have been blessed with an amazing eight new solos and we must congratulate Dave Binney, Laurence Desmet, Dave Procter, Ian Hind, Ben Dawson, Dick Midwinter, Dave Higginbottom and Sarah Sheard, who went solo on her 16th birthday. Congratulations must also go to Steve Ruffell on becoming our newest BGI. Well done everybody! The clubhouse is progressing very well – the great day of painting came along in July with an outstanding turnout and jaw-dropping amount of progress. We've finally taken delivery of the SkyLaunch winch and Dyneema washing line and both are faring well.

Sam Roddie

Wyvern (Upavon)

THE third heat of the SW Area Inter-club League was at Upavon



*Two of **Ulster's** oldest members: P2 (front) is James McCloud, aged early 90s, with instructor Jeremy Bryson, aged early 70s*

in July with two excellent days. Will Chappel and Bruce Hudson won both days in the Intermediate and Novice classes and Brian Penfold was fourth and third in the Pundit class. The finals clash with the Inter Services Championships, so Wyvern has withdrawn. Congratulations to Emma Young on becoming the fifth of the QinetiQ Graduate Airmanship Scheme pupils to solo, and to Paul Beckett and Bryn Williams on their first solos. The fifth weekday course has been completed and more than 150 army cadets were introduced to gliding.

Andy Gibson

York (Rufforth)

FINALLY – promising weather with members making use of it. CFI Richard Kalin managed 501km, and Tom Stoker continues to provide inspiration with two flights in three days of 186km and 187km as well as three height gains in five weeks totalling more than 33,000ft. We have three completed Silver Badges and two 100km diplomas. Pam Shuttleworth and Craig Olley managed 100km triangles and Matthew Moxon managed his 1000m height gain, polishing off the Silver the next week with his 50km flight. We must also acknowledge the achievements of Ed Watkinson. It wasn't long since Ed was being recognised for his first solo, and already he is a third of the way to Silver. Lastly, congrats to Pete Harvey on his Bronze Medal (Open Class) in the Worlds.

Andrew Batty

Yorkshire (Sutton Bank)

MUCHO congrats to Martin Joyce and Ralph Evans for their first solos, Reg Watson for completing his Bronze and Harry Clark for flying his five hours. I can proudly announce that YGC are the winners of the Yorkshire ICL 2006 (now then, I hear thee...) – well done to all who competed and good luck for the final! Thanks go to Andy Wright and the team for organising this year's Northerns. Onward to task week and yes, you've guessed it, more flying. PS: come fly in our wave this autumn, you know you want to (promise there are no dragons)...

Annette Smith

S&G's thanks to Debb Evans for editing Club News *down from the 12,000 words submitted to the 6,000 we had space for, and our thanks to all contributors. Although we sometimes have to edit them, your words and photos are much appreciated*



*Sarah Sheard after being sent solo on her 16th birthday by Terry Win at **Wolds GC**, Pocklington*

Accident/incident summaries by Douglas Every

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	REGISTRATION	Damage	Time	DATE Place	Age	PILOT(S) Injury	P1 Hours
045	ASTIR		None	16-Apr-06	Incident Rpt		None	

The pilot didn't adequately take into account a slight crosswind when landing resulting in a 90° ground loop - the tailskid became detached. See also Report 046 – same pilot and aircraft the previous day.

046	ASTIR		None	15-Apr-06	Incident Rpt		None	

On only his second flight in this glider type, the pilot forgot to lower the undercarriage when landing on a grass strip. See also Report 045 – same pilot and aircraft the next day.

047	DISCUS		None	17-Apr-06	Incident Rpt		None	

The airbrakes were seen to open on a winch launch on this glider two days earlier. When the same thing happened again, the glider was inspected and the airbrake lock was found to be insufficiently strong. The glider was immediately grounded and the problem has since been rectified. The area of concern is that neither pilot noticed that the brakes had opened until the top of the launch.

048	Letov LF-107 Lunak	4970	Minor	22-Apr-06	Saltby	59	None	

After a series of Intermediate Class aerobatic manoeuvres and while flying straight and level, at 100 knots and at 2000ft, there was a loud bang and the rear sliding canopy flew off, hitting the pilot on the left side of the face, near the temple removing his glasses. The pilot was unhurt and chose not to bale out. Although concerned that the canopy may have hit the tail surfaces the pilot determined that they appeared intact. He flew cautiously and landed safely.

050	ASW19B	4486	Minor	29-Apr-06 15:15	Pocklington	56	None	905

On aerotow the initial ground run was OK but when the glider took off the nose pitched up and the pilot could not lower the nose. The pilot released from the tug, the nose lowered and the glider landed a little heavily. The pilot checked the elevator and found that, despite having carried out positive checks, it was not connected.

051	Ka 6CR	2312	Minor	29-Mar-06	Wormingford	56	None	

During a winch launch the power failed and the glider started to overtake the cable. The pilot pulled off and attempted to land straight ahead with no use of airbrake. He was aware of the cable and drogue just ahead of him and landed the glider heavily which then came to rest with the cable wrapped around the port wing.

052	ASK13	2405	None	29-Mar-06 16:21	Wormingford	64	None None	 0

On the pupil's second attempt at take off and at the point of starting the climb, acceleration stopped and the parachute and strop flew down the side of the glider. Simultaneously the canopy flew open about 12". The instructor took control, closed the canopy and landed straight ahead. After a safe landing the strop was observed to be wrapped around the outer canopy release and the cable across the chest of P2 in the front seat.

053	ASK21	3673	Minor	01-Apr-06 14:40	Lasham	25	None	76.5

The pilot had been asked to demonstrate a spot landing along the centre line of the runway. The runway was blocked by the launchpoint bus and another glider but still left a 500m landing run.. On approach the speed crept up to 70kts but was corrected to 60kts. When rounding out the pilot ballooned and immediately closed the airbrakes. The glider subsequently got into pilot induced oscillations that became divergent. After a very low turn to avoid other aircraft on the ground and more oscillations the glider landed heavily, stopping 50ft past the other glider.

054	DISCUS	4283	Minor	29-Apr-06 17:49	Aboyne	59	None	

After a late change of mind about landing direction and a cramped circuit, the pilot ended up too high on approach and attempted to lose height by S turning. The aircraft lost speed close to the ground, the left wing stalled and touched the ground, resulting in a sharp ground loop with some minor damage to the aircraft.

055	PUCHACZ		None	14-Apr-06	Incident Rpt		None	

At the early stages of tow, the tow aircraft became unstable due either to turbulence or the glider being out of position. The tow pilot pulled the release and made a clearing turn to the right. However, the towrope release mechanism had not functioned and the glider was still attached. The glider pilot eventually succeeded in pulling off and made a safe landing in a field. Subsequent inspection of the tug showed that the release mechanism did not function correctly under load.

056	Astir CS	4948	Substantial	12-Mar-06 12:51	Edgehill	56	None	664

Whilst landing on a congested airfield at a high ground speed and as the glider crossed the junction between grass and concrete, the undercarriage collapsed and picked up a winch cable. Visible corroded ends of broken wheel mount castings had obviously been failing for some time.

057				14-May-06	Incident Rpt			

Two cars entered the airfield during flying operations, raced around the perimeter track and drove across the runways and winch cables laid out for launching. During the altercation which followed a club member was injured by one car and the other was prevented from leaving. A police investigation is under way.

BGA Badges

No	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
FAI 750KM (SINGLE-SEATER)			
58	Kevin Hook	From Portmoak	30.5.06
DIAMOND BADGE			
714	Peter Ryland	Norfolk (Lake Keepit)	24.2.06
Diamond distance			
1-1061	Russell Richards	ESGC (Tocumwal)	26.1.06
1-1062	Anthony Firmin	Imperial College	31.5.06
1-1063	Peter Ryland	Norfolk (Lake Keepit)	24.2.06
1-1064	Jim White	Booker	29.6.06
Diamond goal			
2-3134	Ralph Bowsfield	Cotswold	31.5.06
2-3135	Evan Pole	SGU (Tocumwal)	22.2.06
2-3136	Robin Birch	Cotswold	29.6.06
GOLD BADGE			
2411	Robin Birch	Cotswold	29.6.06
Gold distance			
Evan Pole		SGU (Tocumwal)	22.2.06
Chris Sterritt		Lasham	29.6.06
Robin Birch		Costwold	29.6.06
SILVER BADGE			
11647	David Bassett	Mendip	31.5.06
11648	Michael Pointon	Surrey Hills	30.5.06
11649	Martin Ling	Scottish Gliding Union	4.4.06
11650	Russell King	Surrey Hills	31.5.06
11651	Stephen Whitaker	Southdown	25.5.06
11652	Michael Drayton	Wolds	25.5.06
11653	Ingram Gavan	Surrey Hills	30.5.06
11654	Luke Dale	Lasham	5.4.06
11655	Norman Frost	Southdown	25.5.06
11656	Steven Pozerskis	Soaring Centre	31.5.06
11657	Robert Jones	Dartmoor	31.5.06
11658	Chris Grebby	Kent	5.5.06
11659	Godfrey King	Devon & Somerset	31.5.06
11660	Alan Cridge	Black Mountains	10.4.06
11661	Stephen Foster	Bidford	8.6.06
11662	Simon Lewis	South Wales	26.5.06
11663	John Inglehart	Lasham	7.6.06
11664	Dominic Polhill	Mendip	10.7.06
11665	Andrew Spray	Bowland Forest	22.6.06
11666	Nicholas Ghee	Bidford	28.5.06
11667	Adrian Lake	London	23.6.06
11668	Brian Smith	Lasham	17.6.06
11669	David Greasley	Lasham	23.6.06
11670	Andrew Mckee	Windrushers	16.6.06
11671	Paul Lazenby	Cotswold	24.6.06
11672	Robin Clery	Kent	21.6.06
11673	Tim Roberts	Bannerdown	31.5.06
11674	Graham Settle	Bowland Forest	20.6.06
11675	Alan Trott	London	11.7.06
11676	Felix Hofmann	Oxford University	23.6.06
11677	Laurie Gregoire	Lasham	29.6.06
11678	Henry Stott	Bowland Forest	23.6.06
11679	Stephen Hipkins	Soaring Centre	1.7.06
UK 100km DIPLOMA			
1004	Leslie Fletcher	Bidford	14.4.06
1005	Michael Drayton	Wolds	5.5.06
1006	George Rowden	Yorkshire	25.5.06
1007	Chris Grebby	Kent	5.5.06
1008	Brian Smith	Lasham	17.6.06
1009	Colin Winterburn	Southdown	23.6.06
1010	Peter Thompson	Cairngorm	10.5.06
AEROBATIC BADGE			
Std Knwn	Paul Holdnall	RAF Cosford	6.8.06

Accident/incident summaries (continued)

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	REGISTRATION	Damage	Time	DATE Place	Age	PILOT(S) Injury	P1 Hours
059	DISCUS	4106	Minor	28-May-06 13:40	Gransden Lodge		None	

Combined winch and aerotows were in operation on R/W 34 and due to the lack of an alternative runway at that time for landing, gliders were landing long on the same runway. A glider at the front of the winch queue was kept waiting for a winch launch due to another pilot who had landed long and pulled his glider to the side of the runway then left it while he went to fetch his retrieval gear. The waiting pilot was advised by the duty instructor that it was safe to launch and did so. He over rotated and the weak link broke at between 250 and 300 feet. The pilot carried out a straight-ahead recovery landing without further mishap. However, the winch cable fell across the port wing, fuselage and canopy of the parked glider. The glider's owner attempted to clear the cable so that he could reach his radio and warn the launchpoint but the winch driver began to retrieve the cable. The cable retrieve continued despite his clear hand signals for it to stop. The glider sustained some scratching to the gelcoat and the canopy.

060	KA7/13	1664	Minor	31-May-06 11:25	Perranporth	65	None	472
						73	None	0

During the very early stages of a winch launch the right wing of the glider contacted the top of grass seed stalks. The glider yawed right through 90°, P1 and P2 pulled the release, with some difficulty due to building side loads, and the glider slid sideways to a halt 20 to 30 metres from the initial launch point. The only apparent damage to the glider was a dented main wheel.

061	ASW19	4038	Minor	31-May-06 14:45	Olney Hyde farm. Beds	58	None	241

While attempting a cross-country flight, the pilot ran out of lift and had to land out. By the time he was down to 300 feet he realised that the field he had selected had a considerably greater slope than anticipated and that his speed was excessive. Full brake over the threshold and the stick well back resulted in a heavy touch down and balloon and it was obvious to the pilot that an overshoot was inevitable. The heavy final landing and run-out was stopped by a large hedge hiding strands of barbed wire. The pilot was uninjured but was trapped in the glider until the retrieve crew arrived some hour and a half later. The glider sustained superficial damage to the canopy and gelcoat.

062	Kestrel 19	1683	Write off	30-May-06 15:00	Nr Kintbury Hungerford	49	None	1000

During a recovery flight from Lasham to Membury the pilot found himself in very strong sink and 1800 feet below the glide slope to Membury. The field he chose was fairly steeply sloping uphill into wind and there were some wires in the way. After a normal approach with a little extra speed to allow for the slope, the tail of the glider touched down and immediately the right wingtip caught in the grass, which was longer than expected and wet. This resulted in a rapid ground loop, which consequently broke the fuselage tail boom.

063				29-May-06	North Hill			

The aircraft was parked with its brakes on and wheels chocked after refuelling. A strong gust of wind rotated the aircraft. Consequently the covering on the underside of the port wing was torn by the Safety Box for storing fire equipment.

064	T61F VENTURE M/G	G-BVKU	Substantial	03-Jun-06 14:10	The Park	58	None None	315

After completing a normal landing run, and while the glider was taxiing at walking pace across the upwind end of the field, a vehicle approached from the port side of the aircraft at an oblique angle. The moving vehicle collided with the port wing of the glider, causing damage to the leading edge of the wing.

065	OLYMPIA 2B	2279	Substantial	03-Jun-06 15:50	Challock	54	None	4

The pilot flew a low downwind leg and failed to recognise the need to turn in early. Having failed to turn in early, he flew an extended base leg at an unacceptably low height. Instead of turning away from the airfield and landing in a field at the bottom of the ridge, he chose to attempt an approach to the airfield. In doing so he stretched the glide and left himself too slow to manoeuvre away from the airfield and committed himself to an undershoot into trees at the edge of the airfield in a fully stalled state.

066	T61F VENTURE M/G	G-BVKK	Substantial	04-Jun-06 17:10	Saltby	62 41	None None	500

The M/G was being used for rope break exercises and completed a successful circuit and a well-flown approach. The M/G came down on undulating grass which caused it to skip in a series of low hops. The PIC instructed the student to close the spoilers whilst he opened the throttle in order to climb away. During one of the bounces the propeller hit the ground, shattered and subsequently broke the canopy. The PIC took control and the aircraft was brought to a stop.

067	ASTIR CS JEANS		None	31-May-06	Incident Rpt		None	

On the first aerotow on the type, the tow rope was attached to the belly hook in error and the tail dolly was still in place. At the agreed height the release knob was pulled without effect. At this stage the glider nose rose lifting the tail of the tug aircraft. The tug pilot released and the glider pilot subsequently was able to release the rope from the glider. Both aircraft then landed safely.

068	Ka 6CR	1219	Minor	31-May-06 14:55	Rivar Hill	60	None	301

During a very low-level launch failure, the glider did not have sufficient speed to commence the climb. The pilot pulled off but the cable chute flew over the port wing. As the glider landed the cable weight pushed the wing down and caused a ground loop. The cable subsequently snagged the fin, causing minor damage. The winch driver did not give enough speed for the launch. He closed the throttle as soon as he saw the launch abandoned.

069 ASK13 2425 Minor 02-Jun-06 Edgehill 50 None

On landing the glider veered sharply to the left then ran into a stationary glider. Investigation revealed an incorrectly assembled rudder cable connection had failed, causing full left rudder.

070 KA8B None 07-Jun-06 Incident Rpt None

Ballast was left in the aircraft unsecured by the previous pilot. The relatively inexperienced pilot, who did not require ballast, did not realise the significance of its presence in the cockpit. During flight the ballast became wedged alongside the stick, inhibiting its movement. Despite this the pilot landed safely using larger-than-normal rudder movements and enhanced approach speed.

071 Capstan T49B None 28-May-06 Incident Rpt None

Full DI check performed following work on the glider and all the controls were checked for movement in the correct sense except the rudder. The aircraft took off with the rudder cables crossed. The pilot was able to make a safe landing.

072 KA8B 2849 Minor 17-Jun-06 18:40 Waldershare Park 42 None 1

The pilot closed the airbrakes during the flare just before touchdown. The glider ballooned and it then either stalled or the pilot overcorrected. The nose dropped sharply, contacting the ground. It then became airborne again and then landed as the airspeed decreased. Two support tubes which hold the top of the skid in position were bent.

073 Vega T65A 2682 Substantial 20-Jun-06 17:00 Challock 65 None 194

The pilot became low returning to the airfield but he expected good lift from the southern ridge, which had been giving good lift all day. He misjudged his position and drifted downwind of the ridge into a steep gully. He correctly attempted to land uphill on a very steep incline but this also had a side camber that caught a wing as the glider touched down. It suffered substantial damage.

074 ASW27 4338 Substantial 21-Jun-06 15:00 Hartlebury 47 None 950

The pilot needed to land out and selected a set-aside field to land in. The approach was very windy and turbulent. The ground with vegetation up to 3' high was undulating and had a side slope. The wing caught the vegetation on the high side of the slope, resulting in a ground loop. Substantial damage was done, including a broken fuselage, fin and tailplane and a damaged wing.

075 Astir CS 4953 Substantial 24-Jun-06 20:30 Keevil 27 None 11

On his first flight at this airfield, the pilot misjudged when to round out, possibly due to a lack of experience on large Tarmac runways. The glider impacted the runway in a nose-down attitude and the undercarriage collapsed, allowing the tail to hit the ground. The glider bounced before hitting the runway a second time and then ground looping. The glider's canopy shattered and there was impact damage to the fuselage, tailskid mounting and rudder.

076 ASK21 3639 Minor 15-Jun-06 16:00 59 None 2707
52 None 20

Whilst out landing in nil wind conditions into a short (250M) field with a slight downslope and telephone lines under the approach, the glider had to be deliberately ground looped to avoid running into a hedge. The aircraft suffered some minor damage to a wingtip and the skid.

077 Skylark 4 None 04-Jun-06 Incident Rpt None

The pilot made three attempts to take off on aerotow with each launch resulting in the wingtip going down. The aircraft was examined and the wing was found to be incorrectly rigged, resulting in an inability to get full movement of the starboard aileron. The owner was unaware that this form of mis-rigging could occur, having only rigged this glider four times before.

078 PIK20B 5050 Minor 25-Jun-06 11:36 Nr Dungiven, co. Londonderry 45 None 470

During a cross-country flight the pilot landed out into a large field with wires at the far end. There was a 5kts tailwind and the wheel ran into a hollow at the start of the ground run and the right-hand wingtip caught the grass and caused a ground loop. Whilst the aircraft was travelling backwards the right-hand tip hit the ground, causing damage to the aileron.

079 ASW20FP 3834 Minor 17-Jun-06 18:30 Nr Bidford 43 None 250

The pilot misjudged his final glide to the airfield and landed in an adjacent field. During this he forgot to lower the wheel.

080 03-Jun-06 Incident Rpt None

The winch cable was dropped on to a car park when an early solo pilot was launching in a crosswind. The winch driver could not be certain that the cable could be drawn in quickly enough so chopped the power to allow the cable to fall freely, minimising the risks of serious damage or injury. The result was minor scratches to a car.

081 LIBELLE Std 1661 Substantial 16-Jun-06 17:20 5km SW of NOW 43 None 490

During a competition field landing the right wing caught in flattened crop and the glider ground looped, snapping the fuselage.

082 AC4C 4812 Substantial 29-Jun-06 11:50 0.5m N of Bidford 53 None 224

The pilot landed out in crop, having mistaken it for set-aside, with substantial damage to the aircraft as a consequence.

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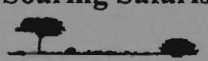
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Accident/incident summaries (continued)

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	REGISTRATION	Damage	DATE Time	Place	Age	PILOT(S) Injury	P1 Hours
083	SZD Junior	5168	Write off	17-May-06 12:45	Nr Thornton Fife	45	Minor	12

During a first field landing exercise the pilot found himself with little option because of his low height. He rejected his original choice of field because of an electrified fence running across it. He deviated to an alternative field and during the final approach the aircraft struck power lines. This resulted in a complete loss of speed and the aircraft plunged approximately 80' nose first into the field. The pilot escaped with only minor injuries but the aircraft was written off.

084	Kestrel 19		Minor	22-Jun-06	Incident Rpt		None	

The aircraft's owner drove over a wingtip while the glider was at the launchpoint, causing substantial damage.

085	Astir CS	None	04-Jun-06	Incident Rpt	None			

The pilot failed to lower the undercarriage for landing on a grass runway. No damage was done to the glider. He will now pay special attention to his pre-landing checks.

086	ASK21	2687	Substantial	01-Jul-06 16:42	Cross Hayes	51	None	0.3

The glider was on finals with a normal half-brake approach. It started to undershoot and the pilot reduced the brakes. The glider entered the round-out phase of the landing with minimal brakes extended; it then ballooned and the pilot overcorrected. The glider touched down heavily and proceeded into a pilot-induced oscillation, resulting in several contacts with the ground and substantial damage to the glider.

087	Mosquito B	4652	None	07-Jun-06 15:57	Wormingford	70	None	

The pilot, landing with a light tailwind ahead of a thunderstorm, was faced with a K6 in the centre of the field awaiting retrieval and an Astir parked sideways at the rear of the launch queue with its tail projecting into the landing area. Because of the conditions the pilot elected to land between the launch queue and the K6. During the landing the glider struck the Astir a glancing blow on the upper surface of its tailplane, fortunately causing no damage.

088	ASK13	2405	Minor	17-May-06 14:39	Wormingford	64	None None	2980

P2 was flying the approach in a 12-knot crosswind. P1 suggested a full airbrake landing to enable landing short of the launch-point and a glider adjacent in the centre of the runway. The approach was normal but P2 moved the stick forward instead of back for round-out and P1 was unable to react in time to prevent a heavy landing.

089	DUO DISCUS		None	14-May-06	Incident Rpt		None	

P1 was observing P2 on an early aerotow. P2 got out of position and then over corrected at the same time as the tug turned. A long loop developed so P1 took control and released at the same time as the rope became taut. P1 flew the aircraft back and executed a normal but low circuit. It was subsequently discovered that the towing equipment in the tug was not correctly fitted. A new rope and Tost slug have now been fitted to the tug.

090	ASK13	1746	Substantial	29-Jun-06 16:45	Long Mynd	58	None	33

The student was briefed to continue circuit practice as previously flown that morning and to limit any soaring to 15 minutes as the conditions had become more thermic. However, the student flew further away from the site and into lee sink northwest of the site. He tried to get home and failed, substantially damaging the glider.

091	Capstan T49B	1131	Substantial	09-Jul-06 14:34	Aboyne	59	None None	390 203

After completion of a field landing, the aircraft ran backwards downhill and hit a fence, causing substantial damage. This aircraft was not fitted with a wheel brake.

092	DG300 Club Elan		Minor	29-Jun-06	Incident Rpt			

The aerotow hook release mechanism link was found to be broken. Had an aerotow been taken it would not have been possible to release the rope.

028	Falke SF25B		Substantial	04-Mar-06	Halton	70	None	221

The August-September S&G reported that: Some minor work was done on the motorglider's engine to secure a loose baffle and clear a partially blocked breather tube. After a satisfactory ground run the pilot took a flight but during the downwind leg a minor vibration started which increased then the engine stopped. The pilot made a safe landing with no propeller as the bolts had sheared. *Subsequent new information is that:* Investigation revealed that the loss of the propeller was due to the fatigue failure of the bolts securing the propeller back-plate to the crankshaft and not the propeller bolts disturbed during the minor maintenance. See full report in the AAIB Bulletin 7/2006. Ref EW/G2005/03/02

Classifieds

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The Surrey Hills Gliding Club has a vacancy for a Full-time Staff Instructor to work weekdays only from April 2007. The successful candidate would have a B.G.A. Full cat rating.

For more information please apply in writing to:
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Website: www.southlondongliding.co.uk
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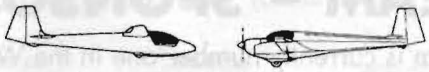
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British Gliding Association

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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.

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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.

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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.

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CAA Aeronautical Charts

Due to a number of airspace changes since the publication of the Southern England & Wales 1:500,000 aeronautical chart, edition 32 earlier this year, the CAA has recently published a second chart, edition 32A. This chart came in effect on 31 August and replaces the previous edition.

Chart Name	Current Date	Next Planned Date/s
500k Southern England & Wales	31 August 06 (Ed. 32A)	15 Mar 07 (Ed. 33)
500k Northern England & Northern Ireland	11 May 06 (Ed. 29)	10 May 07 (Ed. 30)
500k Scotland	6 Jul 06 (Ed. 24)	20 Dec 07 (Ed. 25)
250k 1. N.Scotland West	19 Feb 04 (Ed. 3)	31 Aug 06 (Ed. 4)
250k 2. N.Scotland East	6 Jul 06 (Ed. 4)	TBC
250k 3. N.Ireland	7 Jul 05 (Ed. 4)	7 Jun 07 (Ed. 5)
250k 4. The Borders	13 Apr 06 (Ed. 5)	TBC
250k 5. Central England & Wales	14 April 05 (Ed. 6)	12 Apr 07 (Ed. 7)
250k 6. England East	8 Jun 06 (Ed. 7)	TBC
250k 7. West & South Wales	4 Aug 05 (Ed. 5)	2 Aug 07 (Ed. 6)
250k 8. England South	13 Apr 06 (Ed. 10)	15 Feb 07 (Ed. 11)
1:50k London Helicopter Chart	25 Nov 04 (Ed. 11)	23 Nov 06 (Ed. 12)

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