Sailplane & Gliding



Diana 2

Flight test by Jochen Ewald

THREE SECONDS OF MAYHEM

Gone north – another first for the Scottish wave pioneers

Plus: John Allison Instructing Currency barometer

February-March 2007
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The Diana 2 prototype flown by worldwide dealer Alexander Mueller above Aalen-Elchingen airfield in Southern Germany. For Jochen Ewald's evaluation of this innovative glider, which flew to victory in the !5-Metre Worlds last year, see page 19.
(Photo: Jochen Ewald)

Sailplane & Gliding

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Changes to UK airspace

FROM March 15, 2007, ALL UK airspace above Flight Level 195 will become Class C airspace. The change is part of European harmonisation and Class C airspace will replace any existing Class A, D, F and G airspace at and above FL195. No VFR flying is allowed without prior arrangement.

However, to accommodate those aircraft operating VFR above FL195, both military and gliding, Temporary Reserved Areas (TRAs) will be introduced. There will be eight TRAs for the military and additionally to cater for gliders TRA(G) will be introduced at and above FL195. These areas and specific requirements for glider operations are detailed in the AIP.

The BGA Airspace Committee has been involved in this change as it has considerable effects on those clubs where glider pilots fairly regularly fly above FL195. The statistics from wave sites show that whilst it was rare to achieve flights above FL245, flights above FL195 at some sites on some days were an almost routine occurrence. Therefore it was essential for this activity to continue. The wave areas in Wales are almost unchanged but in Scotland the areas are significantly different. Milfield has a sensible-sized area and the Yorkshire area has increased. Northern Ireland also needed an area.

Maps of all the areas are in the AIP (see *www.gliding.co.uk/airspace* for links). Letters of agreement are being drawn up for all the clubs regularly involved in flights above FL195. It has also been agreed that in order to keep charts as simple as possible the upper limit of half-million charts will be FL195.

Carr Withall, BGA Airspace Committee

The former TRAs are now RA(T)s

THE restricted areas formerly known as Temporary Restricted Areas (TRAs), put in place to protect events such as air displays and major incidents, have been renamed Restricted Areas (Temporary) or RA(T)s. The change is to avoid confusion with the new Temporary Reserved Areas introduced from March 15 to coincide with the lowering of Class C airspace to FL195 and to bring the UK in line with Eurocontrol Flexible Use of Airspace definitions. More details in AIC 123/2006 (Yellow 225) issued on December 7, 2006.

Gliding sites are on AIS website

NATS have added details of gliding sites to their operational database. This will enable clubs and members to prepare briefings using the unique indicator for their particular site. The code is based on the BGA trigraph so, for example, Aboyne is XABO. To use the site you must register at *www.ais.org.uk* and to access the additional airfields you need to register for the worldwide service. If you're an existing user who wants to change from domestic to worldwide service you should email a request to *aissupervisor@nats.co.uk*.

More details, including the list of gliding sites, are available on the BGA website at *www.gliding.co.uk/airspace*

Update on airprox activities

CONSIDERING the excellent summer and the amount of gliding, it was encouraging to see definite improvements in some areas and we did not see an increase in incidents. Good weather gives additional problems, many of which have been highlighted before. In the UK the average good day's cloudbase is 4-5000ft above ground. Above this, you are entering a piece of sky where others are not expecting to see you, especially off-airways IFR traffic. This is not traffic 'cutting corners' but legitimate flights operating between airfields that have no interconnecting airway. Un-pressurised traffic will be operating mostly from about FL50 to FL120, with the pressurised aircraft generally higher. The same applies to wave flying, especially from sites that only have wave occasionally and may not think to remind themselves of who may be there too.

There were a number of incidents involving the Red Arrows last year, but generally from the rest of GA. Please continue to keep a good eye on the show calendar and vacate the notam-ed display airspace in plenty of time, and do not leave it until the last minute. Note too the sequence of displays; they very often go from one venue to another and you could meet them in transit, especially when you are on final glide later in the day.

Winch sites

Throughout the year we have had several incidents involving winch launches and passing traffic, usually GA. You do not as you know have reserved airspace around gliding sites but it is never sensible to pass over any winch site, especially below cable height, irrespective of who you are or what you are flying. Gliding sites are marked on the standard maps and charts but not always on the electronic versions or en-route guides, something we are trying to address.

To help raise awareness, it will be really helpful if all clubs could keep a very simple note of traffic that crossed the field below cable height, irrespective of whether you were launching or not. Date, time, a guess at the type and a direction and guess height will do. I can then, together with other Airprox colleagues look at this data and collectively we can assess the risk and what to do. I am fairly sure this happens a lot at some sites.

Further work

I have for some time been liaising with the Military about wave flying, and it is very much part of the presentation I do regularly to stations throughout the UK. We are getting near to agreeing how to make this work and I am hoping a little trial will start this winter when the basic processes have been agreed. My recommendation is we run a trial for about a year before widening the outcomes into general practice. There is lots to do to work out a sensible process and then try it out in practice. The key is we get on with it now as there is likely to be more conflict in the future, especially with the introduction of new multi-role aircraft, and currently there is no way to inform both parties other than by Notam until we get better electronic interfaces, which are still many years away from being a reality.

Hugh Woodsend

Dates for your diary

Competitions

Overseas Champs	Ocaña, Spain	21/5-1/6
Bidford Regionals	Bidford	16/6-24/6
15-Metre Nationals	Tibenham	23/6-1/7
Eastern Regionals	Tibenham	23/6-1/7
Competition Enterprise	Sutton Bank	7/7-14/7
18-Metre Nationals	Husbands Bosworth	7/7-15/7
Sabina Glide (pre-worlds)	Rieti, Italy	8/7-15/7
Women's Worlds	Romarantin, France	10/7-22/7
Western Regionals	Nympsfield	21/7-29/7
Bicester Regionals	Bicester	21/7-29/7
Standard Class Nationals	Pocklington	21/7-29/7
Inter-University Task Week	Aston Down	28/7-5/8
Junior Worlds	Rieti, Italy	28/7-11/8
Europeans:		
– Club/Standard Class	Pociunai, Lithuania	28/7-12/8
– 15m/18m/Open Class	Issoudun, France	2/8-19/8
Open Class Nationals	Lasham	4/8-12/8
Club Class Nationals	Lasham	4/8-12/8
Midland Regionals	Husbands Bosworth	4/8-12/8
Northern Regionals	Sutton Bank	4/8-12/8
Inter-Services Regionals	RAF Honington	4/8-12/8
Booker Regionals	Booker	11/8-19/8
Junior Nationals	Tibenham	18/8-26/8
Lasham Regionals*	Lasham	18/8-26/8
Dunstable Regionals	Dunstable	18/8-26/8
Mountain Soaring Comp	Aboyne	2/9-8/9
World Sailplane GP	Omarama, NZ	19/12-27/12

**Apologies to Lasham for the wrong date in the last S&G.*

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 p22 of this issue of *S&G*.

S&G deadlines for 2007

April-May: Articles, Letters, Club News – **February 13**
(Display adverts, February 23. Classifieds, March 5)

June-July: Articles, Letters, Club News – **April 10**
(Display adverts, April 25. Classifieds, May 4)

August-Sept: Articles, Letters, Club News – **June 12**
(Display adverts, June 25. Classifieds, July 6)

October-November: Articles, Letters, Club News – **August 14**
(Display adverts August 24. Classifieds, September 5)

See also: *www.gliding.co.uk/sailplaneandglidingnews.htm*

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*

Military Civil Air Safety Day

THE first MCASD of 2007 will be at Wattisham on May 22. Its aim is to promote closer ties between MoD aviation and GA , focusing on the shared use of lower airspace. Registration forms from: *www.caa.co.uk/ga* (follow link to "information").

Women's development weekend

AFTER the success of the first event , a second will be held at Nympsfield on April 14-15. Pilots of all abilities and experience are welcome, even if you have not flown cross-country or in comps yet. More information from Liz Sparrow (*ebertoya@iee.org*)

Sharing ideas that work

CLUBS are starting to send in entries to the Association to share their good practices with others and perhaps to receive one of the awards that the BGA is planning to present. The BGA wishes to encourage its member clubs to develop and then to share good practices in all aspects of their management and operations. Although clubs are inevitably to some extent in competition with each other, on the whole they have demonstrated in recent years that they are willing to share ideas.

Clubs that have developed a new concept are also often quite proud of their achievement and are keen to show it off to others.

Now, under the auspices of the BGA Development Committee and website there is a simple, more organised way in which sharing of good practice can be achieved.

The first three ideas received – and which are now available on the internet for you to look at – cover a flight safety audit/review, improved methods of securing external capital funding, and developing better communication within a club.

Visit the BGA website (follow the links for *information for clubs and members – club management – best practice*) to download more information and read the examples submitted so far. These are:

Flight safety audit/review (Cambridge)
This document uses a "traffic light system" that enables club officers to see at a glance where issues require attention. It covers all items suggested in the BGA checklist, plus others to meet local needs. It is updated regularly by the club's Flight Safety Officer and reviewed by the CGC committee.

Weekly email updates (Highland)
The CFI sends out an email every Friday which includes recent news, safety issues and an accurate forecast with pointers for likely sources of lift. The email is popular and has improved weekend attendance.

External capital funding (Ulster)
Ulster looked at four areas of improvement: 1) Networking; 2) Demonstrating better administration and accountability; 3) Demonstrating success; and 4) Delivering a higher quality bid. In 2004-2006 this 65-member club has achieved external funding of more than £100,000.

Don't forget to submit your own club's bright ideas! Further details of schemes published on the BGA website may be obtained from the Association's Development Officer, Roger Coote, at *jrcoote@tiscali.co.uk*.

UK airworthiness requirements for gliders

THE unavoidable, ongoing European legal situation that is pushing the BGA towards regulated glider certification is, as previously reported, developing quite quickly. The BGA will be hosting a visit by an EASA Airworthiness Review Team during January 2007 to enable EASA to consider how they might grandfather BGA gliders to enable them to be issued with EASA Certificates of Airworthiness. Meanwhile, following discussion with the Department for Transport and the Civil Aviation Authority during December, the DfT agreed that they will seek to extend the exemption from EASA regulation for the post-2003 BGA glider fleet. This temporary exemption is expected be have been extended in January to enable the transition – between September 2007 and September 2008 – of pre- and post-2003 EASA gliders. More information will be made available once the BGA has discussed the outcome of the EASA review and then the transition process has been detailed between the BGA and the CAA. Please monitor *www.gliding.co.uk* for updates

Mode S latest

THE CAA has published its 19-page response to its consultation on airspace interoperability ("Mode S") and its 144-page summary of the replies it received. These may look daunting but are well worth skim-reading for the interesting detail they contain. More than 80 per cent of the 3,113 replies came from the gliding movement. A chart of the 2,632 electronic replies (excluding the 481 paper ones) shows that only one per cent of respondents agreed that all aircraft should be equipped with Mode S and 90 per cent strongly disagreed; while 64 per cent believed that the best of the options presented was to do nothing. The CAA says it will investigate the issues that have been raised and plans a second round of consultation. The BGA Mode S team continues to work with other air sports organisations to make representations on your behalf *(see also p10)* and will keep you updated.
To read the CAA documents for yourself, follow the link dated December 22 at *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/news.htm*

Brunt Trophy

CLAIMS for 2006 for the Brunt Trophy (given by Professor Sir David Brunt in 1948), issued each year to the full-time student who has achieved the greatest gain of height, should go to afandi@optimal-aerodynamics.com



News in brief

DESPITE assurances to the contrary, the UK Government's recently revised Planning Policy Statement, *PPS3 – Housing*, still contains the change of wording that threatens to classify the whole of an airfield (not only the built-up part) as "brownfield" land and, therefore, makes it more vulnerable to development. The change, then a proposal, received widespread media attention last year. An electronic petition at *http//petitions.pm.gov.uk/Airfields/* remains open for signature until March 8. The BGA is liaising with the General Aviation Awareness Council and other air sports organisations to develop its response: please visit *www.gliding.co.uk* for news of how you might be called upon to help.

WE are very sorry to report the death of Owen Truelove and his son James when his Stemme crashed in New Zealand's South Island in December. Readers may recall Owen's account in the February-March 2005 *S&G* of his pioneering 27,517km flight in his Stemme to New Zealand. He was the first person to make the journey from the UK in a motorglider, and it was the first time a motorglider had flown to New Zealand from Europe or crossed the Tasman Sea.

RECORD claims are flowing in to the FAI from around the world. Attracting particular attention are some from South America, including two Open Class bids from Klaus Ohlmann in a Schempp-Hirth Nimbus 4 DM. On December 22 he achieved 306.8km/h over an out-and-return of 500km, from Zapala (Argentina), 20 per cent faster than the current record, 247.49km/h. He warmed up, the day before, by shaving a few km/h off Steve Fossett's 750km triangle record: his claim is for 176.5km/h as opposed to Steve's 171.29 in 2003.

IF you want to develop your skills as a coach or volunteer official but can't raise the money to help, try asking the Torch Trophy Trust. They award grants, usually for 50 per cent of the cost, to individuals or groups (*www.torchtrophytrust.org/ttt_site.htm*)

THE RAeC Trust awards bursaries annually to young solo pilots, aged 16-21, to enable them to become more competent in their sport. Sums of up to £500 are available to help you move from one recognised level of air sport to the next (for example, gain your Bronze Badge or Cross-country Endorsement). Applications for 2007 bursaries for gliding must be endorsed by the BGA and the Trust needs to receive them by March 31, so please make sure you submit yours to *debbie@gliding.co.uk* by February 28 (*www.royalaeroclubtrust.org/bursaries.htm*)

THE next round of BGA Executive Committee visits to member clubs is under way. It's your chance to find out from your elected representatives what the BGA is doing for you and to make your own views known.

The winner of the BGA 1000 Club Lottery for November 2006 was HD Maddams (£34.25), with runners-up R Ashurst and GH Chamberlain (each £17.25). The winner for December 2006 was MF Lisle (£31.75), with runners-up RH Dixon and R Walker (each £15.87).

Your letters

Flarm in Germany

I AM a member of a gliding club in Northern Germany (I started to learn to fly here 25 years ago). At the beginning of the 2006 flying season I installed a Flarm device in my DG-300 glider.

One should not make the false judgment that Flarm is only for those who fly in the Alps. Whilst there are relatively few gliders flying cross-country "up north" on any given day; there are several areas in Germany where topographical conditions and airspace restrictions cause routes to be bunched – there have been various plots of logger traces demonstrating this.

I try to spend a couple of weeks each year in better conditions in the area between Stuttgart and Ulm, southern Germany, where flights can go around Nuremberg airspace. Contact with the club I visit revealed that pretty well all their gliders (club and private) were equipped with Flarm. Some years ago they had had an incident where one member had a head-on mid-air collision with another glider at cruising speed between two thermals (both pilots survived, one had to use a parachute) – this incident has influenced Flarm purchasing.

Even though one attempts to keep a good lookout, there have been occasions where a glider has appeared underneath me and I wondered where he came from...

The air safety inspectors of the German Aero Club (DAeC) have come down heavily in favour of having gliders installed with Flarm and it's now claimed that more than 3,000 German-registered gliders are so equipped. A number of helicopters (especially in Southern Germany) are equipped with Flarm as it also gives warning of pre-programmed objects such as masts and cable cars.

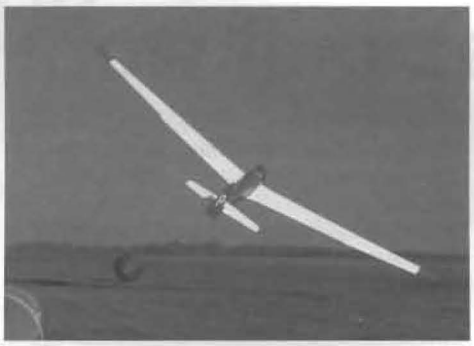
My own experience? Unfortunately my visit down south in 2006 was blessed with bad weather and we had only two afternoons of flying. I had "tagged onto" a local cross-country training course and the 20-plus gliders involved all were Flarm-equipped. Certainly the instrument indicated the presence of other Flarm-equipped gliders. I'm hoping for better conditions in 2007... We have organised group orders for Flarm devices both last winter and this winter with further subvention for club-owned gliders – with the result that in our area clubs have started to equip their gliders with Flarm.

My own glider is also equipped with an iPAQ running GPS_LOG software – mainly so as to be able to adhere to airspace regulations. Normally this obtains the GPS signal from my Volkslogger but it is possible to use the output signal from Flarm to drive GPS_LOG (as is the case with other software). The Flarm device includes additional information in its data stream and some programs are able to use this. The audio warning from the iPAQ – "8 o'clock above" – gets drowned in the screech of the Flarm itself and so I disabled this feature. What can be done is to have a TCAS-like display, showing the positions of other Flarm-equipped gliders. Whilst this is of interest in general flying (as long as it doesn't distract) at a recent DAeC meeting I attended at national level it was reported that at one competition over half the pilots had switched off their Flarm devices to prevent others "seeing" their position – which defeats the object of the whole thing.

In my opinion there is little use debating whether Flarm is "good" or will "come" – it's here now and is the only system currently available and at a reasonable price – it also works.

Flarm is not an officially approved device? Good thing – otherwise it would cost significantly more! It's correctly billed as an aid to collision-avoidance and not a replacement for good airmanship.

Howard Mills, *via email*



Wingdrop on a winch launch, from the April-May 2006 S&G. Early on, the instructor tried to pull off but his gloved hand slipped off the release. Are high-friction RAF gloves the answer, wonders Jim Ball (below), or are there better solutions? (www.flightbox.com)

Hand in glove to reduce accidents?

WHILST recovering from a heavy cold, I was driven by the all-consuming boredom that accompanies such afflictions to browse through some back issues of *Sailplane & Gliding*. (My word, I must have been bored!) Inspired, I happily set about penning another instalment of the antics at the East Sussex GC, when an altogether more serious subject came to my attention. I refer to *Six Eventful Seconds* (April-May 2006, p38) and the very close call of an instructor and student during a wing drop on a winch launch. The pivotal moment in this incident appears to be in the first second when the correspondent notes: "The instructor has tried to release the cable but the knob slipped through his hand due to low-friction gloves".

I did not take up gliding until I was 46 years old and I am the first to state that I am not very brave! This often results in my having somewhat sweaty hands. For this reason I started wearing flying gloves very early on and continue to do so, particularly on a warm day. Good flying gloves are not some kind of retro fashion statement; indeed, the modern RAF flying glove is a wonderful piece of high-tech kit and I am baffled as to why so few pilots wear them. The flying gloves I use (I am told they are RAF AM/2 gloves) have an exceptionally high-friction surface; the best analogy I can draw upon to describe them is that it is like having very sticky hands.

During a winch launch things happen fast – indeed things can go very wrong in a matter of half a second. Surely we should be encouraging the use of such a cheap and efficient piece of kit like the lightweight summer flying glove? After all, it may make the difference between half a second and a second and that may be all it takes to avert a nasty accident.

Jim Ball, *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* ***February 13***

The case for the mature recruit

WITH reference to Mary Meagher's letter in the December-January *S&G* (*From the granny glider pilot*, p7), I totally agree that the primary target for recruits into our sport should be the 40-plus age group for many of the reasons she states – they have money, kids left home, mortgage paid, well-paid job and time to spend, and are probably settled into their location so will stay, usually are willing to participate in club activities, and have time to work for the club doing the "jobs" many youngsters scorn.

In no way does this decry the need for young people to become glider pilots: they too are needed but, face the facts, the chances of a 16-year-old joining a club, staying for 20 years or more and flying regularly, unless they already have a family or friend connection, is remote so don't spend too much effort chasing them.

It is a question of priorities. A 50-year-old probably has at least 20 years of gliding life remaining and, when retired, a day in the outdoors plus some flying and a few pints in the bar can be very attractive and extremely profitable for the club. OK, so they may never be world champions but so what, they can be fabulous contributors and good all-round members. Serious competitive flying is a pastime for the minority and certainly not a major motivator for most club members anyway.

With the decline in gliding membership being almost universal, it appears to me that this age group can be an opportunity not to be dismissed lightly. Anyone doubting this, just check the winter launchpoint or the bar of any gliding club in the evening. Spot the under-40s – they are a very rare breed!

Barney Toulson, *via email*

PS: Just for the record, I learned to "fly" in the ATC so actually started gliding very young but, because of career, marriage, kids and mortgage had many lean years and only became a serious club member in my 40s. Subsequently I became CFI, chairman, present member of two syndicates and huge (according to my wife) financial contributor



Above: Roger Davies was one of more than 50 tug pilots attending the first BGA seminar for tuggies, a whole-day event with volunteer speakers, organised by the BGA Senior Tug Pilot to increase safety awareness (Photo: S&G)

Seminar for tug pilots

SEVERAL months ago, BGA Senior Tug Pilot John Marriott mentioned that he was arranging a "Tug Pilots' Seminar" and would we – the "royal we" – be interested in such an event? Of course: anything to escape the Christmas shopping! The date was set for December 2, so I, and four of my able tug pilot colleagues, set off from RAF Halton to Husbands Bosworth, not really knowing how John was going to fill the day.

Over a bacon sandwich and coffee on arrival, I was surprised and pleased to see so many colleagues and friends gathered for this event. BGA Chief Executive Pete Stratten made all of the customary introductions and mentioned that at the last minute John had been unable to attend his event personally as he was tied up in some exotic place overseas (on duty, of course).

The seminar began with a very informative – and amusing, in a perverse sort of way – lecture on licensing and revalidation. How on earth did revalidation and the renewal of licences ever get into this convoluted situation? Perhaps only Brussels bureaucrats may know. From a personal standpoint, it was a useful reminder, having just moved house, to change the address on my licence!

EASA is only a step away. Thankfully we have the good offices of the BGA, in the form of its Chief Technical Officer Jim Hammerton, to pick our way through through the minefield, look after our engineering and perhaps ensure that it's not all gloom and doom. Jim's talk was helpful for operators and owners, and a significant amount of detailed information is available from the BGA website at *www.gliding.co.uk*.

You all must have read the books on Human Performance and Limitations to pass the Private Pilot's Licence examinations, but how many of us really thought about this subject? Steve Jarvis brought it into a new perspective: "amusing," "informative" and "imaginative" are only a few of the plaudits I overheard. If we get another opportunity I would commend this one to you.

Let us not forget that being a "tug driver" is both enjoyable and hard work but it can have catastrophic consequences for the unwary. Kevin Moloney gave us all a sombre reminder that from normal flight to a tug upset is but a few seconds, and how many of us really understood or even thought of the lateral tug upset? Refreshing to hear, however, is that the numbers of tug incidents are small when set against the total flights each year. The message remains: there is no room for complacency in this area of aviation.

It would be terse of me not to mention Terry Slater (towing speeds) and Alec Trevett (mid-air collisions and how to avoid them) for their considered and valued contributions to the event and it goes without saying that the warm welcome and genuine hospitality that Husbands Bosworth provided was, as ever, excellent.

In summary, this was a grown-up, well-thought-out series of presentations that was aimed primarily at the tug pilot but would have been equally relevant at any gliding or general aviation seminar. Well done John (in absentia) and those that gave of their time and contributed to this most enjoyable day.

Roger Davies

The event was attended by 55 tug pilots representing 27 clubs: Aquila; Bidford; Black Mountains; Booker; Borders; Bristol & Gloucestershire; Buckminster; Burn; Cambridge; Chilterns; Clevelands; Four Counties; Lasham; London; Mendip; Norfolk; Peterborough & Spalding; Portsmouth Naval; Southdown; Staffordshire; The Gliding Centre; Trent Valley; Vale of White Horse; Windrushers; Wrekin; York; Yorkshire

News in brief

THE BGA's Executive Committee has established a separate Financial Administration Committee for the Association. Initially this will have three members – the BGA Treasurer, Chief Executive and Company Secretary – but they would be grateful to hear from suitably qualified people with specific expertise (for example, in VAT) to strengthen the skills base available. If you feel you could contribute – even on a one-off project-focused basis – to this critical aspect of BGA operations, please contact the BGA Treasurer, John Birch - *johnbirch@furneux.com*

THE BGA has appointed two new Regional Technical Officers: Ken Ballington for the Central North region; and Ian Hey for the Wales & West Midlands region.

A NEW edition of the CAA LASORS (Licensing, Administration, and Standardisation; Operating Requirements and Safety) is now available. LASORS brings together in one book all the flight crew licensing information otherwise found in JAR-FCL, the UK ANO, AICs and the old CAPs 53/54. LASORS can be bought from the Stationery Office (*www.tsoshop.co.uk*) at £13.99 or downloaded from *www.caa.co.uk/docs/33/LASORS_07.pdf*. Individual sections of LASORs can also be viewed at *www.caa.co.uk/LASORS*

THE Popular Flying Association's annual Rally – more recently known as *Flying for Fun* – will not take place in 2007. The Rally, once a major event in the GA calendar, has been in decline over the past few years. Instead, the PFA is looking at running regional rallies linked to existing events and possibly re-launching a major event in 2008 *(www.pfa.org.uk)*.

2006 saw the highest average temperature in the UK since records began in 1914, and the world is likely to experience the warmest year on record in 2007, the UK Met Office says. An extended warming period, resulting from an El Nino weather event in the Pacific Ocean, will probably push up global temperatures. There is a 60 per cent chance that the average surface temperature will match or exceed the current record, set in 1998 (*www.metoffice.gov.uk/*).

THE Faulkes Flying Foundation has announced that, due to insufficient grant aid to subsidise future flights and support its charitable work, the directors and trustees have reluctantly decided to wind up the charity and sell off the assets. One of its motorgliders has been sold to Hertfordshire scouts *(see p53)*.

THE BGA has appointed Andy Holmes as its Winching Advisor. Andy is looking for other volunteers who may be able to get involved – contact him via *office@gliding.co.uk*. A 747 first officer and racing cross-country glider pilot, Andy has a remarkable level of knowledge and experience of technical and practical aspects of winch operations in this country. His knowledge has been augmented through his working for a number of years, on a voluntary basis, with a commercial winch manufacturer, but his interest started when he was a youngster at his local club and has developed through his gliding career.

News in brief

EUROPEAN Commission regulation EC1794/2006, laying down a common charging scheme for air navigation services, was published in December. It states that flights in aircraft with a max take-off weight under two tonnes are exempt from *en route* charges for air navigation services. Our representatives in Europe, in particular Europe Air Sports, have worked hard over two years to achieve this excellent result.

ALL the presentations given at December's highly successful Eurocontrol Sporting and Recreational Aviation Conference, including that of Europe Air Sports President John Allison, are at *www.eurocontrol.int/eatm/public/event/011206_eas.html*. The conference enabled regulators and air sports to exchange views and gain a better understanding of each other. There will be a follow-up meeting in mid-2007. The latest EAS newsletter is at *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/documents/easnewsletterdec06.doc* and provides an update on regulatory issues they are dealing with on our behalf.

GILLIAN Merron MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport, was a keynote speaker at a CAA conference on General Aviation last November, which was attended by more than 150 delegates. She said she had attended to confirm her commitment to GA and to make sure its contribution to transport in Britain is more broadly appreciated throughout Government. A significant part of the day was devoted to the two recent CAA reviews of GA, whose recommendations are being worked on, overseen by joint committees of people from GA, the CAA and the DfT. The CAA added that, although EASA will be responsible for drawing up regulations that will affect GA and auditing how they are implemented, the CAA remains responsible for day-to-day oversight. Presentations from the day are at *www.caa.co.uk/gaconference*

AN update on its 2003 White Paper, *The Future of Air Transport*, was published at the end of last year by the Department for Transport. The White Paper's emphasis was on making better use of infrastructure already in place, which includes airlines increasing the number of passengers on each plane, "improving how we use our crowded skies", and encouraging passengers to use local airports to direct road and air traffic away from the congested South East. During 2007 the DfT aims, among other things, to launch a full public consultation on the future development of Heathrow Airport and consider the impact of forecast growth on south-east airspace as a whole in up to 2030. You can read the update at *www.dft.gov.uk* (follow links to *Aviation – The Future of Air Transport – White Paper and the Civil Aviation Bill – Air Transport White Paper Progress Report 2006* then scroll to the heading: *Progress since 2003*).

THE UK House of Commons Transport Committee's report on the work of the Civil Aviation Authority, which comments on both the CAA and EASA, was published last year and is at *www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmselect/cmtran/809/809.pdf*

THE Hungarian Gliding Federation is the latest association to join the European Gliding Union, whose website (visit *www.egu-info.org/news.htm*) is regularly updated, including recently with EGU responses to NPA 06-2006 (Basic principles and Essential Requirements for the Safety and Interoperability Regulation of Aerodromes) and A-NPA 14-2006 (A concept for a better regulation in GA).



On-the-spot expo

Jane Moore of Booker describes how her club took advantage of an on-site exhibition to promote gliding to potential pilots

THE first AeroExpo event, at Wycombe Air Park, was billed as "the event to be at if you are interested in learning to fly, or are already a pilot and want to see the latest products available." Some hangars (including ours) were to be transformed into trade halls, there would be a static display of aircraft and a fly-in. Booker is one of several aviation businesses at Wycombe Air Park that would have their operation disrupted, and in June, the middle of the season, this was not good news for glider pilots.

But it gave us an opportunity on our doorstep to convert thousands of aviation-minded visitors to gliding. With free stand space as part compensation for loss of business, Booker's marketing team started planning. Building on the lessons learned from our pitch at the BGA's stand at the Earls Court Air Show, we looked at the likely profile of visitors and decided on promoting gliding as "the purest, most natural way to fly". Our selling point is the convenience of Wycombe Air Park for transport links to London, Oxford and Reading.

And we were determined to look smart and professional – no mud or airfield jeans.

Our stand was designed and built by club member Chris Collett, who designs them for a living, ably backed up by Steve Brown who did wonders with the technology. The display panels showed the range of gliding possibilities, including aerobatics and vintage. Steve set up a feed from the BGA simulator to a plasma screen, which we switched between the simulator and various gliding DVDs. Our show offer – a discounted introductory course – was very effective, as was the quiz, useful as a conversation point and to collect contacts for future marketing. We also parked out a K-21, which captured more interest.

Vital to the enterprise were the 25 club members who worked on the stand and out by the K-21 over the three days. Kitted out in navy blue Booker polo shirts, they looked very professional. Our stand was always busy, the BGA simulator being a great crowd puller. We sold a number of courses, generating extra income and several possible new members. It was an excellent event which raised the profile of gliding and was also a great deal of fun. And since the weather wasn't great we didn't even miss much flying.

Expo 2007 is booked for June 8-10, and with our plan already tried and tested, organising our stand will be a breeze.



Above: Booker GC's presence at AeroExpo on its own airfield gave it an opportunity to promote gliding to thousands of aviation-minded visitors

Left: Andy Perkins of Booker GC, who has recently taken on the voluntary role of CFI, at the club's exhibition stand at AeroExpo

BGA NATIONAL GLIDING COACH

The BGA is seeking applications for the remunerated position of BGA National Gliding Coach. The key role of the National Gliding Coach is to provide leadership within a devolved structure which will encompass all levels of instructor training together with the development of a structured development pathway from first flight to world class performance. In addition, the BGA will expect this post holder to;

- Engage with BGA club flying operations development and be visible to clubs and their CFI's
- Advise the BGA regarding flying operational elements of the BGA Safety Management System.
- Be an informed ambassador for the BGA at Regional and National level.

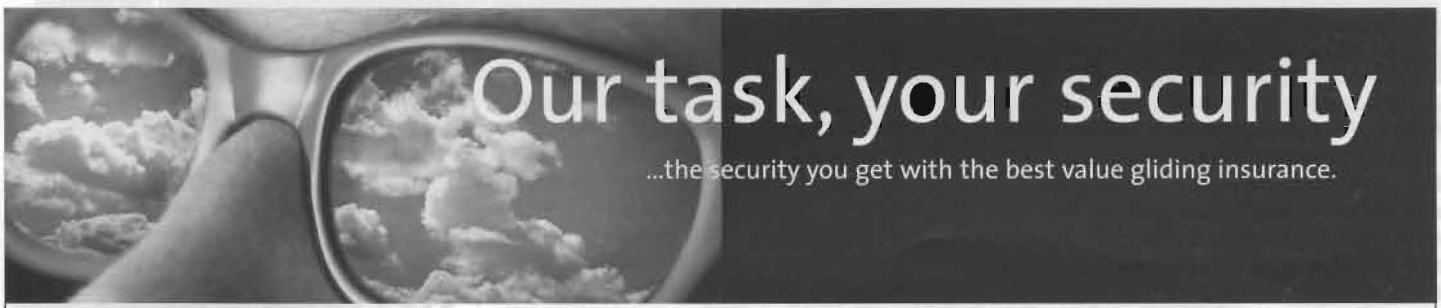
The successful candidate is likely to have strong leadership and interpersonal skills and will be able to gain the confidence of the BGA instructors committee, as well as CFI's and Regional Examiners. In addition, the following experience and qualifications are expected;

- Significant level of gliding instruction experience
- Familiarity with the full spectrum of BGA club gliding operations
- BGA Full Rating
- Ongoing JAR Class 2 medical certification
- Experience of using MS Office applications
- Significant level of cross country and soaring experience
- Familiarity with the ANO and BGA operational regulations and recommended practices
- UK SLMG PPL, NPPL SLMG or JAR TMG rating
- A good standard of oral and written communication skills
- Proven track record of working proactively

As the role is seen as one of pilot development in general, rather than an exclusive one of instructor training, the candidate will be a credible cross country pilot although a competition background is not vital.

Applications including a CV should be marked as confidential and forwarded to Pete Stratten at the BGA Office pete@gliding.co.uk.

Closing date for applications is 16th February 2007.



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Lilienthal Medal

Ian Strachan has just become only the fifth Briton to receive the prestigious Lilienthal Medal. Peter Hearne reports

ON OCTOBER 25, Ian Strachan was presented with the Lilienthal Medal of the Féderation Aéronautique Internationale (FAI). He joins Philip Wills, Ann Burns, Anne Welch and George Lee, the previous UK winners. The Lilienthal, the most prestigious annual gliding award, is for an individual who has given distinguished service of a very high order to world gliding. It recognises the contributions Ian has made in the last 40 years and the influence these have had not only in the UK but worldwide.

Working with his RAF colleague John Delafield in the 1960s, their pragmatic approach led to the replacement of human observers at turn points by pilot photography and a reorganisation of nationals contest structure to encourage pilots flying older types of gliders. As a result, Ian was invited to join the BGA Competitions Committee and given the handicapping portfolio.

He replaced the previous "rule-of-thumb" handicapping by a scientific model based on MacCready cross-country speeds for each glider type. Photographic evidence and speed-based handicapping on the BGA model then found their way into the Sporting Code of the International Gliding Commission (IGC) of the FAI. In the 1970s, now as chairman of the BGA Competitions Committee and UK delegate to the IGC, Ian wrote the BGA paper that preserved the non-flapped Standard Class and created the (then) new 15-Metre Class.

Later, in the GPS era, he has been a key figure in the use of GPS in gliding and chairs the IGC GPS Flight Recorder Approval Committee (GFAC) that carries out approval tests on all glider GPS recorders worldwide.

Amidst all this, Ian has been UK National Champion (twice), a UK record-breaker, frequent task-setter for regionals and nationals, high-performance motorglider pioneer, and a member of various committees of the BGA, IGC and FAI itself. As an extension of his task-setting activities, he created and currently manages what is now the BGA waypoint list with some 950 accurately-plotted points available for all to use.

His ability to contribute so much over the years is in no small way connected with his previous "day job". As Wing Commander Strachan RAF MBE AFC FRAeS, his career includes V-bomber captain, Central Flying School A1-rated instructor, Empire Test Pilot School graduate, Guided Weapon Specialist, Chief Test Pilot at RAE Farnborough and Commanding Officer of the Heavy Aircraft Test Squadron at Boscombe Down. At Farnborough, he played a major part in the development of low-level night-attack flying up to 500kt and down to 200ft using electro-optics. At Boscombe in the run-up to the Falklands, he was responsible for the rapid clearance of flight refuelling for RAF aircraft such as Hercules and Nimrod that were previously without this capability. His final tours in Operations Requirements Branch involved him in setting the pace in important new developments, particularly in the field of flight simulators, a continuing activity, in which he is still one of the UK's gurus.

In sum, Ian is one of the cadre of all-round aviation professionals at the heart of the BGA's ability to achieve and maintain its position as the self-regulator of UK gliding. We are fortunate to have benefited from his initiatives over these many years.

Photo: Ian Strachan (right) being presented with the FAI Lilienthal medal for gliding by General Osvaldo Saravia, the Chief of the Chilean Air Force, during the FAI Awards Ceremony on 25 October 2006. Normally, FAI awards are presented by the FAI President, but in view of Ian's ex-RAF background an exception was made for his award. This ceremony is part of the FAI General Conference that in 2006 was held in Santiago de Chile

BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli looks forward to three of the action points at the top of the Association's agenda in the coming months

LIKE MANY people, I usually take a brief period of time in late December or early January to reflect on the year just finished and to contemplate the one to come.

For British gliding, 2006 was a year of considerable "ups" at all levels. For example, the tremendous progress that has been made at club level in many areas is a reflection of the continued, exceptional commitment of countless volunteers; the regional and national competition scene remains vibrant with record numbers of participants; British gliding, once again, excelled in international competition; and the range of awards made to individuals from within the movement by national and international bodies such as the Royal Aero Club and the FAI reflects the important contribution British gliding has made to the broader air sports community.

Of course, 2006 was not without its challenges, even the occasional "down". We finished, for example, in the midst of a number of important consultation activities, whose outturns are still far from clear. Nevertheless we are confident in our ability to work constructively with all relevant parties to secure acceptable if not optimal outcomes.

The BGA Annual Report will cover the work of the Association in 2006 in more detail. It will be published in time for the Annual General Meeting in March and so I will not take more space to cover the same ground here. I would, however, like to use the remainder of this article to cover three particularly important activities that will be accorded high priority in early 2007.

CAA consultation on Mode S

This is an ongoing issue for us and one where we have expended a lot of time and effort since early summer last year. The Civil Aviation Authority has published the initial report on the submissions that it had received as part of the public consultation process *(see also p5 of this issue)*. My read of the report suggests that the CAA received a very large number of constructive inputs against each of the areas for which they asked for views on. It is also clear to see that the vast majority of responses disagreed fundamentally with many of the CAA's basic assertions in its analysis of interoperability issues and options and that this further translated into an almost broad-scale rejection of the Mode S proposal. Common sense would now suggest that the CAA should look to work with the main air sports bodies that have most issue with the current proposals. At the time of writing, the BGA is preparing the elements of its

Taskforce for youth gliding



Mike Jarrett

He's too young to go solo but this 11-year-old – Alexandre Larochelle from Marseilles – still enjoyed his first glider flight, in a Lasham K-13 last April. How to inspire young people with a love of gliding, encourage them to take up the sport when they're old enough and enable them to continue to participate will be the subject of a BGA taskforce in early 2007

Below right: Dick Bradley (left) *and Patrick Naegeli at the launch of the JS1 glider in South Africa in December 2006* (see also p14)

counter-proposals in anticipation of being able to meet with the CAA sometime early in the New Year. We will, at the same time, continue to work in close co-ordination with other air sports associations. In so doing, we are aiming to ensure that our suggestions are aligned as much as is practically possible with theirs and, therefore, carry the maximum weight possible.

Youth gliding

In the second half of 2006, the BGA explored the potential interest there might be among various parties (such as air cadet associations, university clubs, the Air League, etc.) in the development of a more coherent approach to stimulating and supporting youth gliding. The aim is to ensure that we have a more effective way of interesting young people in gliding and increasing the numbers that take the sport up. All of the initial feedback was positive and we will be forming a small task force to begin work in earnest in January.

BGA operations

I mentioned in one of my 2006 articles that the BGA needs to develop more structured safety, training and technical systems if it is to be successful in achieving appropriate levels of delegated authorities under EASA. While progress is being made in individual areas there is a need to make sure that the pace of this work matches the timescales within which EASA developments are occurring and that appropriate linkages exist between them. This is a far from trivial task, one that will be formally kicked-off in February.

Clearly, these are not the only things the BGA needs to be concerned with. There is a very considerable amount of day-to-day activity that will be going on and that will account for the majority of our limited time and resources. I will report on progress on all the main areas in future issues of *S&G*.

In closing, I would like to say a particular thank you to Mike Jordy, the BGA Vice Chairman. Mike will be retiring at the AGM having served his full term. Mike has committed much of his time to the service of the BGA for a good many years. I have particularly valued his support as I have eased myself into my role as BGA Chairman. Thank you, Mike – enjoy "retirement".

Remember, the BGA is always looking for good people to help with its work – either on the Executive Committee (nominations close on February 9, 2007) or any of the subcommittees or working groups. Please volunteer if you would like to contribute. Elections to the Executive take place at the AGM, other vacancies are advertised on the BGA website (*www.gliding.co.uk*) and often in *S&G*. We can, in any event, always find a home for spontaneous offers of help.

I am looking forward to another full year of gliding in 2007; I hope you are too.

Stay safe and have fun.

Patrick Naegeli
Chairman, British Gliding Association
January 5, 2006
chairman@gliding.co.uk



Reb Rebbeck

New Year hangar clearance

Alison Randle looks at some of the issues that have crossed her desk in her first year at the BGA

THE appearance of *S&G* on my doormat quickens my pulse. Sadly no longer just because I look forward to settling down with a nice cup of tea to read it, but because it now heralds the approach of the next editorial deadline. Although you are reading this fairly well into the New Year, I am writing it in 2006. It seems a good time to sweep up a few miscellaneous enquiries that have recently crossed my keyboard.

Development Committee's role

The BGA Development committee currently consists of three of us. Diana King as Chairman has the strategic role. This includes deploying two Development Officers, Roger Coote and me. The work is divided between us mainly according to our backgrounds, so that we each focus on issues where we have the appropriate knowledge. Geographically, Roger is the Regional Officer for clubs in the east and south-east, whilst I am the Regional Officer for the rest of the country. So what do we do? Essentially, we exist to support the work of club committees and advise on:

- Site purchase
- Security of tenure
- Safeguarding and site protection
- Funding and grants
- Club management, including operational matters
- Membership recruitment and retention
- New legislation: for example, DDA, Fire regulations, CASC status
- Land management
- Planning permission
- Taxation
- Youth

We are responsible for a number of BGA publications, available at *www.gliding.co.uk* (in the club management section) or from the BGA office. In addition to the list above, we give attention to certain operational matters and work closely with other BGA sub-committees as required. Generally we do not get involved with instructional or technical issues, or with internal club matters, but if asked and where appropriate, we will advise clubs where they can find information to help resolve matters.

We're here for your benefit, so please make contact if you think we can help. If we aren't qualified to comment, for example on legal matters, we will suggest appropriately qualified professionals who should be able to. Maintaining confidentiality is critical to our work. so you may tell others about meetings you have with us, but the BGA won't (unless you ask us to).

Performing Right Society (PRS)

This society was set up early last century to collect the royalties due to artists for public performances. In November, a gliding club contacted the Development Team as they had received a lively approach from the PRS who had requested fees from the club for a licence. The problem was that the PRS's approach appeared very similar to the sort of approach adopted by operators of scams. Neither the BGA nor the CCPR (the Central Council of Physical Recreation, which campaigns on behalf of sport and supports the work of national governing bodies) had been forewarned by the PRS that they would be approaching clubs. However, the CCPR is engaged in talks with the PRS to discuss their approaches to sports clubs. The PRS has acknowledged that the manner of their approach was not helpful. The PRS is reviewing its Members' Club tariff during 2007. Any changes in fee levels are likely to be implemented in 2008. To aid negotiations, the CCPR has requested that sports clubs fill in a short questionnaire on the CASC website, *www.cascinfo.co.uk*. At the time of writing the outcome is not known, neither is it possible to predict. What is unlikely to change is the legal requirement for clubs to have the appropriate licence in place. The BGA will circulate information as it becomes available.

Book your place now

This year the Development Committee will run a two-hour workshop at the BGA Conference for club officials, to focus on recognising financial and other problems in good time and finding ways of surviving the increasingly harsh financial climate that clubs face. Please contact *ailson@gliding.co.uk* to book your place. Deadline for bookings is Friday February, 23. We will also be available during the day to answer individual queries.

Data Protection

There seems to be some confusion as to whether clubs can give out contact details of club members to other club members. The answer is "yes" if the club has told its members that their contact details will be shared with other members.

Under the First Principle of the Data Protection Act, personal data should be processed fairly and lawfully. This means that, upon collection of the data, members should be told clearly that their details would be passed to other members on request. If the club wishes to add this statement to its membership application for example, then there will be no problem with disclosure. The Information Commissioner's website *www.ico.gov.uk* is worth visiting to clarify any questions you may have. There is also an information sheet in the club management pages of *www.gliding.co.uk*

AGM season

You may recall the Development News item in the June-July 2006 *S&G* praising the volunteers who run our sport. The comments that follow apply equally well to the BGA's own AGM... Your club's AGM is the perfect time to support the group of volunteers who make up your committee. The committee represent your needs and are accountable to you, the membership. Help your committee to help you by giving them a mandate to carry out the club's business on your behalf. By this I mean, brief yourself on the issues to be discussed by reading the papers they have circulated and attend the meeting. If you can't attend, in addition to submitting your apologies to the secretary, brief a representative on your views or sign any proxy forms. Perhaps you are interested in joining this worthy band of volunteers? Wonderful! The more the merrier. Perhaps this year isn't the year for you, but is there scope for finding out about the role that interests you so that you could take it on another year? Which brings me neatly on to:

Succession Planning

So you have excellent people in place doing things in your club and they love the work! Great. But what happens when they come to stand down, or suffer a bereavement, serious illness in the family, or are themselves struck down so that they have to step aside either permanently or for a few months? It's healthy to think about bringing on new people. Why not have apprentices or assistants? It is also a good idea to have a system where other people are aware of how each role is being run; the nature of current issues; how certain equipment is maintained; the content of files and so on, so that, should the worst happen, any impact on the club is minimised. Creating a support system for people taking on specific roles in clubs will make it less daunting for volunteers to step forward. Do you care about your gliding club? Are you proud of skills that you have? Why wait? Don't leave it to your club chairman to approach you. Be bold. Make a without-prejudice approach. Ask questions. Make their day! And on behalf of all of us who fly or otherwise benefit from the existence of our gliding clubs, thank you to all of you who put so much into gliding as volunteers. The festive season may have passed, but let's raise a glass to you all.

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

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Now in the skies

HERE S&G presents some of the newcomers to the skies in the last few months – in the UK and worldwide. And if you're into the latest new toys, gadgets and gizmos, don't forget that AERO 2007, the influential general aviation trade show that's held every two years at Friedrichshafen, takes place from April 19-22. But if you can't get there this year, you needn't miss out – there'll be a full illustrated report in the June-July issue of S&G.

Below: our thanks to Patrick Naegeli and Reb Rebbeck (who took the photo) for alerting us to the new 18-metre South African racing ship, the JS1 Revelation – so called, its makers say, because the amount of work that's needed to design and manufacture a high-performance sailplane was in itself a revelation. Seen below at its official launch, the JS1, has just been flown to first place in the South African nationals by its Chief Design Engineer Attie Jonkers (who finished 5th in the 2003 Worlds). His brother, JS1 Project Manager Uys, came second in the same nationals in a Ventus 2ct (see www.sssa.org.za*). More information at* www.jonkersailplanes.co.za





*Jochen Ewald took these photos (above and below) of the HPH Glasflügel 304S/18m at the factory in the Czech Republic. A new, flapped 15/18m glider for the 18-Metre Class, it first flew in November. HPH first began making gliders with the licensed production of the German 304CZ during the 1990s and later made a successful, cheap Standard Class version, the 304C. The new 304S has a new high-performance wing, a modified fuselage and roomier cockpit, and interesting, elegant tips for wings and, inset, elevator (*www.hph.cz*)*





*Left: The two-seat PW-6U, now built by ZS Jezow, is EASA type certificated: Stephen Cook's shot is of CP West's demonstrator (*www.szdjezow.com.pl*); Right: The new DG808C's first flight in October. It's a cheaper version of the DG808C Competition, (the 808B's successor), but designed for pleasure flying rather than racing; Right: the maiden flight of the Stemme S6 prototype took place in November. With 18-metre span, a 3-bladed prop and tricycle undercarriage (retracting version gives 38:1), the S6 uses Rotax engines mounted centrally below the wing, as on the S10. The 914F turbo engine gives 150kt cruise and the ability to aerotow gliders*



www.dg-flugzeugbau.de



www.stemme.de

How to check your currency

Use this currency barometer to guide your pre-flight risk assessment

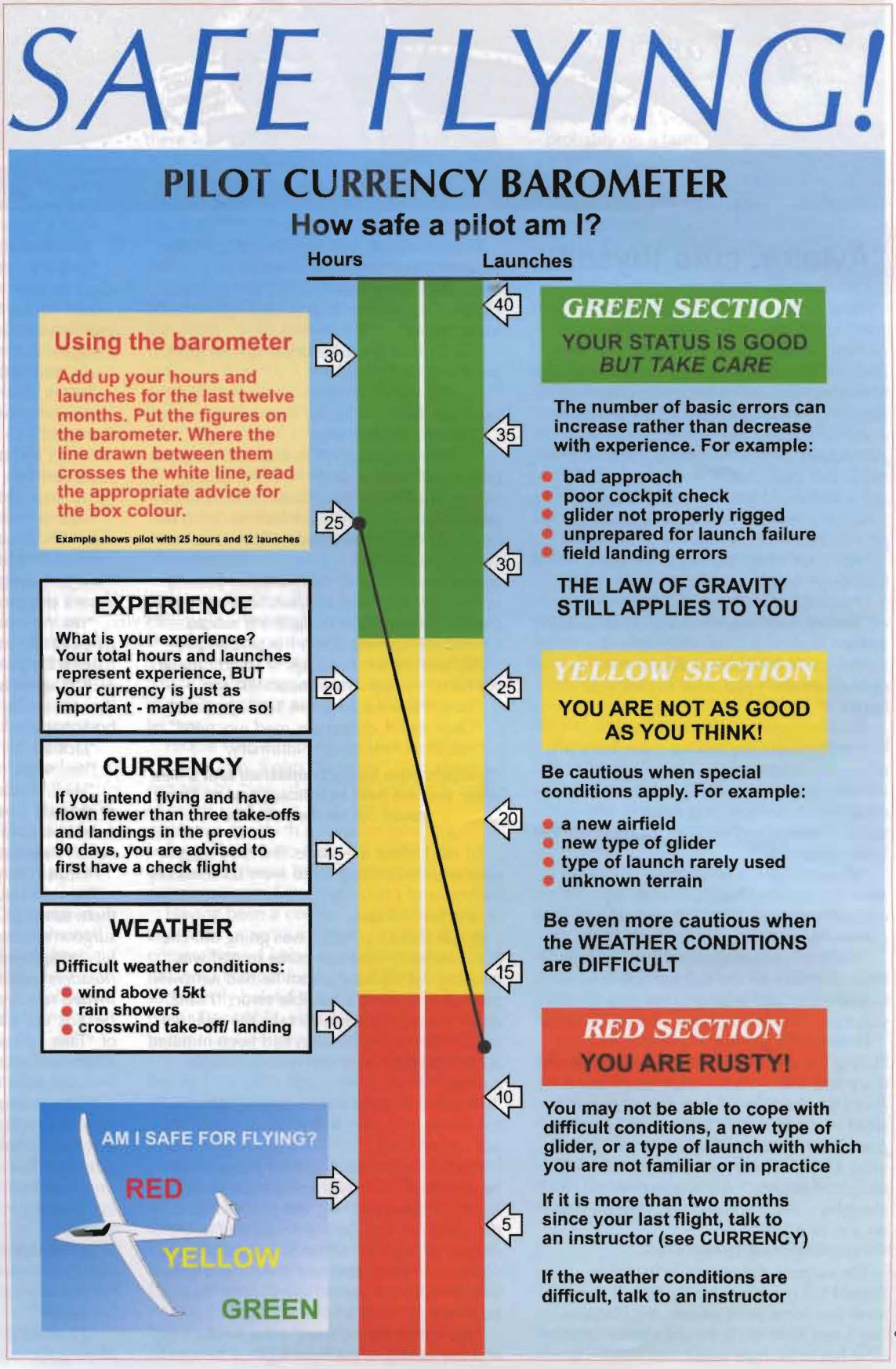
GLIDER pilots across the world experience many similar problems, not least of which is having the time and funds to get enough flying. But what is enough? Some pilots are content to fly a few minutes every now and again, while others aren't happy unless they've clocked up 200 hours per year of high-quality cross-country racing.

"Enough" is – to some extent – a personal choice and depends on what you hope to achieve, but clearly (as with any activity that requires experience and skill) to fly with an appropriate level of safety and to achieve success, the more recent practice you have the better. Maintaining a level of skill requires ongoing, regular practice.

Any of us, even those with hundreds of hours, who have had even a short break from gliding and are therefore out of practice will recall that we need to start thinking about what we're doing more than was previously the case.

All pre-flight thinking should always involve assessing risk, and where there is doubt about flying currency it may be helpful to have some guidance. The "barometer" (available at *www.gliding.co.uk*) supplies that guidance and is hopefully self explanatory. Of course this *is* just guidance – if in any doubt about your level of currency or your ability to cope with the expected conditions, please refer to your CFI.

This barometer has been developed from previous work by the OSTIV Safety and Training Panel and a version supplied by the German Aero Club



Steve Longland



"Aviator, cure thyself!"

"Pilots to advise on hospital safety". *New York Times, November 2006)*
In the USA 98,000 people a year die in botched hospital operations or by mistakes in medication; others had the wrong limbs lopped off etc. The chief culprits are poor communications and lack of disciplined procedures. Senior hospital doctors believe much can be learnt from the lessons of the aviation industry over 30 increasingly successful years of investigating and preventing air accidents.

"Hello Mr Platypus, this is the Royal College of Surgeons calling – "

"Aaaarrrggghhh!" I responded, in my customary calm way in moments of sudden stress.

"No cause for alarm, I assure you. My colleagues and I just want to pick your brains –"

"Aaaarrrggghhh!" I shrieked again.

"Sorry, I was only talking metaphorically of course. I mean, we'd like to ask your advice about how we might suffer fewer disasters in our operating theatres and wards. Experienced aviators like yourself can help immensely."

"You have got to be kidding. Have you seen my accident record or read my occasional series, STINC (Stupid Things I Now Confess)?"

"We have indeed perused both with great interest. However the fact the you are still in one piece and talking to me now speaks volumes. Clearly you have a lot to teach us."

Flattery will get you anywhere, they say. Puffing my chest out a little, I picked up my diary and said: *"Well I could spare three hours for a leisurely lunch some time next week at the Waldorf Grill, which I know is just round the corner from your HQ – just send a limo to pick me up and I'll be delighted to give you the benefit of my thoughts – and I promise you it won't cost an arm or a leg!"*

I was beginning to enjoy this.

The surgeon did not smile (so far as I could tell over the phone). "We'll certainly send you some swift wheels, Mr Platypus, but it will have to be an ambulance and the time has to be right now."

I could already hear the wail of a siren as an emergency vehicle scythed its way through Hammersmith traffic, getting louder, closer. Then a screech of brakes right outside my mansion.

"That's a bit presumptuous, isn't it, just assuming I'd agree?"

"Well, you never know when you might need our help in a hurry, do you?'

"Touché, Doctor, er...?

"*Mister* Lance Boyle". In England, surgeons take a professional pride in being called Mister, not Doctor. This dates from the olden times when surgeons were looked down on by physicians and were not allowed to be called Doctor. "Your point is well made, Mister Boyle," I said, inadvertently coming up with another surgical pun, and sped to the door to meet the burly driver whom I could see coming down the garden path.

"Where are we heading?" I asked him as we raced through the London suburbs.

"To a notorious accident blackspot, sir."

"Dear me! A dangerous road junction?"

"No, the Dreadnought Infirmary."

'Scalpels were being brandished and it was clear that the next significant loss of blood would not be the patient's'

I'd read about the place. The only people who enjoyed visiting there were undertakers, lawyers and *Daily Mail* journalists in search of another scandal.

A real shouting match was going on. The boss sawbones had just come in and was bawling out a junior whom he had narrowly prevented making a horrible error: *"I said, make absolutely sure you take the right leg off!"* A very small incision had been initiated above the right knee of the unconscious patient.

"Well, this is the poor bugger's right leg," the junior said truculently. It was obviously not a happy ship.

His boss went puce. *"What I meant was, be absolutely sure you remove the correct leg, the appropriate leg, the proper leg, the specified leg, the leg designated at the bottom of page 17 of the 53 pages of notes you should have read and memorised before this operation. It says distinctly: The limb to be removed is Mr Smith's left leg!"*

"You mean the right leg is the wrong leg, and the left leg is the right leg?"

"Of course, you dummy!"

Scalpels were being brandished and it was clear that the next significant loss of blood would not be the patient's. I chose this moment to intervene. *"Gentlemen, might I suggest that we ban the use of the terms 'right' and 'left' in operating theatres?"*

Both scalpels were now being brandished in my direction: "You dragging politics into this now?"

"No. I just suggest you call them port and starboard legs, so this sort of confusion can never arise again."

"That is brilliant! We never thought of that!" The Boss looked genuinely pleased. "It shall be standard practice from now on. I say, Jack Smith would have been so upset if we'd taken off the wrong bit."

"Yes, he would have been hopping mad!" quipped the younger man, and they both roared. They were bonding again, it was so nice to see: I had helped in team-building. Besides saving at least one of Mr Smith's body parts.

"Jack Smith, did you say?" I asked.

"Yes, why?"

"Well," I said, *"the chart here at the foot of the bed says Jake Smith. And Jake Smith here is in for a quick in-and-out operation on his haemorrhoids."*

"Oops!" they said in unison.

The next hour I spent with the two of them turning CBSIFTCB into a handy surgeon's mnemonic to prevent the wrong bits being chopped off the wrong people. *(Readers with medical knowledge are invited to guess what this mnemonic might be. Ed).* We also got a few coarse laughs out of "Take up slack" and "All out!" By way of a farewell treat they poured me a few stiff brandies from their private stash.

It was getting late as I made my way out, singing happily. I was still hearing their jolly laughter upstairs when I slipped and fell down the last six steps of the main entrance. I realised from a previous incident in my cycle-racing youth that I had badly broken a tibia.

"You all all right, sir?" said the driver as I lurched towards him through the shadows. "D'you want to go back inside and have that looked at?"

"It's nothing. Just an old war wound playing up," I lied as I dragged myself into

the ambulance. I was sure that if I got home without fainting there must be some useful advice on the Internet about DIY and compound fractures. Lone round-the-world yachtsmen do it all the time...

Fly cross-country for fun? Are you mad?

You know, I believe I must have been one of the first glider pilots in Britain to use GPS in anger –

Editor's note: Let me quickly explain to our many readers for whom English is not their mother tongue, that the colloquial phrase "in anger" does not mean in a state of rage and violent fury – it simply means doing something for real, as opposed for training purposes or for display. Thus an anti-tank gun fired over the army's testing grounds on Salisbury Plain, or to mark the Queen's birthday, would not be said to have been fired "in anger"– unless of course it happened at the time to be pointed at the Queen by a would-be assassin. In the case of our esteemed columnist we can assume that all he actually means is that he was one of the first pilots to use GPS in earnest for badges, records or competitions.

Sorry, Mad Ed (that's my abbreviated pet name for Madam Editor, by the way, not to be confused with those people I know called Ed who really are mad) although you are quite right in general, in this case you are mistaken. Most of the electronic devices I have ever bought, whether pedometers, multi-function watches, mobile telephones, cameras or computers, end up being used by me in a state of rage and violent fury. They usually succumb not to obsolescence but to being thrown out of a third-floor window or attacked by a seven-pound sledgehammer.

Now where were we? Ah, yes – the very first year I used a GPS was 1992. I eagerly took it along with me to Competition Enterprise in Yorkshire that summer, as well as the Nationals and the Dunstable Regionals. (This was the only Competition Enterprise I've ever flown in; I am ashamed to say that for most of my life I have been possessed by the urge to win serious contests, overcome as I was by inexplicable delusions of adequacy.) I'd had no time to install the Garmin 100 – which cost well over £1,200 15 years ago – in the instrument panel, so I just strapped it to my knee.

That may not seem a very good position for an important instrument (and we're now strongly advised not to do it), but I reckoned since I was flying an ASW22 and therefore lying almost supine, my knees were practically on a level with my eyes anyway. (Go and stand in the corner of the classroom wearing a pointy hat with a large D for Dunce, if you who think the word for lying on one's back is prone. Of course if I had been prone instead of supine the Garmin would still have been level with my eyes, but I'd have had great difficulty seeing it.)

By the summer of 1992 I had been soaring in clouds – and falling out of the bottom just often enough to discourage any but the bravest competitors from following me in – for a third of a century. I'd done a lot of cloud-flying with only a turn-and-slip; a T&S was much cheaper than an artificial horizon and moreover it could not topple whatever the pilot did to the glider and whatever darkness and turbulence did to the pilot's brain. If you didn't have room in the panel for both horizon and turn-and-slip, there was something to be said for just using the latter.

Anyway, in the lovely and much less congested airspace over Northumberland this southerner took the earliest opportunity to go into cloud to see how the new device performed. Would it work in the murk?

It was a revelation. Yes, the GPS gave beautifully clear headings all the way round the circle – with a bit of lag, of course, so when it said your heading was 300° it was really 330°, since it is calculating a moving average over the past few seconds. But, making a routine allowance for that lag, emerging into the blue on the desired track was as easy as pie. There I had a superb view of the Northumbrian coast, including the Holy Island of Lindisfarne, which was once inhabited by monks keeping the light of civilisation burning through the Dark Ages.

The view from 10,000ft or so was one of my reasons for doing Competition Enterprise – the organisers don't try to keep competitors away from capricious effects of the sea. If the contestants want to smell the ozone and rotting seaweed, and are willing to risk being shot down by a sea-breeze, let 'em.

People who can be described as doing cross-country flights "in anger" (see above remarks by Mad Ed and Plat) are pretty well all pilots who fly in BGA-rated contests – to which Enterprise does not belong. There is no National Ladder or path to the World Team hanging on your performance in Enterprise.

Having been a contest director and/or task-setter at serious, Death-or-Glory Rated competitions, I know how absolutely paranoid competitors can get about the supposedly baleful effects of the sea. In the bar at Dunstable, after a longish task in the true Geoffrey Stephenson tradition, one notoriously cantankerous competitor berated me quite aggressively for having set a turning point so close to the sea (about 30 miles away, for Pete's sake, in a small island where you are always less than 70 miles away from salt-water) that he found himself struggling at 500 ft, clearly the victim of cool sea air coming in during the afternoon and killing the lift.

I was able to make this stout party collapse by stating that, unbeknown to him, I had decided to do the task myself and had rounded that same turning point at 3,000ft half an hour later. However I forfeited any chance of a free beer that evening.

Nuts to you

How and where to store a sailplane over the winter is every private owner's worry. That is of course assuming you have given up the manic urge to fly every day of the year whenever cloud-base is over 1,000ft and visibility over a mile.

The best answer is, in a well-aired trailer under the benign cover of a secure, well-aired shed, not too far from the club – probably on a farm. It'll cost, naturally. But calculate it as so much per partner per month, and it might amount to the price of an aerotow – which you are not taking, so you can afford it.

That's the trouble with economists: they make your head spin – Ed.

I did hear years ago of one fellow who was too parsimonious to rent a shed. (I was going to say too mean, but it occurs to me that he might still be around and doing this every winter, and he could take offence and we know how dangerous it is to give offence these days.) He would wait for a dry autumn day and then systematically mothball his trailer with the glider nicely tucked up in it, so that the box was totally airtight and not a drop of moisture could get in, like an Egyptian tomb.

I am far too disorganised to risk any such drastic procedure; I can imagine opening the trailer on the spring equinox, and there to one's horror, clinging with boney fingers to the locked door of the trailer, is a skeletal figure with desperate, gaping jaws. "Good Lord, I was wondering why Bert didn't attend the mid-winter syndicate party!" I would ejaculate helplessly, before being hauled off by the police.

The chap who a couple of years ago found 100 pounds of acorns and nuts squirreled away (literally) in one of his wings illustrates the danger of leaving holes for small furry critters to get in, the undercarriage bay especially.

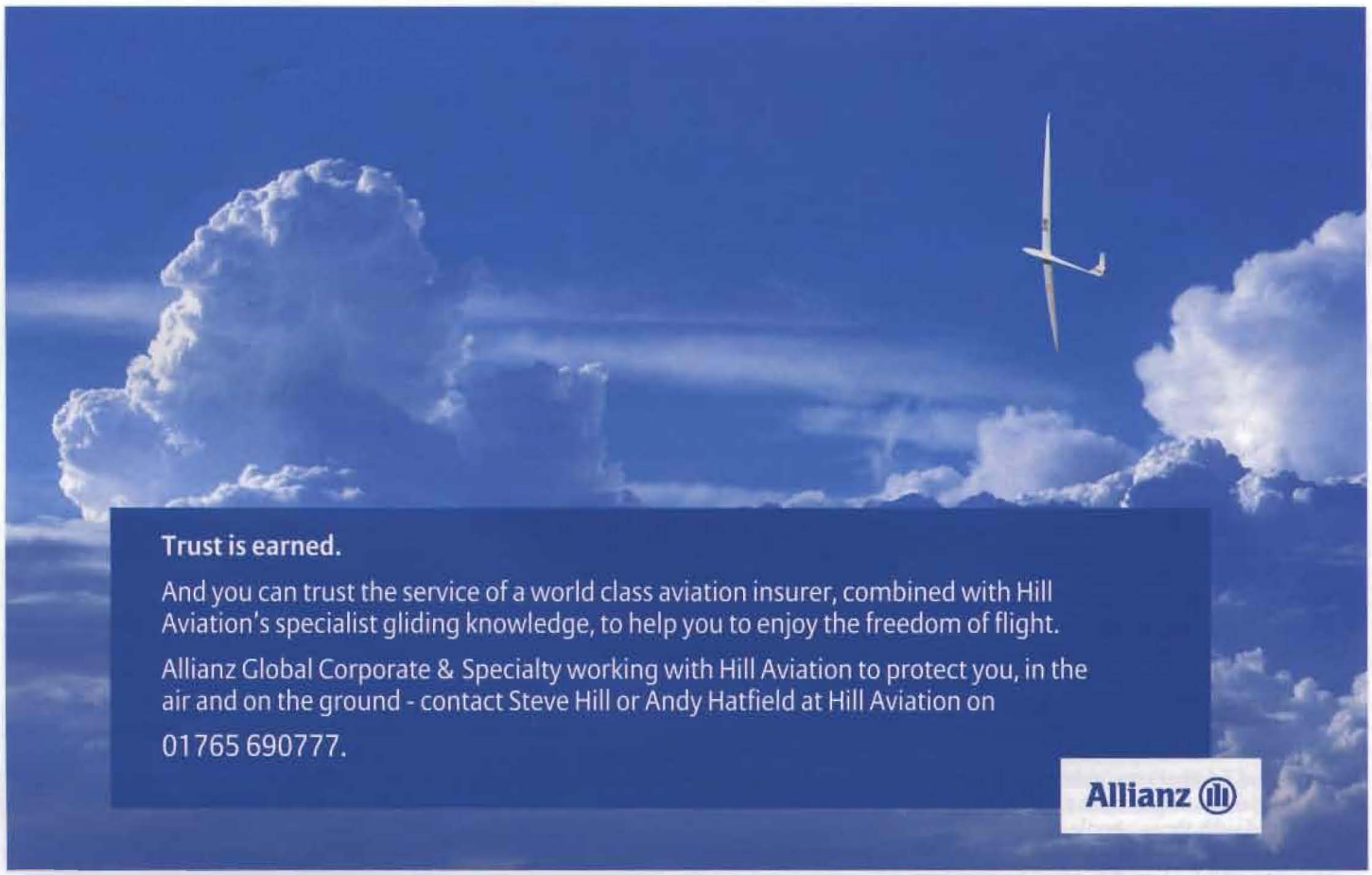
I am not worried about the plight of the owner – a glider can take off and fly perfectly well all day with one wing heavier than the other by as much as 200 pounds. I've done it twice without harm; though I should mention that the last bit of the landing run suddenly gets interesting when you're least prepared for it.

I am more concerned about the squirrel and his or her family: the poor wee things must have been aghast to find their entire, painstakingly-gathered hoard gone, and with starvation staring them right in the whiskers.

Beatrix Potter could have written and illustrated a heart-wrenching little story about this event, with the cruel glider-owners as the villains....

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Diana, the huntress

Jochen Ewald flies the Diana 2 – the sailplane that won last year's 15-Metre Class World Championships in the hands of pilot Janusz Centka



Main picture: Diana 2 prototype flown from Aalen-Elchingen in Germany by worldwide dealer Alexander Mueller. Above: the layout of the cockpit, with sidestick

WHEN you reach the top of the ladder, the hunter becomes the hunted. Now, after Janusz Centka flew it to victory in the FAI 15-Metre Class World Championships, the Diana 2 has become one of this elite band. Bearing the name of the goddess of hunting, the Diana 2 is designed and built by Bogumil Beres in Poland. But how does this winner, which has managed to break into the ranks of the German-built racers, fly?

The Diana 2 is a flapped 15-metre ship, built from carbon and aramide fibre composites, with a very small wing surface (8.64m^2), low empty weight (182kg) and high waterballast capacity (248 and 5.6 litres). It is the successor of the SZD-56-1 Diana, which Bogumil Beres designed and built when working in the then state-owned factory. Later he produced a handful of these high-performance gliders by himself, before he decided to optimise performance and flying characteristics by developing a completely new slim wing with a slightly larger surface, continuously curved leading edge and only 12.8-12.2 per cent thick.

The aerodynamic design of this wing originates from Krzystof Kubrynski of the Technical University at Warsaw, using his updated aerodynamic design programme. The increased waterballast capacity and a maximum take-off mass of 500kg allows the Diana 2's pilots to choose a wingloading between 28 and 58kg/m^2, a feature no glider has previously offered. The maiden flight of the Diana 2 was on January 12, 2005.

This wing, with a completely new internal structure, has two integral waterballast tanks, one in the front and one in the aft section, which are filled through newly developed quick-draining valves at the bottom close to the wingroots. The wings have long flaperons, operated via three pushrods. They can be set to flap positions between -2° and +28°, with 21° and 28° for landing. At the bottom of the flaperons are holes to destroy the laminar bubble, which, on this aerofoil, is at 90 to 92 per cent of the aerofoil depth. The two-bladed upper-surface Schempp-Hirth airbrakes with front-suspended hinged lids provide a perfect seal.

The wing connection is a spar bridge that is an integral part of the fuselage: the spar tongues protrude from the fuselage and you push each wing on to its tongue and link it to the fuselage with a long bolt, which connects the main fitting as well as the rear one and is (at present) secured by a Fokker needle (a snap-in lock is in preparation). This fuselage-integrated spar bridge with its tongues means the Diana 2 does not fit into standard trailers. At the time of writing, adapted trailers are available from the manufacturer and the Spindelberger (Cobra) factory. The flaperons are connected manually, using reliable and easy-to-connect Polish quick connection links, while the airbrakes and waterballast valves connect automatically via torsional links.

The slim cockpit has a large, front-hinged, gas-strut-suspended canopy. Emergency jettison is by a red handle at the bottom



The Polish quick connection link in the closed position

TECHNICAL DATA

Span	15.00m
Length	6.88m
Height	1.35m
Wing area	8,64sq.m
Aspect ratio	26.04
Wing aerofoil (root)	KL-002-128F/17
Wing aerofoil (tip)	KL-002-122F/17
Dihedral	2°
Empty weight	182kg
Empty weight (prototype)	186kg
Max take-off weight	500kg
Max waterballast (wing)	248l
Min wingloading	27.43 kg/sq.m
Max wingloading	57.87 kg/sq.m
Manoeuvring speed (V_A, V_{RA})	198 km/h
Max. speed (V_{NE})	277 km/h
Max. speed flaps 14-28°	224 km/h
Min sink	0.45 m/s
Best glide	>50

Manufacturer: *www.beres.com.pl*
Sales (except in America): www.dianasegelflugzeuge.com
Sales (America): www.dianasailplanes.com

**Figures from the manufacturer*



All photos: Jochen Ewald

Winglet and curved leading edge of the Diana 2

right of the instrument panel: this, in my opinion, is quite close to the yellow cable release of the same shape to the right of it. This prototype did not yet have the Röger hook for safe canopy jettison installed, which can be found in all serial production Diana 2s. There is an aerotow hook at the front of the belly; at the time of writing (summer 2006) a C of G hook for winching has not yet been installed or tested.

The rudder pedals are adjustable in flight, while the backrest, bottom and top, can be adjusted on the ground. Both have a wide range and suit pilots up to 1.80m tall. Pilots up to 1.90m tall can also fly the Diana 2 by removing the backrest and using a separate adjustable headrest. The undercarriage lever is on the left console. The airbrake lever also operates the wheel's drum brake. The control stick – a sidestick – is on the right of the cockpit, with the neutral aileron position pointing about 45° inwards the cockpit, and it has an unlocking lever for the elevator spring trim device at its front.

The tailfin contains a 5.6 litre waterballast tank; there is no indication of the amount it contains. Its drain valve is operated by a separate lever in the cockpit, which automatically opens when the main waterballast valves are opened. The tailplane with its little 'spar tongue' is placed on the tailfin from above, fixed by a long bolt inserted from the front, secured by a Fokker needle. The elevator is connected manually using the Polish standard quick connection link, easy to reach because the whole front section is covered with a 'bubble' cap held by a screw after rigging.

But enough of the technical details, which demonstrate a lot of previously unseen solutions – let's fly it!

The large canopy means there is enough room to enter the relatively flat seat comfortably. The reclining posture requires careful positioning of backrest, headrest and pedal positions to ensure all controls can be reached safely and comfortable. Pilots with strong legs must also check they can get full right aileron deflection of the sidestick. Beres offers his customers individual positioning of the levers in this cockpit, which simply cannot be built to fit all pilots' body shapes in one standard configuration.

Once the best position is found and fixed, I feel very comfortable. With the parachute and me in the cockpit, the prototype weighs about 270kg and the C of G is slightly aft. Standard flap position for take-off is 8°, no flap switching is required. After just a few metres' acceleration, the small tailwheel lifts off and the aileron becomes efficient in a direct, pleasant way. With the fuselage level, the Diana 2 soon becomes airborne.

Although this glider is controlled by a sidestick, this does not feel unusual: it is so well designed ergonomically that you simply do not realise there's any difference from a conventional control column. The trim works perfectly. The undercarriage lever is easily unlocked and pushed forward; only at the far end of travel does it require slightly more force to swing it behind its 'retracted' lock.

Although the canopy is flat and long, all-round visibility from the cockpit is excellent, and the tug can be seen clearly above the panel. For a slow tow, the flap position may be changed to 14°, which brings the nose even further down.

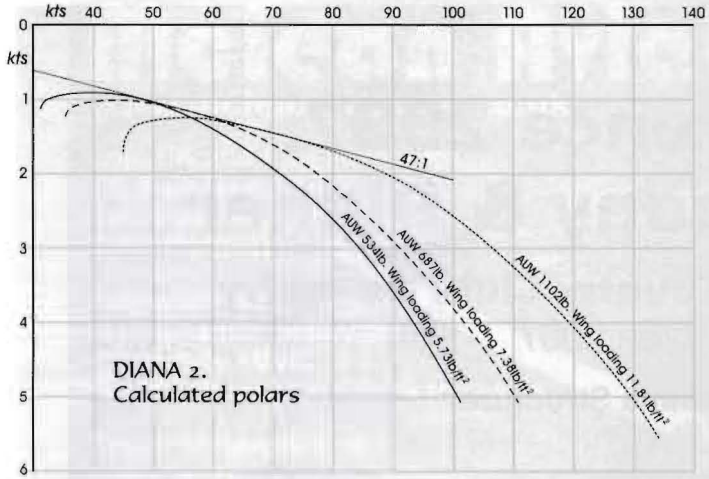
Stalling is gentle. With the flaps set to 8°, the controls start feeling soft below 68km/h IAS; at 65km/h buffeting starts and the nose rises noticeably as the Diana 2 enters a stable, buffeting stall with the stick fully back and aileron control. Selecting thermalling flap at 14°, I find the same behaviour at 3km/h slower. The 'landing positions' 21° and 28° reduce the speeds by another 3-4km/h, and with the stick fully back it finally drops a wing. Recovery is easy and fast. With airbrakes opened, indicated stall speeds are about 8km/h higher, with the behaviour unchanged.

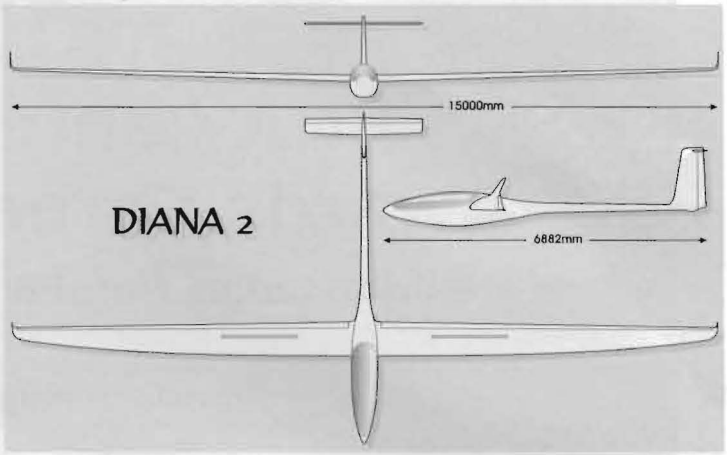
Opening the airbrakes moves the nose down, which accelerates the glider a little more than necessary, from the previously trimmed 75km/h to 115km/h. The fin has a relatively big surface compared to the rudder, which results in a rather inefficient sideslip that also becomes a bit lively with airbrakes opened due to the airbrake vortex hitting the tail. But in this glider sideslipping is really not required: the 28° flap position creates an excellent braking effect with very little acceleration when pushing the nose down. So very steep, slow approaches are possible. The front-hinged airbrake covering lids swing up after unlocking the airbrakes, resulting (after a short twitch when unlocking





Left: because the main spar bridge is integral to the fuselage, the Diana 2 requires a purpose-built trailer; Right; the cockpit provides excellent all-round visibility





Above: calculated speed polars for the Diana 2 15-metre flapped sailplane and (above right) a three view of the glider that won the 2006 15-Metre Worlds (Steve Longland)

via the brake lever) in practically no forces pulling the brakes open – a sensible feature to prevent 'self-opening' airbrakes when they are not locked properly.

The Diana 2 feels nicely stable in flight but it is also enormously responsive. With the flaps set to 8°, I measured a 45° roll-rate of only 2.7 seconds at 100km/h, and even at 95km/h with the flaps at 14° the time was still under three seconds! Control harmony was best at 90km/h. Below that a bit more rudder than aileron was required to roll without sideslipping. When circling, a slight rudder deflection in the direction of the turn and a bit of opposite aileron keep the string in the centre, and flying the Dick Johnson theory of keeping the string pointing slightly outwards only requires a bit of inside rudder, while the Diana circles perfectly – even hands off. So flying this way appears best to me, especially because constant stick forces, even light ones, can lead to fatigue when flying with a sidestick.

In this prototype, the highest speed I could trim to was 170km/h in flap setting -2°. The flap-speed-connection works well: trimmed to 65km/h in landing position 28°, the Diana 2 accelerates continuously with the flap setting to 150km/h at -2°. At higher speeds, the flap lever produces a significant 'backwards' force, and when flying through gusts with the hand on the lever, which unlocks by down pressure, this might lead to unintentional unlocking and the flaps snapping a bit back (but not into 'dangerous' positions). At high speeds, aileron forces increase significantly, while elevator and rudder forces do so only a bit. Here, the sidestick offers a remarkable safety feature: when flying through gusts, the varying g-forces on the pilot's hand do not lead to amplification by unintended elevator operation like they do in most 'cranked central stick' gliders with a reclining seat position!

All this makes flying the Diana 2 real fun. In thermals, without ballast, it outclimbs other gliders like a wooden glider, and remains very stable in the thermal. Worlds competitors report that the Diana 2 was an excellent climber when fully ballasted (Janusz Centka usually took off with max ballast). As far as its performance (which has not yet been measured at Idaflieg) is concerned, I can only say: look at what her excellent pilot Janusz Centka has achieved in the last year and a half.

'Bogumil Beres has developed many astonishing new features which are, of course, being watched with interest by his competitors'

Landing is also easy. I found an approach speed of 80km/h with the flaps on 21° appropriate, while I recommend 85km/h for steep approaches using the 28° position to allow a proper flare before touchdown. Selecting the landing positions brings the nose well down, offering an excellent view of the field. Touchdown speed is very low, and the Diana 2 settles in a two-point attitude at 21° or on the main wheel at 28°. I found the spring trim force while holding off a bit disturbing – pulling the trim lever during this phase makes this unnatural force disappear and prevents ballooning due to not holding off fully. Mainwheel suspension is good, but a bit stiff. Nevertheless, this is needed to take the load of the fully loaded glider, which weighs about double the empty one! The wheelbrake is easy to close, without no tendency to nose forward on to the belly, and, combined with the low touchdown speed, enables very short ground runs. To improve aileron efficiency, either keep the tail up by using elevator and brake, or switch the flaps to negative.

Polish aircraft manufacturers always have been good competitors to German ones. Now, after the big changes in the Eastern political system, they're back on the market with a top glider. Bogumil Beres aimed to optimise performance without compromises and with no regard to convention. By doing so he has developed many astonishing new features, which, of course, are being watched with interest by his competitors. The Diana 2 is clearly not a 'club glider' – the available space in the cockpit and the need to adapt the seating position carefully would, in themselves, exclude several pilots. Its sidestick, and the low aileron efficiency for the short time the tail is still on the ground, require precise adherence to the recommended take-off procedures. Bogumil Beres is working on a small, patented take-off aid, to prevent wingdrops even when the glider is ballasted with more than 200 litres, and serial production gliders already come with some changes to improve take-off behaviour when heavily ballasted. All this makes the Diana 2 a very interesting and attractive glider for dedicated competition pilots as well as for recreational pilots who are looking for a lightweight glider, easy to rig without high spinal loads, and with agreeable flying characteristics and excellent performance in any weather.





Left: the wing is really lightweight and easy to rig; Right: During the initial takeoff run, the stick has to be pushed fully forwards until the fuselage is horizontal

New Venue

BGA Conference 2007
Awards Ceremony & Dinner

Hellidon Lakes Hotel & Country Club, Daventry

Saturday 10 March 2007

Provisional Programme Structure

Morning

Workshop Session - 3 workshops are being held in parallel -

- **"Gliding around Britain" (*Phil King*)**
  Gone solo but need help getting to that next level? Join Phil as he shares his knowledge on why it's worthwhile to visit other clubs and what's available around the UK for that next gliding holiday.
- **"Fly Further, Fly Faster" (*Pete Masson*)**
  Pete Masson guides you through some modern thinking of Cross Country flight. "Fly further, fly faster" is an interactive session concentrating on achieving your individual flying goals.
- **"Managing a Crisis" (*Sharon Kerby*)**
  This session provides essential guidance on how a club should prepare for and manage a crisis situation including pre-planning, making an effective response, statements & dealing with the press, including some common mistakes and the 'golden rules'.

Afternoon

- Workshop Session (repeated)
- AGM of the BGA
- Exhibition Walkabout
  Take a walk around the stands, view the latest gadgets or take a look at the gliders on display.
- Keynote Speaker - Jacques Noel

Walk In Clinics

Throughout the day there will be Walk In Clinics:

- "Technical Internet CTO Workshop"
  Having trouble finding technical information about your glider? Jim Hammerton, the BGA's Chief Technical Officer, will be on hand to help and answer question.
- "Gliding Bursaries - What's on offer?"
  This walk in clinic can help you identify what sponsorship and bursary opportunities are open to you. We can provide information on what's on offer and how to apply.
- "Development Committee - Worried about how your club will survive?"
  This workshop for club officials will help you recognise problems, financial or otherwise, in good time & find solutions to build for a brighter future. Diana King, Roger Coote and Alison Randle are on hand to offer advice and answer questions.
- "Marketing Clinic"
  Keith Auchterlonie, the BGA's Communications Officer, will be available to discuss any marketing or publicity related issues that your club might have.

Lunch (pre-booking required) - £15.50 for buffet, £6.50 for rolls/sandwiches.

Dinner £28.50pp (or £19.99 for ages 25 and under)

For more information, visit www.gliding.co.uk, phone 0116 253 1051, or email office@gliding.co.uk
Accommodation bookings, contact Hellidon Lakes Hotel: Tel: 01327 262550, Fax: 01327 262559.
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Pursuing their research

Jochen Ewald reports on the gliding research centre of the German Akafliegs

IN THE last three weeks of August every year, Aalen-Elchingen on the Schwäbische Alb plateau in Germany becomes a gliding research centre. The students of the German Academic Flying Groups, the Akafliegs, united in the Idaflieg organisation, meet staff from the DLR (German Centre of aeronautical and spaceflight research) to evaluate the performance and flying characteristics of gliders as well as to test their own new ideas and products.

Teachers from the universities, along with glider manufacturers and employees of the LBA (German CAA/FAA) involved in glider certification, are also welcome guests. The latter not only stay up to date by attending, but often, in open discussions, they can also find practical solutions how to sensibly handle certification problems.

The DLR supports this important meeting by supplying a tug with engineer-pilots, measurement equipment and the "holy" DG-300/17, which was purpose-built as a comparison glider for performance evaluation and research flights.

In 2006, the Idaflieg was led by Andreas Lutz and Georg Schiffleithner of the Munich Akaflieg. Every two years the leadership changes to an elected team of another Idaflieg member group. The scientific work of the flying students was co-ordinated by Falk Pätzold of the IFF (Institut für Flugführung) of Brunswick University. Unfortunately, because of poor weather, there were only a few days which provided the absolutely calm morning atmosphere permitting performance evaluation flights with new gliders. Evaluation of the Discus 2c/18m was completed, while with the Antares 18s only first evaluation flights were possible.

The most important flights at the Idaflieg meeting are the flying characteristic evaluation flights, conducted according to the Zacher scheme. These assess whether the aircraft are good, easy and safe to fly; if flying it is uncomfortable and fatiguing, even the best pilots will not be able to make use of its true performance. This year, the ASW 28-18, Duo Discus X, LS-10, ASK-21, DG-1000S, HPH Gl-304C, LS-1d, a 'vintage flying wing', a Fauvel AV-36c and the Akaflieg prototypes SB 11 (Brunswick) and B-12 (Berlin) were available. The ASK-21 also took part in a very interesting extension of the 'Zacher flights'. Years ago, there had been attempts to research aerobatic flying characteristics. It proved to be difficult. The 2006 flights in the ASK-21 refined this programme so that it can be used in single-seaters, as well as to train licensed aerobatics pilots to fly it safely and obtain sensible data.

In addition to these regular main projects at the Idaflieg Summer Meeting, there were also interesting 'special projects' such as researching the airflow approaching the wing (see box, below). In another project. the DG-300/17 and the Discus 2c carried out close formation-flight performance evaluations to find out more about the influence of one sailplane flying close to another in different positions. This will not only provide information about measurement errors caused by certain positions

Laminar separation on wing and tailplane

THE Dresden Akaflieg continued their research about the actual airflow approaching the wing and tailplane of a glider in real flight, which they had already started over the last two years by developing and testing their equipment on their Super-Blanik and the Bocian *(see picture, bottom right)*. The behaviour of the airflow during actual thermal circling is an especially interesting theme, which could lead to aerodynamic improvements, because this cannot be simulated realistically in a wind tunnel! The Dresden students also tested a new method to make the boundary layer airflow visible in flight. Equipped with a heatable 'aerofoil glove' on the wing *(see picture, top right)*, they proved it was possible to identify laminar and turbulent airflow zones using infrared imaging. This worked very well, and even self-adhesive black foil on the wing produced enough energy on sunny days to show temperature differences clearly on laminar and turbulent sections. Further research into the approaching airflow during free flight was carried out by the members of the Berlin Akaflieg, using their B-12, a two-seater with Janus wings *(see picture, below)*.







during normal performance evaluation flights (where the gliders don't normally fly in close formation), but also about whether gliders can gain additional performance by flying in special formations like some birds do.

The Brunswick Akaflieg continued flight testing their 18-metre flapped SB 14 design. The airbrake-open polar was measured and research was done into the airflow around fully and partially opened airbrakes at different speeds. Similar research was also conducted with the DLR's DG-300/17, to get more information about the effects of airbrakes and how to improve their design. On the LS10, the laminar-turbulent airflow conversion and laminar bubble position on the bottom surface of the wing was researched to optimise the use of the zig-zag tape which enables this conversion to happen without creating drag-producing laminar bubbles. The research technique used a special fluid, sprayed on the wing surface before the flight, which in flight is moved by the laminar flow more than by the turbulent flow, and forms 'pools' in the laminar bubble separation area.

Invaluable research work such this has, for the last 70 years, resulted in benefits for the whole gliding scene and it is done for free by interested students. But it is becoming more and more difficult for them to do this. New studying guidelines and fees have been introduced at universities, shortening course lengths (and with this, the student's active membership in an Akaflieg) and costing money. So the students were pleased that many institute leaders at the universities recognised the value of this work and are integrating it even more into the academic plans of students, for example, by choosing Idaflieg project themes for dissertations. This year, Professor Peter Dahmann of the Fachhochschule Aachen University took part in the meeting. An active glider pilot himself, he was very interested in the Idaflieg work and in discussing possibilities for active co-operation. This not only supports the future of scientific gliding research, but also helps the students after university. A student who not only solved theoretical problems manufactured for his dissertations, but also took part in real, practical research, will be an engineer with experience, and employers recognise the value of this.

The results of the Idaflieg Summer Meeting research were due to be discussed at the ('theoretical') annual Idaflieg Winter Meeting in January. They are also, together with other interesting research work done in the Akafliegs, going to be published, but only in German. The Idaflieg Report for the January 2006 winter meeting in Dresden is now available in printed form from the Idaflieg. Further information at *www.idaflieg.de* or

Idaflieg,
c/o Akaflieg Muenchen,
Arcisstraße 21,
80333 Muenchen,
Germany

All photos: Jochen Ewald



The K-21 of the German "Association to support glider aerobatics" (above), the Duo Discus X (below) and the LS10 (bottom) were all flown at the meeting to assess handling characteristics according to the Zacher scheme







Steve Longland



"Many visitors to Scotland in autumn 2006 got more golf than gliding," says John Williams. "There had been a few decent summer days (Roy Wilson did four 500s above 100km/h, Kevin did 750km and I did 300km O/R at 158km/h) but September and October didn't deliver. Then the first ten days of November gave four 500-plus opportunities as described in these three accounts: Val's of her first wave cross-country – a declared 500 as P2 in the Scottish Gliding Association's ASH; Kevin's remarkable double 300; and my attempt at the 500km O/R record (see also map, left). Pictured above from left at their home base of Portmoak are: ***Kevin Hook*** *(Scottish GC's treasurer, he began gliding in 1992, has 4,000hrs, Diamond Badge, his 750km, and an assistant instructor rating);* ***John Williams*** *(SGC chairman, he started gliding in 1993, has 1,400hrs, Diamond Badge, 750km, and a BI rating);* ***Val Alexander*** *(started gliding in 1990 at 662 VGS, became a staff cadet, gaining G1 Wings, roughly equivalent to a BI. Drifted away from flying around 1995 with approximately 150hrs gliding and 22hrs power. Took up gliding again in April 2006, re-soloing in June and doing around 30hrs this year);* ***Santiago Cervantes*** *(soloed in gliders at 16 and got a PPL at 18, both via the ATC. He has 1,200hrs gliding, Gold, two Diamonds and a BI rating. He has 20,000hrs power; in his day job he flies an Airbus for bmi)*

How four pilots made the most of wave – starting with John's trip farther north than anyone has soared in the UK before

AT THE 2006 BGA conference I was asked, with Pete Harvey, to give a presentation about flying fast in wave. Among the slides we used were two showing a tempting satpic of west wind wave and a hypothetical 500km out-and-return record possibility using a new turn point of Tongue (TOG) created for just such a purpose. If that task were to be do-able, the speed record would be at risk and more interestingly it would prove that on the right day with summer daylight it might be possible to do it twice – the only way to get 1,000km in Scotland without having to cross the Edinburgh and Glasgow airspace barrier.

The forecast for November 6, 2006, was promising with high pressure and an approaching ridge; the jet stream was more or less over Scotland. So I declared the task, a remote start and finish at Loch Venacher (LVE) with Tongue (TOG) as the single turn point. Launching at 08.30hr was intended to give a chance to do the task before the wind went too far south, making the return leg a real battle. As it happened the wave system was incredibly broken, and only after two solid hours of being battered in rotor and with the help of three airborne relights did



John Williams

We are all still pioneers

I get established in wave at all. The relights show the advantage of having a self-launcher or turbo but my final use of the Antares' batteries effectively burnt my last candle and left me setting off on task as a pure glider.

Loch Venacher was a mass of clag with just enough of a gap to get into start sector and I pushed out on track, encouraged by Kevin Hook in 320 calling that there was an almost understandable system further north. He was right, and just west of Dalwhinnie it was possible to climb to 10,000ft and contemplate the far north for the first time. The view was still confusing, I needed to cross Loch Ness, where the system is always distorted (the wave-flying equivalent of the Cheshire Gap), and to make ground upwind but the only good-looking wave bars were way downwind, apparently out over the sea.

With a wind at flying height of more than 50kt I refused to let myself slide downwind (it's a real psychological failing, upwinditis) and so made the next bit far harder than it needed to be. The cloud cover was much denser and it wasn't until I got a view of the Summer Isles west of Ullapool that I admitted to myself that it would be permissible to drift downwind a bit. I wasn't sure if the wave system would extend all the way to Tongue – there were major S-bends in the wave bars as I'd seen on previous satpics (is this some sort of refraction at the coast?) – but eventually I was able to slide over the top of a wave bar to find myself looking at the bridge over the Kyle of Tongue, having overshot the turn by about 3km. Clumsy, but the compensation was a unique view of wave-battered coastline up

'Holding 100-plus knots and almost on track it took about 15 minutes to cover 40km and gain 4,000ft'

towards Cape Wrath and (even more welcome at 6,500ft and 58° 31' N on a winters day) the sight of a real beauty of a wave bar leading homewards from Tongue.

Holding 100-plus knots and almost on track it took about 15 minutes to cover 40km and gain 4,000ft in the process – if only I'd chosen to come in on that same energy line....

From that point on I relaxed a bit in the knowledge that any retrieve needed wouldn't be too far on the wrong side of Inverness. A lot less relaxing was the sight of a Tornado from RAF Leuchars passing directly under me near Loch Rannoch – I had not seen him but he had seen me – thank you, military pilot, whoever you are. The remainder of the task was a matter of pushing as hard as possible to beat the increasing headwind component while staying out of increasing amounts of cloud. In my haste I misjudged the bit after the finish, requiring a hasty call to ATC, who kindly and promptly let me use a corner of TMA at Callander to avoid descending into cloud and preserve a chance of gliding the 60km back to Portmoak. The controller also kindly warned me that there was a lot of military traffic around, too. I neglected to tell him that I'd already discovered that.

Checking the trace later showed the speed to be 117km/h, 5km/h higher than the previous record and the record is subject to ratification at time of writing. But the real pleasure was soaring further north than any UK glider has before.

There aren't many sports where we can have the privilege of opening up new territory in our old age. ➢

I'm as hooked as ever I was

Val Alexander's story conveys the thrill of her first wave cross-country and explains why it was a very special flight

Thursday 16.30hrs. I look out of the 100-metre-long panoramic top-floor and north-facing windows of my Edinburgh office. There are grey ribbons in the pinkish sky. Having taken up gliding again this year, it was from a good start point: my first solo was half a lifetime ago at 16. I kept my gliding up until I was 20. I've only flown in it once before, but I know wave when I see it.

Friday 10.00hrs. I am so restless at work today it's unbelievable. I was a Portmoak evening flier this summer so my colleagues became used to me both clock- and cloud-watching out of those magnificent windows every Wednesday. Eventually it got to the stage that they'd actually point thermals out to me... I haven't been able to tempt any of them into the skies, but even they know how to pick out good-looking fluffy clouds from duffers. Today there's nothing fluffy in the sky and yet I am gazing at it, completely transfixed for minutes at a time. What I see tells me that today, you could fly as far as the eye can view and probably then some, if you know how to do it. I think of my family commitments this weekend – Dad is critically ill in hospital and I know how long the club flying list will be, so I release a quiet, hopeless sigh.

Friday 11.00hrs. My mobile rings. It is Santiago ("Sant") Cervantes, one of our ASH 25 pilots. I'd completely forgotten I'd put my name down to fly in the ASH this weekend! He's talking about a 500km flight tomorrow, aerotow 07.00hrs. He gives me a stern briefing about the endurance required and the conditions – temperature, oxygen, and so on – that we will be flying in. I don't think he was expecting me to be quite so delighted to be able to fly in these awesome skies. My colleagues think I'm crazy and can't even imagine how it would be possible. I get proper serious goodbyes and good-lucks from them when I leave for the weekend. I think they think they might never see me again.

Saturday 07.00hrs. It's the early bird that gets the worm. There are more people than I expected to see at the clubhouse as the dawn is breaking and we've all arrived before sunrise. The anticipation for me is electric, even more so as the experienced chaps casually exchanging banter are Kevin Hook, John Williams and Sant... a good racing indicator of what the conditions might be like. The sun rises south of east to illuminate the most gorgeous sky. I take a few photos. Our Pawnee happens to be right in the middle of one of the shots. And 925 reflects the same dawn just beautifully in the misty canopies. We take off a little later than expected just as soon as the canopies clear.

Saturday 10.00hrs. We've been off tow for a while and floating around above some fantastically fluffy-looking clouds. Sant has explained he's just testing the air. This is okay with me, but what on earth are we doing floating above the top of them? I'm watching the instruments intently so not in a panic, we're going up... but what are we soaring in? My scan takes in a few perfect lenticular clouds many thousands of feet above and some distance away from us. I'm completely confused. We're in lift at 5,000ft above a sea of cotton wool with a few gaps showing the mountains and lochs below. After 40 minutes I still haven't figured it out, but I am enjoying myself and we haven't landed yet either. It's all good. Sant

Back-to-back 300s in November: failure or success?

WE had had a run of good wave forecasts from the start of November, *writes Kevin Hook*, but I had managed to make a mess of all of them. One example was a declaration of a fast 300km with a remote start, which went horribly wrong when it took me five hours to get into the start sector. Ultimately, I had to run for home 30km short of the remote finish in order to get back before dark. Now, I needed to rebuild my confidence with a declared and completed task. I wanted something achievable but I also wanted to go for something that would count. John Williams was declaring 500km out and return to Tongue, a flight that I had been hoping to make all summer, but too demanding for my present state of mind. I excused my lack of spirit, pointing out that I had a 16-point handicap deficit, but still didn't relish the prospect wasting a day on which a record was likely to be set. I remembered that John was the current contender for the BGA 300km speed trophy. This sounded like a soft target and proved too tempting.

The trophy rules are not well defined, but there appears to be nothing to preclude a double out-and-return, nor even a requirement for the turn points to be 10km apart. Based on the satpics, COM-FES-COM-KIG-COM looked like a good bet, using the same 80km energy line four times to give 319km (FES and KIG are only 9.9km apart).

I established in blue wave south of Perth and worked a very confused and demanding system to get to the remote start. It was in my mind to fly the first two legs steadily, looking for the best lift, before restarting to try and get a really fast time around the task. However, the first leg averaged 136km/h and the second 123km/h. The restart didn't seem necessary until the energy lines collapsed and the slots filled in on the third leg (85km/h). However, conditions improved towards the end of the final leg to give a leg speed of 122km/h.

Having completed at 113km/h by 13.00, it was too early to go home and land, so the question arose: "What do I do now?" "Start again" was the outrageous reply. "If I can get the speed back up, then I can take that trophy from Williams" (who, after a very slow start, was turning the Tongue turn point just as I finished, making me green with envy).

I spent 15 minutes climbing to what I thought would be a good start height to take advantage of the revitalised conditions. In spite of diving through bad sink to make the restart, suddenly I felt I was in with a chance. However, good conditions were short lived. The first two legs were completed at 107km/h, and once again conditions deteriorated further on the third leg. By the last turn point, I was being chased east away from a developing area of eight-eighths cloud. As I headed south, watching the descending sun, I found myself creeping eastwards, hedging my bets between a direct return to Portmoak and the (almost) possible final leg.

By now I knew that John had completed his task and that whetted my appetite for success. I worked my way along an incomprehensible energy line that was oriented directly into wind thinking that the weather gods were looking after me after all. Time was running out and I was mentally committed to landing out at the Strathallan parachute centre and rescuing the glider the following morning. Finally, I got into the finish sector but too low for the 1,000m rule. There was no obvious sign that I could climb back to the necessary height, and precious little daylight to do so. I would have to settle for the 15-minute penalty and accept a start time from the finish of my previous lap of the task.

Although I had a theoretical final glide to home, I had no time to spare and if anything went wrong I would be selecting fields in the dark. However, if I used my engine I would get back to Portmoak before last landing and would not have to rescue the glider from Strathallan in the morning. With a sigh of resigned defeat I accepted that I couldn't soar home and fired up the iron thermal. I landed with five minutes to spare and gradually it dawned on me that I had not failed after all. John's trophy was safe (from me at least!), but two laps of a declared 319km task at more than 100km/h was hardly a failure and must surely score a few ladder points.

A total of 690km of soaring on a November day was not really a failure at all – just not the success I had been hoping for.





announces we've started the task. I've no idea what we're flying in so I settle myself in for the ride and crack open a chocolate bar.

"Where's the lift coming from, Sant?" I ask, trying to be as casual about it as possible. "WAVE!" he shouts cheerily back. "Isn't it just fantastic, this is just super, cracking, perfect stuff don't you think?"

"Yeah," I reply, metaphorically scratching my head. "So we're rising up towards these wispy lenticular clouds?" I decide to go for it and I continue my line of questioning: that's what flights in the back seat of the ASH 25 are about, after all – the chance to learn from top-level pilots. There are only a couple of wisps up at very high levels and I just cannot get my head around why there is so much lift around. I've always thought of wave as being this completely elusive hallowed stuff. And yet here it seems to be all over the place.

Sant explains what is happening – he tells me to imagine that the mountains are the bed of a stream and that the air is the water flowing over them – what happens to the surface of the stream? I reply that it would have ripples on it. "Exactly!" comes the response. Think of wave like that. In a stream, there are always waves forming and breaking and although the water is passing through, the waves are roughly stationary. Air is no different. Sant suggests the next time I get a chance I study a stream to see this effect in action as it will help enormously in the understanding... I have, and it did.

By now we've made it almost to our first turn point and I am delighted to pick out so many places beneath me that have such special significance along the way – hills I've climbed, places I've been with friends, lochs I've sailed on. It is just great to be flying across my own country in a glider! We reach TP1 at Heughead and absolutely motor back down towards TP2. It's so fast and smooth that if it wasn't so cold I could almost feel I was a passenger in Sant's Airbus rather than our ASH. Passing over Loch Tay, he points out the most perfect wave often generated by the local geography of the area (I'll spare his blushes and not mention the words he used to describe it, but I did catch it on a DVD I've made of the flight). But he's

'We soar all the way back up to Callander using the same lower bar as though it was a ridge. Simple. Beautiful. Amazing'

right, and suddenly, I understand – the lower-level fluffy stuff is wave, too! Here I can see it in a defined bar with associated upper lenticular cloud way, way up high. That high-level stuff was what I'd thought was exclusively what wave was all about. This flight has blown that idea out of the water. We scream down it to Callander, turn around and soar all the way back up the Loch Tay system using the same lower bar as though it was a ridge. Simple. Beautiful. Amazing. Next stop Rhynie.

On the way it all starts to go a bit wrong. The gaps between the clouds are narrowing and areas we used previously are collapsing. We hold in an area of strong lift while Sant ponders what to do; frustratingly, we are no distance at all from Rhynie; I can see Balmoral below us. Sant starts considering our options. A landout at Aboyne is looking likely. He asks if that would be okay and I think of my Dad. I'd say I'd like to get back that night to see him in hospital. A timely call from Fran flying KL from Aboyne points us in the right direction. We make it to 12,000ft and I get my first-ever taste of gliding using oxygen. It's absolutely freezing. While Sant is doing the hard stuff in the front figuring out how we are going to make this turn point and then get back to Crieff, I devote a couple of backseat brainwaves to wondering how long it takes to get frostbite. At the same time I work frantically to restore control and feeling to my toes by flexing my boots gently against the side of the glider. They seem to be saveable. The sky is stunning. There are a hundred shades of blue and grey, pink and white everywhere you look. What a flight this is turning out to be.

The height we've gained is enough to take us over the gaps to TP3 and get straight back down here to the strongest areas. With Rhynie in the bag we head back for Crieff, where the flight began, and I take the glider round TP4, which is the first turn point I have actually done the flying for, and savour the beep it makes. Next stop Portmoak and it's a whooping 140kts all the way, quick beat-up of the clubhouse and a run up to the end of Bishop hill and back before we land about seven hours after we'd started. One word. Fantastic. I'm as hooked as ever I was.

I zoom down to the hospital and watch the DVD with my Dad and other family. That was one of the last things he and I watched together, so it was a special, special flight. I'm also delighted and honoured to be sharing in the writing of this article with John, who said the thing about gliding that inspired him the most is that: "we are all still pioneers". Those words will always be with me. He proved that just two days after our flight by being the first man in the world to soar to Tongue. Along with sailing the Atlantic, I have a new ambition and that's to get around that TP, too! Maybe, just maybe I'll be a pioneer myself and be the first woman in the world to do so.





This page, clockwise from left: Portmoak Pawnee at dawn; the view on launching; stunning sky; Loch Tay

Gliding in the front line

John Allison, former C-in-C of RAF Strike Command and now President of Europe Air Sports, tells Helen Evans why he values gliding – and thinks it's in the front line of a battle for freedom



"I just like flying," says former RAF fighter pilot John Allison (left), pictured with his 1947 Beechcraft Bonanza (opposite page, right), on the Windrushers GC airfield at Bicester. "I like the fine control over the machine," he explains, "and I like exercising the skill that goes with the empathy to fly something well. I like the fact that flying can be challenging and slightly dangerous, and I like the way aeroplanes look and smell and sound..."

(Photos: Helen Evans)

IT'S windy at Bicester, with scurrying cloud and fitful glints of sunshine; the hangar doors are shut, and the only sign of life is some brisk kite-buggying. Then a radio call and a greaser of a landing in his sleek blue 1947 Beechcraft Bonanza signal the arrival of a pilot for whom the conditions are literally a breeze. When I get to his plane, Sir John Allison is perched on the starboard wing, reaching casually for his mobile to let me know he's here. Such relaxed informality doesn't fit the stuffed-shirt stereotype of a knighted career officer who, in his final job before retiring in 1999, was responsible for the UK's entire front-line airborne capability. But it's characteristic of the man. Eminent he is. Pretentious he is not.

John – the "Sir" can be useful, but he wouldn't want it to create a barrier between him and other people – is a former RAF fighter pilot who flew Lightnings and Phantoms for a living. With the Battle of Britain Flight, he's displayed the Hurricane, the Lancaster and the Spitfire. As Director of the Shuttleworth Collection he can fly some of the world's most historic types. The earliest originals he's flown are a 1917 SE5 and a Bristol Fighter, while the fastest, at low level, is the Tornado. He owns a Miles Gemini, based at Bicester, as well as the Bonanza. Before retiring, he was Commander-in-Chief of RAF Strike Command. So the question in my mind is: given his track record, what is it that makes him value gliding so much?

As we talk, it's immediately apparent there's a strong emotional attachment to the sport that gave him his first solo. "I knew from the age of eight I wanted to be a pilot," explains John. "I couldn't fly power till I was 17 but you could solo a glider at 16. I built models, hung around at Baginton airfield, eventually got on the right side of the fence, cadged the odd flight and joined the ATC. As soon as I could I joined Coventry GC. They were extremely good to me and gave me a lot of help and encouragement. It was a really nice atmosphere. The fleet was a couple of T-21s, a couple of Prefects, an Oly 2B – the hot ship – and a Scott Viking. I never got to fly the Oly or Viking because you had to be really quite someone to do that, but I soloed the T-21 in the Easter after my 16th birthday and then for my second solo flew one of the Prefects. I flew there until I joined the Air Force and also gained my PPL on Tiger Moths at Fairoaks, thanks to an Air Training Corps Flying Scholarship."

As an Officer Cadet at Cranwell he got so much satisfying flying he didn't feel the need to carry on gliding, although he did manage a memorable expedition to a hill site whose identity is lost in the mists of time. "It was my first attempt at ridge soaring," he says, "and I pushed it past the point of idiocy. After one-and-a-half hours struggling to stay up, I pointed the nose straight down the hill and tumbled ignominiously off. With great good fortune, my trajectory found a field at the bottom...

"After Cranwell," he continues, "I never went back to gliding until I was Station Commander at RAF Wildenrath in Germany,

'The reason I rate gliding, apart from the club environment, is that many of the qualities required are those needed by front-line aircrew in the RAF'

when my three elder children were teenagers. I had always had in mind how much fun I had on the gliding field and very positive views about the club atmosphere, as I still do. I had been given responsibility despite being a fairly wild 16-year-old: they let me drive the retrieve car even though I put one through the boundary fence. They just took me to one side and said: 'John, you've got to leave a margin for error!'

"I thought it was a good example of adults operating together for a common purpose: the most impressive, wholesome, enjoyable development for a teenager. So in 1982 I rejoined gliding – the Phoenix club at Brüggen – because I wanted to introduce my children to it. Over time they all tried it and four out of the five went solo.

"At Brüggen there was a workshop full of old winches and vehicles and broken-down Land Rovers and in the back, absolutely covered in dust, was this dismantled glider. When I got close enough I could see it was a Prefect and someone had scrawled in the dust: 'buy me'. It was owned by a Jaguar pilot, who sold it me for 1,000DM (then about £250) and I was so stretched for cash that I had to borrow the money. It wasn't airworthy so I paid engineers on the site to replace the metal fittings and subsequently all my children who soloed flew it. What's more, as soon as the logbooks were handed over I realised it was one of the two Prefects that I'd flown at Baginton. I was chuffed to bits and decided that in my lifetime it would never be sold."

This Prefect, recently refurbished, now lives in the hangar at Bicester, but despite owning a glider, John doesn't, in his own words, see himself as much of a glider pilot. "I never achieved anything beyond Silver," he says. "The five hours on the ridge at Halton, the cross-country from Phoenix GC at Brüggen and the height at Aboyne.

"But the reason I rate gliding, apart from the club environment, is based on my background as a fighter pilot and my understanding of the qualities you need to be a good competition glider pilot. Many of the qualities required are those needed by front-line aircrew in the RAF. The ability to think lucidly under pressure while operating in a slightly uncomfortable environment. The ability to make ongoing tactical decisions over a period of time without fatigue or losing concentration. The strength of character to manage risk successfully. The ability to overcome personal fear. The willingness at times to put it on the edge in order to





Right: John with the Prefect that he first flew as a teenager, then rescued years later from a dusty workshop before realising it was an old friend. He'd never sell it, but if he had to pick an aircraft type as his favourite, he'd choose the Phantom. "I flew it the most," he says, "and probably came to love it the most. You get to the point with an aeroplane where you can put it on like an old coat because you know it so well, and it was a deeply satisfying warplane, genuinely multi-role. In the 1970s it was the best tactical aeroplane in the world and it had quirky handling characteristics that meant good pilots could fly it better than journeymen. Putting it on the edge was a matter of personal skill. That's not so true of today's software-driven aeroplanes."

achieve success. The ability to think laterally: gliding is quite a cerebral activity, a bright person's sport. Anybody who could be a successful competition glider pilot has in my opinion bucketloads of aircrew qualities as I recognise them in a military context."

Now, in retirement, this former fighter pilot is flying a desk through exactly the kind of bureaucratic and regulatory maze that – reading between the lines – he spent much of his service career seeking to avoid. It seems incongruous, but the explanation is simple: "I detest rules and regulations of all kinds," he states, "because they are invariably framed for the lowest common denominator. It's precisely because I don't like what governments and officials are doing to us that it starts some flicker of political activism in me."

Retirement is, in fact, a bit of a misnomer. He's the president of no fewer than four air sports organisations: the Popular Flying Association, the GA Alliance and the Historic Aircraft Association as well as Europe Air Sports. "In Europe," he says, "gliding is in a period of transition – and transition is always Hell because it creates a degree of regulatory turbulence. We don't immediately know how all the pieces are going to settle. It's made worse because some of the National Aviation Authorities (NAAs) are in a degree of rivalry with the new European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). Also, because the NAAs see a future in which they have lost a great deal of their power and perhaps their funding, they need new ways to fill the vacuum in order to preserve their jobs and structures.

"Moreover, we're seeing a tendency to support Commercial Air Transport (CAT) at the expense of the recreational user. This is supposedly because one sector shouldn't subsidise another, but there's no reason why we should be treated in this manner: we don't actually need an air traffic system at all. The fact is, we're compelled to work around or within it because of CAT's needs. We're seeing the rapacious appetite of CAT for more airspace and we're seeing the desire of air traffic managers for increased control, which reflects a desire by the political class to monitor and control citizens, for example, via cameras, identity cards and so forth. Gliding, which depends on access to decent volumes of airspace, is at risk of being squeezed out, so we're very much in the front line of all this.

"There's a particular issue in the UK because the arrangements by which gliding has been managed under the BGA were incomparably better in terms of personal freedoms than anywhere else in Europe. If you speak to a German or Dutchman they are frankly disbelieving that we have been able to fly without benefit of a licence, yet manifestly, since our accident rate is no worse than others and better than many, the licence is irrelevant to the proper supervision of a sport like gliding. Equally, with the question of medical certificates, what few people understand is that the only legitimate interest politicians and civil servants have is the protection of third parties. What risks people take for themselves within sport is partly down to the governing body and the ethos of the sport, but it's mainly a matter for the individual.

'Accepting and managing risk is part of being human, and they're trying to take that away from us, to tell us in detail how to live our lives'

"On a human level, this is a major reason for my involvement: I absolutely detest politicians and civil servants telling me or any other grown-up how I should live.

"What I can't get my head around is how we're sleepwalking into this. I think the outcome will be that society will become increasingly bland. Management of risk and acceptance of risk is part of being a human being and they're trying to take that away from us, to tell us in detail how to live our lives. I do believe that when the pendulum swings in one direction it will eventually swing back, but it's taking a long time.

"The only thing we can do is tackle the issues, as many sensible people are doing, and patiently argue for requirements based on demonstrable need. But there is a real risk of failure unless more is done than is being done today.

"The problem is that while we can engage with officials, ultimately these things are decided for political reasons by politicians and not for any reason to do with the detail. It's very much large hand, small map. We don't even have a professional paid lobbyist at our disposal. A group of volunteers is doing this work in their spare time and recreational air sports don't seem able – at national or international level – to fund the campaign that's really needed."

In conclusion, then, if there were one message he wanted to get across, what would it be? "I would like to say this to the political forces that are trying to create a European Super State: if they want the support of the Sporting and Recreational Aviation community they need to make our lives better, not worse, and the route to that is to pay attention to the experts who are sincerely trying to help."

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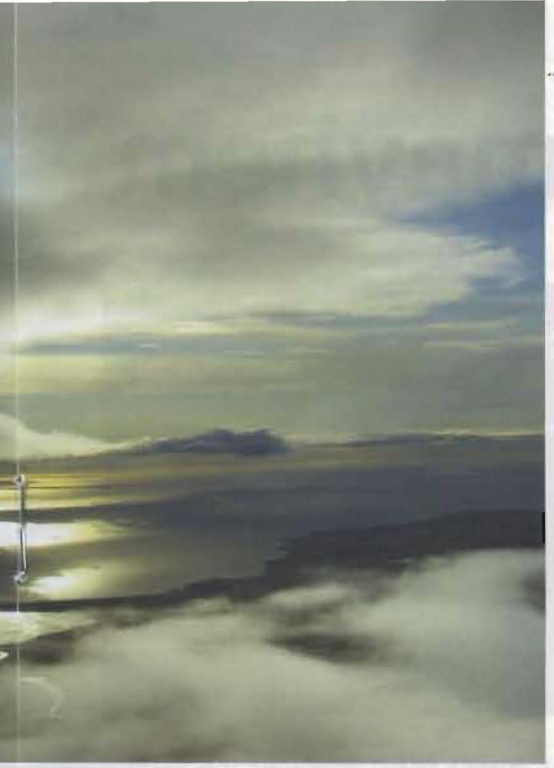


It's better

HERE'S a selection of photos received from venturesome pilots in th
Above: Another of John Williams' photos of Scottish wave – we just c
Top right: Steve Cook from Cotswold GC had to go only as far as his
Right: S&G *subscriber Jorge Neumann snapped this parked SZD 55*
Below: Mike Roberts of Cambridge GC took this on July 29, 2006, ve
Below left: Ophelie Degrange and nieces came from France for her t
Left: Peter Atkinson of London GC in Deeside's Discus, HXH, over Ba
If you'd like to see your (previously unpublished) photos here, we'd lo

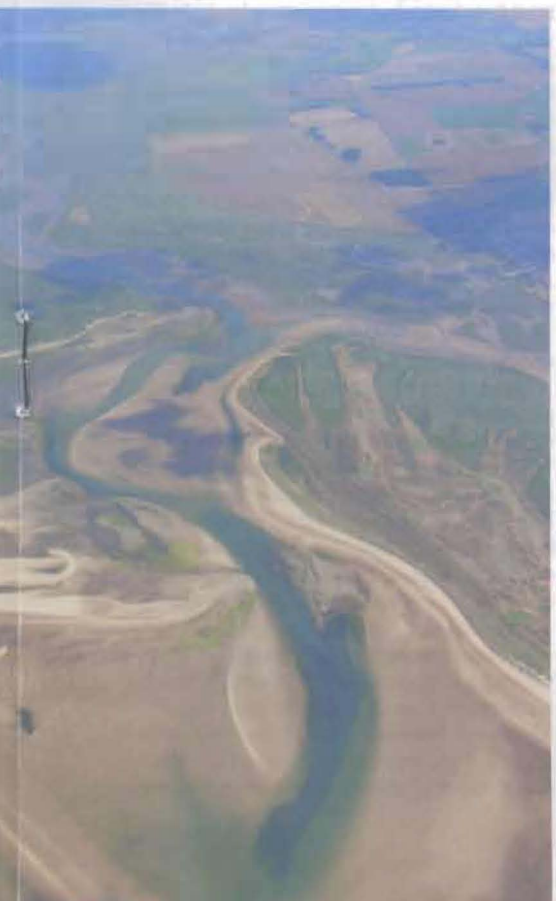


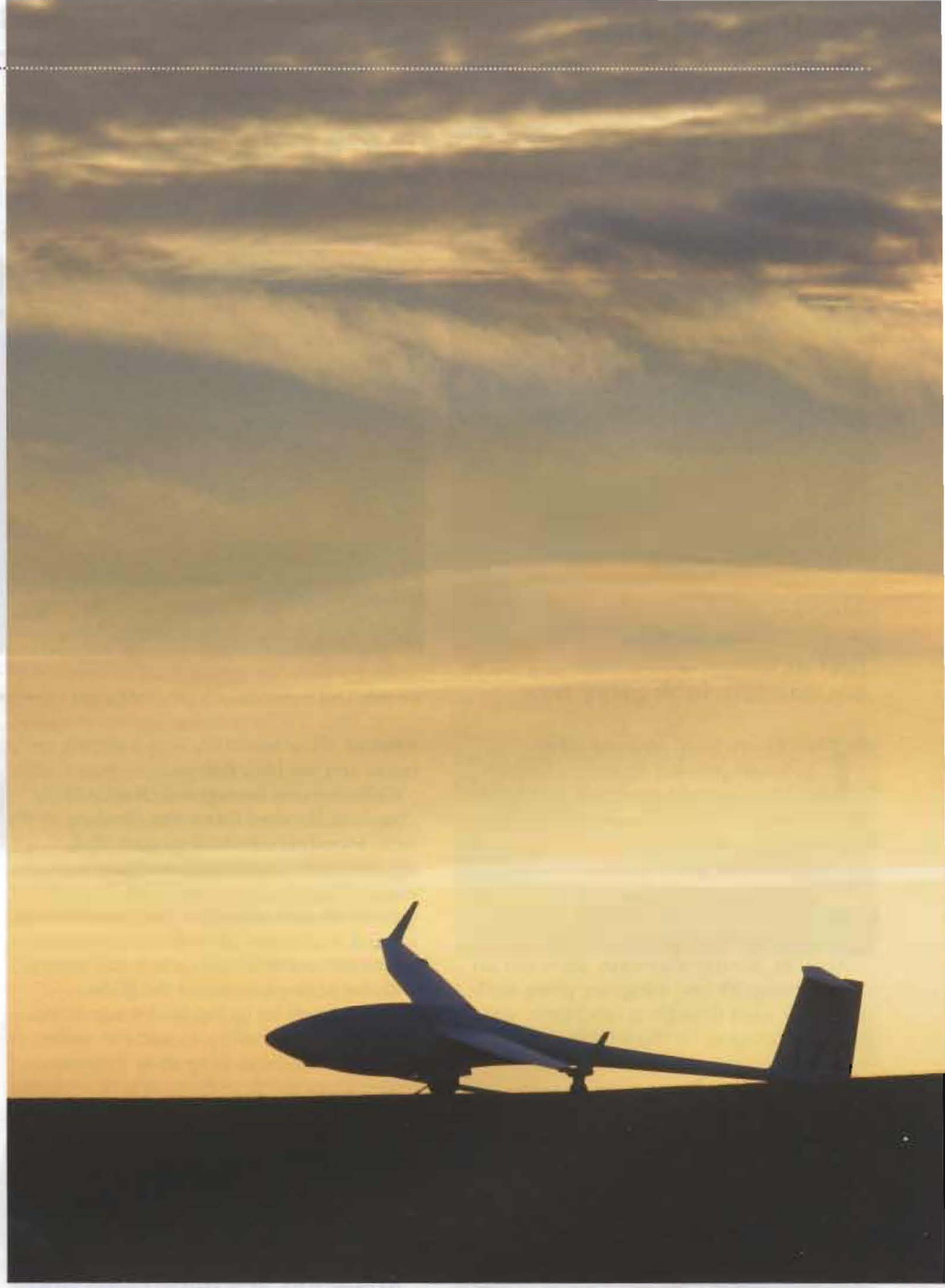




r to travel

he last twelve months, with many thanks to our talented contributors.
couldn't resist including it. See p26 for the story of his epic trek north.
s neigbouring club, Nympsfield, to photograph this, early on August 6.
55 when he was flying the Brazilian Nationals at Palmeira das Missões.
venturing 2km offshore from the north Norfolk coast in his Duo Discus.
tc enjoy flying at Channel GC with Bob Shallcrass (Nigel Shepherd).
Balmoral at just below 10,000ft, using weak wave that went to 18,000ft.
love to take a look: just send them to editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk







Three seconds of mayhem





There's a lot to learn from this well-written article – and not just at winch sites. But if you're squeamish, look away now

We chose not to print the gory photo of the foot – but here's the damage to the boot (left) and the K-13 wing (above)

THERE are three layers of safety between you and disaster; thorough training, correct operating procedure, and reacting swiftly and appropriately if it still all goes wrong. Example: you learn why and how to do a good lookout, you practice and use the scan-cycle, but if something slips through and comes straight at you head-on, you turn right.

Autumn, Sunday afternoon, we're out on main runway 21 and things are going well. A shower went through at lunchtime, we've cleaned the water off the wings, visibility is good, the cross wind isn't too bad at 260/5-plus knots. Four two-seaters are gainfully employed in carrying out a mix of trial lessons and club flying. I've cornered one of the K-13s to fly a winter refresher course with my syndicate partner. We briefed in the comfort of the clubhouse, did upper air exercises and revised the basics of winch launching and circuit planning/approach control; now we're about to round things off (though he doesn't know it yet) with some unannounced launch failures.

The launchpoint is fairly well populated. Our local university gliding club arrived in good numbers almost from the start of term, and today most of them have already flown and are hanging around trying to get another go. Nice to see such keen young people. Their own more experienced pilots have briefed them, so they're keeping themselves busy by helping out on the launchpoint.

Although a shifting population of new pilots who vary in ability from week to week is hard work, it's always useful to have a few extra bodies when club pilots are hibernating.

My syndicate partner (let's call him Rob) handles the first launch failure well; judging correctly that there isn't room to land ahead, he turns downwind and delivers us back to the launchpoint via a well-flown short circuit. I brief him for another upper air exercise. However, I'll spring a slightly lower break and see how that goes.

Off we go on the second cable. At a couple of hundred feet we're climbing really well. I spoil it by releasing again. Rob handles it like a pro (did I mention that he's my syndicate partner?) and puts us down cleanly, straight ahead on to the downwind edge of the tarmac short of the cross runway. Super, ten out of ten. A Land Rover arrives with the trolley to retrieve the glider.

With the glider facing back towards the launchpoint and safely aboard the trolley, I carry the wheeled wing dolly to where Rob is waiting. We're fixing it to the wingtip nearest to the centre line of the runway.

So far, so good. But back at the launchpoint things are very slowly unravelling. One of the students had responded to a call

'Our driver is sounding urgent. Am I alright? Now *that's* a good question. It's gone quiet and a bit less exciting. Let's see...'

for someone, anyone, to man the signalling lights on the top of the bus so as to get us launched. He saw us off well enough, perhaps wondered why we came down again so quickly, but there we are now, plainly sitting in the middle distance on the runway. Of course, we are not the only things sitting on the runway. The parachute and cable are also out there, about halfway between the bus and the glider.

He gets a call from the winch.

"Where's the parachute?"

Easy. There it is, not far down the runway.

"About 250m down the runway."

The next question from the winch is more technical: *"Shall I pull it back to the winch or come down with the truck and bring it to the launchpoint?"*

Our tyro signaller doesn't know the answer to this. Neither does he know that moving cables is a winch driver's decision, not his. So he asks a club member what he should say. Club member, who has just come back to the bus after handing over to the current driver, knows this is the second of two cables and can't tangle with the other if it's eventually retrieved to the winch. So... *"Tell him it'll be OK to pull it in..."*

This is duly done. In the winch, doubt intrudes. The glider was clearly landing ahead, but it disappeared after rounding out behind the high point at the runway crossing and has now been out of sight for a couple of minutes.

Now: this high point at the crossing with 09/27. It isn't obvious to everybody in the way it used to be when we launched with reverse-pulley autotow. Back in the Good Old Days you knew it was there because as the tow truck ran ever so slightly downhill from the runway crossing you had to ease off the throttle slightly and then breathe it back to life... just *so*... just to maintain an even strain. And then drive back to pick up the cable again. Two trips per launch. After a few launches you were on first-name terms with every stone on the runway.

Still uncertain, the winch driver double checks. *"Is the cable clear?"*

Clear of what exactly? Well, there's the parachute, lying on the runway, the cable stretches straight back towards the winch. The winch itself is of course nearly a mile away, just out of view beyond the same hump at the crossing of 03/21 and 09/27. However, the cable isn't close to the group with the Landy and the glider. They're off to one side. The downwind side.

"It's clear..."

Now you're probably thinking: "An accident waiting to happen, then?" Wrong. It's not waiting, it's already happening. It's been happening for some time. But only now is it approaching the tipping point where things can run out of control. Just one or two more

misjudgments before the blood starts to flow... be patient.

Wretched winch won't go into gear. Back at the launchpoint our student doesn't know that any more than he appreciates the significance of the wind direction. All he sees is a lot of nothing happening. Boring. Decides to go back downstairs and rejoin his friends. Leaves the signal desk unattended. The club member who gave advice without in any way meaning to initiate a cable movement is now otherwise occupied.

The wing dolly is as awkward as always. Rob is on the trailing edge trying to fasten a couple of rubber bungs into their hooks; I'm in front of him holding it up by the leading edge. Our driver has climbed back into the Landy and is gazing towards the launchpoint.

After several attempts, the drum selector is in place and the winch bangs into gear. Second cable. Okay, could have gone down and pulled it to the launch line with the truck, but... they're okay about it, so if we get a move on it'll be quicker and more effective to bring it home smartly and then pull both strings down at the same time.

Outside, at the launchpoint, people see the parachute inflate in the distance. Cue a long moment of collective calculation involving wind vectors, distance and the like. Then pandemonium...but the "stop" switch is now out of reach.

On the runway, our driver sees something coming towards him at very high speed.

Now, start counting...

In the middle of his fight with the bungees Rob announces, rather matter-of-factly: "Cable." Something tugs momentarily at my right boot *...one.*

I glance down. There's a shower of... what? ...paint? ...flakes? ...coming from under the wing. There's *(...weird...)* a sort of silvery streak running over my left boot. I can't lift it off the tarmac *...two.*

Hey! I don't like the look of this, but there's no time to worry because *(smack!)* I'm flat on my back under the wing and there's *stuff*... lots of stuff like *snow*... falling all round me. Some bits look a bit ragged round the edges, but I can't cope with wondering about that and the odd feeling in my left foot all at the same time *...three.*

Stop counting. Three seconds. That didn't take long, did it?

Our driver is sounding urgent. Indeed. Am I alright? Now *that's* a good question.

Well, it's gone quiet and it's a bit less exciting. Let's see. My boot seems to have come unfastened – no, it is still fastened, just not properly on my foot... A new hole in my sock, too. And it's rather ...wet... and sticky. My foot seems to be ...sort of... open at the top. I move my toes. Something else moves inside. Wow! This is like... *Yes!... Terminator! You know, they shoot Arnie and there's like stuff moving underneath when the skin comes off...*

Oh dear: into the Landy, back to the launchpoint, off to local casualty. As I am driven away one of my instructors arrives at the winch. He is about to put a bowel-loosening question to the unfortunate driver.

"Do you know what you've just done?"

Which is another good question, but the wrong one. All the poor chap has actually done is make the last near-fatal mistakes in a long series of various people's errors.

Transfer to a different, more industrial-grade Accident & Emergency department, tell a stupid joke about a Jewish Cowboy and a Redhead* to my rescuer and then to the duty nurse. Shock, you see. Spend two days in Trauma and Orthopaedics on a starvation diet waiting to get on the theatre list, then blessed relief, fade out whilst still chatting up the anaesthetist (poor woman, she's heard it all before).

Isn't hindsight a truly wonderful thing? Who allowed an inexperienced pilot on to the signal lights, and who briefed him? Why didn't they communicate clearly? Why did he leave his position at the signals? Why didn't the winch man go and have a look for himself? Why did he haul it in so quickly? Why haul it in at all? Why couldn't the more experienced folk at the launch-point stop things before it all went tits-up? Why did the CFI allow things to get to this state? Hang on, I *am* the CFI...

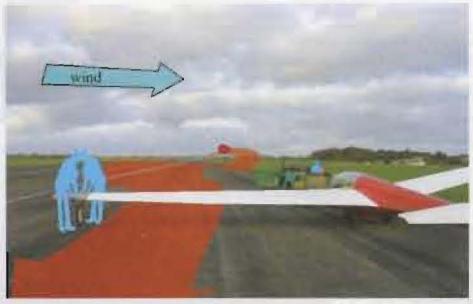
Much later Rob rings and tells me about the three-inch gash in his boot, the bruised leg and cut thumb. I tell him about the progress of my 70 per cent severed tendon. We agree that we are two (with the Landy driver, three!) very lucky bunnies. Belatedly, I start to hear of other near misses that no one reported at the time. Thanks, chaps.

There are three layers of safety between you and disaster. Training, procedures, reactions. You see, accidents don't just happen; they're the end result of a cascade of misjudgments, each building on the last until no-one is in control and events suddenly turn on you, teeth bared. If the training isn't adequate, so procedures aren't followed, and reaction is impossible... disaster. Three layers.

Postscript: The system for launching was originally based on reverse pulley autotow and worked well. Much attention was given to teaching people how to drive the winch at the transition, but the surrounding training, procedural and infrastructural environment doesn't seem to have caught up.

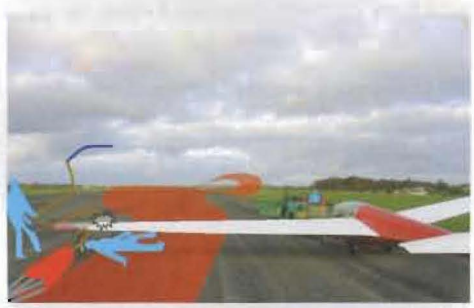
Evidently some careful readjustment has to be done, but we don't want to introduce unforeseen consequences. So the club safety committee is devising a new regime and the training to match it; there are probably several ways of devolving responsibility, but in an all-volunteer organisation the process needs sensitive political handling as well as clear analysis. Winch launching is a collective endeavour; whatever is decided upon must be self-organising and self-policing or it may founder through uneven supervision and hence non-compliance.

**Okay, there's this bloke on a bus. A gorgeous redhead gets on and sits down next to him... No, some other time... The foot is feeling a bit better, thanks for asking*









Photographs (above, from top): start counting; one, two, three... (Below): "Between my nose and the wing," writes this CFI, "there passed in less than a second shackles, a parachute, more shackles, twenty feet of hemp shock rope, a weak link assembly, a wire strop in a plastic tube, and a set of rings. I didn't see any of them." S&G thanks the people involved for agreeing to share their experience so that others can learn from it. If you have a story that you think others might benefit from please send it to editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk



From Basic to Assistant

In the second of our series on becoming an instructor, Barney Crump describes why he chose to train for an Assistant rating and what it's like to have one



An Assistant rating extends what you can teach (Barney Crump). Right: K-13 at the Two-Seater Comp (Geoff Davies)

FRUSTRATION! This was my answer to the first question asked on my Assistant Instructor training course. The question itself was a relatively simple one – why do you want to become an Assistant Instructor? After holding a Basic Instructor rating for just over a year, I was starting to become a little frustrated by its restricted privileges. While I found Basic Instruction very rewarding and enjoyable, I felt that it was time to move up to the next level of Instructor qualification. I wanted to be more involved in the club's *ab initio* training programme, and in the training and development of post-solo pilots. After flying with a student on half a dozen occasions, they are usually competent enough at lookout and upper air exercises to allow them to progress to the next phase of their training, which requires at least an Assistant Instructor rating. It was this fact that caused me some frustration: I wanted to be involved in the further training of pupils, which my current rating didn't allow me to do. At this point I decided to take a leap into the world of Assistant Instructing!

Having got the nod of approval from Andy Oultram, my then CFI at Staffordshire GC, I sent off my application form to the BGA without delay. What I received by return post was a bit of a shock, to say the least – more patter – more damn patter! I can honestly say that my heart sank when I saw what other patter notes I would have to learn. I immediately had flashbacks to the sleepless nights and sweaty palms I had experienced whilst trying to learn the few exercises for the BI rating. And now there's more – GULP! I needed to come up with an easier way of getting the notes permanently embedded in the grey matter. Then I remembered that a fellow member, Chris Johnson, had the BI patter notes on a tape that he played in the car. Perfect! I commuted to work in the car, a two-hour round trip each day... that's ten hours a week, loads of time! Armed with a cassette recorder and blank tape, I locked myself away to produce the masterpiece that would be my saviour. The result? A poor-quality recording that wouldn't sound out of place as a passenger announcement on Yorkshire 'bloody' Airlines! I was horrified. Is that really what I sound like from the back seat of a glider? Like Geoff Boycott after a painful visit to the dentist. It seemed to do the trick, however. After a couple of weeks, the patter notes were 'permanently' stored in the grey matter. So to the next phase of my training – learning to fly!

So, you think you can fly? I thought I could until I started having to talk the patter in perfect synchronisation with the demonstration of an airborne exercise. It reminded of being at Junior School – patting your head whilst rubbing your stomach in a circular motion – but in this case imagine you are standing on one leg and wearing a blindfold. This was probably the most difficult part of the training in my opinion – getting the timing right of that damn patter! Practice, practice and more practice... This was the only way I found to conquer the challenge. Going through patter and control movements in a glider on the ground certainly helped, but there was no substitute for doing it for real in the air.

Armed with patter, timing and the ability to fly, I headed south to Bicester for my

'I found that this period of consolidation was invaluable in determining when I should take control'

Assistant Instructor Course, a full-time course over nine days at Bicester airfield. It was run by the National Coaches at the time, Dave Bullock and Simon Adlard. Helping was Roy Gaunt – I had met Roy on expeditions to Borders GC, and he was also the examiner on my Basic Instructor Course.

My course at Bicester began on the Saturday morning after an introduction to the coaches and the other three candidates (or victims?). Following this was a morning of lectures about the privileges of the rating, and what to expect of the course. We then ventured outside to demonstrate our proficiency in delivering the patter whilst flying the motorglider. My 'permanently' stored patter wasn't so permanent after all... Oops! After a few repeats and a bit of practice I eventually got through. I don't know if it was nerves, unfamiliar surroundings, or both, but it seemed to be even harder to produce the patter correctly on "the big day". The next few days were similar. Extensive lectures and briefings on certain exercises in the morning whilst there was blue sky and sunshine, then flying in the afternoon in between heavy rain showers! In the air, the coach demonstrated an exercise with the correct patter, which you then had to repeat to an acceptable standard. No opportunity really to repeat (or practice) any exercises, as there just wasn't enough time – hence the importance of being well prepared for the course with the aforementioned patter. The last two days of the course were also taken up with flying exercises that would be invaluable as a new assistant instructor – fault finding and how to conduct check flights. I found this really interesting, especially when we were given examples of how devious and sneaky Bloggs can be whilst flying with (or without) an instructor (if you don't know, in instructor language any student pilot is affectionately known as 'Bloggs'). Following successful completion of these final exercises, I had my paperwork signed to show I had passed the course, and headed back to Seighford for my acceptance checks with the CFI.

In order to demonstrate my ability as an Assistant Instructor, the CFI wished to see a safe and competent demonstration of a few of the exercises (complete with patter!). After that was out of the way, we had a chat about what he expected of me and what I would be allowed to do. He placed some temporary restrictions on my instructor privileges. Although my rating allowed me to supervise flying operations and conduct cable-break



checks, he said that he would not allow me to do so until I had been qualified for a few months. After explaining his reasons, this was perfectly understandable. In the case of cable breaks, I was not to teach launch failure recoveries, and should treat every real failure as a demonstration. The teaching of launch failures involves a high workload for both the pupil and instructor, especially if a transfer of control is required at a critical moment. I found this period of consolidation invaluable in determining at what point I should take control in the event that a pupil became overloaded – something that you don't want to find out when close to the ground during a launch failure!

So, how does being an Assistant Instructor compare to being a BI? I believe that in order to understand and be really proficient at a subject you should try teaching it – gliding is definitely in this category. The knowledge and experience I gained from my training has been invaluable, and there is no doubt that this has made me a safer and more aware pilot and instructor. There is still, however, no substitute for experience and, more importantly, currency (especially of the solo type). I can remember having done a whole day of mainly check flights or advanced training – a dozen flights and a couple of hours in the logbook – yet I hardly touched the controls (and didn't even do a launch or a landing). Not the way to maintain "real" currency. This is one of the big differences compared to being a BI – you always had to do the flying below 500ft, so could consider yourself current as long as you were instructing regularly. The bottom line is – don't forget your solo flying!

I have always found instructing rewarding, especially since becoming Assistant rated. I can now teach nearly all gliding exercises, give briefings, undertake check flights, and send people solo under supervision. The bonus is that I can still do trial lessons if there is no BI available! I have found that this has made me more likely to be "forced" into the back of a two-seater when I'm caught loitering around the launchpoint! There are a few minor disadvantages with this added level of responsibility, though. There may be occasions where you need to put on your diplomatic hat. Being an instructor carries a high level of responsibility and you may need to address directly poor airmanship (either observed from outside or whilst flying with someone). Occasionally, such conversations may not be well received but are usually accepted once you have pointed out the relevant safety concerns. One example that arises frequently is circuit planning (or to be more specific, the lack of it). A poorly executed circuit observed from the ground will usually lead to the inevitable approach from the Duty Instructor who will mutter those infamous words: "Please can I have a quick chat before you fly again?" or "Bloggs, please could you just talk me through your circuit?" Mmmm, I know that I've heard those words in the past, and they haven't always come from me!

'A poorly flown circuit witnessed from the back seat will lead to a common affliction of instructors – the leans'

A poorly flown circuit witnessed in the air, however, will lead to a common affliction of instructors – the dreaded "leans". Contrary to popular belief, this is nothing to do with an excess of post-flying celebrations. Imagine flying downwind in the circuit; you appear to be losing height at a rapid rate with the landing area becoming a mere speck in the distance. You start to "lean" towards it, willing, hoping, and eventually praying that Bloggs will turn on to a base leg. You then provide a minor prompt such as: "What do you think of the angle to our chosen landing area, Bloggs?" Most of the time this has the desired effect of a turn towards the landing area, with no more leaning required. Occasionally, however, it will result in a poorly co-ordinated turn in the wrong direction and a spluttered "I have control" from the back seat – all part of the learning experience for pupil and instructor.

Another situation that may arise is one I have usually found more difficult to solve. Imagine that it is forecast to be a cracking day, you get to the club early, ready for a big flight – but you are desperately needed to help instruct. What do you do? On a few occasions I have had to play the hard man and enjoy my own flying for the day – I'm sure I'm not the first instructor to come across this predicament. Some members may have a bit of a moan, but the majority do understand that you are in gliding for your own enjoyment, and not simply for the benefit of others! I would consider these minor drawbacks, and find instructing fascinating and rewarding, despite the patter!

So, are you thinking of becoming an instructor? Are you thinking of swapping that BI Rating for an Assistant one? All I can say is "Try it today!" I think you'll be surprised how much you learn, and how much more you notice when hanging around a cold and windy airfield.

Barney began gliding as a university student nine years ago at Staffordshire GC, and did his Assistant rating four years ago. Now a Windrushers member, he has 300hrs gliding, and flies a British Airways B737 for a living



Sun and rain

Who needs words? These pictures of a rainbow near the Scottish Gliding Centre, Portmoak, speak for themselves. Our thanks go to Andy Bates, who took them from Edinburgh University's K-13 and sent them to us at editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk





Wandersegelflug in England





We love GB? Hartmut Hummel tells the story of why three German glider pilots forsook Continental thermals to soar across England last summer

WHY would three German glider pilots, equipped only with three self-launching gliders, no crews, no trailers, all their luggage stored away in the gliders, come up with the idea of flying to England – a country that is not exactly famous for brilliant gliding conditions? Well, there are at least three good reasons:
1. Hartmut Hummel (that's me) has done 16 gliding expeditions of this kind since 1989, visiting nearly all European countries – the UK was the only one missing.
2. We thought to ourselves that the British gliding conditions can't be all that bad: after all, two of 2006's World Champions are British, and the British team is consistently one of the top gliding teams in the world.
3. The British are known to be very much individualists, so we thought they would probably take quite an interest in this kind of gliding challenge.

July 15, 2006: Albert Kiessling and I set off as planned from our home club in south-west Germany and fly to Marpingen in Saarland, where we are planning to meet up with our third man, Günter Fritz. Conditions aren't brilliant as the warm air only produces weak blue thermals. Just before 16.00 we make radio contact with Günter, meet up near Saarlouis and fly via Thionville and Sedan to Charleville Mezieres. We set up camp and have a restful night in our three single rooms (tents) next to the gliders.

July 16: Take-off at 13.00. We fly along the Belgian border to Arras and to the coast at St Inglevert; we arrive at 800m (2,500ft). We fire up our little helpers and climb to 1,800m

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Opposite, from top: arriving at the English coast near Folkestone; agricultural art "Somewhere In England"; the pilots thermal in a stubble fire near Newark then land at Syerston; the three German pilots (from left), Günter Fritz, Albert Kiessling and Hartmut Hummel. This page, from top left: Günter, flying towards Hus Bos; a view of the Lake District; the engine failure at Carlisle that forced Albert to drive all the way home – and back again to fetch the glider

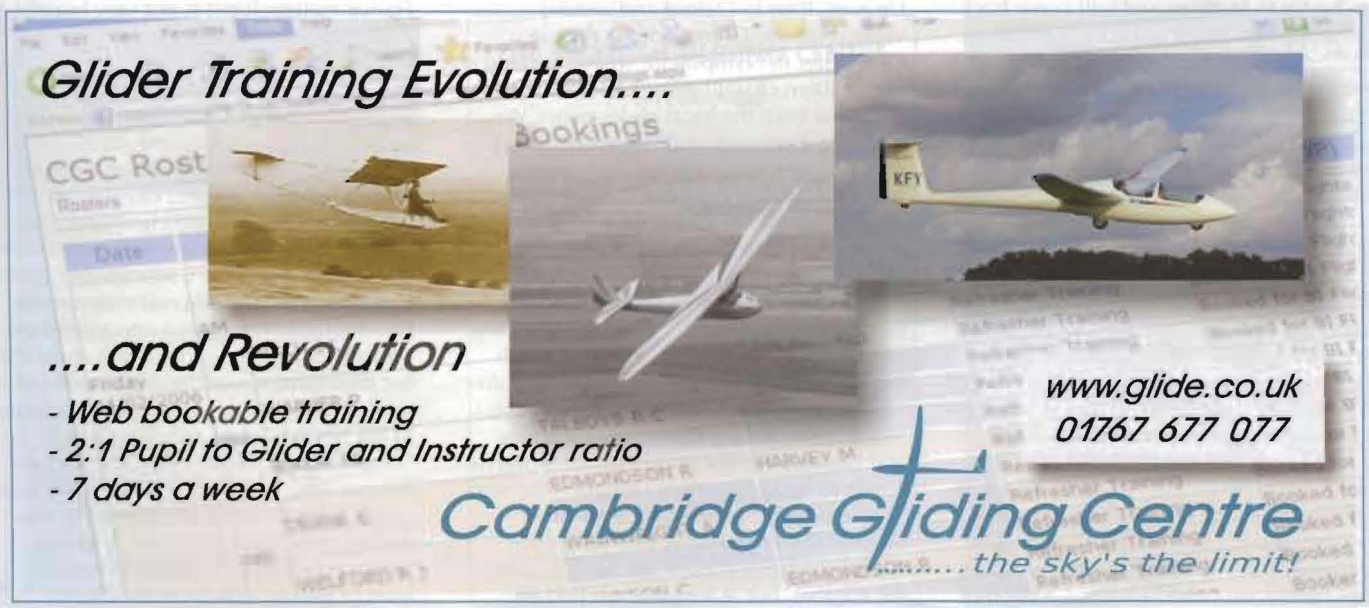
(5,400ft). Halfway across the Channel we switch the engines off and glide to Lashenden-Headcorn, where we land at 5.20pm. We are surprised to find that it's very busy at Headcorn. All types of recreational aviation apart from gliding seem to be going on at the same time here, lots of visitors on the airfield, and in the middle of all this is an amazingly laid-back man in charge. We are impressed.

July 17 – our first long flight in England: Take-off at 11.51 local time. We follow a western route along the coast to avoid the Gatwick TMA, and find surprisingly good blue thermals. Then we go north, zigzagging around all the restricted airspace via Lasham and Husbands Bosworth. Near Syerston the thermals begin to die and we decide to land here, even though the airfield looks deserted from the air. We carry on to Newark, which according to our maps is also a gliding site, but we realise that it seems to be a disused airfield. That makes our decision easier: we land at Syerston. Günter is the first to touch down and tells us that he can see the letters RAF on the tower. Albert and I land anyway and have a good look around the airfield, but we are a bit uncertain about what to expect the following day.

July 18 – New day, new luck: We receive a very friendly welcome from the Air Cadets and their commanders and witness a perfectly organised flying operation. We take off at 12.06 and are happy to inform the cadets that we are climbing at 2.5m/s. Today we want to fly to Scotland. At first the thermals are quite good, but further north, in the area west of Leeming, conditions begin to deteriorate. Our attempt to get into the western hills of the Lake District fails miserably. We have to retreat and climb away inch by inch. When we reach the first lakes the thermals get better, and we even see the first cumulus since our departure ➢







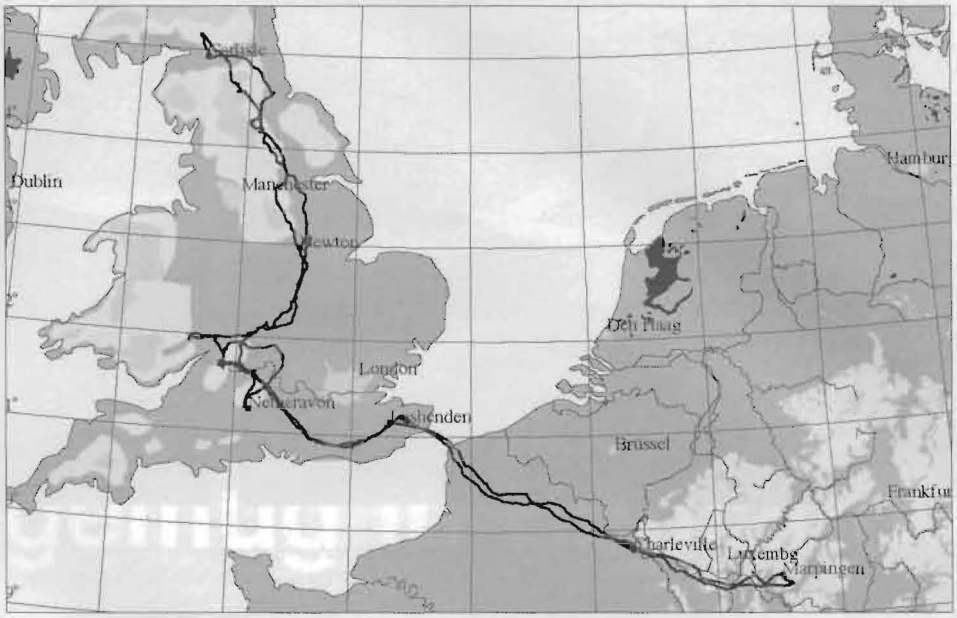
The pilots:
Hartmut Hummel, born 1945, approx. 7,000hrs.
Ventus CM D-KDHH
Günter Fritz, born 1951, approx. 6,000hrs,
ASH 26 ER D-KEG
Albert Kiessling, born 1946, approx. 6,000hrs,
Ventus 2 CM D-KFAA

Flight statistics:
Total distance: approx. 3,000km
Total flying time: 52 hours
Total time running the engine: 2:15
Total for nine take-offs: 1:00
Crossing the Channel: 0:30
Escape from bad weather: 0:34
From Parham to Ringmer: 0:11

Text and photos: *Hartmut Hummel*

Translation: *Claudia Büngen and Nick Hill*

www.wandersegelflug.eu



from Germany. Unfortunately this doesn't last long. We run out of lift approximately 25km north of Carlisle and we decide to land at Carlisle. A fellow glider pilot had watched us from home: he rushes to Carlisle airfield and is a great help to us on this commercial airport.

July 19 – very warm and very stable: Take-off 12.23. We don't find any usable lift. We have to use the engine-generated thermals for the second time. We try to find some lift when Albert tells us that his engine has suddenly stopped during the cooling-down cycle at low revs. He can't retract the engine and has to land in Carlisle, which he reaches with only a few metres reserve. We land as well and examine the engine. Unfortunately it's a major engine failure, which can't be repaired locally. So for Albert this means the end of his journey.

July 20: We accompany Albert to Carlisle train station. He has booked a flight from Manchester to Stuttgart and will come back with his car and trailer to pick his glider up.

July 21 – no flight to Scotland: We are about to take off when an airport employee tells us that we can't fly to Scotland because of bad weather. We had already changed our plans anyway and based on the weather information we got from the internet we are now planning on flying south again. Under good clouds we climb eastwards and on to Shildon, past Darlington and then down south again. As we look across to the Lake District we are surprised to see that over there it's blue again, even though the treeless hills with their dark rock surfaces should produce better thermic conditions. We fly east past Leeds and Bradford and carry on between Manchester and Sheffield. At 18.21 we reach Husbands Bosworth, our goal for today, and receive another warm welcome. Hus Bos are hosting a regional competition, and of course we can already see a band of clouds in the west on the horizon. The next two days are rest days for us; the competition pilots go through two rigging and gridding exercises. The second day also brings an impressive storm. On that day we are the guests of Philip Sturley, an ASH 26 pilot and friend of Günter's. He picks us up from the airfield and we have a lovely afternoon at his house. Back at Hus Bos we realise that dramatic things must have happened. One dented trailer and the damaged Wilga bear witness to today's weather. Fortunately, our gliders have survived it all well, though our tent poles are bent and our accommodation now consists of ponds.

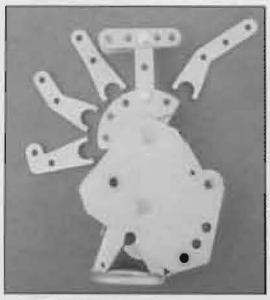
July 24 – sightseeing flight: We want to fly to Wales today. We take off before the competitors and fly west in very good thermals – which go blue and weaker the further west we go. South of Hereford we turn around because the ground is higher towards the west and our height band seems too low for comfort. We fly south to Upavon, then to Oxford and around Weston-on-the-Green, and finally via Gloucester to Nympsfield, where we land after 430km of sightseeing. Another friendly welcome from the local glider pilots. We pitch our tents and retire to a pub nearby.

July 25 – around London: The undulating airfield is a bit iffy for my little 30bhp engine, so I take a winch launch. We launch at 12.12, which is a bit early as it turns out. I don't quite manage to contact the first thermal off the wire and need to gain a few feet by use of the engine. We fly through the narrow airspace gap and on in a south-easterly direction. Thermals are excellent, so we make good progress via Newbury and Lasham. The last good thermal, however, seems to be just south of Lasham – the sea breeze has set in and stops any further thermal development. A very long glide to Parham follows. Here we need to start the engines, but at Ringmer we find lift. From here we easily make it to Challock. The conditions are perfect. Cloudbase is just under 5,000ft. We fly towards Folkestone for a bit and take in the dramatic coastline and the general views.

July 26 – back to the Continent: We issue the flight plan via telephone and leave the UK at 14.17, climbing via Folkestone. Visibility is rather poor: after a short while all we can see is water and a few ships. The horizon can be distinguished by weak inversion lines. Twenty minutes later we cross the French coast and shortly afterwards find the first French thermals. We progress fast in strong continental thermals and change our flight plan to a new destination, Charleville Mezieres. It's over 200km away and it's already 16.30. A bit bold – but we get there! We arrive with the last evening thermals at 19.10.

July 27 – going home: The sky is overcast. No sun means no thermals. The Metéo France meteorologist is not very hopeful as a front is rapidly approaching from the west. We either have to get away soon, or we are stuck for one to two days. We decide to set off. Three engine burns are necessary to get to the better weather, which starts at the German border. We find some thermals near Merzig in Germany, and Günter gets enough height for a final glide to his home club, Marpingen. He lands there, eagerly awaited by his wife. I need to cover another 200km, in very unstable conditions with cu-nims growing at an impressive rate around me. I manage to get to within 24km of my club, but then have to use the engine one last time as 30m above glide would not be sufficient in the pouring rain I'm flying through. I arrive back home at 16.11 and let the journey pass before my eyes as I sit the rain out in the comfort of my glider. We saw the best side of England and its gliding community and are impressed with the level of gliding activity in the country.

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Closing date 31 January 2007



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Closing date 28 February 2007



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Closing date 28 February 2007



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Information including downloadable application forms, conditions and "online" membership application can be found on our website at www.airleague.co.uk
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Closing date 28 February 2007



For application forms:
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phone: **(020) 7222-8463**
fax: **(020) 7222-8462**

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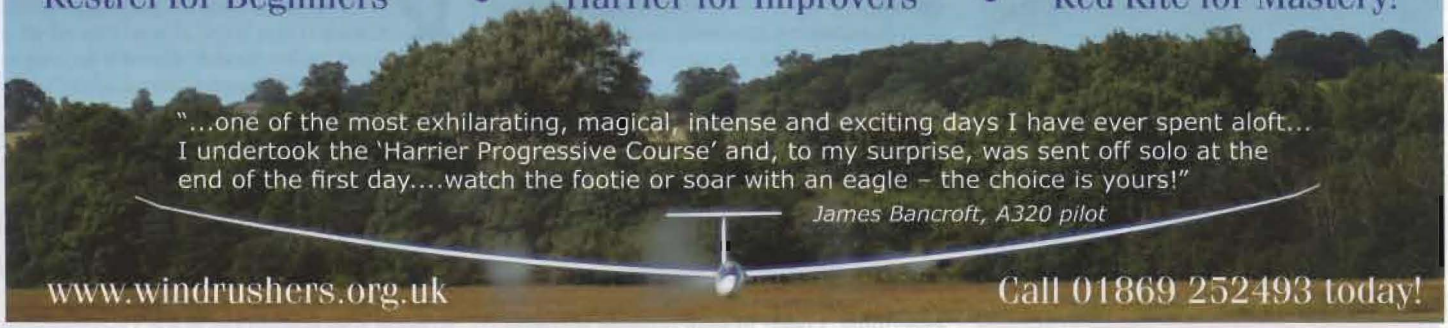
21-29 April . . . . . IC2 Wolds GC – Pocklington	23 June – 1 July . . . IC8 Bicester Airfield – Hus Bos
28 April – 6 May . . IC3 Lasham – Lasham Airfield	21-29 July. . . . . IC9 The Gliding Centre – Hus Bos
12-20 May . . . . . IC4 Wolds GC – Pocklington	1-9 September . . . . IC10 The Gliding Centre – Hus Bos
2-10 June . . . . . IC6 Lasham – Lasham Airfield	8-16 September . . . IC11 Wolds G.C. – Pocklington
2 – 10 June. . . . . IC7 The Gliding Centre – Hus Bos	15-23 September . . IC12 Lasham – Lasham Airfield

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Team learning

Ayala Liran explains what she learned from the women's development week run by the British Gliding Team

A RECENTLY soloed female pilot could be forgiven for thinking that gliding competitions are, like some posh golf clubs, males only. The overall percentage of women pilots has changed little in recent years and very few of these fly competitions. It has been too long since a woman has won a Nationals and, to my mind, the problem is not enough role models. Whereas I was fortunate to "grow up" in a club that's home for two women members of the British team and a female CFI (on my second day at the club and after only six flights Liz Sparrow handed me an air map and said "plan a flight to Didcot"), in most clubs few women compete seriously at the highest level.

However, this is starting to change thanks to an initiative started last year by women in the British Team to provide knowledge, encouragement and opportunities to fly competitions. Thirty women attended the inaugural meeting in January, followed by a well-attended cross-country weekend at Lasham. This had an immediate positive effect, and in the Club Class last summer nearly a quarter of the competitors were women. The initiative also offered a training opportunity to two aspiring pilots who are deemed to have the potential in the future to become part of the British team. The offer was a week's cross-country coaching in France and entry was open to all women pilots aiming to fly a nationals. As that included me I started working on my CV.

Hannah Hay and I were selected for the first training week to be held at Issoudun, France. We met at the UK Club Class, where Rose Johnson and Liz Sparrow were flying. Together with Gill Spreckley and Dave Watt they formed the coaching team, and we decided to travel to Issoudun together, taking Hannah's beautiful LS4, Charlie Hotel.

In France, each day began with a classroom discussion on a specific aspect of cross-country or competition, then after task briefing we would do our own preparation for the day's flight. Hannah and I took turns flying with a coach in Nina (the Spreckleys' Duo Discus) whilst the other would fly solo in CH and the other coach flying the second LS4. Tasks would be around 100-200km and flying was followed by de-briefing.

The weather was slow to improve and with eight-eighths and 2,000ft bases we flew locally for the first two days: the order of the day was thermal centring, getting used to French airspace and learning to say "downwind for 27" in French. In those weak conditions Gill's searching and centring technique was a real eye-opener. But the weather did improve and we had three great cross-country flights, each posing very different challenges – ideal conditions for competition training.

The third day started with three-eighths cumulus and 3-4kt climbs, then turned blue. I flew solo in CH, starting with Hannah and Rose and focusing on team flying and reporting climbs. This was particularly beneficial from the second TP, where it went blue and very weak and we were scratching at 1-2kts, an excellent exercise in changing gears – the point where I usually hit the ground.

I flew with Dave Watt the next day, which had the best weather, three-eighths and 5-6kt climbs. The focus was on cruising speed and decision-making. It was fascinating to see how gentle on the controls Dave was flying whereas I was throwing the glider around as hard as I could, and of course he got 6kt where I could only find 3.

The wind was the major issue on the last day, up to 30kts at height, but with superb streeting and tasks aligned with the streets we were able to run very fast, staying at cloudbase for most of the flight.

So what did I learn? Climb rate is almost everything, I need to search better, fly more by feel and every top pilot flies differently. A lot about my own flying technique and how to improve it, how top pilots fly and make decisions and a lot of theory. The key benefit of the course for me was that with only two trainees, it was very personal, tailor-made coaching. Discussions focused on individual goals and ambitions, and our technical and mental strengths and weaknesses were dissected. In a kind of psychotherapy for glider pilots we were each put on the spot to give an honest analysis of our flying, successes, failures, ambitions and how far we wanted to go. Most importantly, I learned that there are very good women and men pilots out there who are keen to promote women's gliding and help aspiring racing pilots. The support, encouragement and individual training we got from Gill, Rose, and Dave was amazing and I am grateful to them and everyone else involved in providing this opportunity. This summer is the Women's Worlds: there will be two more training places on offer and the message to other women pilots is that competition flying is great fun and there are opportunities and initiatives to help so put your name down, come forward and race with the boys!

Liz Sparrow adds: As we get no BGA funding, this would not have been possible without our kind sponsors and we offer our thanks to them. They are Peter Turner, Joint Aviation and Hill Aviation. We are lucky that our sport has people like you involved – thank you. Dear reader, please note the good guys and patronise them where appropriate!



Jochen Ewald reports on the VGC's 34th International rally, held at Angoulème in France

KEEPING the history of gliding alive in the air – that is the aim of more than 1,000 pilots worldwide who belong to the international Vintage Glider Club (VGC), founded in 1973 in Great Britain. As well as many national gatherings and type- or manufacturer-focused meetings, the VGC's annual big rally is held in a different country each year and organised by local members. From August 12-20, 2006, the AAAC, a small but very active gliding club located at Angoulème-Champniers, a growing regional airport in the Charente Department near Cognac in South-West France, invited VGC members from all around the world. For those wanting to spend more time flying in France, a previous 'Rendez-Vous' rally was offered at Angers.

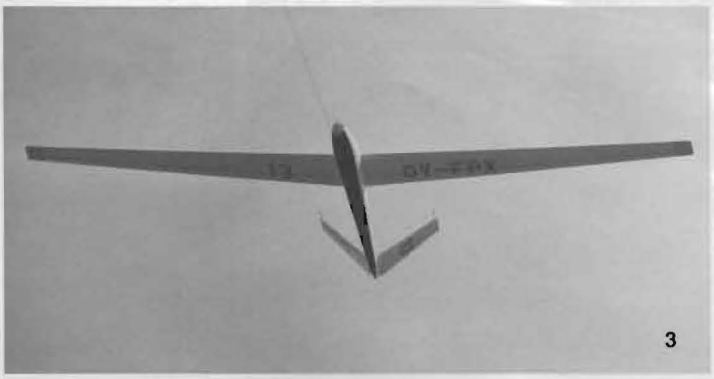
AAAC president Frederic Ben Abdallah and his young, flexible, hard-working and very dedicated team (consisting all the club's 30 members) offered 450 visitors from 19 countries – with their 100 gliders – a



The Fauvel AV-22S two-seat flying wing at the rally



2



3

French leave

comfortable, well-organised gliding holiday to be remembered. There was remarkable support of the rally from the Departement (regional) government and the Chambre de Commerce (which operates French airports); they offered free use of the airport. The friendly, professional air traffic control team in the Angoulème tower integrated radioless vintage glider smoothly into the commercial airport's operations and managed to open virtually unlimited regional airspace.

To launch all these gliders, four tugs were supplemented at the last minute by a winch from another friendly French club. This was a novelty for Angoulème, until then aerotow-only, and the experience persuaded the club and airport controllers to plan winching at

'Of special interest, of course, were the local heroes, like the two-seat flying wing AV-22S'

Angoulème for future club operations. With more than 2km of concrete runway with smooth grass alongside, all operations were comfortably accommodated.

In the AAAC hangar, a nice exhibition about early French gliding, with historic gliders borrowed from French museums, gave a good impression of the formerly very active French gliding industry. There was a recently-completed replica of the second 'LeBris' glider from the 1850s, two 1930s 'Avia' primaries and the famous Avia 41P that the French pilot Eric Nessler (whose daughter gave an interesting evening speech during the rally about the flying life of her father) flew to break several world records.

Although the weather – after a extremely dry spell – brought some thunderstorms, the VGC's invaluable collection of global gliding history since the 1930s could often be admired in the skies around Angoulème. Of special interest, of course, were the local heroes, like the two-seat flying wing Fauvel AV-22S, and the postwar Breguet glider production line with the 1949 Breguet B 900S no. 1 flapped competition single-seater, its successor, the B 901S, the huge two-seater B904 and the first, recently overhauled V-tail B905 Fauvette – a type which had been banned from flying in France for a long time before it was now, after some modification and great effort by the French vintage glider enthusiasts, certified again in France. Two V-tailed Siren C30 Edelweiss represented the most elegant superships of the 1960s, while the VMA-200 Milan (DFS-Weihe), Nord 2000 (Olympia-Meise) and the Avialsa A-60 Fauconnet (L-Spatz 55) were popular German designs that were built under licence in France.

Among the many recently restored or overhauled vintage gliders (which limited space prevents us listing), the Doppelraab V of Marijle Waalkes from the Netherlands, the Czech Zlin 24 Krajanek of the Prague Technical Museum, and a little Belgian Hütter 17b with its interesting trailing edge airbrakes, were just some of the eyecatchers.

After the successful rally in the hospitable Charente, all the VGC members said a big thank you to their perfect hosts of the AAAC. They are now looking forward to their next big international rally, which will be held (after a Rendez-Vous rally at Rana, Czech Republic) from July 26 to August 5, 2007, at Nitra in Slovakia. Something else to look forward to is a new VGC bell! It is a favourite tradition that VGC president Christopher Wills opens and closes each rally by ringing an old original Swiss cow-bell, which was donated to the club by Swiss members soon after its foundation. On this bell, all the international rally dates and locations are engraved, and the space to do this is now completely full. So VGC founder member Willi Schwarzenbach from Switzerland decided to present the VGC with a new, specially cast VGC cow-bell to open and close future VGC rallies, which connect gliding enthusiasts from across the world, and to continue the tradition of a third of a century's successful activity on the part of the international Vintage Glider Club.

Information about the VGC can be found at: *www.vintagegliderclub.org* and about the 2007 rally at *www.nitravgr.sk*

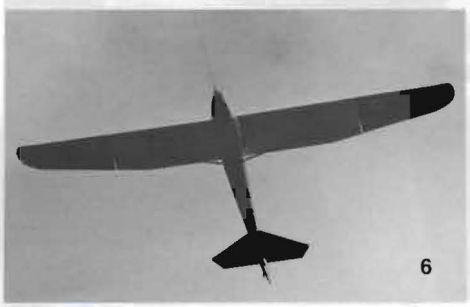


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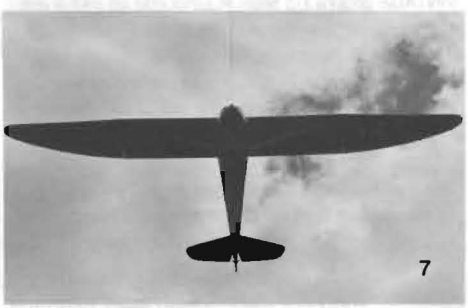


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How good is your identification of these vintage types – the gliders, that is, not the pilots? For the answers, see page 50, overleaf *(All photos: Jochen Ewald)*



6



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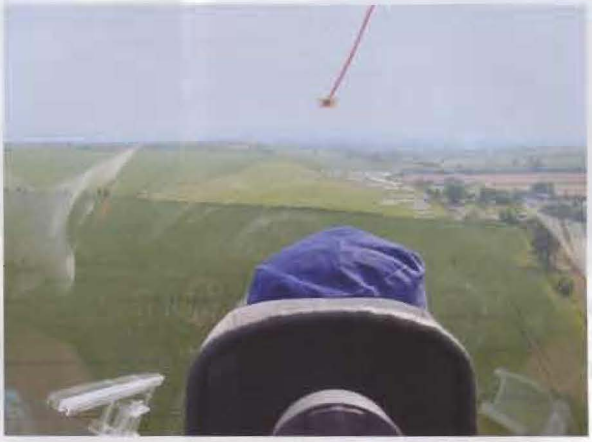


VINTAGE gliders 1-5 seen in silhouette on p48-9 are:
1. the pre-war two-seater Rubik R-11b Cimbora;
2. the French Bréguet 905S Fauvette;
3. the Schempp-Hirth SHK 1 high-performance glider;
4. Hans Jacob's last design, the two-seater Kranich III;
5. a newly renovated Ka-6CR, from Belgium

The final two familiar silhouettes on p49 will require no introduction to many British readers. They are the Tandem Tutor T-31 (6) and the T-21 Sedbergh (7)

All photos by Jochen Ewald at the VGC Rally

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Soaring with hands only



Bruce McGhie was injured in a US Air Force training accident in 1955, becoming paralysed from the chest down and losing much of the strength in his hands. He went through a difficult period of rehabilitation and re-introduction to the real world, which in those days was in no way was as accessible to wheelchairs as it is today (no kerb cuts, inaccessible bathrooms, and stairs everywhere). He eventually became a partner in a financial public affairs consultancy and travelled widely on business, inctuding several trips to Europe and Africa. Always intrigued by flying, he took up soaring at 47 and became the first person in the world to be licensed to fly gliders with hand controls. He has written a memoir of his journey entitled Ascent: How One Quadriplegic Fought for a Full Life and Soared *(Ruder Finn Press, 2006)*

In an excerpt from his memoirs, American pilot Bruce McGhie describes his passion for flight

I HAVE often been asked why I wanted to fly. Like many a child, I dreamed of being Superman and soaring over tall buildings, made model airplanes, and jumped off barns into hay piles with umbrellas as parachutes. I grew up in World War Two fascinated with flight and could accurately identify any tiny speck in the sky by its name and military designation – thrilled by the Battle of Britain, strategic bombers, and the glory of fighter-pilot aces. I suppose that I was even then on the fateful road to my Air Force misfortune. I never lost interest after my accident either.

I was intrigued by everything about flying and vicariously enjoyed it even when on commercial flights. When I finally was able to pursue this urge to fly, I chose gliding because I wanted recreation rather than a means of travel, and I found the idea of using the natural forces very appealing. My handicap put me at a serious disadvantage, but the challenge made it even more interesting. There was another appeal as well – call it controlled risk. I found that soaring can be an inspiring experience, but you are in a situation that does not countenance much laxity in skill, good judgment, presence of mind, and resourcefulness. Your life is in your hands, absolutely, from the time you start your takeoff roll until you have braked the aircraft to a full stop after landing. This of course is also true for power flying. Soaring is statistically a very safe sport. But there is always some sense of risk. I know of no pilot who has not been in a situation when a safe outcome was in some doubt. This ever-present edge, while not the main factor, adds to the lure of flight for certain types of people. For others, the experience simply isn't worth it, or even engenders sheer terror.

It is one thing to fly a hang glider or ultralight – types of sport flying that take place mostly in unregulated airspace. These people do amazing things, achieving very high skill levels, and all I have said above can apply to these adventurous aviators. But being a licensed pilot adds another dimension: You have to measure up to specific Federal standards of skill, safety, and competence and prove it through objective written and flight examinations, which though comprehensive are not intimidating. They involve intimate knowledge of your aircraft and its aeronautics and systems, as well as the basics of navigation, weather, radio communications, and a lot more. Passing these tests permits you to fly legally in the national airspace system – a far more trafficked and complex environment than most people realise. I never felt I was a "true" pilot until I had the imprimatur of an FAA license...

As a glider pilot using your skill and wits, you can harness the awesome power of nature for your pleasure for hours without harming it in the slightest way. And being there, at one with the natural elements, you can witness such things as the birth of a cloud, a hawk flying at the glider's wing tip, snow being wind-dusted off the top of a mountain, and other unspeakably beautiful visions of sky and landscape. Mankind has fulfilled a yearning to fly in many ways. Soaring was the way I chose to do it. It was a long time in coming, challenging on many levels, and is deeply satisfying.

Success is measured in different ways such as time spent aloft, altitude gained, and distance covered. As I write this, my logbook shows close to 1,300 total hours of flying time. My average time aloft in recent years has been between two and three hours. The most distance covered in a day is 150 miles. (Unfortunately, I was never able to acquire a glider with better than a 38:1 glide ratio, and the concept of landing out without my wheelchair put a damper on my cross-country flying.) The longest I have stayed aloft is over five hours, and the highest altitude I have achieved is close to 15,000ft. I have also done basic solo aerobatics and hold a Silver Badge.

For each pilot, there are certain things that make flying compelling. For me, being able to soar like a bird in the sky for hours without an engine is challenging and absorbing. There is the rush of surging up to higher altitude at better than 1,000 feet a minute, tightly circling in a powerful thermal or riding a mountain wave – borne aloft by the raw power of nature. And there are nature's surprises. One day, I overtook a migrating Great Blue Heron a mile high and got within 20 feet of him before he peeled off. Then, there are moments of coasting on course serenely over the earthly panorama with just the gentle sound of air passing over the canopy.

I have flown in calm air toward the end of the day over the desert mountains in Arizona when I could trim out the controls so that my hands were resting on my knees in a cockpit no wider than the stern of a canoe. I could look out on the long purple shadows of the ranges below me, accented by the golden-rich reds of the late sunlight on the western sides of the harsh, rocky peaks. In the desert distance might be a quarter-mile plume of back-lighted dust behind a rancher's pickup heading home; or the restless, hardly perceptible movements of wild horses in the dark sagebrush below. Everything has seemed to be in exquisite balance when I have been willingly suspended like this, alone and full of keen wonder, between unforgiving reality and dreamlike tranquillity.

I loved to be able to exist this way in three dimensions, to have done such things that are in harmony with nature and inherently graceful – yet at times mentally or physically stressful. Best of all, it has been just being by myself in the sky at altitude with the earth far below. Aloft I would think, "I am solitude, I am peace, I am freedom".

This gliding game

A proud early solo member of Wolds GC, Bill Dick (below left), recalls his impressions of the flight that encouraged him to take up the sport

WITH birthday voucher clutched in palm perspiring, I present myself to the duty pilot at Wolds Gliding Club. With paperwork filled in I get a few moments to reflect.

So, this gliding game – it can't be that hard to learn, can it? I mean, you just waggle a stick-thing and push a couple of pedals and watch a couple of dials, and off you go, up into the big blue yonder. Yes?

And this plane's got no engines. All the better, then. There'll be fewer knobs to fiddle with, fewer dials to watch, nowt to catch fire, and no noisy, draughty bits to fall off or break down.

Hmm, very smart-looking little plane it is too, with two seats, one behind the other, and I get to sit in the front seat! But hang on a minute, if the pilot is sitting behind me, how does he see where he's going, where we are going? Do I have to tell him? Maybe this is not such a good idea…

Too late, someone is now putting a parachute on me! "Excuse me," I say, "but if this plane is so safe, how come I need a parachute?"

"Oh, it's just a formality; you shouldn't have to use it."

(Err…. Shouldn't?)

A moment later and I'm sitting in the glider – "It's a glider, not a plane," – says my little helper while all sorts of straps and buckles are being wrapped around me and clicked into place. The guy sitting behind me (I'll call him Fred) starts saying things I don't really understand, and then the stick-thing between my legs starts stroking the inside of my thighs and my lower region! Hmmm…

"Have you flown in a glider before?" says Fred.

"No," says I.

"Well, there'll be a little bit of a ground run, we'll lift off, then we'll rotate into the climb – which will seem a bit steep but is perfectly safe. Look out to the right and watch Pocklington. At the top of the climb you may hear a bit of a thump and feel like we've gone over a hump back bridge but don't worry, nothing will have fallen off, it's just the cable being released."

What? A hump back bridge?

My little helper (the parachute man) now kneels on the ground and does something underneath the glider, then stands up and says: "All clear above and behind."

What can he mean? Then I realise this flying machine doesn't even have any mirrors! Not only can the guy behind me not see where he's going, he can't see what's coming up behind him, like a great big Jumbo jet, perhaps!

"Okay?" says Fred, and before I can even nod, whoosh! we're off. One minute I'm sitting in the seat, the next it seems I'm lying in it – and we are going up like a rocket! I look down to the right and wish I hadn't, because everything is getting smaller and smaller.

Suddenly there's a loud 'bang!' and my heart leaps, followed instantly by my stomach, as we level out.

Now, we're just floating across the sky, the only sound a soft 'swish'. And when I look down, it's like looking at toy-town, little cars and little houses. Brilliant!

"Okay", says Fred, "We've done the nose up and down bit. I'm going to make a couple of turns. If you hold the stick gently you can follow through on the movements I make." I nod, and ever so gently we turn, first one way then the other, and I can feel the movements in the stick-thing.

"Now it's your turn," says Fred, "just move the stick gently to the right." I move the stick to the right, yes – I move the stick, and we turn, we actually turn, smooth as silk! Magic! Brilliant!

Didn't I say this flying game is easy? Haven't I just proved it? Me, who has never handled a plane before, and now I'm flying one!

It's so easy, you just move the stick – and you can go wherever you want. There's nowt to it. Five minutes and I'm totally hooked!

All too soon Fred says it's time to go back. We float downwards, make a few turns, and there in front of us is the runway we took off from. A loud 'clunk' sound comes from somewhere and we seem to slow right down. The ground is getting closer – and that's when I remember the pilot is sitting behind me!

I squish down a bit in my seat, hoping that will help him. Now the ground is getting very close, we seem to be going down a lot faster now, then there's a gentle bump, a little rumbling sound, then silence. We've stopped. We've landed!

It feels like we were in the air for ages, but we were only up for seven minutes. Up in the sky – in a plane with no engines, no mirrors, and a pilot who couldn't see where he was going! How magic is that?

As we get out, Fred asks, "Did you enjoy that?"

Enjoy it? Enjoy it? Where do I sign up for some more of this gliding game?



Club news

Andreas (Isle of Man)

2006 will not be remembered for its outstanding soaring, but we made the best we could of it. Derek Callister finished the chassis and cab for our new winch and, we have to say, he has done a fantastic job. Now all we have to do is mount the Jag V12 engine (!) we have rescued from a car crushed by a wall blown down by the wind (physical evidence that it's been a tad breezy at times). The winch gear and safety guards are yet to be fabricated and installed. Panic nearly set in when the tug syndicate decided to disband due to impending retirement of the key members and the aircraft was put up for sale. Fortunately several members raided various piggy banks and a new syndicate has been formed. The Auster stays! Our September expedition to Bowland Forest was met by the usual exceptional hospitality but unfortunately the lack of good soaring conditions followed us from the Island. Having said that, Dylan Smith and Graeme Howie were both able to complete their Bronzes after being put through their paces by our SRE, Bob Pettifer. We welcome Peter Gill to the Island and our club. We know he will bring some additional and valuable and much-needed experience to the club. Finally, during a day that was not suitable for gliding Dylan was able to treat some of our less experienced members with some "wave flying" in the tug, to prove that it is there. Our website has been revamped courtesy of Graeme Howie and is attracting favourable comment. Please visit *www.manxgliding.org*

Brian Goodspeed and Bob Fennell

Anglia (Wattisham)

THE change from RAFGSA (RAF Gliding and Soaring Association) to AGA (Army Gliding Association) is now well behind us and, perhaps as a result of this, the Army are showing more interest in the club and we are looking forward to gaining more Army members. There has been the usual influx of Essex University students and a programme of ground-school lectures has been set up to help them, and club members, get to grips with the theory as well as the practice of flying gliders. Pete Brown has qualified as a Basic Instructor. Essex GC will be joining us over the winter, leaving their waterlogged strip at Ridgewell for our mile-long hard runway. They will also, like many before them, wonder why the runway was built at 90° to the prevailing wind – answers on a postcard please. As a Tornado pilot was heard to remark: "Drift? What's that?" As always we welcome new civilian members and offer year-round flying from an operational airfield with a top-rate team of instructors, astonishingly low flying fees and an excellent bar. What more could you ask for? Last, and by no means least, we remember our Army club members and other soldiers from the base serving in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Mike Powell

Aquila (Hinton in the Hedges)

DAVE Hook and Alan Veal have successfully completed their tug pilot training and have joined the tug roster. The AGM/annual prizegiving was held in November. Plans for the coming year were outlined, including more effective marketing of the club, increasing membership and planning for a new improved club-house. We are aiming for a big increase in midweek flying for 2007, with visiting pilots welcome, by prior arrangement. Chris Nicholson, Rod Watson and Louise Walker were elected to the committee. Awards were presented to Alan Veal (clubman of the year), David Gowling (best *ab initio*), Stuart Johnston (most





promising pilot), Louise Walker (best progress), John Giddins (club ladder and cross-country awards), Brian Hammon ("almost but not quite") for his almost-50km out-and-return, and John Batch (Keith Chichester award for services to the club).
Tim O'Sullivan

Bannerdown (Keevil)

THE motorglider course run by Pete Desmond was affected by poor weather but Oscar Constable and Ron Peach soloed. Burt Desmond and Ken Bryer also took part. After re-gelling, the Janus will have an engine fitted to the existing mounting. The club has acquired a number of new members so the two-seaters are busy again. Congratulations to Debb and Willy on the arrival of their daughter, Grace Jennifer – another thing to go solo on, Willy!
Derek Findlay

Bath, Wilts & North Dorset (The Park)

THE trophy presentation evening at the end of October was a great success, the highlight of the evening being the spicy Mexican food prepared by Jean North, Colin Field and Jan Smith. Michael Schlotter swept away the majority of the trophies but left enough to be presented to David Parkes, Colin Field and Mike Jenks. The Gordon Mealing trophy for outstanding contribution to the club was presented to Stuart North for his contribution as CFI. After two years of interrupted training, Jack Deeth, student at Bath University, finally went solo. On a marginally soarable day Jack found some lift and spend several minutes soaring and enjoying his new-found freedom. David Parkes has organised a series of interesting Saturday lectures aimed at encouraging members to visit the club more regularly during the winter months. Alistair MacGregor and Jan Smith have repainted the clubhouse. The colour scheme remains the same but it looks a little cleaner now. Dick Yerburgh continues to put in hours maintaining the tug and Merv Pocock and Dave Strange ensure we have working retrieve tractors every weekend.
Jan Smith

Bidford (Bidford)

NOVEMBER proved to be a great month for flying here, the weather was fantastic for that time of year, and interest in our new Capstan and the even newer addition of the Motor Falke was at a peak. We have created a new structure for our instructors, which has proved very popular, and we also have some new BIs. Well done to Les Fletcher and Andrew Turk for completing their training, and good luck to Alan Wallace and Steve Foster for their course. We will be welcoming Lu Kennington at the beginning of March; she will run the café here for the duration of the season – this is a doubly good thing, as she will also be on hand to jump into the back of the glider when her husband Bruno Brown needs a break. Tuggy Tony will also be staying with us – what a team!
Lynne Burkert

Please send news to *editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk* (delete the old address, *helen@sandg.dircon.co.uk*) or to Helen Evans, BGA, Kimberley House, Vaughan Way, Leicester LE1 4SE to arrive by **February 13** for the next issue (later deadlines at *www.gliding.co.uk*)

Black Mountains (Talgarth)

FOR the year to the end of November 2006, we achieved a record number of launches at Talgarth and the hours flown give us an average flight time per launch of 1hr 15mins, including training circuits and BI flights. A PW6 demonstrator is on site for a few months and is available through Roger Hurley of CP West Ltd for demonstration flights. Those of us at Talgarth who have had the chance to fly it have been impressed. A number of club projects are now in hand to improve our operations in 2007, including a new lecture/store room and two mini runways to ease wet weather operation. Decision time is approaching as regards the purchase of a new two-seater glider, identified in our five year strategy as a "need to have" tool for cross-country training. As part of our excellent winter lecture programme drawn up by our new CFI, Martin Langford, Sarah Kelman enthralled a packed clubhouse with tips on how to fly faster cross-countries.
Robbie Robertson

Booker (Wycombe Air Park)

FOLLOWING the successful annual autumn expeditions to Shobdon and Aboyne (both of whom we thank for their hospitality) plans are already under way for return visits in 2007. Due to economic pressures common to many gliding clubs in the UK, our costs have come under ever-increasing scrutiny and this has led to a number of changes. The most obvious of these has been to make the post of professional CFI redundant. We thank Andy Henderson for his contributions to the club whilst in the post and previously as a full-rated instructor. After informing the membership of this need to reduce our cost base we were overwhelmed by the offers of support and are delighted to announce that Andy Perkins has taken over at the helm as member CFI. He is well-known throughout gliding as a Regional Examiner, one of the youngest when appointed, and we are sure that his drive and enthusiasm, ably supported by the instructor team, will enable Booker to remain at the forefront of gliding. He is a long-term member of the club and a previous DCFI at Booker. Currently our DCFI is Mike Collett. Booker will continue to operate seven days a week as previously, but on a couple of days will be under the direct supervision of club member instructors. We're also pleased to announce a comprehensive series of Bronze and cross-country lectures as well as aerobatics lectures and training courses over the next few months. At the time of writing, Booker GC is in top position on the BGA Ladder for the number of cross-country flights recorded and kilometres flown, with Dave Caunt averaging over 306km per flight claimed. At the other end of the scale we welcome our newest Cadet, Tom Clowry Cooper, and hope that he will soon be joined by further new recruits. We hope that our training and development programme will see us remain at the top in 2007, with our Regionals scheduled for August 11-19.
Roger Neal

Borders (Milfield)

LATE September and October saw our wave weeks living up to their name. Eddie Stephenson set off round a 100km triangle in his ASW 15 and came back some seven hours later when gentle prompts from his stomach forced a landing! We had Diamond heights from two of our visitors, Alistair Mackenzie and Rob Nichols – Alastair reaching 20,000ft – and separately, Keith Latty gained his NPPL. The first flights of December saw rapid ascents to 12,000ft-plus from Colin Sword, Mike Crews, Graham ➢p56

Photos from around the BGA clubs – this page, from top left: Dorset's chairman, Doug Every, has been particularly busy, sorting out their lease, taking on the role of BGA accident database manager and leading the club's winch renovation project, all despite a hip replacement operation;
Hertfordshire Scouts have bought a Motor Falke from the Faulkes Flying Foundation and based it at ***Gransden Lodge****;*
Tony Law re-soloed on November 4 at ***Dorset GC*** *after a break from gliding whilst his family was growing up;*
Chris Wick hands on the keys of ***Kestrel****, the RAFGSA's newest club, to Andy Lamb with Stn Cdr RAF Odiham Sean Reynolds;*
Steve Rhenius, who has gone solo at ***Essex GC***







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July/August
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September
2-8, 9-15, 16-22, 23-29
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picture courtesy of Mike Evans

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Above: 61 years old and looking great – the Auster at ***Andreas GC*** *is now owned entirely by club members*

Top right: Eddie Stephenson in his ASW 15, taken by ***Borders****' Rich Abercrombie in his, at 12,000ft looking over the coast. "And very nice it was, too!" he says*

Right: Ian Easson of ***Portmoak*** *took this photo as he was climbing up the front of one cloud and aiming for the wave bar. "You can see the high rise buildings of Kirkcaldy and the River Forth to the south," says Ian*



Above: Not to be confused with the contributor below (as the editor initially did...), Dave White of ***London GC*** *took this picture of dew on Discus TB at Talgarth*

Right: Pete Yeo of ***Wyvern GC****, competing in the* ***Booker*** *Regionals, took this photograph of the Lunak Czech aerobatic glider as flown there by Graham Saw*

Below: It was David White of ***Essex & Suffolk GC*** *who took this image at* ***Denbigh****. And if you're a fan of rainbows, don't miss Andy Bates' great photos on p40*









Club news



Alastair MacKinnon, who took up the role of manager at ***Lasham Gliding Society*** *last autumn* (www.flightbox.com)

➢ Mitch, Dave Wilson and newly solo pilot Kevin Mitcheson, who got to 8,000ft in the Alliance with Keith Latty. Their descents proved even quicker thanks to a snow shower spoiling the fun, in total one hour from 0 to 12,000ft and back again! Our Remembrance Day memorial service was held on Saturday 11, with a huge thanks to President Jim Hogarth and all who helped.
Rich Abercrombie

Bowland Forest (Chipping)

RAIN, rain and more rain made the field a pretty uninviting place to be during November with would-be BIs Paul Kamp and Robin McVean desperately trying to finish off their course, run by Bob Pettifer. Hopefully it will dry out a bit to allow a few days flying during the rest of the winter. Some of the members have decamped their gliders to their wintering grounds at Dishforth, resulting in some spectacular early-season wave climbs to over 13,000ft along with Dean Eden bagging his Gold height in his Nimbus 2b. Our annual Christmas bash at Garstang Golf Club was a great success with plenty of seasonal spirit drunk and stuffed bird consumed, mixed up well with the subsequent antics on the dance floor.
Phil Punt & Tracy Joseph

Bristol & Glos (Nympsfield)

MANY pilots enjoyed round trips to Bath and Cheltenham along the ridges in November. The committee has taken advice on our finances and made some changes to charges so we can develop the fleet and the club. A new team-based launchpoint organisation has started that includes instructors, a cross-country coach and tug pilots. New catering arrangements have been made, too, with winter food at weekends, thanks to Giuseppe. Don Puttock will be joining us as a resident instructor this year. A serious applicant for the "outlanding of the year" pot was Rob Thompson, who left his glider rigged in a landout field next to the locked trailer with the trailer keys at Nympsfield. All was stuck in the mud until he borrowed the farmer's tractor next day. Congrats to Matt Davis on going solo. Don't forget our regionals from July 21-29 – with a special prize for the top two-seater.
Bernard Smyth

Burn (Burn)

OUR autumn visits to Milfield and Aboyne resulted in some exciting wave flying with Alastair Mackenzie and Rob Nichols gaining their Diamond height and Richard Noble achieving Gold height. Also congratulations to Michael Cain on his first solo flight. David Bellamy and John Parr have joined our instructing team. The annual Bonfire Night celebration was a great success thanks to Edna Sharples and Karl Zatorski. Karl produced and directed an exceptional firework display.
George Goodenough

Cambridge (Gransden Lodge)

HERTFORDSHIRE Scouts have bought a Motor Falke from the old Faulkes Flying Foundation and are basing it at Gransden Lodge. We had a formal handing over ceremony on December 2, 2006, and the weather obliged enough for them to be able to play with the new toy. Don Lees has been running MGIR courses to cope with the expected demands from the Scouts. Our "splinter" group has been inundated with offers for an old wooden single-seat glider and this should be flying, after some TLC, this summer. Finally, congratulations to Julian Bane on becoming an Assistant Instructor.
Paul Harvey

Carlton Moor (Carlton Moor)

THE club welcomes new member Brian Kylo, who has taken on the responsibility of maintaining the buildings and is busy making himself indispensable. We are grateful for this input of enthusiasm and have quickly noticed the difference his work has made. Work is in progress to upgrade the clubhouse and repair the MT shed roof. The latest adventure of CFI Ged Terry has involved two flights in a MIG 15 (complete with drop tanks!) on one of his trips to the USA. Comrade Gedski tells us it demonstrated many new and interesting ways to kill yourself, and was nearly as much fun as the Swallow. Can anyone lend him a B52?
Nigel Ling

Channel (Waldershare Park)

THE club is looking forward to a good season with plenty of new members and the prospect of aerotows in addition to our normal winch launching. In the meantime our winter maintenance programme continues. Club gliders are being prepared for their Cs of A and the clubhouse is receiving an overdue coat of paint. The major pre-season work however is the construction of new hangars. Ian Dawkins, a skilled engineer who now has more time on his hands, has volunteered to lead this project. We are still looking for a club single-seater. Please contact club chairman, Simon Waters, if you have a suitable projectile.
Nigel Shepherd

Chilterns (RAF Halton)

CONGRATULATIONS to Gordon Howarth on obtaining his BI rating. It has been a fairly uneventful flying period so far this winter, with the airfield being closed in December as a result of the very wet weather (all of this while we still have a hosepipe ban!). However, we are not letting this dampen our spirits and we look forward to some good winter flying on the ridges – maybe some wave as well. It is with sadness that we have to report that Brian Broadwith passed away at the end of November; whilst he had only recently joined he quickly completed his training and gained an SLMG NPPL. He will be sadly missed by the club. Also sympathies go to the family of Owen Truelove, who was so tragically killed with his son in an accident flying his Stemme out of Omarama, New Zealand. Owen was a Life Member at Chilterns, and it was he who facilitated the move of the club to RAF Halton when he was Station Commander.
Andy Hyslop

Cotswold (Aston Down)

IN October Richard Kill, our social secretary, prepared a Greek-themed meal to mark the end of the season. Richard's cooking was superb and a good time was had by all. The following week-end was the annual autumn expedition to Portmoak. Regrettably as can happen the weather was not co-operative and we could only manage two flying days. Additionally the M6 seemed particularly congested. Ah well, better luck next year! Our boffins have been busy updating the club website and the results are superb. You can see for yourself on www.cotswoldgliding.co.uk. Work continues converting the old admin office into a briefing and meeting room. It should be finished in time for the comp season. Finally we managed to launch a K-8 to more than 2,700ft using one of our Skylaunch winches (we have clearance to 3,000ft) during the recent windy weather using the full length of our main runway. A club record, I think.
Frank Birlison

Cranwell (RAF Cranwell)

THE Christmas party is now a distant memory (or maybe none at all for some members!) so let's hope we've had a least one sniff at a thermal by now. The club fleet and equipment are looking very spick and span after the hard work put in by many club members: general maintenance, hard-waxing, aircraft Cs of A, avionics, parachutes, vehicles and the winch. It means that we are well prepared for this year – thanks to all those involved. Welcome to the RF5 syndicate, made up of current members Mick Baker, John Macauley and John Rogers, which will add a different dimension to the flying/gliding experience. Nottingham university members will probably by now have acquired their replacement for the K-13 (I believe this to be an Acro), which will also have to be hard-waxed! Having practised on the current fleet of club aircraft I'm sure this will not present a problem... We hope that they have enjoyable year in this new type. Finally a big thank you to Mike Hale, our Officer In Charge, who works very hard behind the scenes to ensure that we maximise all the available opportunities to keep the club in good shape.
Zeb Zamo

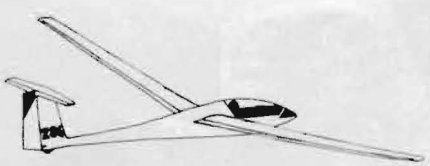
Denbigh (Denbigh)

CONGRATULATIONS to our latest solo pilot – Peter Higgs – and to Rosie Lovegrove, who has been awarded a BGA scholarship. Conditions over North Wales have continued to provide excellent flying through the winter. The wave and ridge flying opportunities mean we don't spend much time circuit bashing. Our new Skylaunch winch provides excellent launches on plastic rope for all types of gliders in all conditions. Launches of nearly 2,000ft are not unknown in the best conditions. Time is being spent over the winter keeping the club fleet airworthy – thanks must go to

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Robin, Tony and the team for their efforts in this area. With our growing number of new solo pilots and increasing membership, the club fleet is in more demand than in recent years. We should also remember John Sconce's work on the vehicles – without it we would have stopped long ago. If you are getting impatient waiting for the thermals to start again, come to Denbigh for a weekend. It is not as far as you think, and you won't be disappointed by the warm welcome and support you'll receive.
Paul Jewell

Dorset (Eyres Field)

WE are having our winch and engine refurbished, and needed to strip down the winch and remove the old engine. Saturday, December 2, saw a good turnout of willing helpers arrive at the club, ready for the dirty work of separating the winch from the lorry chassis and cleaning and removing the (very large) engine. The merry band was led by Gerry Cox and overseen by our Chairman Doug Every. Doug, who is just recovering from a hip replacement operation, has led and co-ordinated the winch refurbishment programme. By the evening we had separated the winch from the lorry and were ready to lift the engine out. We are planning to sell the existing engine, which is still in good working order, and replace it with a refurbished engine. Sunday saw the engine lifted from the winch and the winch itself lifted off its lorry base and located on to the new trailer. The next couple of weeks will be spent cleaning and painting the chassis in preparation for its trip up to Shropshire for refurbishment. We are all eagerly awaiting the eventual return of our refurbished winch in time for the start of the flying season this year. Particular thanks for their efforts to date go to: Rob Monk, Rob, Terry, and Tim Linee, Tony Hampshire, Dave Finch, Barrie Stuckey, Barry Thomas, Jon Marshall, and Colin Weyman.
Colin Weyman

Essex (Ridgewell/North Weald)

MANY congratulations to Steve Rhenius on going solo. David Jones is as busy as ever converting the cable drum braking system on one of our winches to use discs as opposed to shoes (saving on the winch driver's footwear?!) In a major move, and after many decades, we have left North Weald and moved all our flying operations in both summer and winter to our airfield at Ridgewell, thereby giving us more scope and opportunity to encourage members to extend their wings and experience. As to the winter, the Anglia GC at Wattisham has very kindly invited us to fly with them when Ridgewell becomes too wet. They have also invited us to share in their Christmas celebrations. Thank you, Wattisham, for making us feel so welcome: it is very much appreciated. This is an exciting development for the club and we look forward to the future. We are, however, still keeping the clubhouse, office and workshop facilities at North Weald.
The firework and barbecue party at Ridgewell was very well attended, with an enormous bonfire (anyone missing an old trailer?). A cascade of fireworks together with excellent food, thanks to Sue and Geoff Martin, ensured that a very good time was enjoyed by everyone.
Peter Perry

Fenland (RAF Marham)

THE big question is, will Mitch Middleton finally get to do his Full Cat course? He was almost there but a dose of Man Flu stopped him in his tracks. With round-the-clock attention from his able nurse he is ready for his next attempt! The Astir has now got a tail wheel; thanks to Jon Oakley for bringing this forward a few months. We have a new clubhouse, and but for a couple of fridges would be in there already. The new place is being tidied up as we speak and stand by for a painting party before too long. By the time you read this, annual checks should have started. Paul McLean continues his relentless drive to motivate people with field landing training for Nat Day and Adrian Bramwell, and anyone else who wants it. Thanks to John Doubleday for last issue's input to the club news and the previously mentioned Adrian's unstinting work on the airfield. We also wish Olly Chubbock well whilst he twiddles his thumbs in Afghanistan and welcome back to Johnny Broom.
Graham French

Four Counties (Wittering)

OUR congratulations go to our two most recent soloists, Jim Douthwaite and Stan Watson. Jim has made the best of his winter free of airshows with the Battle of Britain flight to progress to solo, while Stan's hard work behind the scenes midweek at Wittering mean he is only too deserving of his great achievement. Well done both. A windy weekend gave the opportunity for members to clear out the latest batch of stuff from Syerston, and now the workshop is set up and ready to take gliders as we run into the C of A season. At the time of writing we have not yet had the promised swap of aircraft, leaving us with a yellow Rotax Falke doing the job of both tug and motorglider; however, it is expected very soon. Not only will this consolidation benefit the club financially, but will also make room in the hangar, as the Loughborough University K-13 promises to be out of the workshop soon and flying at Wittering.
Pete Davey

Imperial College (Lasham)

IMPERIAL has been very active over the past quarter, flying over a hundred trial flights. Many are coming back as members, and we're benefiting immensely from a large selection of keen in-house instructors so that we can offer more people flying than ever before. We're even running a successful ground school initiative. Over the summer there were many achievements: Aki, Shaun, and Sage all became Assistant Instructors; Andy got his Silver and Standard Aero Badges; Rory almost did his Bronze; and Jamie and Shaun flew the Juniors, with Jamie coming 13th. Well done everyone! This New Year icGC took a record number of 13 pilots to Portmoak, Scotland, for a week of fun in the snow! Diary dates: annual dinner, February 17, 2007; Old Fogies Flying Weekend, March 31 and April 1, 2007. If you're an old friend or member and would like to come along, get in touch: Shaun Murdoch, *shaun.murdoch@imperial.ac.uk* or postal contact via Lasham Gliding Society.
Shaun Murdoch

Kestrel (Odiham)

JANUARY saw Chris Wick, our longest-serving committee member, stand down as officer in charge. He was replaced by Andy Lamb. Chris, a member of the club since 1986, has held most of the club's committee positions, including secretary, chairman, CFI and since the swap to GSA, officer in charge. He has so far completed 4,708 launches totalling 873hrs in Kestrel GC gliders, and many more hours flying the paperwork desk for the club. All at Kestrel pass on their thanks for the hard work and effort that Chris has put in over the years.
Neil Armstrong



Norfolk GC's Harry Day with the club's CFI, Andy Vidion, following Harry's solo, one of two recent soloists at ***Tibenham***

Lasham Gliding Society (Lasham)

THE new Lasham Manual has gone live and is available on the website, www.lasham.org.uk. All members are required to sign that they have read the mandatory reading sections of the manual before their new membership card is issued. We're most grateful to the Lasham Trust for their donation of a John Deere Gator to the Society. We hope to see the new machine in the spring. The forthcoming club expedition to Jaca in Spain is now fully booked, but we are planning to leave a Duo Discus there for April and May so that those who have missed out can still make use of it. Winch driving courses have started for both new and existing winch drivers. Anyone interested should speak to Keith Blount. The Christmas Party was sold out and, we hope, enjoyed by all.
Alastair Mackinnon

Mendip (Halesland)

EITHER the weather has been better or we have recruited some keen flyers. Whichever is the case, we are well ahead on launches and soaring compared with last year's figures. A late boost was provided by an all-day session with the Venture Scouts. Although it was booked as a local Scout group, their internal advertising attracted responses from all over Somerset and the fine weather on the day resulted in a very successful session. An example of oneupmanship was provided when two of the group arrived on horseback; the two horses enjoyed a romp in our paddock while their owners were flying. Our star of the month was Adam Western, who soloed "properly" – his previous solo being with the Air Cadets. The end of November was blessed with some great ridge-soaring days and Peter Turner managed to exploit the conditions with a wave flight to 7,500ft in his Ventus.
Keith Simmons



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York Gliding Centre



Lincolnshire

At a glance

Full membership cost: £130 pa

Launch type and cost:
Winch – £4.50

Club fleet:
K-13 x2, K-8, Astir

Instructors: 5

Types of lift: thermal, sea breeze

Operates:
Weekends, Wednesdays and Bank Holidays

www.lincsglidingclub.co.uk

Left: Strubby airfield, the base for Lincolnshire GC

Below: some of the club fleet at the launchpoint at Strubby

LINCOLNSHIRE GC has its origins in the old Lincolnshire Gliding Club, which used to operate at Bardney. When Bardney closed a small soaring group from that club set up at the old six-week-wonder wartime RAF airfield at Strubby. They used a T-31 and car launch from the runway to study sea breeze fronts. As with all things, a core of interested visitors began and a club was formed. We became affiliated to the BGA in December 1978.

The original club fleet was a Bocian, T-21 and Skylark 2. Car launching continued until the runways were dug up to shore up the Humber Bridge. The club then built a winch and operated from two very short strips of concrete.

We have developed the site with the assistance of the landlords and now operate from a grass strip 1,400 yards by 100 yards, orientated east-west.

We have also upgraded the fleet and now have two K-13s a K-8 and an Astir CS. Our winch is now a purpose-built machine, which is capable of launching the K-8 in normal conditions to 2,000ft, plus we have authority to 3,000ft.

We soar in the summer in thermals and in sea breeze, the invisible ridge, while spring and autumn soaring is in thermals all day.

We have no controlled airspace until the airway at 17,500ft above us. We do, however, get some great views of the Typhoons from Coningsby flying around the airfield.

We still launch by winch predominantly, though we do have the occasional aerotow day.

Our site is also used by a small power group, which has a hard runway just north of the gliding club. We fly circuits both sides, but visitors please keep a good lookout for power aircraft.

The club has a very active youth policy, offering a free membership cadet scheme. We also work very closely with local schools.

Dick Skerry



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Club news



*Stephen Butcher, a **Southdown** member for six years, was sent solo on his 16th birthday in November by Les Blows (right)*



*Alan Wright (left) and his student Dave Clark, just after the latter's solo in the K-13 at **Stratford on Avon GC**, Snitterfield*



***Shenington** cherishes G-OFER, as Mike Miles, Scotty Scott and Colin Hales demonstrate... (Mary Meagher)*

Nene Valley (Upwood)

STEVE Jarvis has passed his Basic Instructor Rating – Well done, Steve. The AGM took place and we now have a new chairman, treasurer, PR secretary, aircraft member and site manager. Many of the previous committee stood down due to ill health. We thank them for their hard work. We are now in the process of getting our K-7/13, DQX, ready for its C of A and have had an excellent response to our plea for help from the members. Peterborough & Spalding GC visited and thoroughly enjoyed their winch-launching day as they are an aerotow-only site.

Dave Mansfield

Norfolk (Tibenham)

CONGRATULATIONS to Harry Day and James Francis on going solo. Construction of the new power hangar is well on the way and should be soon providing us with an additional source of income. The bonfire night and disco were a great success. And Phil Morgan's charity night raised funds towards Help the Aged.

Mark Wright

North Wales (Llantysilio)

THIS is the quiet end of the year and a time for reflection: our membership has increased and the publicity gained from the press and media coverage in the flying of our centenarian gentleman gained us some interest in the club. The local Scout group from Llangollen had a very enjoyable day's flying: as each of the scouts landed he/she was invested by their leader while seated in the aircraft. Some expressed great enthusiasm in further involvement in gliding. Like many clubs the astronomic increase in insurance charges has caused us to put up our fees right across the board, so not helping the younger potential member (or the older one for that matter). To help offset these charges for one young member, Freddy Lucas, a grant has been obtained. This will be of great help to him as he is still attending school.

We are putting our very tidy K-8 up for sale because since the Skylark 4 came back on line it is not being used enough to justify its upkeep.

Brian Williams

Peterborough & Spalding (Crowland)

CONGRATULATIONS to our cadet Sam Breese, who has been flying with us on our cadet scheme for the last year or so and has gone solo! It was a great day for Brian Crowhurst, too, the instructor who sent him off, as it was also his last instructional after many years' service to the club. Thank you, Brian. Another of our recent solo pilots, Arthur Ricketts, is learning the finer art of becoming a tug pilot. Arthur has many thousands of hours flying power and has piloted aircraft ranging from a Super Cub to Concorde. Further improvements to the clubhouse have taken place with a replacement window and patio door giving a great view of our flying activities. Many thanks to Mick Burridge for his hard work. Dave Crowhurst and Kev and Sheena Fear are off to Oz in early March for three weeks soaring and will be of course be visiting ex-Crowland sky god Jim Crowhurst, who emigrated there a couple of years ago. They are expecting big flights and we will accept nothing short of a 500km. On the day that our members were making their way to Aboyne on the club's annual pilgrimage, chairman Rob Theil managed to soar to 6,600ft in wave over Spalding. Meanwhile at Aboyne, everyone had a great time. No records were broken unless you count Matt Bell for the highest (and therefore most expensive) aerotow: 6,000ft. He wanted to be sure he was in the wave – the trouble was that the wave went up to only 6,500ft that day! Food was up to its usual high standard, as were the fishing spoils and evening entertainment. Rob Theil is now the proud owner of an LS4, which will complement his Ventus, and is now known as "two gliders Rob".

Merv Bull

Portsmouth Naval (Lee-on-Solent)

THIS edition's *Club News* marks the end of another year and finds the club in much the same condition as it was a year ago. Although sounding unremarkable, this statement hides quite an accomplishment. It is true that our gliding operation has been restricted by the loss of a runway and hampered by the encroachment of developers around the periphery of the airfield. It is also true that the continuing loss of the clubhouse bar means that the club has lost (temporarily, we hope) its social centre. But these losses do not outweigh the fact that the club is back in operation at Lee-on-Solent – a state of affairs that appeared by no means certain over the past year. With the threat to our tenure behind us, the club looks forward to a new year with the luxury of more confidence than would have been sensible recently. We are making plans to replace some of our older gliders, acquire a motorglider for the club and convert our Chipmunk ZZ to give us an all-Supermunk tugging fleet. Following John Hale's appointment as CFI, Gerry Holden moves into his place as deputy CFI. We will get the New Year off to a good start with our annual Dinner and Dance at HMS Collingwood in January.

Steve Morgan

Rattlesden (Rattlesden)

THE annual dinner was held at Hintlesham golf club in November 2006; solo certificates were presented to Graham Drewery and James Inch. Mark Taylor won the "Numb Bum" cup for a 401km flight in April; Gren Croll won the "Club Ladder" – most of his flights didn't take off until 2pm and he landed after everyone else! David Salvage won the "Jean Towse" cup for the best flight in a club glider and Karen Wright won the "Landlord's Cup" for the most improved pilot. Martin Raper has stepped down from instructing: many thanks to him for all the years in the back seat.

Helen Page

Scottish Gliding Union (Portmoak)

I WAS glad to read that Plat had such a good time when he flew with John Williams in our DG (see last issue, p16), and as predicted by John (how does he do that?) November was indeed great. Here's a taster and a reminder that these flights can be downloaded from the BGA ladder page and replayed on your PC. John Williams flew a very fast 500km from Loch Venachar to Tongue, the most northerly TP in Scotland, and back to Loch Venachar at around 117kt (see page 26). John also did a 502km, a 392km and a 281km within a few days. Not to be outdone, Kevin Hook completed a 433km, 305 km, 213km, 180km and a 320km – the latter twice on the same day! (see page 28). Valerie Alexander flew P2 with Sant Cervantes in the Scottish ASH25 around 507km (see page 28). Our winch was brought out of service at the end of November for planned maintenance but unfortunately our tug went u/s at the same time. Not too bad, however, as the weather turned nasty and we couldn't have flown anyway. We are upgrading our single-seat fleet with a third Junior to replace our K-8. Other achievements since last issue include Ross Paterson (re-solo) and Maurice Williams (solo and Bronze).

Ian Easson

South Wales (Usk)

IN early November some members of our club may have come across a Grob Acro sized hole in a corner of the airfield. They need not have worried: this was the footings for our new T-hangar for the club's Grob 103, with Andrew James being the driving force behind this project. Enzo Casagrande has been issued with epaulettes and peaked cap, successfully becoming a tug pilot. A tear was shed in the eye of our tugmaster as the new retrieve winch has been fitted to the Pawnee. Reports from all who have operated it, or followed it, seem to be very positive, as it has reduced the workload for the tug pilot, and increased the safety of our tug operation by no longer having to drop the rope across the field, or our neighbour's fence, on the approach.

George Robertson

Southdown (Parham)

STEPHEN Butcher has been one of the most enthusiastic helpers around the club since early schooldays, and we were delighted to see him go solo on his 16th birthday. We have a full programme of lectures planned for this spring and visitors are welcome. Also on offer is our winter membership scheme for members of other clubs. This is proving a great success, and anyone who would like to join us for a hill soaring experience, please apply soon. The club Pegasus is now advertised for sale. This machine is in excellent condition and must be seen! All enquiries to the club secretary.

Peter J Holloway

Staffordshire (Seighford)

A TWIN Astir has joined our club fleet and is proving to be very popular with the members. It was put to very good use on November 11, when wave was located just west of the site and clear of the airway. Derek Heaton and Jeff Heard climbed to over 12,000ft and later in the day Geoff Oultram and Graham Burton managed over 11,000ft. Each year we fly at Seighford, the wave seems to get better, not bad for a flat site. Clair Hamlet has just flown her first solo in October, thus extending what has been our best season for several years for first solos. In order to help all these new pilots to progress, we are planning to run a course in the early spring, aimed at getting early solo pilots up to Bronze standard as quickly as possible. A Bonfire Night party was enjoyed by more than 50 members and family and we are grateful to Paul Cooper and several other members and wives for their hard work in organising the event and for preparing an excellent buffet supper.

Colin Ratcliffe

Obituary

Peter Heywood – Welland

SADLY, Peter (1958-2006), died following a tragic mid-air collision at Sutton Bank in October. A regular visitor to Sutton Bank, Peter was there on this occasion for the annual Welland expedition. Always an invaluable member of the party, Peter took care of everyone, whether by lending a hand with rigging or repairing a glider; preparing a full meal in the evening; or simply sharing a wee dram of some fine whisky. He was a constant source of information, having a reputation for giving thorough and precise explanations. On the rare occasions when Peter didn't have an answer, he would use the internet to research it. Club chairman Ken Wells recounts a journey to Sutton Bank when he asked Peter how the car's climate control system worked. The answer apparently took up most of the two-hour journey, losing Ken after ten minutes! Peter's history shows the progression of interests that ultimately brought him to gliding. As a child, his bedroom ceiling was adorned with model aircraft he had built. As an adult, Peter became interested in motorbikes, classic cars and sailing. Sailing with 'the lads' round the Greek Islands or the Channel Isles, Peter was invariably the navigator. Professionally, Peter's vast capacity for information and knowledge served him well as a software designer. He had a number of roles over the years and we heard many stories of his time designing the anti-lock braking systems for the 757. Since this naturally involved a lot of time in simulators, Peter was to some extent already an experienced pilot before he took up gliding. Joining Welland GC in 1998, Peter was active both as a pilot and as a club member. He served a spell as club treasurer and took part in all club social events. A member of the cross-country contingent, Peter would happily show others how to plan the flight as well as how to use the latest gadgetry to support and record it. A group from the club meets on Thursday evenings for a jar and a laugh and Peter was a regular contributor to the banter on these occasions. Peter is very sadly missed by all his friends across the gliding community and our sympathy goes to his wife, Carole, as well as to his parents.

Laura Lindell



Club news



***Ulster GC**'s Brian Brannigan after completing his Silver Duration on a terrible day to consider even getting into a glider*



*Brian Dobson getting his wings from **Welland** CFI Mark Prickett. Brian persevered at learning to fly despite having an artificial leg*

Stratford on Avon (Snitterfield)

MANY congratulations to Juergen Schaper and Dave Clark on solos in the K-13s – both relatively new members. Another recent solo, Matt King, has lost no time in forming a syndicate. We wish them all well in their gliding career. Peter Merritt has been appointed chief duty marshal to replace Penny Broad, who is standing down – thank you, Penny, for your work. Well done to Peter Fanshawe on his award of life membership for many years of dedicated service as CFI and coaching expertise. We welcome Penny, Julie Ireland and Sue Searle, who have volunteered to keep the catering open in the absence of Mary Benton on holiday. All very much appreciated. The AGM brought forth a lively presentation of the club's most successful year and upbeat predictions for the season by chairman John Dickinson, with an optimistic forecast – subject to the weather.

Harry Williams

Surrey Hills/South London (Kenley)

THE autumn/winter months have seen the club relatively busy despite restricting the number of days we have flown, as we have still not found a full-time instructor (our thanks go to Richard Fitch for single-handedly running the field over the winter). We're still hoping that the right instructor candidate will come forward in the spring. Congratulations must go to Stephen Swan on successfully becoming a Basic Instructor. December saw the club's Christmas Dinner with prizegiving, where the prize for best *ab initio* went to Michael Dilnot for soloing on his 16th birthday and then completing his Bronze not long after. The club award for members who have given a lot of their time and energy to the club went to Stephen Skinner for all his efforts repairing gliders and winches and also instructing. The Alex Wright Award went to Michael Slatford, who has just retired as membership secretary after 15 years of service. The club's thanks go to him for all his hard work over the years.

Marc Corrance

The Gliding Centre (Husbands Bosworth)

FIRSTLY, and most importantly, we have changed our club name from "The Soaring Centre" to "The Gliding Centre". Congratulations to Chris Deeks on going solo. Well done to Ellie Armstrong, who received the Coventry Telegraph Trophy (best progress during the year) and The Jimmick Trophy (most meritorious performance) at our annual prizegiving, having soloed in February, completed her Silver in July, flown 270km on an attempted Gold distance and taken part in a regionals competition in the same year. We have awarded life membership to Sid Gilmore for his enthusiasm and contribution to gliding at the club. Paul Armstrong is our new CFI. Thanks to Joe Horwood for all the work he did as our previous CFI.

Siobhan Crabb

Ulster (Bellarena)

BY the time this is printed, our AGM will have passed. We will keep you posted on who will make up our new committee. Launches for 2005/2006 increased on the previous year. This year has seen more cross-country flying than ever before. Wave has been common throughout the year with numerous flights up to 12,000ft; had oxygen been fitted flights would have been much higher! Our new grass mower has been put to good use. Thanks to all those who helped throughout the season keeping the field in good condition. Congratulations to Keith Loughry, who went solo on the winch on a recent visit to Portmoak. Congratulations to Brian Brannigan on completing his Silver duration on what can only be described as a terrible day to even consider getting into a glider!

Finbarr Cochrane

Welland (Lyveden)

THIS autumn has been overshadowed by losses and absences. Peter Heywood *(see obituary, left)* died in a glider collision at the club's expedition to Sutton Bank and Michael Neale has spent most of the year in hospital following a stroke; both are missed for their flying and supporting activities. Our annual dinner and prizegiving celebrated Vicky, Brian and Mario Staniscia, our most recent solo pilots, and Brian Dobson earned the Sedburgh Cup for sheer perseverance. The Ray Clarke Cup for pre-Silver achievement went to Jo Cooper for probably the fastest 4,000ft to cloudbase all year. Steve Burgess took the 267 Cup and Best in Wood Trophies. Strzeb and Paul Cronk claimed the Ladder Trophies. The CFI Shield was awarded posthumously to Peter Heywood for his support in many club activities.

Strzeb

Windrushers (Bicester)

WINDRUSHERS hosted two competitions during the summer. We were happy to host Booker for a weekend early in July. Our programme of trial flights and short courses has been well supported along with midweek and Friday evening flying. Oxford and Cranfield Universities continue to provide us with a steady stream of *ab initios*. Gary Binnie stepped down as CFI with effect from the end of December, and we would all like to thank him for the work that he has put in over since the formation of the club. Gareth Cunningham surrendered his crown as the club's



*Vicky Asquith, seen with CFI Mark Prickett, soloed in her second season with the **Welland** cadet scheme*



Karen Binney with instructor Ged McCann after she went solo. Her father, Dave, soled earlier in the year – both at ***Wolds GC***

longest serving Ass Cat and joined the massed ranks of Full Cats. Numerous solos were achieved and Clive Dalziell completed his Silver with a downwind dash in OUGC's K-21 to Gransden Lodge. The 2007 Bicester Regionals start on July 21, see *www.windrushers.org.uk* for further info.

Dave Smith

Wolds (Pocklington)

WE are proud to congratulate Karen Binney and Stuart Smith on being sent solo in the same weekend by demon instructing duo, Ged and Stacey McCann. Karen's dad, Dave, who went solo earlier this year, was very proud of her for her achievement. After much discussion and investigation we have decided to return to using cable instead of Dyneema on our winch. With the clubhouse nearing completion there is a burst of enthusiasm to finish the job with two parties already arranged and the beer pumps in place! We have managed to secure the services of weather guru Hugh Brookes for the Standard Nationals in July, which can be seen at *www.glidingcomp.com*. We all look forward to a good season in 2007 and many more memorable flights!

Sam Roddie

York (Rufforth)

ANOTHER year is over and we've just completed our annual awards presentations at a very special dinner dance. Many thanks to Tony Lee, Chris McDermott Roe and everyone else who helped organise another superb event. Award winners include: Chairman's Shield, Howard McDermott Roe; Cousley trophy, Tom Stoker (longest cross-country); Anthony Foster Memorial Trophy, Simon Hawkins (Most Promising Young Pilot; Senior Ladder, Tom Stoker; Height Gain, Tom Stoker; Alan Simpson Rose Bowl, Keith Batty (best Silver distance); Bill Tyers Award, Ed Watkinson (Wednesday flyers' achievement award). Meanwhile, Mark Lench achieved his Cross-Country Endorsement in October, Tom Stoker racked up another impressive height gain (this time of 8,600ft to reach 11,400ft) and yours truly joined the ranks of the BI cadre. We are optimistic that long-awaited runway repairs will soon be completed and our new clubhouse will be a very significant step closer to being fully commissioned. The club's thanks go to chairman Richard Smith for getting things moving. Thanks, too, to Howard McDermott Roe and Tony Lee, who have stepped down from the committee after many years of much-valued service. 2007 looks like being quite a year at York with lots of promise both in terms of development of our facilities and, most importantly, in terms of the flying ambitions of our pilots, old and new. Let's hope the weather is on our side!

Keith Batty

Yorkshire (Sutton Bank)

WITH 2006 now behind us (thank goodness!), members are looking forward to those early spring thermals. We thank Andy Parish for getting all our toys ready for the coming season. Several members have visited the Antipodes for some much-needed practice and a bit of sunshine. Our new CFI – "Dick" Cole – is ensuring that everyone is up to date with field landings, so at least the new motorglider is earning its keep!

John Marsh

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Accident/incident summaries by Douglas Every

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	REGISTRATION	Damage	Time	DATE Place	Age	PILOT(S) Injury	P1 Hours
144	DART 17WR		None	06-Aug-06	Incident Rpt		None	

The pilot had been interrupted during pre-flight checks and as a result did not check the trim. At the top of the ensuing winch launch and in an attempt to reach a cloud street the pilot turned quickly to the left. The glider dropped a wing and span one revolution before being recovered. The pilot then flew a normal circuit and landing.

145	LS8-st	5192	None	29-Jul-06 16:00	4km east of Hus Bos	49	None	216

The pilot landed the glider heavily in a turf field, resulting in some damage to the landing gear.

146	SZD Junior	3541	Substantial	07-Sep-06	Portmoak A/F	47	None	11

At 6,000ft over the airfield and having completed HASSLL checks the pilot span the glider to the right. On recovery, whilst pointing straight down and as the rotation had just stopped, the canopy flew open, paused for a second then slammed shut and shattered. The pilot recovered from the dive, assessed controllability, then descended using airbrakes for a normal landing.

147	ASW 27B	5160	Substantial	08-Aug-06 17:29	1km west of Lasham A/F	50	Serious	2077

The pilot was at the end of a long competition flight and on final glide into Lasham airfield with a 13kt tailwind. Two areas of heavy sink were encountered and reduced the expected arrival height. Six minutes out the glider was slowed to best glide speed whilst still carrying water ballast. The arrival height continued to reduce so water was jettisoned and the glider slowed accordingly. The glider lost energy and just failed to clear a row of trees on a high point about 1km west of the airfield. The field before the trees was too small and pulling up risked stalling onto high-tension wires just downwind of them. The left wing impacted the top of the trees slowing the glider rapidly and rotating it about 170° before it fell about 30ft to the ground. The pilot suffered a compression fracture to his lumbar spine.

149	LS8-18	4785	Write off	10-Jun-06 19:00	Drum Farm Nr Keith	53	Serious	455

The pilot had spent six hours under an unrelenting sun on a hot day flying a fairly demanding 300km flight over mountains. He had chosen to end the flight with a deliberate field landing at his own farm. The field left him with a difficult approach into a small field with no viable overshoot and severe turbulence. The landing required the glider to clear some 100KVA power lines followed by some smaller 11KVA power lines two-thirds of the way into the field and running across it. On approach there was a 41kts head wind and it was very turbulent. The pilot added some extra speed and cleared the power lines with a larger margin than required and it quickly became apparent that he then had too much energy to stop in the available space. He closed the brakes and tried to hop over the 20ft trees at the far end of the field but did not have enough speed to pull up high enough. As the glider passed over the trees the wing caught, the glider spun round and dropped on to the ground in the next field, injuring the pilot's back.

150	LIBELLE Std	4524	Minor	23-Jul-06 16:15	Southdown	47	None	38

The pilot, who was on her second flight on type, landed the glider in the 22 direction and, not wanting to cause congestion on the airfield, taxied off to the left to clear the landing area. Encountering a slight downward slope and with insufficient braking applied, the glider ran on towards two parked gliders. A syndicate member standing near the parked gliders, grasped the starboard wing which slewed the glider to the right averting a collision with one of the parked gliders. However, just before the glider eventually stopped, the port wing struck the rudder of the other parked glider, causing enough damage to render it unserviceable.

151	ASW20L	4354	Write off	23-Sep-06 11:32	Keevil	67	Fatal	1000

NB: Limited report information – subject to AAIB investigation. The glider wing dropped on take off. The glider cartwheeled and crashed, resulting in fatal head and neck injuries to the pilot.

001*	LS6-18W	4131	Substantial	07-Oct-06 14:15	Wiston, West Sussex	59	None	436

The glider was three miles east of the airfield at 1,200ft and experiencing difficulty in contacting reliable lift for an upwind final glide to the airfield. The pilot was below 1,000ft when he decided to land out. The options were very limited due to livestock, terrain and wind direction. At 700ft he finally committed himself to a small grass field and commenced an into-wind landing but at 500ft it became apparent that the field was not long enough. Despite using full airbrakes the pilot landed long. Realising that the glider would not reach a standstill before the boundary fence, and in and attempt to limit damage, the pilot deliberately groundlooped, which resulted in substantial damage to the glider.

002	ASW 19B	Write off	02-Oct-06	Near Sutton Bank	Fatal	
	SF 27	Write off	15.15		Minor	

Subject to AAIB investigation *(see AAIB Update, right).*

003	KA8B	None	08-Oct-06	Incident Rpt	None

As the glider rotated into the climb on the first launch of the day, the wing top fairing departed. The pilot, alarmed by the unusual noise and buffeting, continued to a safe height then abandoned the launch and began his circuit. Fearing a damaged airframe or control surfaces, he turned gently and eventually made a safe landing. The glider's DI was performed by an early solo pilot. Standard practice at the club is to replace the nuts on to the studs to make it less likely that the fairing is fitted without them. In this case they were put in the glider's document pocket.

* *The BGA year begins in October*

(continued on opposite page)

AAIB Update

In the latest of our regular series gleaned from the UK Air Accident Investigation Branch, we reproduce (in slightly shortened form) AAIB Special Bulletin S8/2006 from the Department for Transport website. The BGA has already actioned the two safety recommendations made

Aircraft Type and Registration:
i) Scheibe SF27 glider, HGM
ii) Schleicher ASW 19B glider, GDP

Year of Manufacture: i) 1965; ii) 1979

Date & Time (UTC): 2 October 2006 at 15.15hrs

Location: Sutton Bank, North Yorkshire

Persons on Board: i) Crew – 1; ii) Crew – 1

Injuries: i) Minor; ii) Fatal

Nature of Damage: Both aircraft destroyed

Commander's Licence:
i) BGA Gliding Certificate
ii) BGA Gliding Certificate

Commanders' Age: i) 50 years; ii) 48 years

Commanders' Flying Experience:
i) 733 hours (last 90 days, 20hrs; last 28 days – 5hrs)
ii) 280 hours (Last 90 days, 10hrs, last 28 days, 1 hour)

Information Source:
AAIB Field Investigation with BGA assistance

History of the flight

The aircraft were both soaring in the vicinity of Sutton Bank, at a height above the airfield of about 1,500ft, near to the base of cloud. The surviving (SF27) pilot recalled suddenly seeing the other aircraft coming towards him, very close, and attempted to manoeuvre to avoid collision. However, the two aircraft collided almost head on, each aircraft's canopy being severely damaged by the other aircraft's wing. The SF27 wing structure separated from the fuselage; one wing of the ASW 19B separated approximately half-way along its span. The ASW 19B and its pilot fell to the ground. The SF27 canopy and canopy frame were severely damaged in the collision, and the pilot abandoned the aircraft through a hole in the canopy. He deployed his parachute successfully, and landed safely amongst trees. His minor injuries were sustained in the collision and subsequent parachute landing.

ASW 19B canopy design

The clear canopy of the ASW 19B, and its glass-reinforced plastic (GRP) frame, are attached to the fuselage at the forward end by a pivoted lifting arm. Normal access to the cockpit is achieved by lifting the rear of the canopy. The canopy is locked in the closed position by two steel pins, in the rear of the canopy frame, which locate into recesses in the canopy surround. These pins are operated by push rods and levers on either side of the canopy frame. In an emergency the canopy may be jettisoned by pulling a knob on the instrument panel glare shield; this releases the forward edge of the canopy from the lifting arm. The process is completed by disengaging both of the rear locking pins, allowing the canopy to separate from the glider, although it may be possible for the canopy to be jettisoned without the rear pins being disengaged.

Initial investigation

A section of canopy of the ASW 19B was found at the top of Sutton Bank, and the rest of the canopy was found in close proximity to the glider's fuselage, some 500m away. Examination of the glider confirmed that the jettison procedure had been initiated, but not completed, before impact with the ground. The forward section of the

canopy frame had been released from the lifting arm prior to ground impact, but the canopy locking pins were in the 'LOCKED' position. The ASW 19B pilot's harness had been unfastened prior to impact. It is unclear whether the pilot had exited his aircraft; his body was found close to the remains of his aircraft. He had sustained fatal impact injuries. His parachute had not been operated.

The investigation identified that this ASW 19B, GDP, had been fitted with electronic equipment, including a logger, GPS, and palmtop computer. These had been attached to the glare shield and canopy frame and were connected to other systems in the glider by a series of electric cables. These cables were secured to the canopy frame and to the structure behind the instrument panel with cable ties. Had the jettison sequence been completed, it is probable that the wiring to the components installed on the canopy frame and glare shield would have prevented the canopy from being successfully jettisoned, and the pilot would not have been able to leave the glider.

Previous Safety Action by the BGA

On a number of occasions, the BGA has reminded pilots of the need to ensure that nothing interferes with the correct operation of canopy jettison systems. This has included technical documentation and an article in the BGA's own *Sailplane & Gliding* magazine.

Safety Recommendations

AAIB discussion with experienced glider pilots and members of the BGA suggested that similar modifications may have been made to other gliders. Therefore, the following Safety Recommendations are made:

Safety Recommendation 2006-127: The British Gliding Association should advise glider pilots to incorporate, into their pre-flight checks, a check to ensure that no modifications have been made which would prevent the canopy being jettisoned in emergency.

Safety Recommendation 2006-128: The British Gliding Association should remind its inspectors of the provisions of BGA Glider Maintenance Schedule Task 8, specifically with regard to ensuring that any canopy may be fully jettisoned without restriction.

The bulletin is available at www.aaib.gov.uk/publications
The AAIB adds that this special bulletin contains facts which have been determined up to the time of issue. This information is published to inform the aviation industry and the public of the general circumstances of accidents and must necessarily be regarded as tentative and subject to alteration or correction if additional evidence becomes available.

004	ASK21	4316	Substantial	04-Nov-06 14:00	Wattisham A/F48		None	8

P1 was current on type and authorised to fly the aircraft solo by a full rated instructor at the launch point. Whilst in full climb and at about 200ft the rear canopy opened and shattered. The pilot released, recovered the aircraft and made a normal landing on the runway ahead. On subsequent examination of the glider it was apparent that the rear straps had not been secured and also that there was a parachute lying on the rear seat. The left-hand canopy lock was closed and the right hand canopy lock was open. On the previous flight the aircraft had been flown with two pilots.

006	DG-200-17	3794	Minor	05-Nov-06 11:30	Aboyne	52	None	1079

After an extremely rough circuit in strong winds the glider landed without lowering the undercarriage causing damage to the belly hook and gel coat damage to the underbelly.

007	Capstan T-49B		Minor	05-Nov-06	Incident Rpt			

Whilst rigging the glider and during attachment of the port wing, the fuselage rolled away and the wing root fell on to the wing dolly. Some minor skin damage was sustained.

008	CIRRUS OPEN	4218	Substantial	11-Nov-06 11:40	Pengefford	60	None	

The pilot made a stalled landing into a steeply sloping field. The glider suffered a cracked leading edge on the port wing, a burst tyre and some damage to the undercarriage door.

009	ASK13	3787	Substantial	12-Nov-06 15:17	Aston Down airfield		Serious Minor	

The glider was being fitted with a wing dolly prior to being towed back to the launchpoint following a practice launch failure. The dropped cable was lying stationary roughly in the middle of the runway, between the stationary glider and the launchpoint, when it suddenly started to be pulled back by the winch. The cable passed under the port wing and the parachute impacted with the leading edge of the wing, causing significant damage and also knocking P1 off his feet, inflicting a severe laceration to his foot. P2, who was assisting, also suffered a minor cut to his left thumb. P1 was then taken to hospital for urgent medical attention.

010	PAWNEE TUG	G-BXST	Substantial	18-Nov-06 13:50	Currock Hill	55	None	

Whilst the tug was taxi-ing, a strong gust of wind lifted the tail. The propeller struck the ground, damaging both tips.

011	Cub Tug	G-BBOL	Minor	19-Nov-06 14:00	Aston Down airfield		None	

After completing an aerotow, the tug was recovering to Aston Down when the pilot noticed lateral movement of the right undercarriage wheel whilst downwind. He shut off the engine, made a landing on the left wheel and as the aircraft halted it sank on to its right wingtip. On subsequent examination an undercarriage bolt was found to have sheared.

013	ASK13	3215	Substantial	19-Nov-06 11:30	Seighford airfield		None	2

The glider, flown by an early solo pilot, undershot the normal landing area and caught the right wing on a small tree in the airfield boundary fence. This damaged the glider's D-box and caused it to yaw severely. The subsequent groundloop caused further damage to the wing and fuselage.

014	ASK21	843	Minor	28-Oct-06 15:00	Wormingford	41	None	

Following a normal winch launch with a 65kts constant airspeed, the glider encountered a gust at 200ft agl that raised the airspeed to 80kts and precipitated a failure of the cable parachute webbing. Immediately following the loss of power, a loud bang was heard from the rear of the glider and the pilot noticed the parachute moving down and away still under power. Unsure of the cause of the noise, the pilot carried out a check of control authority and elected to complete a normal circuit and landing. On subsequent inspection impact damage was found on the lower fuselage. It was suspected that the damage was caused by the D shackle recoiling into the glider as the parachute webbing failed.

BGA Badges

No	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
DIAMOND BADGE			
717	Rory O'Conor	Yorkshire	7.10.06
Diamond goal			
2-3149	Ken Bell	Ex-pat, (Harnet, USA)	8.7.2006
2-1350	Daryl Mansbridge	ATC 621 (Minden, USA)	7.8.2006
Diamond height			
3-1668	Rory O'Conor	Yorkshire	7.10.06
3-1669	Alistair Mackenzie	Burn (Milfield)	28.10.06
GOLD BADGE			
2423	Ken Bell	Ex-pat, (Harnet, USA)	8.7.2006
2424	Daryl Mansbridge	ATC 621 (Minden, USA)	7.8.2006
2425	Brian Penfold	Wyvern (Aboyne)	29.10.2006
2426	Werner Stroud	Wyvern (Aboyne)	28.10.2006
Gold distance			
Ken Bell		Ex-pat, (Harnet, USA)	8.7.2006
Daryl Mansbridge		ATC 621 (Minden, USA)	7.8.2006
Gold height			
Edmund Mason		Lasham (Aboyne)	28.9.2006
Brian Penfold		Wyvern (Aboyne)	29.10.2006
Emily Todd		Booker (Aboyne)	8.10.2006
Werner Stroud		Wyvern (Aboyne)	28.10.2006
Peter Thomas		Black Mountains	15.10.2006
Glen Turpin		Bannerdown (Aboyne)	7.10.2006
SILVER BADGE			
11730	Matthew Bell	Peterboro & Spalding	30.8.2006
11731	Sam Roddie	Wolds	25.8.2006
11732	Reginald Watson	Yorkshire	13.7.2006
11733	John Firth	Burn	7.10.2006
11734	Steve Burgess	Welland	23.7.2006
11735	Chris Lawrence	Norfolk	23.7.2006
11736	Stephen Johnston	Ulster	23.4.2006
UK 100km DIPLOMA			
1031	Barry Douglas	York	8.9.2006
1032	Andrew Cockerell	Lasham	8.9.2006
1033	Steve Burgess	Welland	8.8.2006
AEROBATIC BADGE			
Std Knwn	Christopher Young	Booker	8.10.2006
Std Knwn	Chris Stobart	East Sussex	23.9.2006
Std Knwn	James Hasker	Bannerdown	4.11.2006

Classifieds

Please send the text of your classified advert to Debbie Carr at the BGA office (not to the editor) – *debbie@gliding.co.uk*. Call 0116 253 1051 if you have any queries about classified adverts.

Please remember that, if you are emailing text, your advert may not appear unless we have received payment by post or credit card by the deadline. The deadline for classifieds to be included in the February-March 2007 issue of *Sailplane & Gliding* is **March 5, 2007** after which any adverts received will be published in the following issue.

Text: 80p/word, minimum twenty words (£16). Black and white photographs: £6 extra
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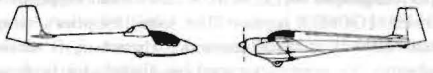
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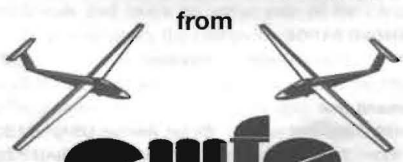
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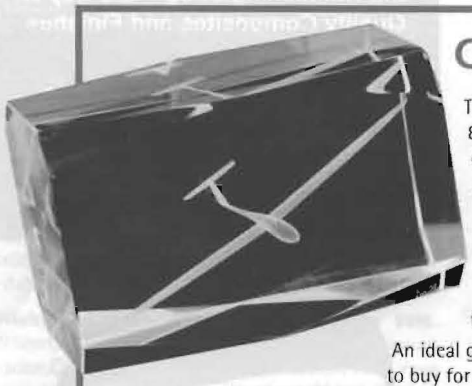
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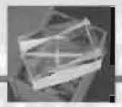
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HALF of the proceeds go to the Philip Wills Memorial Fund to help with its work in developing BGA clubs and the other HALF is distributed each month in the form of 3 CASH PRIZES. The more participants we have, the greater the prize money pool.

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

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

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

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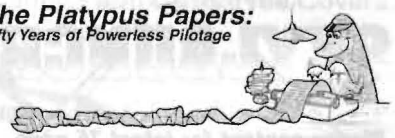
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