Sailplane & Gliding



Watch out

for the Shark, says Jochen Ewald

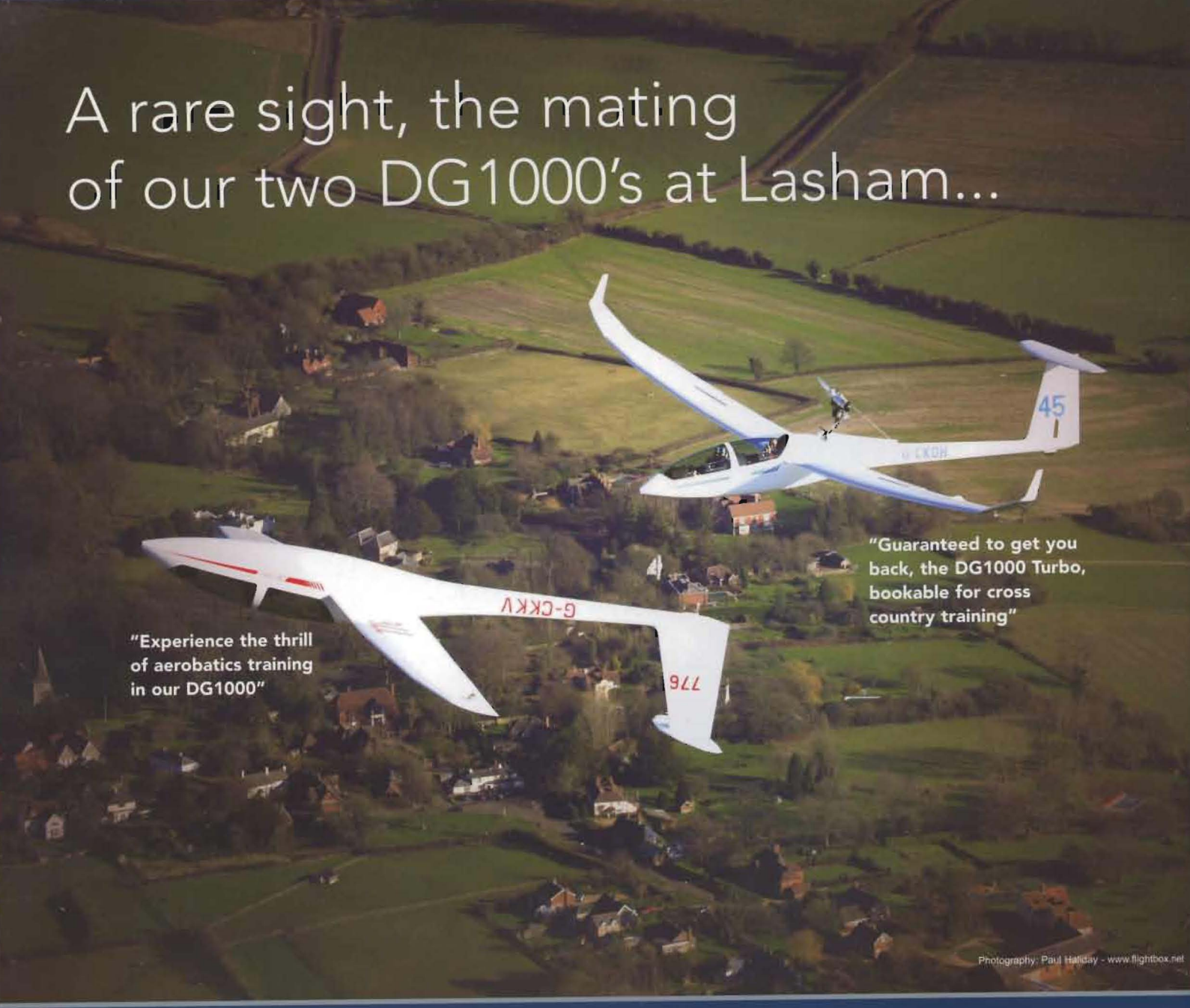
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April-May 2007
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The distinctive wingtips of the HpH 304S – flown from Zbraslavice in the Czech Republic by Richard Jensen – explain its name: the Shark. For a flight test, see page 18 *(Photo: Jochen Ewald)*

Sailplane & Gliding

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The 18-Metre Class HpH 304s "Shark" is worth a closer look, says **Jochen Ewald** – and check out how it places when it races

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The JS1 Revelation first flew last December. In January, it won the South African Nationals. Now twice World Champion **Andy Davis** has taken it for a test flight – of 500km

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FAI

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News in brief

A NEW edition (33) of the Southern England and Wales 1:500,000 aeronautical chart was published on March 15. This is the first chart to reflect the Class C airspace introduction (see Airspace Update, p45) and so the upper limit of airspace portrayed will reduce from FL245 to FL195. A new edition (11) of the 1:250,000 England South chart is also available.

DON'T fly with out-of-date information! It's that time of year where you need to check that the data in your GPS navigation and logging equipment is still valid – especially airspace data. An updated version of the guide to getting NOTAMs is on the BGA website's airspace section – and how to find sources of data upgrades will also be made available there in due course (*www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/airspace*).

AN updated version of the BGA's *Laws & Rules Edition 15* is now available for download from *www.gliding.co.uk/forms/lawsandrules.pdf* This will only be available in PDF form but a printed edition 16 will be produced, probably in late 2007, when current negotiations with EASA and others are concluded.

THE Royal Aero Club has recognised five glider pilots in its 2006 Awards. World 18-Metre Champion Phil Jones has been awarded the RAeC Gold Medal and World Standard Class Champion Leigh Wells the Silver Medal. Another Silver Medal went to Dr Peter Saundby, medical advisor to the BGA since 1967. The Ann Welch Memorial Award goes to John Henry of the Scottish Gliding Union while 17-year-old Christopher Lawrence of Norfolk GC wins the President's Rolex Trophy. The awards ceremony will be on April 24 at the RAF Club in Piccadilly, London.

SITES in the United Kingdom, Australia, Russia, Denmark and Italy have been selected by the Executive Board of the FAI – The World Air Sports Federation – as candidates for the World Air Games 2009. A final decision will be made in June.

BGA volunteers and staff have been asked to take part in two new steering groups established under the auspices of the Civil Aviation Authority: ASI – the Airspace Safety Initiative – and GASPER – the General Aviation Safety Promotion Education Review.

THE RAeC Trust is looking for copies of Royal Aero Club minutes between October 1956 to June 1969. If you can help, please contact RAeC Vice President Fred Marsh at *marshfromlondon@btinternet.com*

IF you're planning to fly in the Alps, Pyrenees or Appenines you might be interested in TherMap – a set of maps that plot likely thermal hot spots in these areas (*www.aerodrome-gruyere.ch/thermap*). S&G would like to hear from anyone who has actually used TherMap or other thermal mapping software – email *editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk*

THE winner of the BGA 1000 Club Lottery for January 2007 was F Strathern (£33.00) with runners-up S Duerden and J Delafield (£16.50 each). The February winners will appear in the next issue.

UK glider airworthiness

FOLLOWING a constructive visit in January from an EASA Airworthiness Review Team to the BGA and two member clubs (at Halton and Lasham), the Association is now developing procedures to allow the transition of both pre- and post-September 2003 gliders from a BGA C of A to an EASA C of A as required by the recent changes in European regulation. It is planning with the CAA to make the transition with C of A renewals starting September 28, 2007. Details are not yet finalised and a meeting due to be held in March by the CAA and BGA should help clarify matters – keep an eye on *www.gliding.co.uk* for news.

Before an EASA CofA can be issued, a glider (apart from "Annex II" aircraft – mainly vintage types) will have to be registered and display G- registration marks. Application for registration should be made approximately three months before any post-September 2007 C of A renewal date. The BGA is not asking you to register any pre-September 2003 gliders in the near future. However, if you are having your glider refinished in the next few months, you may wish to consider having the new registration marks applied during this process. Once CAA registration has been granted, G- marks must be displayed on the aircraft before flight.

The BGA is also developing procedures to comply with Part M (European regulation on Maintenance and Continuing Airworthiness), which, currently, will apply to all aircraft with an EASA C of A (gliders, motorgliders and tugs) from September 28, 2008. There will be changes in how approvals and authorisations are issued but the detail is not yet clear.

Safety Initiative

THERE was a reduction in serious winch launch accidents in 2006 but it is too early to be sure that this was due to the safe winch launch campaign that began just over a year ago. Safe winch launching has again been given high priority at the recent regional CFI meetings.

A new edition of the safe winch launch leaflet will shortly be distributed.

If serious winch accidents in 2007 can be kept at or below the level in 2006 we can be confident that the campaign is working. Reaching this goal will require every pilot on every launch to adopt good technique, to anticipate emergencies, and to deal competently with any emergency. If you are unsure about any of these issues, ask an instructor.

Brussels conference a first for presidents

THE Board of Europe Air Sports (EAS) and the Presidents of its member organisations – the National Aero Clubs of Europe and the European Air Sports Unions – all met together for the first time at an EAS conference in Brussels in February.

The unprecedented meeting was called to decide how best EAS (which represents some 650,000 sporting and recreational aviators) could be strengthened to meet the ever-increasing challenges posed by the transfer of legislative authority for civil aviation from nations to the European Union.

The implications of some of the issues now under consideration by the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA), Eurocontrol/Single European Sky (SES) and the political institutions of Europe – concerning, for example, pilot licensing, aircraft maintenance and the future airspace structure – had the potential to do great harm, possibly even terminal harm in some cases, if the wrong decisions were taken.

The meeting resolved upon a number of measures to improve internal communication and co-ordination to ensure that concerns were well understood, not only at the drafting level, where there was already effective and fruitful co-operation with EASA and Eurocontrol, but also at the political level, where hitherto EAS's efforts had been less well directed.

Measures to provide additional resources were also comprehensively addressed.

Competition dates

Overseas Champs	Ocaña, Spain	21/5-1/6
Bidford Regionals	Bidford	16/6-24/6
15 Metre Class 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/Std)	Pociunai, Lithuania	28/7-12/8
Europeans (15/18m/Open)	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	RAF Honington	4/8-12/8
Cotswold Regionals	Aston Down	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
Gransden Regionals	Gransden Lodge	18/8-26/8
2-seater competition*	Pocklington	19/8-26/8
Mountain Soaring Comp*	Aboyne	2/9-8/9

** Not a BGA-rated Competition*



Regulatory issues were central to discussion at the European Gliding Union (EGU) Congress in Prague in February, attended by (from left) BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli, Chief Executive Pete Stratten and Regulatory Group Chairman David Roberts. Medicals, pilot licensing, certification, maintenance, operations and airspace were all on the agenda. The EGU foresees an increasing volume of regulatory work in the coming years

(Photo: Aldo Cernezzi)

News from Lausanne

VOLUNTEERS and staff represented BGA members at two recent major meetings on the regulatory and the sporting sides of Association interest – at the European Gliding Union Congress and the FAI Gliding Commission, the IGC.

The IGC meeting in Lausanne in March was attended by BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli, the BGA IGC delegate Brian Spreckley and his alternate, the BGA Competitions Committee Chairman Russell Cheetham. Key subjects discussed (with *S&G*'s thanks to Russell Cheetham) included:

IGC Awards: The Lilienthal Medal went to Alan Patching, Australia for his contribution in testing fatigue life of sailplanes; two Pirat Gehriger Diplomas were awarded: to Loek Boermans of Holland for his work on OSTIV and jointly to Brian Spreckley and Keith Nicholson from the UK for their work on the IGC Pilot Ranking List; and the Pelagia Majewska Medal went to Ghislaine Facon, France.

The World Championships 2010 in the unflapped classes (Club, Standard and World) will be held at Prievidza, Slovakia, while Szeged in Hungary has been chosen to host the flapped classes (15, 18 and Open) that year. The meeting agreed that, from 2012, each Class must hold a Worlds outside Europe at least once every eight years, assuming that the IGC has received an acceptable organising bid – the intention being to support gliding throughout the World and to prevent world championships becoming too Europeanised.

The European Championships 2009 will be at Orel, Russia, in the unflapped classes. There was no bid by the deadline for the 2009 Europeans in the flapped classes, but there are precedents for out-of-time bids being accepted should one emerge. Orel will also hold a concurrent Europeans in the 20-Metre (two-seat) Class – for which there is no Worlds. Contenders in this class are likely to include the Duo Discus and DG-1000. As an aside, while the BGA does not support international entries to this class at European level, the UK will be holding a 20-metre national championship in the UK in 2008. If a Worlds in this class were to be organised – which is unlikely to happen before 2012 – then the UK would have a track record in competing in it, thus facilitating a robust team selection process, and the decision on funding entrants could then be revisited.

The **Gliding World Series** final, which was due to be held in New Zealand, will no longer be staged there. The IGC bureau is seeking bids, which it is hoped may emerge perhaps from South Africa (an original bidder to hold the event) or from Austria.

An **IGC Working Group** to examine how microlight glider classes might be included into the competition structure and where the World Class sits has been established.

Club Class handicaps have been increased on the IGC Club Class list, allowing more gliders into the Club Class from October 2007. The Discus and Discus WL are the most obvious additions. BGA Club Class rules remain unaltered at 96 or below, but the IGC decision will allow these new gliders to fly in the BGA Club Class Nationals, as UK rules refer to the IGC list and allow all gliders on that list to be included in addition – but at their BGA handicaps. The Cirrus has been given a one per cent increase in handicap on the IGC list.

Sporting Code: further to an earlier IGC decision to increase the Open Class max weight to 850kg (with valid C of A), it was decided to bring forward implementation to July 2007 to include this season's European Championship. This will allow single-seaters with engines to fly at up to 850kg, C of A permitting. This means that, even as things stand at present, current top sailplanes like the ASW 22 BLE and Nimbus 4 T and 4M will be able to fly at 800kg or up to 850kg, if the manufacturers are able or willing to attempt re-certification. Pure sailplanes continue to be restricted by certification issues where CS22 prohibits a higher weight than 750kg.

The meeting also approved a proposal for automatic Worlds entries to go to the Junior World and Women's World Champion in each of the relevant classes.

See *www.fai.org* for more IGC news

News in brief

AIC11/2007 (White 132), issued on March 1, contains important information about charity flights in gliders or motorgliders (see the AIC for a definition of charity flights). AIC 12 (yellow 231) of the same date refers to danger areas and restrictions of flying. See *www.ais.org.uk* for details.

AROUND 25 FLARMs – an electronic anti-collision device – are now on site at Lasham, including two sponsored by Joint Aviation for club use and a batch bought by private owners. If all these were fitted, about a tenth of the total glider fleet on site would be FLARM-equipped. Lasham Gliding Society is investigating the feasibility of fitting FLARM to all club aircraft – gliders, motorgliders and tugs. Meanwhile, pilots at Portmoak have been conducting airborne tests with two gliders equipped with the units.

The 2007 BGA competition rules can be downloaded from *www.gliding.co.uk/competitions*. There are a number of changes from last year; so if you are a competition pilot, please read them. Some changes are in response to the AAIB report into the accident at the Junior Worlds in 2005 – see page 62 of this issue of *S&G* for a summary of that report.

ALL *S&G* subscribers in the UK should by now have received their free copy of *Accidents to Gliders 2006*, a useful analysis containing excellent safety advice. It is also being distributed through other channels so, if you haven't yet seen a copy, look out for (and read) it.

AFTER a number of years as the Senior Regional Examiner (SRE) for BGA motorgliding, Bruce Tapson has handed over the role to his planned successor, Andy Miller. A highly experienced motorgliding and gliding instructor, Andy is a former CFI and current cross-country pilot. Bruce has also handed over as the SRE for the North-East Region to John Sentence but remains on the BGA Executive Committee.

INSTRUCTORS and unqualified pilots might be interested to learn that the BGA Bronze Badge syllabus is being reviewed under the auspices of the BGA Instructors Committee. Watch this space.

THE recently-published 16th report of the UK Airprox Board (UKAB) covers 79 incidents between January and June 2006. The total of investigations was 17 fewer than the average of comparable figures in each of the previous five years. Of the four risk category A incidents, none involved a commercial air transport (CAT) aircraft. Of the 21 risk category B events, five involved one. *www.airproxboard.org.uk*

A REPORT from the 2006 Chairmen's Conference is available for download at *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/clubmanagement/documents.htm*.

FOR a different perspective on flying, and impressive video, take a look at jet-powered human flight at *http://jet-man.com/playervideo.swf?video=jetman2007.flv* or enjoy Tilly the Golden Eagle's view at *http://animal.discovery.com/convergence/spyonthewild/birdtech/birdtech.html*

Your letters

Winching in the good old days

HAVING read *Three seconds of mayhem* in the February-March 2007 issue of *S&G* (page 36), I thought you might like to see one example of how it used to be in the good old days (?) before Health and Safety.

This photograph was taken around 1938 at the Scottish Gliding Union's hill site on Bishop. The vehicle is a Studabaker Saloon car which, as you can see, was jacked up and a steel drum attached to one of the back wheels.

Pay particular attention to the safety devices (alternative answers on a postcard, please):
1. Winch driver with his door ajar to keep cool.
2. Signaller using a flag to indicate that: "slack is all out".
3. Official observer "observing" operations nice and close to the rotating drum.
4. The "Axe Man" ready to chop the cable in the event of an emergency (note the protective shorts and long socks). Can you imagine what happens to flailing wire on that drum?

The Studabaker was later requisitioned for the war effort and became an ambulance until it was destroyed during an air raid around 1940.

Ian Easson, via email



Low-tech number 1 (1938): the potential for mayhem was even greater then. See Winching in the good old days

Help required

I THINK there must be something wrong with me: we're going ski-ing tomorrow but "I'll miss gliding next Wednesday..." is what's on my mind! Last October was worse. My wife booked us a week's cruise – and it was Wednesday to Wednesday!

***Name & address supplied,* Devon & Somerset GC**

Do try this at home, too

RODDY'S interesting article (*Do try this at home*, December 2006-January 2007, p22) dealt with flight simulators for the Windows platform. Platypus's disclosure in the same *S&G* that he uses an iMac moves me to mention the X-Plane flight simulator for glider pilots using the Macintosh (*http://x-plane.com/*)

X-Plane is, to my knowledge, the top flight sim for this operating system. The program comes on a single DVD which will run on Windows, Mac and Linux computers. Sweet!

X-Plane scenery is available worldwide. Flight control, weather and view settings are very adjustable. There are many, many aircraft available, including a few sailplane sims such as Blanik, Cirrus and ASW 28.

If you enjoy giving your undivided attention to a complicated instrument panel you can pretty much have it all in X-Plane.

If you are a minimalist, load in a jet, fly low and follow the curves and contours of mountains and valleys (Omarama? The Canadian Rockies? Scotland? South America?) to keep stick, rudder and throttle skills sharp in the off-season.

My own favourite is the TSR.2 sim. If the real thing was as pleasant to fly as the X-Plane version, the test pilots were blessed.

Setting X-Plane up to your liking is easier if you have help but if you don't, trial and error will get you there.

Suppose you'd like to try out flying the Pennsylvania ridge system. Select winch or aerotow take-off from Keystone or Mifflin, and begin by trying out low-level winds set to 310° at about 20kts. You will experience an uncanny computerised version of the area. As you "fly" over the crests and dips of the ridges the glider will react to the simulated orographic lift.

Terry McElligott, via email

Mistaken identity

THANK you for printing my photograph in the February-March issue with the caption: "It was David White of Essex & Suffolk GC who took this image at Denbigh" (p55).

However, there must be a few people from Essex & Suffolk scratching their heads and wondering who their new member is.

Meanwhile, at East Sussex GC, members who know me are wondering why Dave White has moved to Essex & Suffolk and in the process taken the East Sussex Astir with him (JQT, as shown in my photograph in the last issue).

Those who don't know me are thinking: "Who on earth is Dave White?"

I will hold my hand up! The answer is quite simple. On submitting the photos I believe that in my haste I may have put ESGC on the email, causing some confusion at *S&G*. With the choice of two ESGCs, Sod's Law says that the wrong one will be chosen. My apologies for the confusion.

Yours sincerely from East Sussex GC (and not to be confused with Dave White from London GC, who took the photo printed above mine in the last issue).

Dave White, via email

Oops, sorry! – Ed

More soaring dreams

I READ Platypus' comments about people having soaring dreams with interest. I often dream of gliding. Gliding has always been difficult for me. Some people are natural pilots and some just have to work and work at it. I fall into the latter category. In all my years of learning I never dreamed I would own a glider of my own, until I recently brought my first glider: she is a Skylark 4 and I dream about soaring over the Kent countryside and looking down her wings at Canterbury Cathedral.

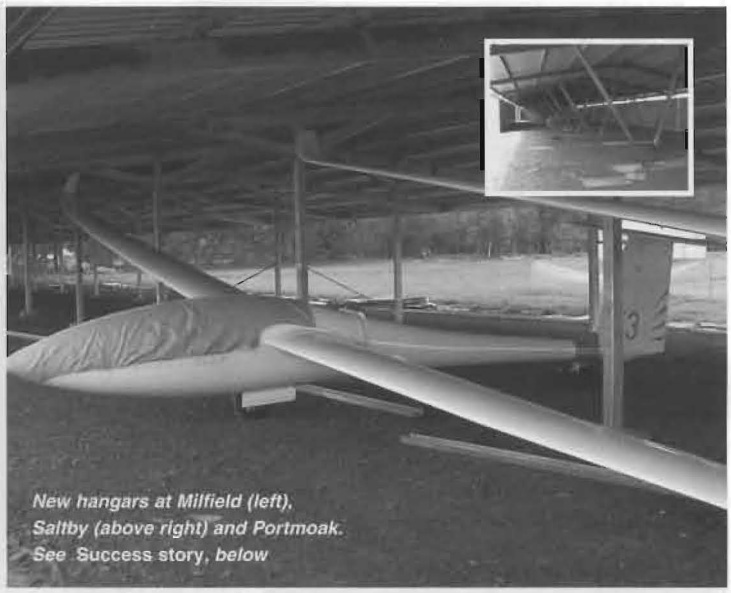
She's a lovely plane and aerotows like a dream and goes up fast in thermals. My Skylark is as 'cool as bits' and I always dream about her. Seeing her on the airfield on a lovely summer's day in her red-and-white livery always brings a smile to my face.

I also dream of an idyllic flight I had with our CFI – one of those last flights of the day when you don't expect much to happen. The sun was just turning red, changing the light around us to that pinky-gold colour that indicates the end of a long summer's day. There were even a few balloons up in the air. We just caught the last of the day's thermal activity and had to scratch



Low-tech number 2 (1951): How about Jimmy the Horse for dragging gliders back to the Portmoak launchpoint?





New hangars at Milfield (left), Saltby (above right) and Portmoak. See **Success story**, *below*

around for every inch of height. It was one of those flights that I always call to mind when people at the bar after flying ask me about my best times in a glider.

Because I've always had trouble sideslipping sometimes I dream of a lesson I had where my instructor made me hold the K-21 in the slip right down to the ground.

The conversation in the cockpit was along the lines of:

"Shall I straighten her up now?"
"No, not yet."
"Now shall I do it now?"
"No, not yet, hold it in."
"I've got to straighten the plane."
"No, wait until I tell you."
"What about now: we're close to the ground."
"NO...Wait until I tell you."
"Now?"
"No."
"Now?"
"No."
"Now?"

"Okay, swing her round straight. There: that was easy!"

But probably my most recurring flying dream is, like most pilots, the one when my instructor, Pete, got out of the K-13 and said to me: "How do you feel about taking it up on your own?"

Around Kent GC the countryside is the stuff soaring dreams are made of. We have castles like Leeds and Bodium to soar over, large areas of woodland that change colour with the seasons, views of the coast of France on a good day, and open fields: for me, these things are all the basic ingredients of good soaring dreams.

Andy Young, via email

PS: I have also had dreams about taking Kylie, Angelina Jolie and Lara Croft gliding with me, but these don't focus very much on the soaring!

Success story

I ATTACH pictures *(above)* of the interiors of Borders, Portmoak and Buckminster hangars with their first gliders in. All three clubs report increased flying hours and launches as a result of the improved ease and speed with which members can get gliders flying – to such an extent that the hangars are paid for already and more hangar spaces are being sought and built.

These are, in my opinion, important success stories which you would do gliding a service by shouting from the rooftops. People have to have less time wasted nowadays – and rigging is SUPER timewasting.

John McWilliam, via email

Fings ain't what they used to be!

I HAD my first glider flight in the T-21A prototype at Dunstable in April 1948. The pilot was George Scarborough. Subsequent solo training was carried out using an open Dagling until flight 17, when I was promoted to the Nacelled Dagling for medium hops. On launch 22, having seen the horizon all green, all blue, then all green again, I crunched the said Dagling, evidence of which is shown in a photograph of Hugh Wheatcroft, then the CFI, contemplating the damage. Launch 46, a high hop, resulted in a flight of 34 seconds. Now I had an "A" badge and was promoted to the Kirby Cadet Mk 1, in which soon after I completed a full circuit and qualified for a "B" badge on July 25, 1948.

As was the practice at the time, after earning "A" and "B" certificates, one was on one's own. There was very little formal instruction except for prompts from the CFI and intermittent encouragement from super chaps like Frank Foster and Geoffrey Stephenson and using the most advanced variometer of the era, a Cobb-Slater, or COSIM.

By 1958 I was in the first phase of my obsession with gliding and managed UK Gold "C" No 35, flying my syndicate Olympia IIa 108. It will come as no surprise that my navigation skills remained almost non existent. Knowing where I was, never mind where I was going, became the central feature of my failures, of which there were many. However, as I did not know that which I did not know, a common failing among young men, I fumbled on for more years than I care to admit making the same mistakes. I remember one flight during the Nationals in 1959 landing in quite a good field, fairly close to a town, and saying to the first person to approach "Is this Crewkerne or Chard?" His face was a picture as he told me with a strong local accent: "This is Glastonbury".

By the middle of the 1970s, I had at last learnt to use a compass and map read. My navigation was helped by sheer volume of cross-countries: having seen most of Southern Britain from the air at least once before, I had now completed my three Diamonds, UK No 68, including the then-essential 28 per cent 500km triangle.

Which brings me to the reason that prompted this epistle. I became chairman of the Instructors Committee in 1977, the year that the BGA added cross-country soaring to the coaching programme. The policy had started in 1976 under the previous chairman, Don Spottiswood. We were using the newly-acquired BGA Twin Astir, 97.

I soon came to recognise that just like me, nearly all pilots starting their cross-country careers could not cope with the navigation and the other demands in the time available.

It became necessary to try and balance the time spent between the various needs in the air. Managing the workload was essential for cross-country success.

About this time, cross-countries in wave became more fashionable in place of hitherto yo-yo mode. The first pilot to my knowledge to adopt a useful navigation device to this end was Mike Costin in his Nimbus 2c. He used a longwave radio on a turntable, tuned to BBC transmitters, obtaining useful bearings from which he could position himself while flying over Mid and North Wales. Soon afterwards at Sleap we started using QDMs based on the VDF installed on the airfield for the use of proper aeroplanes. Using the VDF facility we explored as far west as Cardigan Bay and Anglesey, quite often over 100 per cent cloud. As a result we learnt more about wave. By the mid-80s, Decca became an option. In my case it never really took over from the VDF. A few years on, one of our GA pilots at Shropshire Aero Club flew into the back of the Wrekin with the aid of his

➢

BGA waypoint list hits 1,000

THE 2007 BGA list of Waypoints and Club Sites for the first time includes more than 1000 points . This is mainly because of a set of new points in Scotland, converting what were club points to additions to the BGA list. All clubs are encouraged to do this so that useful points can be made available to all.

When club points are "converted" to BGA ones, the unique BGA Three-Letter Code will be allocated to replace what the club may have been using. There may have to be other small changes to conform to the BGA system. For instance, what the local club calls Boat o'Brig will become Rothes NE in the BGA system because the town Rothes is marked on the half-million air map. Also, a club may be using a rather small feature known to locals. If there is a nearby big feature (BGA Cat A) this will be preferred for the BGA list. Changes are made after negotiating with the club, of course.

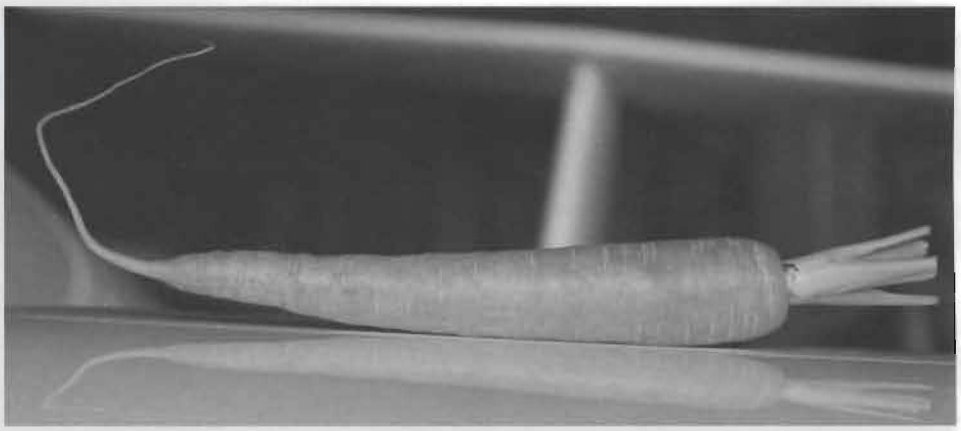
New waypoints on the list this year, as well as the Scottish points, include some in the south west of England as a result of practical soaring experience in that area. This is the whole point, if real soaring experience suggests that a new point would be useful, that point should be in the BGA system! There are also some "fill in" points in the West Midlands and elsewhere.

Pilots and clubs with proposals for new points should put them forward at any time to be included this year as "Stop Press" or added next year. On the other hand, where local airspace has become more restrictive or ground conditions have changed, please notify me so that the point can either be described differently or withdrawn. For instance, Winthorpe (WPE) has been withdrawn because it is no longer the site of the Newark & Notts GC and the old runways have fences across. The alternative is Newark (NWK), which is very close. Where clubs change names and/or sites, I also need to know. For instance, Bicester is now the Windrushers GC, not the RAFGSA Centre.

The definitive BGA list with introduction, latest updates and any stop press items can be accessed via www.gliding.co.uk (Info for clubs and members – Cross Country and Competitions – Forms, Lists and Downloads – look for the para on Waypoints). You can also use the search box on the home page.

The list together with important notes is held at: www.spsys.demon.co.uk/turningpoints.htm and can be accessed directly without going through the BGA site. For policy, changes, comments and new points, you can use the forms on the website or email direct to *ian@ukiws.demon.co.uk*

Ian Strachan, BGA WP List Co-ordinator



Above: The humble carrot. Could nano-fibres from this cheap vegetable, embedded in resin, represent the latest breakthrough for glider technology, asks a reader. See What's up, Doc? *(below) for the full story (Photo:* S&G)

Decca! Then in the last decade of the century not only glider pilots took to GPS, but most amateur GA pilots took to it as well, in spite of repeated horror warnings from the CAA.

This introduction of GPS into gliding was a massive revolution. It changed the sport forever and in ways that are not immediately obvious.

Firstly, navigation has become boringly easy and accurate. If you include turning points and photographic sectors it represented in excess of 50 per cent of a pilot's workload. As a result we have twice the time available to devote to the other tasks that were previously secondary.

It comes as no surprise then that we are much better at these skills, resulting in much enhanced performance, whether racing or distance flying.

In addition the proliferation of multiple turning points increased the opportunities several times over. Who remembers the 28 per cent rule now?

There was, however, one advantage to map reading: it enhanced lookout. When matching features on the landscape to the map, one's attention was often drawn to aircraft not previously seen. As looking at the landscape has become less necessary, the remaining visual task of looking for other aircraft has become optional after all the other activities are completed, unless you are getting low and need a safe landing site. This was well demonstrated to me a few years ago when flying in a two-seater as P2 across the Karoo desert in South Africa, on a 500km rectangular task, I with a map, and the German P1 with his GPS. At no time did he look for anything but turning points, whilst I enjoyed searching for and finding the few scarce features in the desert in between each waypoint.

On another level I know one professional pilot who would not consider taking off for a local flight without his home base entered as a waypoint in his GPS. I also notice that some pilots have so little interest in the landscape they fly as though they were operating a computer in a steam-filled room.

To me what was once a sport of superb visual delight is now driven by electronics. Don't get me wrong, it is just different. The technology is superb, I have no wish to change anything, but today's gliding is not the same as the gliding that I spent 58 years and 4,000 hours enjoying, learning, and in turn helping others to learn.

At least half the operational skills I learnt are now of no value at all. However, I remain eternally grateful for those opportunities I enjoyed during my gliding lifetime and to my Guardian Angel, who came to my rescue whenever I asked for help. Were it possible for me to choose the last 50 years gliding as against the next 50, there would be no doubt about my choice.

Vic Carr, WREXHAM, Wales

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* ***April 10***

Mistaken identity again

FULL marks to Sir John Allison for noting "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 in the front line*, February-March 2007, p30). *S&G* readers who responded to the CAA mode S consultation last summer to help keep air traffic managers in check may also be interested in the wider issue of citizen monitoring via identity cards that Sir John mentions. If so, they should visit the website at *http://www.no2id.net* to find out more about the campaign against compulsory identity cards.

Andrew Watson, CAMBRIDGE, Cambs

What's up, doc?

SCIENCE gets stranger and stranger! Two Scottish materials scientists have developed a much cheaper alternative to carbon fibre, using nano-fibres derived from ground-up carrots, embedded in resin.

They say it can be used to make fly fishing rods, snowboards, and engineering components. They are about to launch their first product – a fly rod – so it must be very tough and flexible. If it does turn out to be as strong as carbon fibre and much cheaper, then could we even see main spars or other structural parts of gliders made from this stuff? For the full story: http://news.scotsman.com/index.cfm?id=212262007

Graham White, via email

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Flying the flag for glider pilots

BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli reports back on two recent major international gliding meetings and on changes to the Executive Committee at the Association's AGM on March 10. The committee members pictured opposite are running the BGA and representing your interests at national level for the next year

IT IS here, at last. As I write, Britain's thermal soaring season appears to have made its long-awaited return. The view from where I'm sitting is of a sky that has all the hallmarks of reasonable conditions – sunshine, distinct cumulus, even evidence of streeting. It seems to have been that way on several days recently: time for a good many pilots to emerge from hibernation.

By contrast, the work of the international gliding bodies goes on all year round. Conveniently, however, the larger, annual meetings are organised when the risk of interfering with this country's soaring season is very small.

Just before our weather got better, the European Gliding Union (EGU) held its Congress in February in Prague, where it was very well hosted by the Czech Aero Club. The EGU Board, working group leads, and member associations' presidents and chairmen met together for a day and a half over a weekend. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the agenda was dominated by regulatory matters and the work that is going on to develop and present European-level gliding views in all the major issue areas.

BGA Chief Executive Pete Stratten and I were invited to the Congress while the Association's Regulatory Group Chairman, David Roberts, was also in attendance as First Vice President of the EGU.

The EGU is making good progress on a number of regulatory fronts. A considerable achievement, given that before it engages directly with representative groups that, like Europe Air Sports, have access to EASA, it must agree common ground among the various national gliding bodies. More often than not this is easily done. There are, however, a few areas where the application of Europe-wide regulation highlights historic differences in approach. A recent example is an understandable reluctance by some countries to agree to medical standards that vary much from their current requirements, even when what is being proposed is less stringent. With people like the BGA's Medical Advisor Peter Saundby at the centre of the debate I am confident that common sense will prevail and that European gliding will make the strongest case for the minimum appropriate standards.

The core EGU team work extremely hard on behalf of its member associations, while BGA staff and volunteers contribute extensively to its work. The value of the EGU, the need to support it, and the consequences for us all if it were not successful are factors that have become more obvious to many nations. Membership of the EGU has increased markedly – largely through the efforts of its President, Roland Stuck. There are now 22 member countries, up from 14 over the last two years.



The weekend following the EGU Congress, the FAI International Gliding Commission (IGC) held its annual Presidents' meeting in the impressive surroundings of the Olympic Museum in Lausanne. Delegates from 33 gliding nations met over two days, with the UK being represented by Brian Spreckley and Russell Cheetham. The meeting covered a range of subjects related to the rules that govern gliding records and competitions, feedback from recent international events, decisions on which nations should host future European and World Championships, and other ideas aimed at keeping gliding as a sport fresh and exciting *(see p5 for details)*.

In between the working sessions, both the EGU and IGC meetings provide valuable opportunities for national delegates to chat informally. This not only leads to some very interesting debates but also helps us to identify areas of strong common interest. For example, the BGA is going to discuss areas of potential information exchange and possible collaboration with the Irish Gliding and Soaring Association on certification and airworthiness matters; and, separately, the suggestion of a civilian pilot exchange programme with Chile along similar lines to that which the RAF GSA has operated for a number of years. Two very different, and very interesting, possibilities.

Rather like buses, gliding conferences come in threes. One week after the IGC meeting, the BGA AGM and Conference has just concluded. *S&G* reports on this, our own event, on pages 12-13 and 26-27. The tremendous success of this weekend, as in previous years, is a clear reflection of the hard work of a great number of BGA staff and volunteers. Well done, and thank you.

The conference is a real showcase for UK gliding and so we invite guests from regulatory bodies, other air sports, and organisations with a commercial interest in gliding, such as our insurers. Their feedback to me on this year's event was universally positive. It helps enormously to forge stronger, more productive working links with the outside world.

Of course, we also conduct the BGA's formal business as well and this year saw a number of significant changes take place in the make-up – perhaps I should say composition – of the Executive Committee. After many years of excellent service, Mike Jordy has retired as our Vice Chairman. He was of tremendous support to my predecessor as chairman, David Roberts, and, over the last year, for me too.

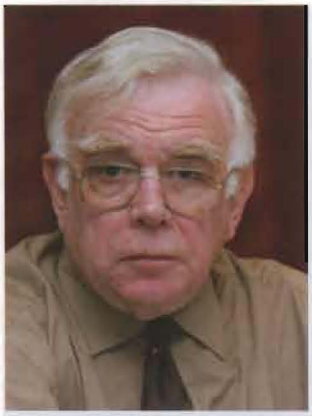
Also retiring after their maximum allowed time on the Committee are Diana King, Jon Hall and Paul Hepworth. I would like to thank them on behalf of the entire movement for their contribution and commitment to the BGA. Keith Mansell and John Birch have been re-elected for further terms, thereby ensuring important continuity. Chris Gibson has joined the committee and will, I am certain, make an equally important contribution to its work.

As I reach the end of my allotted space the view from my study window is very much the same as it was when I began writing. So, I am off to fly.

Have fun, stay safe.



Patrick Naegeli
Chairman, British Gliding Association
March 2007



***Keith Mansell**, President of Midland GC, served many years as the BGA Treasurer and is now its Company Secretary. A trustee of the Planning and Environment and the Philip Wills Funds, he holds a BGA Gold Medal for his services to the sport of gliding*



***John Birch** took over from Keith as BGA Treasurer two years ago. He flies from Cambridge GC and is a full-rated instructor, who has a Duo Discus XT. Janet, his wife, flies an ASW 28. He soloed in 1988 and has all three Diamonds*





***Chris Gibson**, the only newcomer to the Executive this year, flies from Lasham and has MGIR and NPPL instructor ratings as well as being a full-rated gliding instructor. A tug pilot, he has two Diamonds, 1,500hrs and an ASW 20cl share*



***Pete Harvey** flies from Bicester and York and is a British Team member. After success in international hang-gliding, he won the European Open Class Gliding Championship in 2005 and will defend his title this year. He has a Nimbus 4*

*BGA Chairman **Patrick Naegeli**, seen above at the 2007 AGM, flies from Lasham. A Senior Regional Examiner, 2005 British Team member, tug pilot, BGA motorgliding examiner and CAA SLMG instructor, he has 3,000hrs and owns a Ventus 2*

The photos of Patrick, Keith, Pete and (opposite) the BGA's flag are by Paul Morrison. To enjoy more of his images, capturing the atmosphere of a successful weekend, turn to p26. For an AGM report and pictures of BGA award & trophy winners, see overleaf



***Ted Norman** flies from Ulster GC. He began gliding in 1960 with the RAFGSA, was RAFGSA Centre Manager for nine years and is a BGA MGIR & CAA SLMG instructor with 2,000hrs and two Diamonds*



***Rose Johnson** flies from Midland GC. A team member for the 2007 Women's Worlds, she did her first Worlds in 1997. A tug pilot and full-rated instructor, she has a Diamond Badge and shares in three gliders*



***Phil Burton**, who is the BGA's Child Protection Lead, flies from Norfolk GC and Suffolk Soaring Society. An assistant instructor, he has a share in a Grob 103 and enjoys focusing on introducing people to gliding*



***Bruce "Tappo" Tapson**, who flies from Buckminster, began gliding in 1957 with the Air Cadets, is a former RAFGSA CFI and BGA SRE. A CAA examiner (FIE) and CAA CRI, he has more than 12,500hrs – 10,000 instructing*

An upbeat AGM for 2007

All photos: Paul Morrison



Right: The BGA Bronze Medal was awarded to John Bradley, right, former chairman of the Technical Committee, for meritorious service. "John's steady hand, wise counsel and commitment contributed enormously," the citation says, "to the ongoing success of the BGA's airworthiness management"



Left: top French instructor Jacques Noel was the keynote speaker: others were Phil King, Sharon Kerby, Pete Masson and Andrea Schlapbach. See p26 for photos of the day

There was a real buzz at the BGA AGM and Conference this year. Helen Evans reports

THIS LAST YEAR has been one of considerable progress for UK gliding, BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli told the Association's annual general meeting on March 10 at the new venue of Hellidon Lakes Hotel, near Daventry.

More than 240 people attended the AGM and Conference, and the formal business of the day took place after lunch, when Patrick began by thanking the team – led by Claire and Cris Emson – that organises the event, and the major sponsors of the day.

By way of summarising the annual report, Patrick highlighted achievements from each of the Association's sub-committees: from the high-profile exhibition at Canary Wharf by the Communications and Marketing team, through the huge amount of club support undertaken by volunteers in areas like development, airspace and instructing, to the recent successful EASA audit of BGA technical airworthiness issues.

He went on to identify three pressures the BGA faces at national level: the workload on the organisation, the need for volunteers and the demands of a fast-changing environment. At club level, he singled out the membership challenge, volunteers and instructors.

The AGM formally accepted the minutes of the previous AGM and the annual report for the past year.

Treasurer John Birch reported that the Association had made a surplus of £64,291 in 2005/6, more than double that budgeted, but pointed out that some of this derived from disposal of assets, and that major expenditure in anticipation of EASA-inspired change had not yet materialised, though the general cost of dealing with regulatory matters is increasing. The budget for October 2007 to September 2008 was then passed, setting adult *per capita* BGA fees at £26, abolishing the Junior (under 21) fee, and aiming for a smaller surplus than previously.

BGA Chief Executive Pete Stratten then proposed a change to BGA Operational Regulation 1.9, on glider markings, which was passed by the meeting.

Auditors King Freeman were reappointed and, before handing over to Company Secretary Keith Mansell to announce the election of officers, Patrick thanked the four members of the committee who were retiring, all after their maximum term: Diana King, Jon Hall, Paul Hepworth and Vice Chairman Mike Jordy. "All of them have contributed enormously," he said, "and have been patterns of what a good Executive Committee member is about".

Keith Mansell then announced that he himself and John Birch were eligible for re-election and that Chris Gibson had been nominated, and that because the number of nominees did not exceed the number of vacancies, there was no need for an election *(see p11 for a full list of Executive members)*.

All BGA Vice-Presidents were re-elected, as is customary, with one vote, ending the formal business. BGA Diplomas *(see below)* were then presented for services to gliding along with a BGA Bronze Medal *(above)*. Patrick also highlighted honours recently awarded to glider pilots by the Royal Aero Club and the IGC *(see pp4-5 for details)*.

The conference, which was sponsored by Joint Aviation Services, L&L Embroidery, AFE and *Its a wing thing*, concluded with a dinner-dance that was booked to capacity, the presentation of BGA trophies *(see opposite)*, and a very popular after-dinner casino entertainment and band.



BGA Diploma winners present in person on March 10 were – pictured left with Patrick Naegeli – *Les Merritt (Buckminster) and*, pictured right, from left: *Derek Phillips (Stratford), Andrew Hulme (Cambridge) and Peter Molloy (Dorset). Awards in absentia were made to Thomas (Tom) Snoddy of Ulster, John Swannack of Dukeries, Chris Berry of Aquila and Allan Holland of Dartmoor*



All photos: Paul Morrison


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Winning flights: 2006

The following BGA trophies were presented by Janet Birch for last year's achievements

Wakefield Trophy – **David Masson (2)**, Lasham
Longest handicapped distance
July 11, 2006, 829km

Furlong Trophy – **Roy Pentecost**, Lasham
Longest handicapped triangle
April 5, 2006, 638km

Frank Foster Trophy – **Roy Wilson (10)**, Deeside
Fastest handicapped 500km
June 1, 2006, 503km at 109.8km/h

California In England Cup – **Sarah Kelman**, Cambridge
Longest handicapped flight by a female pilot
May 31, 2006, 551.8km at 80.8km/h

Manio Cup – **John Williams (9)**, Scottish
Fastest handicapped 300km
August 10, 2006, 303.8km at 140.4km/h

De Havilland Trophy – **Bruce Cooper (8)**, Booker
Maximum gain of height
February 6, 2006, 21,493ft height gain, max 24,465ft


11

Volk Trophy – **John Russell**, Yorkshire
Longest handicapped out-and-return
April 5, 2006, 508.5km

Goldsborough, Highest placed in recent Worlds
– Leigh Wells, Bristol & Glos and Phil Jones, Lasham
Leigh Wells (4) – Standard Class World Champion
Phil Jones (3) – 18-Metre Class World Champion

Seager Trophy – **Hugh Kindell (11)**, Lasham
Longest handicapped distance in a two-seater
July 11, 2006, 695.7km declared, 91.7% completed

Rex Pilcher Trophy – shared between **Alistair Cook (6)**, Windrushers and **Pete Masson (7)**, Lasham.
Earliest successful Diamond distance claim in the year:
April 5, 2006

Phil Lever Award – **Charlie Tagg (1)**, Wolds
Most promising junior pilot

John Hands Award – **Ron Bridges**, The Gliding Centre
For outstanding support in organising or running of competitions

Enigma Trophy – **Roy Pentecost**, Lasham
Winner, Open National Ladder

Firth Vickers Trophy – **Tim Macfadyen**, Bristol & Glos
Second place, Open National Ladder

L. duGarde Peach Trophy – **David Masson**, Lasham
Winner, Weekend National Ladder

Slingsby Trophy – **Chris Starkey**, Lasham
Second place, Weekend National Ladder

Spitfire Trophy – **Shaun McLaughlin (5)**, London
Winner, Junior National Ladder

Chris Wills Trophy – **Will Ellis**, Essex & Suffolk
Winner, Wooden Ladder

All distance & speed figures are after handicapping


5


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8 9 10

Share your bright ideas

Alison Randle reminds us of the BGA Good Practice Scheme and updates us on important policy initiatives by government

THROUGH our work, the Development Team has the privilege of talking to many clubs across the UK. You all have an individual approach to combating a myriad of challenges whilst undertaking the seemingly simple task of getting as many people as possible launched heavenwards for their paramount pleasure. What we as a sport are weaker on is sharing ideas between clubs. This is why the BGA's Good Practice Scheme has been launched.

Whilst talking to clubs, it has become apparent that perhaps you don't always realise that what you do as a matter of course at your club is actually rather special. (It can be a source of great frustration to us!) I have chosen a picture *(right)* that features use of Day-Glo jackets for members of the public to wear at a busy launchpoint. Who thought of that first and put it into operation? It may not be possible to determine and the argument could rumble for years (but one of you must have!). It is an example of the sort of thing that many clubs may now take for granted. Take a look at what you do at your club, take a look at the Good Practice section at *www.gliding.co.uk* and the few clubs who have already submitted their ideas and post yours. Be proud of your club's achievements! (Prizes are available.)

Government planning policy

PPG3, which was the predecessor to the government's *Planning Policy Statement 3* (PPS3), included a definition of brownfield sites that was particularly useful for protecting airfields. This definition provided that where an airfield site had been defined as previously developed ("brownfield"), the whole of the airfield would not necessarily be considered as such – only, normally, the area where buildings had stood. This protected large areas of airfields from development and kept them available for sporting use.

The draft for PPS3, produced during 2006, omitted this critical aspect of the brownfield definition. It was therefore considered to pose a threat to sporting and recreational airfields, as the new definition could result in the whole of an airfield being classed as brownfield land and, therefore, vulnerable to development. Following a large number of responses to consultation, assurances were received that the detailed definition of brownfield sites on airfields had been omitted in error. Despite these assurances, the now-final PPS3, recently published, has not reinstated the original wording.



*Day-glo jackets for visitors at Midland GC – what bright ideas could **your** club share with us? (Alison Randle)*

Air sports have liaised between themselves with a view to developing appropriate further responses, including letters to MPs.

PPS3 is now in place. Yvette Cooper MP, The Housing and Planning Minister, has responded to MPs' questions by stating: "I can assure you that PPS3 does not change the status of airfields compared to PPG3... it is up to local authorities to decide on a case by case basis". Protests and political lobbying are continuing to try to get more convincing reassurances from Government.

Smoke-free buildings

The ban on smoking in enclosed venues comes into force in July 2007. Please note this is likely to include tents and marquees unless the walls have *permanent* openings within them greater than 50 per cent of the total wall area. Some clubs have already made their clubhouse a smoke–free zone for either fire safety or social reasons.

Gambling Act 2005: gaming in clubs

New regulations are on the way that will relate to fruit machines and other gambling activities. If this applies to your club there is a consultation under way (the deadline for responses is April 20): *www.culture.gov.uk/what_we_do/Gambling_racing/QuickLinks/Consultations/*

Gender Equality Duty

Another new law comes into force at the start of April, ahead of the the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR), which from autumn 2007 will replace the Equal Opportunities Commission, the Commission for Racial Equality and the Disability Rights Commission.

The Gender Equality Duty (GED) requires public authorities to promote equality of opportunity for men and women, and to eliminate sex discrimination and harassment. It follows similar duties relating to race and disability introduced in the past few years.

So if it is for public authorities, why should clubs act? Simply, it is a matter of good practice, of ensuring that our sport is open and appealing to all sorts of people.

Let's put it another way. How easy is it for each club to encourage a person on a trial lesson to come back and try it again? Having done that, how easy is it to get them to come back and join the club? By looking at areas covered by the GED, you will be removing the sorts of things that may be putting people off coming back to your club. Examples could include:

– appropriate provision to enable women to operate ground equipment;
– gender-neutral instruction and coaching;
– appropriate safety advice to women (and men) on physiological matters;
– ground facilities (eg toilets) for both sexes;
– family-friendly facilities;
– appropriate ballast and cushions to enable people of all sizes to fly the club gliders.

Why not turn GED to your advantage? Flagging up your club's strengths in this area may improve your chances of securing grant funding. It may also help if you plan to or are working closely with schools and other publicly funded organisations. It is about creating the right environment so that people who want to come and enjoy the sport can. You probably already have some good ideas at your club. For more information, see *www.eoc.org.uk/Default.aspx?page=15016* and *www.thewnc.org.uk/wnc_work/cehr.html#Gender%20Equality%20Duty*. More regulations relating to the Equality Act are due to emerge during the year. Watch this space.

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Sheer bloody funny

ONE OF my favourite comedy sketches is the one – which I am sure all of you know by heart – in which four comfortable Yorkshire businessmen, over brandy and cigars, vie with each other in describing their poverty-stricken childhoods:

"You 'ad a cardboard box for an 'ome? You were lucky. We lived in an 'ole in t'ground wi' a sheet o' corrugated iron over our 'eads!"

"You 'ad corrugated iron? Sheer bloody luxury! I tell yer, when I was a lad..." and the lurid stories go on and on, escalating from seriously unbelievable to totally preposterous.

Last February I found myself at a black-tie annual dinner at a famous club, telling a bunch of very young glider pilots about my struggles as an early-solo pilot in the 1950s at another famous club, in straitened financial circumstances. Once, I said, I was grounded for a fortnight for buggering the Club Prefect. (That's a type of glider, by the way; I don't want you to get any strange ideas about my proclivities.)

Despondently I took myself home on a Green Line bus, which spent over two hours wending its way through 40 miles of country lanes, there being no motorway yet. Of course poor little Plat, all his miserable pittance of a salary spent on gliding, had no car. (Waits for audience to start sobbing gently; wishes he had violin.)

At this point, however, I could imagine some grizzled old glider pilot jeering:

"You 'ad bus tickets? Sheer bloody luxury! I 'ad to walk barefoot to Sutton Bank every Sunday!"

Yes, there is always someone who has had it worse than you. You may or may not find this a comforting thought. Personally, it does nothing for me.

Anyway, after my address to the young pilots that evening in February, I went to the clean and neat private room which had been kindly laid on for me at the young pilots' expense – and experienced a sudden wave of 1950s nostalgia: the bunkhouse was freezing, and the duvet was wafer-thin. My first thought was, "Just like the old days, wonderful!" My second, and much more intelligent, thought was to thank Heaven that I was on the wagon that week and so was able to drive straight back to my centrally-heated home in London and switch on the electric blanket. The next day I light-heartedly mentioned this episode to my partner – a fellow-syndicate member, I mean, you have to be so careful with words these days – who promptly raised the matter with the Committee.

This I really had not intended, since I did not wish to sound like a pampered, whingeing sissy.

My par – sorry, fellow-syndicate member – then regaled me with this story:

"I remember my introduction to gliding was in 1968 on a residential gliding holiday with the West Wales GC at Withybush near Haverfordwest.

God, what a disaster! I had taken my wife along complete with dancing shoes and posh frocks.

The advertised "Modern Two-Storey Club Room" was the old wartime control tower. The Dance Hall, Sports Room and Bar were in fact all the one room on the top floor.

'Just about then the earth moved, or rather the caravan swayed somewhat. I looked out of the front window and was confronted by a huge sow rubbing its back on the draw bar!'

Our accommodation turned out to be a dirty old green and cream caravan which was awash with empty beer bottles and had rotting curtains.

I well recall my wife sitting in the caravan, in floods of tears, as I was unloading our luggage from the car into the van.

Just about then the earth moved, or rather the caravan swayed around somewhat, I looked out of the front window and was confronted by a huge sow rubbing its back on the draw bar!

On the Monday we found that the course instructor had crashed a glider the week before and left. We had to phone the CFI to get him out of bed and come to do some instructing.

Our introduction to auto-tow launching was, "Who can drive? OK, you drive that Jag, hook the cable on here." We got instructions on signals for "Up slack," "All out", "Stop", "Too fast", "Too slow" etc and off we went.

We had one launch each on the Monday. Did not fly Tuesday and Wednesday because all of the tow-cars were dead! We had an aerotow each on the Thursday and four auto-tow launches each to about 700ft on a short runway on the Friday.

Good first impressions? I don't think so, and enough to make anyone forget about taking up gliding. However as I had been mad about aeroplanes since as long as I can remember I realised that gliding was flying that I could just about afford.

I was working at the Royal Aeronautical Establishment, Farnborough at the time and was all for joining the RAE Gliding Club but my wife insisted that we start a family first. An exhausting year later, after our first son was born, I joined the RAE gliding club and have not looked back since. Gliding for me has become a way of life.

The moral of this story is that first impressions count; a good bunkhouse is an essential part of this.

Had I not been so mad on flying, that experience with the West Wales club would have put me off gliding for good and I would have missed out on a very happy life."

"What, you 'ad a whole caravan, wi' tame pigs rootin' about? Sheer bloody luxury! I tell you, when I was a lad we slept in the T21 cockpit (an open cockpit, of course) wi' wild boars chewin' the ailerons all night..."

If you can beat that West Wales experience with a true-life story, send it to me (documentary evidence like photographs and a signed barograph trace would be nice to have) and I'll send you a copy of *The Platypus Papers*. Promise.

Not so funny, though...

When the Master of Ceremonies at the annual dinner introduced me to my student audience and mentioned that I had got my first solo badge in 1949, there was a sharp collective intake of breath. It occurs to me that if in 1949 some distinguished old geezer had come and talked to us trainee pilots about events that took place 58 years earlier, the year in question would have been 1891, when Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Bismarck and Gladstone were alive and

well, and Queen Victoria was just hitting her stride. Lilienthal's first successful gliding flights were still three years away. That makes me feel very wrinkly indeed...

Sundowners

– with thanks to Ted Hull, by no means the London GC's oldest inhabitant, but certainly the best-informed on matters historical

For as long as any of us can remember, the rash of wooden huts at Dunstable has constituted something of a blot on an otherwise beautiful site. The oldest hut was the original 1932 clubhouse; this was not pulled down in 1936 when the splendid modern clubhouse/hangar designed by Kit Nicholson was put up. Behind this old clubhouse, two more huts went up in 1938 to accommodate Air Cadets, at the government's request. Therefore much of the fine aspect to the south-west – which the new building's characteristically 1930s curvature on that side had been specifically created to display – was blotted out for nearly 70 years.

Now at last the huts are down, and the view of the Chilterns and especially Ivinghoe Beacon is spectacular, especially in the late afternoon. Generations of glider pilots have come and gone without ever enjoying the scene from those windows which Kit had intended. Go and take a look now. Even in unsoarable weather it is well worth seeing. Major plans are afoot that will, amongst other practical benefits, extend the panorama to the west and north west. Then on most days you'll be able to scrutinise the approaching clouds from your armchair.

If Peter Fuller were alive he would doubtless be showing me (as he loved to do) in dark glasses, lolling in an easy chair or deckchair, often with a Martini or Pimm's to hand, admiring not just the sunset but the ceaseless and inexplicable toil of my fellow-members. Where did he get the idea that nothing would stir me to make any effort except threats of physical violence?

Perhaps Peter overheard me muttering about deadlines and imminently-about-to-be-unleashed Rottweilers? Ed.

Stupid Things I Now Confess, No 5 – pulling the wrong lever

Over the past 40 years I have heard, with strong emotions of both horror and scorn, many stories of pilots on approach flying the entire length of an airfield in an unfamiliar glider, with the wheel rhythmically going up and down to little effect except to vary the noise-level in the cockpit.

No prizes for guessing what the cause is, in every case. They have got the wheel handle mixed up with the brake handle – usually in front of a large and mesmerised audience who will never let them forget it (assuming you survive) even if they soar immaculately for the next 50 years.

Although the cause is always the same, the results vary: they may do a very bad landing at the far end, reminiscent of the overshoots into the far hedge that happened in the bad old days before spoilers were invented, and for which the hapless pilots could be forgiven; or, in at least one famous case, the pilot does a spectacular chandelle at the end of a mile-long runway and manages to land back going the opposite direction, having finally run out of height, speed and ideas but not, Lord be thanked, out of runway. Only at a very big site could one get away with that.By luck the wheel was down at the moment of final contact

'The same co-pilot saved me from doing something very silly when I deployed the dive-brake instead of the flap and was wondering why we were shedding so much height on the way into Minden'

with Mother Asphalt. (I was going to say Mother Earth, but the site in question is very grand.) It hardly matters, compared with what might have happened.

Some blunders are less immediately obvious to the outside observer but similar in final outcome: I have even heard of pilots irritably pulling on the cable-release knob as they cross the upwind boundary at an altitude not very different from the height at which they crossed the downwind boundary.

I am no paragon of airmanship, to put it mildly, but when about to deploy airbrakes, especially on a new type, I have always made a point of looking along the wing to see how far out the brake paddles protrude.

For one thing it is useful to know what half-brake looks like and feels like, by comparison with full-brake and no-brake, so you can use half-brake quite often and have some leeway either side to deal with unwanted lift or sink, and other contingencies arising in the circuit.

So my horror at hearing these stories is well founded. But my scorn is much less well founded. Scorn is a close relative of Pride, the deadliest of the Seven Deadly Sins. Pilots such as I are not entitled to Pride or Scorn. Here are some reasons.

Many years ago in a UK Nationals I was trying to give my navigator a feeling that there was a useful job to do in the back seat (GPS having made a mockery of home-made dead-reckoning) other than passing food, drink and peebags. So I said "Let's haul up the undercarriage together – it is very heavy and stiff – when we are on tow."

Both on the first and second day, however, I got a rocket on radio from Brian Spreckley telling me sternly that I had my brakes out on tow. Twice in a row sounds very much like carelessness. It turned out that my co-pilot, extremely experienced generally but unfamiliar with the ASH 25, was hauling on the dive-brake handle when I bellowed for a bit of muscle on the undercarriage lever. However, on another occasion the same co-pilot saved me from doing something very silly in an old Janus (but a new glider for me at the time) when I deployed the dive-brake instead of the flap, and was wondering why we were shedding so much height on the way into Minden.

For although, as I've said, when intending to use dive-brake I always made a point of looking out along the wing to see the brake-paddles sticking up, when not intending to use dive-brake I did not bother to look out.

There is clearly no substitute for spending time on the deck in a new glider blindfold, identifying each knob and handle by location and feel.

In another Janus at Minden I once got a radio call saying my brakes were out while on tow. Having conscientiously done my CBSIFTCBE, I was puzzled. What was happening is this: after the pilots have done their cockpit checks on the patch of gravel at the side of the runway, the line-boys (professional ground-crew) would rush out and haul the glider on to the centreline; in two seconds the mighty, unsilenced tug would roar into life and you'd be whisked over the trees and away; it was a bit like being on an aircraft-carrier.

Being an obliging sort of person (or just a busy-body) I would always pull the dive-brakes out fully for a split-second to apply the wheelbrake to prevent the glider over-running the centreline or sitting with its wheel on the rope, and stop the glider in exactly the right place. On just this one occasion I did not push the brake fully home and lock it after these ground-manoeuvres. So the airbrakes gradually sucked open over the ensuing minutes on tow. A nasty scare.

The truly daft thing is that I remembered later that the Janus's wheelbrake can also be operated with a lever, similar to a bicycle cable brake, mounted conveniently on the control column. So opening the divebrake to operate the wheelbrake, though it does work, is a redundant action during ground-handling. Besides, the Minden line-boys (which term embraces some very sinewy line-girls) know what they are doing and don't need any help getting the glider's main wheel on the right spot. All my messing about with the divebrakes was quite unnecessary as well as dangerous.

Ewe khan knot trussed spell-chequers

I love my spell-checker. He, she or it fails to recognise many of my strange uses of the English language. Thus in place of peebag in the above piece it suggests peerage. Of course these days anybody offering you a peerage ("Do you wish an Earldom, a Viscountcy or will you settle for being a mere Baron, sir?") from the back seat of a glider – even the noble ASH 25 – is likely to get a visit from Britain's vigilant anti-corruption police.

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The Platypus Papers: 50 years of powerless pilotage – *buy at www.gliding.co.uk*



In flight, the HpH 304S has a distinctive, elegant look. Here it is being flown by Richard Jensen in the Czech Republic, above Zbraslavice. The glider is in the EASA type certification process
Left: the sleek fuselage
Right: The view on tow
Far right: We're told that menacing wingtip is why it's called the Shark

Photos: Jochen Ewald



Watch out for the Shark

The 18-Metre Class HpH 304s Shark is worth a closer look, says Jochen Ewald – and check out how it places when it races

HAVING bought the rights and the moulds for the flapped 15-metre Glasflügel 304 (which they renamed the 304CZ) in the early 1990s, HpH at Kutna Hora, about 50 miles east of Prague, became a glider manufacturer. They added optional 17.4m wingtips, and developed an unflapped 15-metre Standard/Club Class variant, the 304C, with conventional Schempp-Hirth airbrakes instead of the Hänle type trailing-edge brakes. Like the original Hänle products, these quickly became renowned for their good flying characteristics and excellent craftsmanship and, due to the lower production costs in the Czech Republic, they can be offered for relatively low prices. Now HpH has launched the 304S Shark, competitively pitched at the increasingly popular FAI 18-Metre Class. Although its name harks back to the Hänle tradition, this is really a completely new development. In November 2006 it had its maiden flight.

The new four-part carbon-fibre structure 18-metre wing comes with a curved leading edge with a separation point six metres from the fuselage centreline, and is equipped with the HpH xn2 profile, a modified, thinner version of the HQ10-16-42 with 13.2% (at the root 16.4%) thickness. The underside will be equipped with zigzag turbulator tape (not yet installed when I flew the prototype) to destroy the laminar separation bubble. The wingtips are bent up and swept backwards, giving the Shark its distinctive, elegant look; and are equipped with wheels. Although the old Hänle internal cross-bearing aileron hinges, which made the control connection, were definitely the best aerodynamic solution, the requirements of stiffness and minimised play for the higher speeds of modern gliders forced HpH to replace them by conventional covered 'aileron horns' as on most modern gliders. Flaps and ailerons are separate units, operated via a mixer in the fuselage and differentiated in each wing to give optimal results for performance and agility in any flap/aileron position. The outer aileron tips move only upwards to reduce aileron drag. Each inner wing section has two waterballast tanks, containing a total maximum of 180 litres,

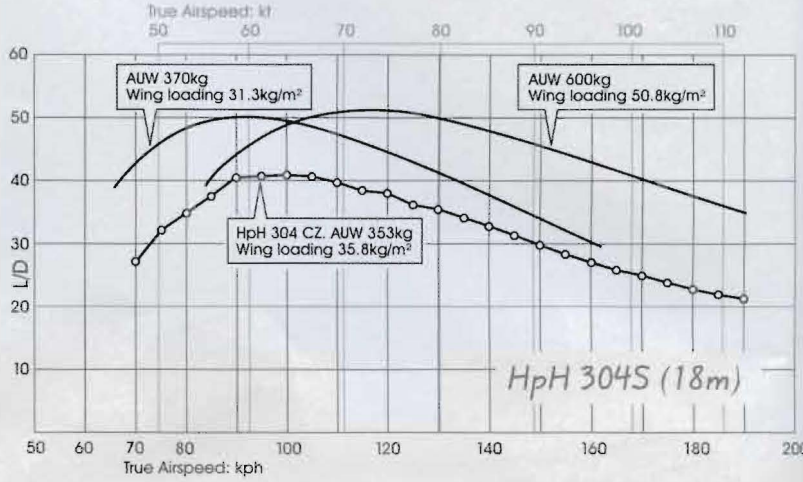






Below left: Jiri Hodan holds the Shark's elliptical tailplane with its interesting tips (left). If you're wondering what the black bits are all about, the rudder and elevator are manufactured using a cutting-edge prepreg-fibre-laminate technology, says Jochen, and on the prototype they were left uncoloured to emphasise the point

All photos: Jochen Ewald



and interconnected 'proportionally-sized' outlet valves, which allow an optimal load distribution when partially dumping ballast.

The fuselage has a new crash-safety cell design, which uses carbon/aramid fibres extensively. It will house a self-launcher or a 'turbo' sustainer or a jet sustainer engine. For pure gliders, a 60-litre waterballast tank can be installed. In the tail are two waterballast tanks: the upper one (6 litres) compensates for the moment of the wing tanks (that 'proportional' emptying), and the lower one (4 litres) balances the centre of gravity according to the cockpit load. The elliptical tailplane, with downward-pointing tips, finishes the interesting overall appearance of the Shark. Rudder and elevator are made using a most modern prepreg-fibre-laminate technology; on the prototype they were left uncoloured to emphasise this. A big, retractable well-suspended mainwheel, a small tailwheel, nose- and c of g hook complete the excellent overall impression of a glider manufactured with excellent craftsmanship.



Rigging is easy and fast. The inner wing sections interconnect tongue-to-tongue with tip bolts, secured by a single main bolt held behind a spring lock, and with automatic Hänle control connections. The outer wings are inserted with their spar tongues, ailerons interconnecting automatically via metal pins, and connected via a horizontal bolt screwed in with the rigging tool through a hole in the leading edge until a locking indicator pin on the upper surface disappears. The tailplane fitting is the conventional Hänle system.

The cockpit interior not only looks very good, but also is equally well designed for comfort and safety. Pedals, backrest and headrest can be adjusted at the bottom and top in many positions, giving pilots of nearly all sizes comfortable seating positions. The seat shell has a smoothly shaped surface without any steps or obstacles that could hold you back during an emergency exit. Steps in the floor between pedals and seat enable you to push your body easily out. The canopy is separated from the gas-strut supported swinging-up instrument panel by pulling the two red levers in front of the white closing ones, and has a Röger hook. The parallel-guided stick of older Hänle types has been replaced by a conventional control stick. Nearly all the levers in the cockpit are placed perfectly ergonomically, I disliked only the shape of the flap lever, which is unlocked by pushing it down and should have a more rounded surface for comfortable grip, and the towcable release handle, which is placed beside the control stick root, and is difficult to reach for pilots with large thighs. This should be changed for serial production. The fresh air supply is controlled by two wheels on the right: one opens the front canopy valve, the other one the adjustable nozzle behind. One lever on the right operates the water valve system, and the spring trim on the left is unlocked by swinging its lever inwards.

Comfortably strapped in, I liked the two handles to pull the canopy down in addition to the levers that close it. The seating position is very comfortable, with a bit less shoulder width than the older Glasflügel types due to the new crash safety cell structure. But below, where you need it to operate the levers, the cockpit becomes wider again and offers full freedom of movement and even space for two pockets to stow things in flight. There are battery boxes behind the main spar and in front of the pedals, and an additional box between pedals and instrument panel, serving also to adjust the c of g for lightweight pilots. This prototype weighed 305kg empty, a bit heavier than the 280kg intended for the serial production glider, but besides being the first prototype this one has also the extra frames and box installed to carry the jet sustainer engine under development at HpH. With my parachute and the battery in the central box behind the baggage shelf, my take-off weight was about 395kg, with the c of g relatively aft.

For the take-off, I chose -2 flap (of the range S, -2, -1, 0, 1, 2, L) to switch to +1 after feeling satisfied with the aileron response. There is a nice extra feature installed in the 304S's instrument panel: a bar with 7 LEDs, indicates the actual flap

TECHNICAL DATA

Wingspan	18m
Wing Area	11.8m²
Aspect Ratio	24.73
Fuselage Length	6.78m
Overall Height	1.48m
Fuselage Height	0.83m
Fuselage Width	0.62m
Empty Weight	280kg
Max Weight	600kg
Min Wingloading	29.6kg/m²
Max Wingloading	50.8kg/m²
VNE	280km/h (151kt)
Performance (calculated)	
Best Glide	51.2 at 125km/h (67.45kt)
Min Sink	0.44m/s (0.85kt) at min weight

Basic price excl. VAT and extra equipment: Euro 69.500

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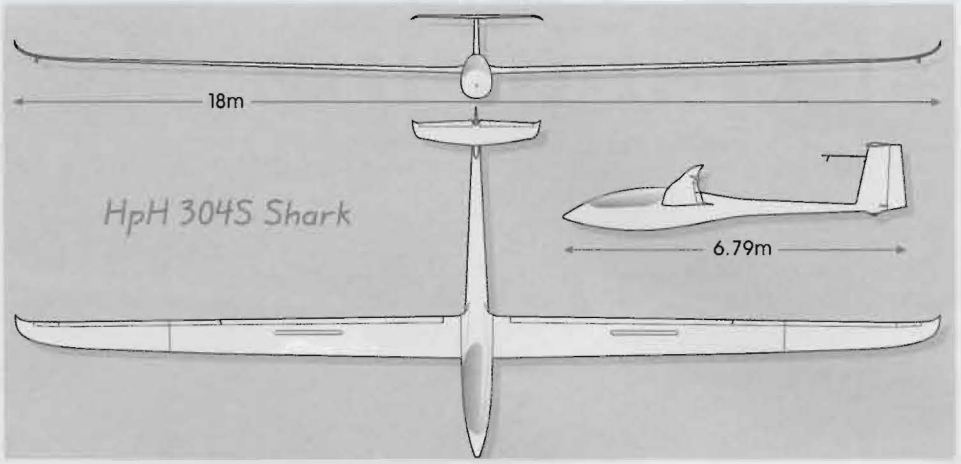
position. I found this very helpful, and it must be even more useful for those flying flapped gliders for the first time! During the ground run, I found that my precaution of beginning with a negative flap setting was not needed: the ailerons were immediately efficient and could be switched to +1, so you do not need to switch the flaps during take-off under normal wind conditions. After a short ground run, the Shark was airborne, flying nicely stable with a very agreeable control response and comfortable control forces. The cockpit view was excellent, and the fresh air supply satisfactory. Retracting the undercarriage was very easy; the locks at both ends can clearly be felt and seen.

After releasing, I first checked the stall and found it very gentle. With the flaps set to 0, buffeting started at 78km/h (42kt) indicated, and at 74km/h (40kt) the Shark went into a buffeting stable stall, with the ASI indication dropping down and a slight tendency to veer to the left. The reason for this was revealed after landing – the airbrake lids were not yet properly adjusted, and on the left side they remained at about 1mm above the surface. The same gentle behaviour was found with the flaps set to +1, +2 and L, with the indicated minimum speeds decreasing by about 3km/h each step. Opening the very efficient three-bladed Schempp-Hirth airbrakes caused an increase in the minimum speed of 6km/h (3kt). When opening the airbrakes, the previously trimmed speed increased by 10km/h (5kt), so no need to change the trim setting during landing.

Next step was to check the flap position–speed interconnection. There is a spring between flap and elevator system, which has not yet been calibrated completely for an optimal interconnection, but it worked already quite well. Trimmed to 80km/h (43kt) in flap position L, speeds settled at 90km/h (48.5kt) at +2; 98 (53kt) at +1; 110 (59kt) at 0; 125 (67.5kt) at –1; 140 (75.5kt) at -2 and 155km/h (84kt) at S. Measuring the 45° roll-rate, I found 3.6 seconds at 105km/h (57kt) with the flaps set to 0, and 4.6 seconds in the thermalling flap position +2 at a speed of 95km/h (51kt) – very good values for an 18-metre glider. At 90km/h (48.5kt) the control harmony was also perfect, and the light control forces make this glider really fun to fly.

At higher speeds – at the time of my flight, the maximum permitted speed was still 220km/h (119kt) because the flutter tests had not yet been completed – this glider flew nicely stable and comfortable, with a very low cockpit noise level.

The fun increased after I descended below the inversion on this sunny mid-February day: some sparse thermal bubbles allowed me to extend my flight a little above Zbraslavice airfield. The Shark appeared to 'sniff' each of those bubbles and make easy use of each one. Before landing, I also tried the sideslip (barely needed with the efficient airbrakes), which is also very easy to control with the rudder being sucked into its stop with light forces only. With the airbrakes open, the nose goes down and a bit more upwards elevator would be needed to compensate fully for this. For the approach and landing I chose flap landing position L and an approach speed of 95km/h (51kt), and found that the Shark handles as easily as a training glider. Fully held off, it touches the ground in a perfect two-point attitude, and the hydraulic wheelbrake, operated by a bicycle-type lever in front of the airbrake lever, makes it effective and easy to adjust your braking without the risk of the nose pitching down on to the ground.



Opposite: calculated polar for the Shark and, above, the three view *(Steve Longland)*

Although the HpH 304S was still in a very early stage of flight testing when I flew it, this glider appears to be a very promising one, not only for competition flying, but also for club use and "conversion to first flapped". The performance, of course, has not yet been measured, but the calculated data indicates it should compete successfully in today's 18-Metre Class competitions.

With its competitive price, gentle flying characteristics, up-to-date safety features, easy handling and HpH's renowned craftsmanship, it is also on the way to follow its Hänle-manufactured predecessors, which are still today much loved by their owners and achieve high prices when offered on the secondhand market.

A set of outer wings for a 15-metre span version exists on HpH's drawing boards, but they doubt they will build these, because there is nearly no demand. Another idea HpH is thinking about is offering tips for 20-metre span, which would further increase performance at quite a low cost for "non-competition" pilots.

But the next options HpH is working on are the engines: a self-launcher version, as well as a 'conventional' turbo and the HpH-developed jet sustainer engine are the features their engineers are working on at the moment. I think it's worth taking a closer look at this glider and how it places in coming competitions! For the UK, HpH is also looking for a dealer.



Right: lots of room for instruments on the panel with (inset) a keypad on the end of the control column

Revelation





The JS1 Revelation first flew last December. In January, it won the SA Nationals. Now twice World Champion Andy Davis has taken it for a test flight – of 500km

I HAVE known about Uys and Attie Jonker's sailplane, the 18-metre JS1 Revelation, for some time, but my first glimpse of the glider itself was on a working visit to South Africa in October last year, when most of the major components were complete and nearing final assembly. I was impressed by the standard of construction and quality of workmanship, and resolved to fly the JS1 on my next visit to the country.

So on a sunny January day I was back at Jonker Sailplanes' facility at Potchefstroom airfield to find it buzzing with the activity involved in laying out the hangar as a factory for serial production. The brothers' target is to construct five production gliders in 2007, increasing to in excess of 12 gliders a year in 2008 and after.

The JS1 has been designed to comply with all the requirements for EASA Type Approval (CS22) and, after they achieve South African Type Approval, the brothers intend to seek EASA Type Approval at the first opportunity.

Taking centre stage in the hangar was the prototype JS1 Revelation. This is a stunning-looking glider, built of carbon fibre, Kevlar and glass-fibre, beautifully finished externally. It is designed purely as an 18-metre glider with a multi-trapezoidal wing tipped with tall winglets, thin high aspect ratio tailplane and a fuselage that reminds me somewhat of recent Schleicher sailplanes.

For aerodynamic reasons, the wing is mounted slightly higher on the fuselage than on other recent designs. Uys explained that the wing root turbulent area is at a much higher angle of attack than the rest of the wing to compensate for loss of lift due to the fuselage; the wing section then changes progressively into the first of six different laminar flow sections across the wingspan.

Attention to detail is impressive. Wing and tailplane joints line up very accurately, which is a testament to the quality of the CNC-machined moulds. There is a very tidy fairing at the fin/tailplane joint. All drives on the full span flaperons are neatly faired and the wing has two rows of blowholes on the lower surface for boundary layer control. These will operate one row at a time, depending on flap position; on the prototype only one row is currently operational. The large undercarriage doors fully cover the belly winch hook when closed. Uys told me the engineering team plans to slightly reduce the size of the doors on production gliders and to arrange for them to be held out away from the undercarriage to reduce the chance of their being damaged in outlandings.

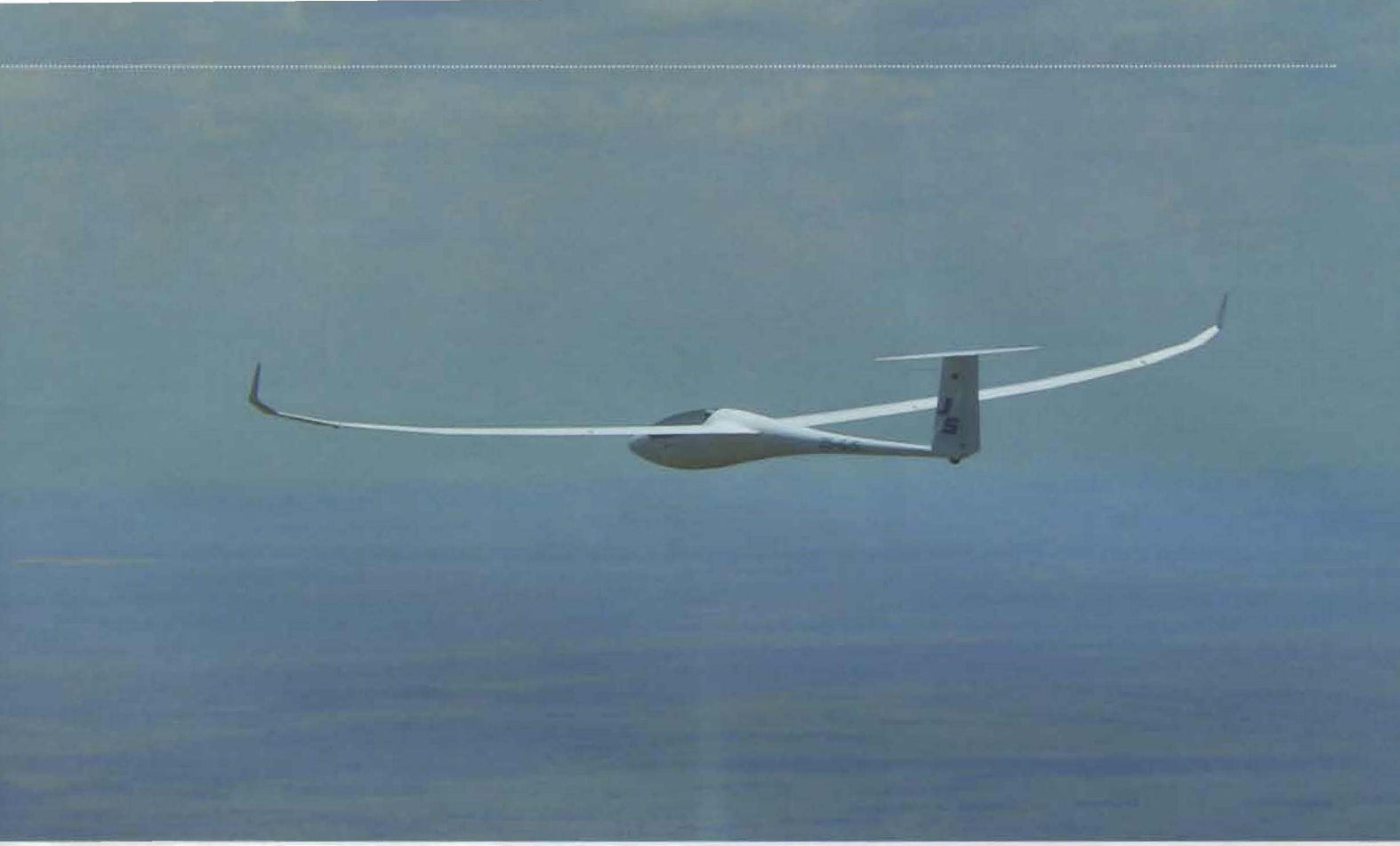
The single-piece canopy fits very well and the optical quality of the prototype's tinted canopy was very good. The large instrument panel lifts up with the front-hinged canopy for easy pilot access to the roomy cockpit. The canopy opens and jettisons by operation of two levers, one on each side of the

TECHNICAL DATA

Wingspan	18m
Aspect ratio	28.8
Wing area	11.2m^2
Wing loading (max)	53.3kg/m^2
Wing loading (min)	31.2kg/m^2
Max all-up weight	600kg
Max Speed (VNE)	290km/h
Manoeuvring speed (Vb)	198km/h
Max L/D	53

Figures from: *www.jonkersailplanes.co.za*





canopy frame, but the team is considering installation of single lever jettison. The design of the canopy is such that it will engage at the rear in the event of jettison to ensure that it lifts clear of the pilot. The cockpit shell incorporates the latest safety features with a rigid zone extending back to the rear of the wing and a crumple zone at the front of the long nose.

Internally, the cockpit finish is quite basic, but it has to be borne in mind that this aspect of the prototype was finished in a hurry to allow the JS1 to compete in the South African Nationals. The moulded seatback with integral headrest has three adjustable lower attachment hinge points and the seatback angle also adjusts so that a good range of pilot sizes can be easily accommodated. On production models the seatback angle will be adjustable in flight. The rudder pedal adjustment knob is very neatly incorporated into the right-hand side of the instrument panel. There are two built-in battery boxes behind the seat suitable for standard 12 volt, 7 AH batteries and an integral oxygen bottle housing behind the seat in the right of the cockpit rear bulkhead.

The undercarriage lever is on the right side of the cockpit, with airbrake, flap lever, trim knob and tow release on the left side. The flap lever is graduated 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and L from front to back respectively, corresponding to high speed through to low speed flight and landing. The flap lever is high on the left cockpit wall with the tow release also mounted high on the left wall just in front of the flap lever so that it is easy to move the left hand from flap to tow release in an emergency. There is a trim trigger at the base of the control stick handgrip so the glider may be re-trimmed with a squeeze of the trigger. Cockpit ventilation is by a grille at the front of the canopy and a directable outlet on the right cockpit sidewall and scoop in the canopy DV window.

The instrument panel is large and easily accommodates a good selection of soaring instruments. There is also a small section of instrument panel fixed to the cockpit floor. This has been reserved for engine controls for the optional engine installation.

The JS1 will be offered for sale either as a pure glider, self-launcher or with a jet sustainer engine. The engineering team have yet to develop the retractable jet sustainer installation, but all production gliders will be able to be retrofitted with the jet engine when development and certification is complete. The jet sustainer engine offers many potential benefits over existing piston engines: light weight (estimated at just 10kg), easy automatic extension and start (fuel cock and go button), very little added drag during the start and high cruise speed.

Prior to my flight, the JS1 was filled with waterballast: first the tail tank filled through the open drain valve in the bottom of the fin (similar to LS gliders), then the valves closed and the wing integral tanks filled through two filler points, in the upper surface at the outer end of each main wing panel. With the vents in the filler caps sealed by tape, the glider can be parked with wingtips on the ground without loss of water, but as on many gliders it is important to remember to remove the tape before take-off. Thus the engineering team is considering modifying the venting system on production gliders. With an empty weight of 313kg, full wing tanks, partial tail tank, parachute, drinking water and me, the all-up weight was close to the 600kg maximum to give a wing loading of 53kg/m². Settling into the cockpit, I found ➢

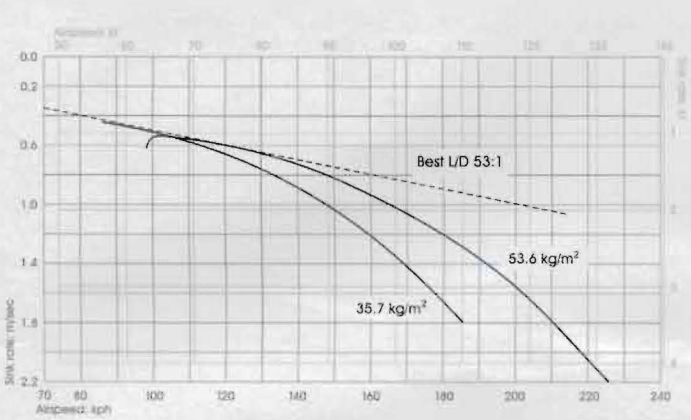
Main picture, opposite: Andy Davis launches in the JS1 in South Africa

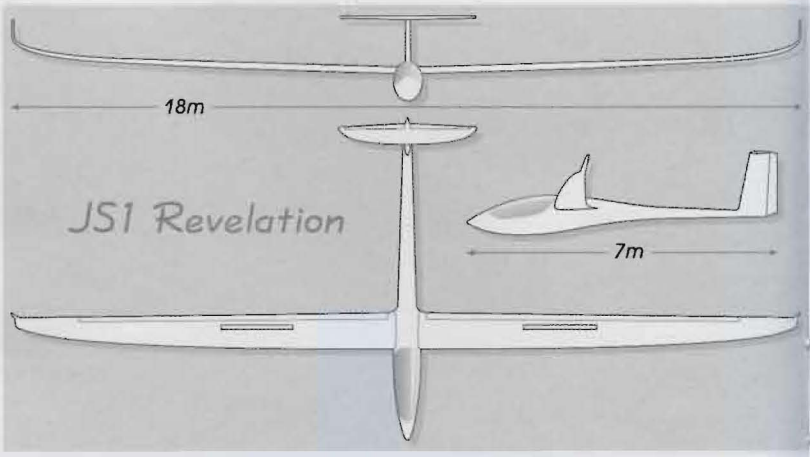
Above: Andy airborne (Jan-Peter Schümann)

Left: Testing the wings in the company's hangar (Jan-Peter Schümann)

Right: The JS1 wings are mounted higher on the fuselage than on many modern gliders (Brett Eloff)







Above: calculated speed polars for the JS1 and (above right) a three view of the glider (Steve Longland). Opposite: the panel has plenty of room for competition instruments

the seating arrangement very comfortable with the rudder pedals adjusted to half travel (I am 6ft/1m 82cm tall). I found that all the controls were in just the right place, falling nicely to hand, and it was easy to obtain full control deflection without restriction.

There were plenty of places to stow Camelbak, map and other personal items.

The towrope was connected to the nose-hook and the initial take-off roll was carried out with flap 3 selected and my left hand holding the release. It was easy to hold the wings level in the blustery crosswind and once speed had increased I transferred my left hand from the tow release to the flap lever and selected flap 4. The JS1 lifted off comfortably without ballooning, felt very stable on tow and it was easy to maintain station behind the tug in the turbulent air.

After releasing and climbing in turbulent narrow thermals to a safe height, during which the JS1's good control harmonisation and handling were immediately apparent, I explored at maximum weight the glider's low-speed handling characteristics.

With flap 5 selected, aerodynamic buffet occurred at 80km/h (43kt) IAS with the full stall occurring at 70km/h (38kt) IAS accompanied by a conventional nose drop. If held in the stall by maintaining back pressure on the stick, there was a gentle wing drop. Recovery from the wing drop and stall was conventional with stall recovery occurring immediately back pressure on the stick was released. With flap L selected, aerodynamic buffet occurred at 75km/h (40kt) IAS with stall and nose drop at 68km/h (37kt) IAS. Once again there was a gentle wing drop. Stall recovery was again immediate on release of stick back pressure. With flap 3 selected, aerodynamic buffet occurred at 81km/h (44kt) IAS and stall at 79km/h (43kt) IAS. Characteristics and recovery were identical to the other stalls. As all the heavy-weight stalls were carried out in turbulent air, it was difficult to obtain consistent readings. Furthermore, calibration of the JS1 pitot/static system has not yet been carried out. As the makers' test programme had not yet progressed to spinning, I didn't investigate spinning characteristics.

Manoeuvring characteristics and roll rates were then explored at heavy weight. With flap 3 at 120km/h, roll reversal from 45° bank to 45° was three seconds. With flap 5 at 100km/h, roll reversal from 45° bank to 45° was five seconds. At all times control harmonisation was good with adequate rudder authority, and control loads were satisfactory in all axes.

I then flew in formation with the Samba tug for a short time as we carried out some air-to-air photography. Unfortunately, our best-laid plans for some high-resolution photographs for *S&G* soon went awry as the Samba, even at full throttle, couldn't keep up with the fast cruising JS1, and a radio problem left me mistakenly thinking the photoshoot was complete. Oblivious to everybody else's frustrations I set off to the west to explore the JS1's performance.

'Uys Jonker asked if I would like to fly with him to compare the performance of the JS1'

I had been briefed that flap 3 was to be used for best glide, flap 2 for speeds of 160-200km/h (86-108kt) and flap 1 for high speed 200km/h (108kt plus). I had been briefed to enter thermals with flap 3, selecting flap 4 once centred and then flap 5 if the thermal was smooth and I could accurately control the speed. In practice I found the roll rate with flap 4 quite good enough to be able to select flap 4 as I pulled up into and then centred the rough thermals.

Eventually, Uys Jonker called me that he was airborne in fully ballasted Ventus 2CT AG and asked if I would like to fly with him to compare the relative performance of the JS1. I returned to the Potchefstroom local area and after a few minutes searching joined up with AG.

I found that at maximum wing loading I could comfortably fly in thermals with flap 5 set at 95-100km/h (51-54kt) IAS depending on bank angle, but I had been warned by Uys not to thermal at too slow a speed and thermal comparison with the Ventus 2CT showed that the JS1 achieved better results in the turbulent thermals when flown a little faster at around 110km/h (59kt) IAS. Nevertheless, the Ventus always seemed to outclimb the JS1, but this probably reflected my own performance in the glider rather than a problem with the JS1 itself as I had not flown much in thermals for six months prior to this flight and I was struggling to interpret the installed variometer and total energy compensation. In discussion after the flight it became apparent that flap 5 should only be used in very smooth thermals as it has only a narrow effective speed band and my selection of flap 5 in the day's rough thermals was inappropriate. Indeed, reports from other pilots suggested that the JS1 climbed very well in the hands of Attie Jonker in the South African Nationals.

As the day developed into a very good soaring day indeed, Uys and I set off on a 500km task to the west and the JS1's potential soon became apparent. Cruising mostly at speeds of 180-200km/h (97-110kt), the JS1 consistently opened out a noticeable height advantage over Uys in AG, always arriving at the next climb distinctly higher. I settled into a routine of airbraking down to the level of AG in each climb so that we could leave the thermal at the same height. I even flew along close behind AG for a while to see if Uys was indulging in some sneaky salesmanship by flying with his airbrakes cracked open!

We finally climbed up some 100km from Potchefstroom and started a long final glide together across a big blue hole at 130km/h (70kt) IAS. About 40km from home, we ran under some small cumulus and as I started to climb AG arrived in the thermal perhaps 500ft lower, the JS1 having opened out a significant advantage in the long slow glide. We climbed up high to carry out a very fast run together at 240km/h (130kt), the JS1 visibly gaining on AG once again before I broke off to dump water and carry out some stalls and explore the JS1's handling at light weight.

After dumping waterballast, there were fluctuations in the airspeed indication due to water entry into the static vents, with airspeed indications reducing to 40km/h for a significant time. This is common in some

other makes of glider with static vents mounted on the tail boom and I would recommend that owners install a pneumatic switch in the instrument panel to allow the pilot to momentarily select pitot pressure into the static system to blow out the water.

The following light-weight stalls were then carried out at a mass of 405kg and wing loading of 36kg/m². With flap 5 selected, aerodynamic buffet occurred at 68km/h (37kts) IAS and stall at 65km/h (35kt) IAS with conventional nose drop. If held in the stall by maintaining back pressure on the stick, there was a gentle wing drop. Recovery from the wing drop and stall was conventional with recovery occurring immediately on releasing back pressure. With flap 3 selected, aerodynamic buffet occurred at 75km/h (40kt) IAS and stall at 70km/h (38kt) IAS with conventional nose drop. No wing drop was observed and recovery was conventional.

These light-weight stalls took place in very smooth air, but there are doubts about the accuracy of the figures due to the possibility of water in the static system affecting the readings at very low airspeeds. Accordingly I discounted recorded values with flap L as being completely unrealistic. Air speed indications returned to normal and expected values as soon as the speed was increased away from the stall. Once again, spinning characteristics were not investigated.

Harmonisation of controls was good at low speeds with recorded times for roll reversals very similar to heavy weights.

The glider was particularly stable in thermals at low weight and I found that it was possible to fly continuous, stable, 30° banked turns in smooth evening thermals

Andy Davis



with hand and feet clear of the controls.

The approach was flown at 95km/h (51kt) with flap L selected as briefed. Roll control throughout the approach was satisfactory, and glide path control using the triple paddle airbrake satisfactory, although full airbrake travel was restricted by the adjustment of the wheelbrake mechanism (the design team were aware of this issue). Roundout and landing were satisfactory, although the glider had a tendency to float in the flare and for this reason I feel that a lower approach speed would be more appropriate. Flap 3 was selected as airspeed reduced in the ground run and aileron control remained good until the glider stopped. The wheelbrake operation, hydraulic disc brake on the 500x5 wheel, was very good.

Throughout the flight, lasting six hours, the JS1 was very comfortable and exhibited no undesirable characteristics. The glider was very stable at all airspeeds up to the maximum attained of 240km/h (limited by the progress of the flight test programme). Handling and harmonisation of controls were good at all speeds. The cockpit was very comfortable, the seating position good with excellent all-round visibility – I could even see the tips of the tailplane. The controls were all well positioned and easy to operate with satisfactory loads, the one exception being retracting the undercarriage – the loads were very high to lock into the up position. The team is aware of the problem, attributing it to over-tight door bungees.

I came away with a very favourable impression of a very well designed and well built new glider. It handles very nicely, has many interesting features and possibilities, and also seems to perform rather well. How well it will perform in competition with other current 18-Metre Class gliders only time will tell, but winning the South African Nationals was an excellent start. Jonker Sailplanes guarantees a 50:1 best glide, whilst their calculations indicate that it may prove to be in the region of 53:1, a figure that will place it amongst the very best in the 18-Metre Class. There is still much work to be done, not least of which is gaining EASA Type Approval, but Uys and Attie are confident that this is only a matter of time and will do whatever is necessary to secure the EASA Type Approval vital for their new JS1 to be a commercial as well as a personal success.

Since flying the JS1, Andy has ordered one for delivery in early 2008

The realisation of a decade's dream

AS CHILDREN, brothers Uys and Attie Jonker *(right)* helped their father with his home-built glider project, subsequently modifying it with aerodynamic improvements inspired by their experiences of modern glass-fibre sailplanes. Already enthusiastic glider pilots, their dream was born: to design and build their own modern composite sailplane. The brothers embarked on a path of engineering studies in pursuit of it. The dream came true with the first flight of the JS1 prototype in December 2006, with Attie flying it to victory in the South African 18-Metre Class Nationals in January 2007. The story of how the brothers went from zero to building the JS1 in such a relatively short time is quite remarkable. In addition to their engineering studies, they rebuilt a wrecked Standard Cirrus and with the experience gained from this they established Jonker Sailplanes, a glider repair and refinish business in Potchefstroom.

In 1996, Attie and Uys started work on developing the JS1 wing profiles together with Potchefstroom's technical university. They also received generous help from Schleicher, the German glider manufacturer, allowing them to work in its factory for a week with unrestricted access to all areas to gain experience of construction processes. The two brothers then ordered an ASH 26 fuselage, which they initially intended to pair with their newly-developed wings, but when a set of damaged ASH 26 wings became available, they decided to build a complete ASH 26 and set about designing their own fuselage for the JS1 with the help of their small but enthusiastic design and engineering team.



Jan-Peter Schümann

In addition to repairing and refinishing gliders, the brothers also established a successful business building wind turbine blades in partnership with Potchefstroom University. This business enabled them to fund the development work on the JS1 Revelation (the name "Revelation" was chosen, because as Uys comments, "the work involved in developing the JS1 was truly a revelation"). The wind turbine blade business complements the business of building and repairing gliders. Many of the skills and processes are the same, there is a pool of workers skilled in composite materials and the brothers were able to use much of their existing tooling to build the moulds for the JS1.


1




2


14

As seen at the

AT the BGA AGM and Conference on March 10... 18-Metre World Champion Phil Jones was presented (1) with his Royal Aero Club Gold Medal by RAeC Chairman Keith Negal... Sam Roddie, Caroline Trust Cadet of the Year (2), dreamed of owning the Ventus 2cxt on display... Claire Emson (3) and husband Cris ran the whole show... Olly Peters (4) won the after-dinner casino entertainment, sponsored by Terry and Marie Mitchell's L&L Embroidery, along with the star prize of a GPS, donated by AFE... Tony Segal (5) gave his renowned talk on crashworthiness... The CAA's new manager for GA Flight Operations Policy, Chris Finnigan, met (6) BGA volunteers and staff, including (seen left) *BGA Chief Executive Pete Stratten... Sponsors* It's a wing thing *could easily change their name to* It's a rotary wing thing *after selling 40-plus toy*



13


12


11





BGA weekend

helicopters, seen piloted (7) by Pete Masson and intercepted (8) by Sarah Curtis... Terry Joint, of sponsors Joint Aviation Services, talks shop with Graham Roberts and Tony Mitchison (9) – the BGA had a helpful meeting on the day with insurance industry representatives... A session on Flarm attracted more than 140 pilots and the kit was on show (10) in a newly imported Duo XT... A LAK 19t, EASA certified, was present (11)... Ian "Gally" Gallagher, of the RAFGSA's Team Condor, *had as much fun as you can have without a sailplane (12)... Steve Hill and Andy Hatfield checked out the Duo (13)... The BGA welcomed John Marshall, deputy head of the CAA's Aircraft Certification Department, to a good opportunity for discussions (14) with our technical experts and* (seen left) *BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli. For a full report on the day, see pp12-13*









You never stop learning

Adrian Lyth, in the third article in our series about instructing, explains why he wanted to become a Full-rated Instructor

WHEN Roger Warren – the then CFI of East Sussex GC – invited me to train as a Basic Instructor four years after going solo, I felt an immense burst of pride, elation and achievement – it was something I had wanted for a long time. I also felt extremely honoured and flattered that I was considered good enough to be entrusted with members of the public and I would become an ambassador for gliding. I was good! I had made the grade and this was now being recognised! However, my ego was severely punctured by his next comment – "And then you'll realise how crap a flier you were before!"

He was of course right, but that comment encapsulates one of the aspects of gliding that I love – you never stop learning (well, let's hope so!). Since then I have progressed from BI to Assistant to Full-rated Instructor, with 870 hours, and at each stage I felt that I became a better pilot.

So, why become an instructor and in particular a Full-rated one? It's quite simple really: you **will** become a better pilot and you **will** gain enormous satisfaction from passing your skills on. The training, from highly-experienced instructors who live and breathe it, is invaluable. You will also do so much more flying. There is a huge difference between doing two or three winch launches a week in one season then doing 15 winch launches one evening as well as two or three aerotows a week the next season. Oh yes, the other attraction is that someone else pays for it!

Roger was an excellent instructor. A man of few words in the air, he repeatedly and expertly suckered me (and three fellow trainees) into situations where we bogged it all up comprehensively in the motorglider. I lost count of the number of occasions on which, after he took control, I sat as miserable as sin in the right-hand seat having difficulty coping with the sense of failure – I thought I was good! Perhaps one day a physiologist could explain the instantaneous and uncomfortable whole body hot flushes I then experienced, which had me scooping air in through the DV panel to cool down. I thought this problem affected only lady pilots of a certain age...

However, Roger was expertly instilling some of the fundamentals of BI instructing; aviate, navigate, communicate, safety. And it was then I became aware of just how good a pilot he was. He embodied one of aviation's classic sayings: "The superior pilot uses his superior judgment so as to **not** to have to demonstrate his superior skills."

The two-day BI course was stressful but the three of us got through it – though I did have to complete some cable break exercises when I returned to Ringmer. The course was fascinating – not only was direct teaching taking place but I also felt as if I were knocking on the door of an exclusive club, which jealousy guarded its standards. I was

'Would you like to do the next one on your own?'

WITHOUT a hint of embarrassment, Graham is wearing the sort of novelty woolly hat that is best left at the bottom of your sock drawer. As he straps on the parachute I flick through his logbook. His 49 flights record a steady progress from co-ordinated turns through circuit planning and approaches, to spins and cable breaks. The book is dotted with comments along the lines of "well flown" and "handled windy conditions well". It looks promising. "Didn't I fly with you a few weeks back?" I ask.

"Yes, we flew one circuit, but you never said anything," he says defensively.

"OK. Well, just fly this one as if I wasn't here and we'll see how you get on."

We strap ourselves in, he does his checks and we close the canopy and connect the cable. For most of the launch he does a good job of correcting for the crosswind, but near the top the left wing comes up and we drift off well to the right before releasing.

After releasing, he seems determined to get as far from the airfield as possible and we set out on a long straight glide into wind. The airfield disappears over my left shoulder and after a couple of minutes I am starting to have a dose of the "leans" – willing him to turn back. Eventually, he starts a turn and I breathe a sign of relief, but instead of heading towards the site he continues round until we are back on the original heading. Finally he twigs and flies towards the field. Despite my silent fretting, we end up at the high key point at more or less the right height.

We are a little way down a perfectly positioned downwind leg when Graham pipes up: "I think I'm a bit high here, I'm going to ease out a bit".

"Looks good to me." It's out before I can stop myself. It is a bad call and for the rest of the circuit I silently curse myself for not letting him make his own decision. He flies a good circuit, but at the end of the approach his roundout is just a fraction of a second too late. Although it's more of an arrival than a landing, we touch down OK.

On the next flight I pull the cable release halfway up the launch. There's a reassuring promptness about the way he lowers the nose and only a moment's hesitation before he calls "landing ahead". His roundout is a bit better this time and we roll to a halt near the winch.

As we walk back to the launchpoint I'm thinking through whether there is any reason why I shouldn't send him solo. It's a perfect day for it: clear blue skies, light wind and not too many other gliders about. By the time we have reached the launchpoint I am resolved that if the next flight is OK I'll send him off.

In fact, the next launch is better and, to make life interesting, on our downwind leg there's a white K-21 in the middle of the landing area with no sign of a retrieve crew doing anything about it. "If they don't shift that glider, where are you going to land?" I ask, just to make sure he's registered it.

"I'm going to aim to land well behind him, but if I overshoot I'll go to his right."

Good call, there's space to the right.

In fact we end up well behind the glider – to its left. When I ask if this is where he wanted to be, he sensibly admits it isn't. But it is safe. I undo my straps and get out.

"Would you like to do the next one on your own?" I ask, and it feels good to say it.

There's a look of consternation on his face and he hesitates for a moment before saying "No".

This is not the answer I am expecting and for a moment I am at a loss. "Why not?" I ask.

"I'm just not sure I'm quite ready," he says. "Well, I think you're perfectly ready and you couldn't wish for a better a day for it." That seems to do the trick and I am relieved when he agrees to go for it.

I do up the straps in the back and brief him on the differences he'll notice flying the K-13 one up. Then, not wanting to fill his head with lots of last-minute advice, I shut up. Anyway, he's looking pretty calm about the whole thing. In fact, I am sure I am more nervous than he is.

Instructing is mostly about teaching flying skills and developing judgment. Occasionally, it's about avoiding damage to the aircraft. And very rarely, usually when you are not expecting it, it's about life and death. Now feels like one of those moments. Graham will be the first person I have sent solo.

His turn comes quickly and soon I am hooking the cable on. "Just enjoy it!" I say and mean it. As I wave up-slack with my right hand I am saying a silent prayer and have the fingers of my left hand crossed behind my back. Then the cable tightens and he's off. It doesn't break and he flies a perfect launch. I'm convinced he's going to go sailing away from the airfield again, but after a few turns he is set up nicely at his high key point. The only fly in the ointment is the K-21. It's ahead of him in the circuit and will clutter up the otherwise clear landing area. It touches down just as Graham turns on to base. A couple of us rush over, shouting at the pilots. When they hear there's a first solo on the way, the canopies fly open, they scramble out and we get the K-21 to one side just as Graham lines up on finals. He flies a smooth, well-controlled approach and rounds out perfectly.

As the glider rolls to halt on the grass I start breathing again.

Tim Barnes

being tested to see if I was good enough to be let in. As I had been warned, the pressure comes from within.

BI instructing was in some ways the most enjoyable of all. Flying with nervous, excited people was great fun and, thankfully, you do all the close-to-the-ground stuff. It became obvious to me that I needed to be able
to "read" pupils, reassure those lacking in confidence, praise them and watch out for those who go quiet!

After two years as a BI I was invited to train for an Assistant rating. Again, I felt that sense of pride, and that I was continuing to progress – there is quite a jump between the two ratings and it was a challenge I wanted to take on board. Again, I spent time flying with Roger, who right from the start instilled extremely good habits (such as guarding the controls when low) which have maintained my safety and that of the pupils.

I found the nine-day course stressful but learned a huge amount and was then pitched into the deep end, teaching all aspects of the syllabus, which I loved. I was back on that old learning curve again and like all instructors realised just how accurate the two rules of instructing are. (Rule 1 – Bloggs is out to get you. Rule 2 – the more experienced Bloggs is, the more he invokes rule 1!) And throughout all of it your flying – in the broadest sense, including the all-important judgment – continues to improve.

It was quite strange doing my first spins with a pupil. Previously a little shirty about such manoeuvres I felt completely different as an instructor, and actually got to enjoy it.

One aspect potential instructors should not underestimate is the value of preparing the pre-flight briefings and Bronze lectures. These really force you to extend your knowledge – and you can only effectively communicate it if you understand it.

Then came the jump through more hoops to become a Full-rated Instructor. Why? Firstly, the CFI, Dave Williams, asked me; secondly, I again felt it would make me a better pilot and instructor. In *Laws & Rules* there is very little apparent difference between Assistant and Full ratings – but a lot of preparation was necessary. The obvious first step was to ensure I was very familiar with everything in between the covers of *Laws & Rules*, the *BGA Instructors Manual* and the *BGA Theory Manual*. Your general airmanship and ability to teach the exercises to a high degree of proficiency will be tested as well as your ability to fault find. And do not touch the controls when Bloggs has control.

The two-day course with Senior Regional Examiner Patrick Naegeli at Lasham was very rigorous, partly because it was one to one – no place to hide. A combined programme of flying, delivering prepared lectures, met brief for the day and paper-based exams was again stressful. At one point, when temporarily unsure of my position behind a large cloud bank but reassured by Patrick, I decided to err on the side of caution and gain a clear view of the airfield. Who knows? He may have been suckering me into an awkward position.



Adrian, right, with Phil ("Henry") Ford after returning to base at the Wolds Two-Seater Comp (Steven Smithers)

Again I felt that testing element – is this guy good enough to join the ranks? I had to brief Patrick for his "first cross-country". When he asked me if I had the up-to-date map (only recently published but which I had obtained) I got the distinct impression that, had I produced the out-of-date version, I would have been on my way home.

One thing that really impressed me about Patrick was the way in which he listened patiently to one of my briefings on winch launching then proceeded to do a far better job with fewer words. Something to aim for: a real object lesson in clarity and precision and a good model to emulate. I hope my pupils feel that I do the same – I presume they will read this and let me know!

(As a footnote, I feel that the dramatic potential of Patrick instantly morphing into the sulkiest-looking teenage pupil I have ever seen has not been sufficiently realised. Lasham Christmas play?)

So the course was demanding and made me realise that there were certain aspects I could do even better: it was an encouragement for me to raise my game. However, what really emerged was an emphasis upon going beyond the progress card, reading the pupil, diagnosing what he really needed and devising a programme of exercises tailored to his needs. Patrick was rightly quite scathing about instructors who just bash pupils through the progress card.

So, having progressed to a Full Rating, I feel I have become a better pilot and instructor, but that has not been the only influence. In my day job I am an educational ICT consultant for primary schools and in recent years there has been much emphasis upon "assessment for learning". This approach to teaching and learning involves (in brief) clearly communicating to children what they are going to learn (the learning intention), why this will be useful to them in their work, and providing them with "success criteria" – what they need to remember to do to ensure success. Crucial to this is assessing prior learning at the start of a lesson and providing children with regular opportunities to reflect upon and evaluate their own learning since this helps them to shape their own learning and accelerates progress.

And what do we see on the first page of the *BGA Instructors Manual*?
1) Establish the trainee's level of knowledge and/or skill;
2) Briefly outline what you will be talking about or demonstrating;
3) Explain the subject in detail, relating to and build upon existing level of knowledge or skill;
4) Demonstrate the flying exercise;
5) Summarise the subject;
6) Draw conclusions;
7) Test the trainee's knowledge and understanding;
8) Analyse the flying for satisfactory levels of skills.

There are enormous similarities here. That initial question-and-answer session is crucial, particularly with a new or visiting pupil. I would prefer to see (2) referring more to what the pupil will be learning. (3) and (4) refer to direct teaching and the remaining points appear to link to providing effective feedback to the pupils. However, this should also take place in the air during the flying exercises, thus providing rapid, immediate information and enabling the pupil to make speedy progress. As an ex-classroom teacher I also know that children learn by doing – and that is the same in gliding. The more the pupil's hands are on the controls and the less I do, the more rapidly they will learn.

I said at the beginning, you never stop learning – and that is true. Only last year I learned a valuable lesson which, arguably, I should have known anyway, and that is to do with exercises which test judgment – in this case, a cable break. The pupil got it wrong in quite an unusual way which meant we were now heading into difficult territory. My error was in allowing a couple of seconds for the pupil, who had already failed the judgment exercise, to re-assess the new situation (requiring even superior judgement) then have the necessary flying skills to deal with it. Unrealistic! The end result was I took control late and we narrowly missed hitting the parked tug, which had recently returned from a five-month repair... The exact purpose of the flight had not been clear in my own mind: it was a judgment exercise. Once it was obviously failed, I should have taken control – but didn't. Lesson learned.

To conclude, I love instructing: there is a tremendous sense of satisfaction in watching someone make progress, knowing that you had a role to play in that. As a means to improving your own flying, instructing and the associated training is second to none.

I would like to end by thanking all the instructors who helped **me** make progress throughout the years.



I wish you'd been here

Ignoring a February Sunday forecast for fog in the Vale of York, Polly Whitehead enjoyed a flight that's the stuff of poetry

THE FORECAST was not inspiring. Slack winds and clear skies in the Vale of York usually mean only one thing – fog. I opened the bedroom curtains in the full expectation of being able to have a much-wanted lie-in. However, the day dawned surprisingly clear, the duty instructor was staying with me and chomping at the bit, so I was somewhat obliged to drag myself to the airfield. (No scandal here – owing to a lack of on-site accommodation, the local members offer an informal B&B service to those who aren't fortunate enough to live within striking distance of Dishforth).

Only a handful of members had turned up so we all drank tea. After a short while, a few of our regular visitors from Bowland Forest appeared. They had seen a forecast for westerly winds of 20kts. The locals were somewhat sceptical of this, and the visitors were looking disappointed, but decided to rig anyway as they had driven too far not to. There was a disconsolate air about the place.

We set up the launchpoint, and I took a launch in the K-21 for no other reason than I thought that I ought to. I towed to 3,000ft, found some areas of reduced sink and descended slowly to earth. Pleasant, but nothing special. However, I did feel, and I can't say why, that "something was happening".

How could I quantify that statement? There was no wind to speak of, no rotor, no roll clouds, certainly no lenticular, and yet...

So, we drank more tea. Some of the visiting gliders towed out to the launchpoint, and one noble soul took a launch. The amount of tea swilling round inside me was taking effect, and I disappeared off to the hangar to use the facilities. Before I left, I mooted the possibility of having a mutual flight with a friend, basically because there wasn't much else to do. But by the time I reappeared, there had been a change of plan. The CFI, Grinner Smith, had decided he would take a launch in the two-seater – yes, it was getting that desperate! – and offered me the back seat. In the absence of any better offers (please, no more tea...) I agreed. The friend I had been going to fly with was despatched to the tug. By the time we rolled the K-21 on line, we were hearing reports of our valiant visitor, Dean, at 7,000ft over the Yorkshire Dales.

The wind, such as it was, did some very odd things. As Grinner closed his canopy, he trapped the rear seat yaw string as it was blown forwards in the slight easterly wind – and, yes, we were launching toward the west – causing the only bit of amusement so far that day.

At around 1,000ft on the tow, there was a rumble through the airframe as we flew

through some wind shear and, shortly after, it was noticeable that we were now going into a westerly. Still no turbulence though, and we could have flown the tow hands-off, it was so smooth. We decided there was no point in releasing early, so hung on to see what would happen. Just below 4,000ft, the vario looked promising but then dipped to read just 2kt climb, so we hung on some more. At 4,500ft, the vario indicated that we were in lift (just) and so we released. We were slightly to the east of Gouthwaite reservoir, well clear of the satellite tracking station at Menwith Hill, which marks the edge of the Leeds-Bradford zone.

We were indeed in wave: gentle, steady, unassuming blue wave. Just 2kt, but constant all the same. As we slowly climbed, we looked around for some evidence of how the wave bars were lying – there was none. Dean had told us he had made contact at the point where the moorland heather of the Pennines starts. This was exactly where we were and that's where we would stay for most of the flight.

It wasn't a challenging flight: no cloud or nasty turbulence, and so we were able to relax and enjoy the view. We put the world to rights, occasionally lapsing into the companionable silence that true friends are comfortable with.

All over the hills, there were heather fires. Coming from them were thin ribbons of smoke, which waved down the valleys toward the east. Appleby appeared to be under a layer of cloud, which looked like the approach of a front, but the Vale of York was still clear.

It was cold, very cold, and neither of us was as well dressed for it as we could have been, but we didn't want to go down and break the spell. Dean had pressed north as far as Catterick but then, he was in a Nimbus. We stayed put – we could see Catterick from where we were, thank you.

We climbed very slowly to 9,400ft. The smoke from the heather fires started to block the sun from the ground, and in the ensuing gloom served to highlight the bright red glow of the flames.

Then it was time to go home, and so we descended quickly back towards the airfield, arriving just to the west at about 6,000ft. The not unexpected question: "Are your straps tight?" emanated from the front seat. I stowed my camera securely, and then we whooped and swooped our way down into the circuit.

And as we were walking back towards the clubhouse after stacking the hangar, God revealed His hand. The sun lit up the west sky like a great fireball, and lenticular clouds, notable by their absence all day, were picked out for us in shimmering pink and red.

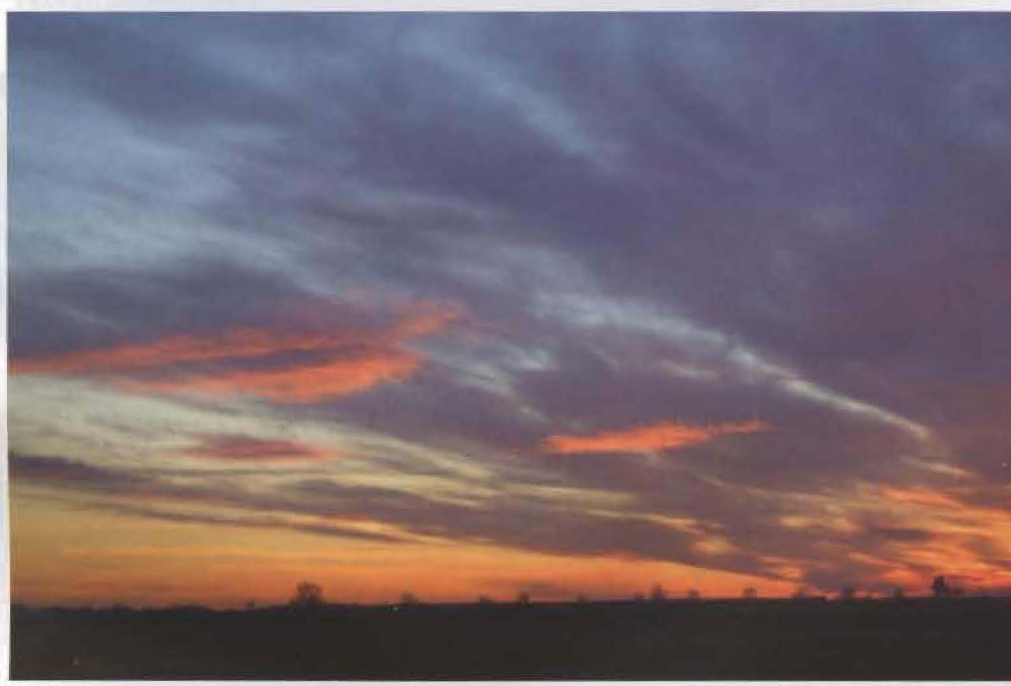
In the great scheme of things, the flight wasn't particularly worthy of note – we didn't go high, we didn't go far, and we didn't go fast. However, for me, it's the stuff that inspires poetry. I wish each of you reading this could have been there.



Main picture, opposite, and above: heather fires over Yorkshire created these ribbons of smoke, shaped by an invisible wave system. As the setting sun (right) descended into the west, it revealed (below) lenticulars in shimmering colour. Polly Whitehead (left, below) and Grinner Smith flew for 99 minutes from Clevelands GC, Dishforth, on Sunday, February 4, 2007 in K-21 R28







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How to find a gliding club in the UK

If you want to try a new site, this list and the map overleaf can help. Numbers refer to locations on the map. Contact details are updated at *www.gliding.co.uk*, where affiliated university clubs are also listed. Service clubs, which may restrict civilian access or membership, are in green below and only UK-based ones are included

ANDREAS GC (9): Andreas Airfield, Braust Farm, Lezayre, Isle of Man; send post c/o Cranstal Cottage, Port e Vullen, Maughold, Ramsey, ISLE OF MAN, IM7 1AN
secretary@manxgliding.flyer.co.uk / www.manxgliding.org

ANGLIA GC (10): RAF Wattisham
ecc.con@which.net / 01493 752232

ANGUS GC (1): Drumshade Farm, Roundyhill, Glamis, By Forfar. 01307 467676 / *robert@carstyledirect.force9.co.uk*
www.angusglidingclub.ukf.net

AQUILA GC (11):
Hinton-in-the Hedges Airfield, Steane, Brackley NN13 5NS
Clubhouse / launchpoint (w/ends) 01295 811056 / 07981 103159 *info@aquilagliding.com* / www.aquilagliding.com

BANNERDOWN RAFGSA GC (12): Keevil Airfield
Clubhouse / launchpoint (w/ends) 01380 870411 / 07931 556646 / *al.stacey@bannerdown.co.uk* / www.bannerdown.co.uk

BATH, WILTS & NORTH DORSET GC (13):
The Park, Kingston Deverill, Warminster BA12 7HF
01985 844095 / 07762 738318 / bwndsecretary@aol.com
www.bwnd.co.uk

BIDFORD GLIDING CENTRE (14):
Bidford Airfield, Bidford on Avon B50 4PD
01789 772606 / *office@bidfordgliding.co.uk*
www.bidfordgliding.co.uk

BLACK MOUNTAINS GC (86):
The Airfield, Talgarth, Powys LD3 0EJ
01874 711463 / *enquiries@talgarthgc.co.uk*
www.talgarthgc.co.uk

BOOKER GC (15): Wycombe Air Park, Marlow SL7 3DR
01494 442501 / *office@bookergc.nildram.co.uk*
www.bookergliding.co.uk

BORDERS GC (16): The Airfield, Milfield Wooler NE71 6HD
01668 216284
help@bordersgliding.co.uk / www.bordersgliding.co.uk

BOWLAND FOREST GC (17):
Lower Cock Hill Fm, Fiddlers Lane, Chipping, Preston PR3 2WN
01995 61267 / *enquiries@bfgc.co.uk* / www.bfgc.co.uk

BRISTOL & GLOUCESTERSHIRE GC (18):
Nympsfield, Stonehouse GL10 3TX
01453 860342 / *office@bggc.co.uk* / www.bggc.co.uk

BUCKMINSTER GC (19):
Saltby Airfield, Sproxton Road, Skillington, Grantham NG33 5HL
01476 860385 / *office@buckminstergc.co.uk*
www.buckminstergc.co.uk

BURN GC (20): The Airfield, Park Lane, Burn, Selby YO8 8LW
01757 270296 / *burnglidingclub@bigfoot.com*
www.burnglidingclub.co.uk

CAIRNGORM GC (2): Feshie Airstrip, Feshiebridge, Kingussie, Inverness-shire PH21 1NG / 01540 651317
cairngormglidingclub@tiscali.co.uk / www.gliding.org

CAMBRIDGE GLIDING CENTRE (21): Gransden Lodge Airfield, Lodge Farm, Longstowe Road, Little Gransden, Sandy, Beds SG19 3EB
01767 677077 / *office@glide.co.uk* / www.glide.co.uk

CARLTON MOOR GC (22):
Carlton Moor, Nr Stokesley, North Yorkshire
01642 778234 (w/e) / *enquiries@carltonmoorglidingclub.org.uk*
www.carltonmoorglidingclub.org.uk

CHANNEL GC (23):
Waldershare Park, Nr. Whitfield, Dover, Kent CT15 5NH
01304 824888 / secretary@channelglidingclub.com
www.channelglidingclub.com

RAFGSA CHILTERNS CENTRE (24): RAF Halton
Office 01296 696818 / engineering 01296 696798
manager@rafgsa.org / www.rafgsa.org

CLEVELANDS GC (25): Dishforth
www.clevelandsgliding.org.uk
Clubhouse 01423 321642 / Mobile 07779 454124

CONNEL GC (3):
Oban Airport, North Connel, By Oban, Argyll PA37 1RT
01631 710428 / *stewart@macfarlane.evesham.net*

CORNISH GLIDING & FLYING CLUB (26):
Perranporth Airfield, Trevellas, Nr Perranporth TR6 9QB
01872 572124 / cornglide@aol.com
http://members.aol.com/cornglide/page1.htm

COTSWOLD GC (27):
Aston Down Airfield, Cowcombe Lane, Chalford, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL6 8HR
01285 760415 / *pat@cotswoldgliding.co.uk*
www.cotswoldgliding.co.uk

CRANWELL GC (28): RAF Cranwell
www.cranwellgc.freeserve.co.uk
Sat, Sun & Bank Holidays: 07970 869501

CROWN SERVICE GC (29):
Lasham Airfield, Alton GU34 5SS
01252 549861 / *membership@csgc.org.uk* / www.csgc.org.uk

DARTMOOR GLIDING SOCIETY (30):
Burnford Common, Brentor, Tavistock, Devon
01822 810712 / bob.feetup@tiscali.co.uk
www.dartmoorgliding.co.uk

DEESIDE GC (4):
Aboyne Airfield, Dinnet, Aboyne, Aberdeen AB34 5LB
01339 885339 / *office@deesideglidingclub.co.uk*
www.deesideglidingclub.co.uk

DENBIGH GC (87): Mold Road, Denbigh, Clwyd
01745 813774 / *office@denbighglidingclub.co.uk*
www.denbighglidingclub.co.uk/

DERBYSHIRE & LANCASHIRE GC (31):
Camphill, Great Hucklow, Tideswell, Buxton, SK17 8RQ
01298 871270 / *dlgc@gliding.u-net.com*
www.dlgc.org.uk

DEVON & SOMERSET GC (32): North Hill Airfield, Broadhembury, Honiton EX14 3LP / 01404 841386
godfreyfking@blueyonder.co.uk / www.dsgc.co.uk/

DORSET GC (33): Eyres Field, Puddletown Road, Hyde, Wareham BH20 7NG
01929 405599 / www.dorsetglidingclub.freeserve.co.uk

DUKERIES GC (34):
Darlton Gaps, Tuxford Rd, Darlton NG22 0TQ
01909 731436 / *www.freewebs.com/dukeriesglidingclub*

DUMFRIES & DISTRICT GC (5):
Falgunzeon, By Dalbeattie, Dumfries & Galloway
01387 760601 / *kaz@paszki.freeserve.co.uk*
www.paszki.freeserve.co.uk/ddgc.htm

EAST SUSSEX GC (35):
Kitson Field, The Broyle, Ringmer, East Sussex BN8 5AP
01825 840347 / *stewart@forsterfamily.co.uk*
www.sussexgliding.co.uk/

ESSEX GC (36): North Weald Airfield, Merlin Way, North Weald CM16 6AA (01992 522222); Ridgewell Airfield, Pannells Ash, Ashen, Ridgewell CO10 8JU (01440 785103)
egc@glidingclub.co.uk / www.essexgliding.org

ESSEX & SUFFOLK GC (37): Wormingford Airfield, Fordham Road, Wormingford, Colchester, CO6 3AQ
01206 242596 / *Glide@esgc.flyer.co.uk* / www.esgc.co.uk

FENLAND GC (38): RAF Marham
www.fenlandgc.co.uk / *webmaster@fenlandgc.co.uk*

FOUR COUNTIES (39): RAF Wittering
wita4acss-esso3@wittering.raf.mod.uk / 01780 783838 Ext. 5181
weekends 07813 542884 / www.fourcountiesglidingclub.co.uk/

FULMAR (6): Easterton Airfield, Birnie, Elgin, Morayshire
Post: Stuart Naylor, Allt na Craoibh, Kellas, Elgin IV30 8TS
01343 890787 / *stuartn@naturalpower.com*
www.fulmargliding.co.uk

HEREFORDSHIRE GC (40):
Shobdon Airfield, Shobdon HR6 9NR / 01568 708908
gliding@shobdon.com / www.shobdon.com

HERON GC (41): RNAS Yeovilton
CFI, Andy Farr: *andy@farr13.freeserve.co.uk* / 01935 433379

HIGHLAND GC (7): Easterton Airfield, Birnie, Elgin, Morayshire. Post to: Secretary, HGC, Drum Farm, Keith AB55 5NP
01343 860272 (weekends only)
admin@highglide.co.uk / www.highglide.co.uk

IMPERIAL COLLEGE GC (42):
Lasham Airfield, Lasham, Alton GU34 5SS
01256 384900 / *icgc-committee@ic.ac.uk*
www.su.ic.ac.uk/gliding

KENT GC (43):
Squids Gate, Challock, Ashford, Kent TN25 4DR
01233 740274 or 740307 / *soaring@kent-gliding-club.co.uk*
www.kent-gliding-club.co.uk/



UK Clubs Directory 2007

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Over 1000m
500 - 1000m
200 - 500m
100 - 200m
0 - 100m
Ridge site ▲
Service Club ◆
SCOTLAND
1 Angus (Drumshade)
2 Cairngorm (Feshiebridge) ▲
3 Connel (Oban) ▲
4 Deeside (Aboyne) ▲
5 Dumfries & District (Falgunzeon) ▲
6 Fulmar (Easterton) ▲◆
7 Highland (Easterton) ▲
8 Scottish Gliding Centre (Portmoak) ▲
NORTHERN IRELAND
91 Ulster (Bellarena) ▲
Elgin
Fulmar
Highland
Inverness
Cairngorm
Deeside
Aberdeen
Ballater
Fort William
Angus
Connel
Oban
Perth
Scottish Gliding Centre
Edinburgh
Glasgow
Borders
Ulster
Dumfries & District
Dumfries
Carlisle
Newcastle
Northumbria
Penrith
Belfast
Carlton Moor
Scarborough
Andrews
ENGLAND
10 Anglia (Wattisham) ◆
11 Aquila (Hinton-in-the-Hedges)
12 Bannerdown (Keevil) ▲◆
13 Bath, Wilts & North Dorset (Kingston Deverill)
14 Bidford Gliding Centre Ltd (Bidford)
15 Booker (Wycombe Air Park)
16 Borders (Milfield) ▲
17 Bowland Forest (Chipping) ▲
18 Bristol & Gloucestershire (Nympsfield) ▲
19 Buckminster (Saltby)
20 Burn (Selby)
21 Cambridge (Gransden Lodge)
22 Carlton Moor (Carlton Moor) ▲
23 Channel (Waldeshare Park)
24 RAFGSA Chilterns Centre (RAF Halton) ◆
25 Clevelands (RAF Dishforth) ◆
26 Cornish Gliding & Flying Club (Perranporth) ▲
27 Cotswold (Aston Down)
28 Cranwell (RAF Cranwell) ◆
29 Crown Service (Lasham)
30 Dartmoor Gliding Society (Brentor)
31 Derby & Lancs (Camphill) ▲
32 Devon & Somerset (North Hill) ▲
33 Dorset (Eyres Field)
34 Dukeries (Darlton)
35 East Sussex (Ringmer)
36 Essex (North Weald & Ridgewell)
37 Essex & Suffolk (Wormingford)
38 Fenland (RAF Marham) ◆
39 Four Counties (RAF Wittering) ◆
40 Herefordshire (Shobdon) ▲
41 Heron (RNAS Yeovilton) ◆
42 Imperial College (Lasham)
43 Kent (Challock)
44 Kestrel (Odiham) ◆
45 Lakes (Walney Island) ▲
46 Lasham Gliding Society (Lasham, Alton)
47 Lincolshire (Strubby, Alford)
48 London (Dunstable) ▲
49 Mendip (Halesland) ▲
50 Midland (Long Mynd) ▲
51 Needwood Forest (Cross Hayes)
52 Nene Valley (Upwood)
53 Newark & Notts (Darlton)
54 Norfolk (Tibenham)
55 North Devon (Eaglescott)
56 Northumbrio (Currock Hill)
57 Oxford (RAF Weston on the Green)
58 Oxfordshire Sport Flying (Enstone)
59 Peterborough & Spalding (Crowland)
60 Portsmouth Naval (Lee on Solent) ◆
61 Rattlesden (Rattlesden)
62 Sackville (Riseley)
63 Seahawk (RNAS Culdrose & Predannack) ◆
64 Shalbourne (Rivar Hill) ▲
65 Shenington (Shenington) ▲
66 Shropshire Soaring Group (Sleap)

BGA MEMBER CLUBS

KESTREL GC (44): Odiham
www.kestrel-gliding.org.uk

LAKES GC (45): Walney Airfield, Barrow In Furness, LA14 3YJ
07860 135447 / *LGC@Braithwaite.freewire.co.uk*
www.lakesgc.co.uk

LASHAM GLIDING SOCIETY (46):
Lasham Airfield, Alton GU34 5SS
01256 384900/*office@lasham.org.uk* / www.lasham.org.uk

LINCOLNSHIRE GC (47):
Strubby Airfield, Alford LN13 1AA
01507 450698 / *keithbrown600@hotmail.com*
www.lincsglidingclub.co.uk

LONDON GC (48): Dunstable Downs, Tring Road, Beds LU6 2JP / 01582 663419 / *wendy@londonglidingclub.com*
www.londonglidingclub.co.uk

MENDIP GC (49):
Halesland Airfield, New Rd, Priddy, Wells, BA5 3BX
01749 870312 (Thursdays and weekends only)
jpatrickn.h4xell@virgin.net / www.mendipglidingclub.co.uk

MIDLAND GC (50):
The Long Mynd, Church Stretton, Shropshire SY6 6TA
01588 650206 / *office@longmynd.com* / www.longmynd.com

NEEDWOOD FOREST GC (51): Cross Hayes Field, Maker Lane, Hoar Cross, Burton upon Trent DE13 8QR
01283 575578 / *nfgc@gogliding.co.uk* / www.gogliding.co.uk

NENE VALLEY GC (52):
Marshals Paddock, Ramsey Road, Upwood PE26 2PH
01487 813062 / 07761 478417
secretary@nvgc.org.uk / www.nvgc.org.uk/

NEWARK & NOTTS GC (53):
Temporarily operating from Darlton. Secretary: 01509 880625
The Club House, Drove Lane, Winthorpe, Newark NG24 2NY
webmaster@newarknottsglidingclub.freeserve.co.uk

NORFOLK GC (54):
Tibenham Airfield, Long Stratton NR16 1NT
01379 677207 / *Mike.Judd@NorfolkGlidingClub.com*
www.norfolkglidingclub.com

NORTH DEVON GC (55):
Eaglescott A/F, Burrington, Umberleigh, North Devon EX37 9LH
01769 520404 / www.eaglescott-airfield.com

NORTH WALES GC (88):
Llantisilio Airfield, Gefnffordd Lane, Nr Llandegla
(Not a postal address)
07956 498078 / *brianw@nwgc.org.uk* / www.nwgc.org.uk

NORTHUMBRIA GC (56):
Currock Hill, Chopwell, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE17 7AX
01207 561286 / *Info@northumbria.flyer.co.uk*
www.northumbria-gliding-club.co.uk

OXFORD GC (57):
RAF Weston On The Green, Nr Bicester OX6 8TQ
0845 094 5265 / *secretary@oxford-gliding-club.co.uk*
www.oxford-gliding-club.co.uk

OXFORDSHIRE SPORTFLYING LTD (58):
Enstone Aerodrome, Church Enstone OX7 4NP
01608 677208 / *osf@enstoneaerodrome.co.uk*
www.enstoneaerodrome.co.uk

PETERBOROUGH & SPALDING GC (59):
Postland Airfield, Crowland, Lincs
01733 210463 / *Chairman@psgc.co.uk*
www.psgc.co.uk

PORTSMOUTH NAVAL GC (60): Lee on Solent
www.pngc.co.uk

RATTLESDEN GC (61):
Rattlesden Airfield, Hightown Green, Rattlesden,
Bury St. Edmunds IP30 0SX
01449 737789 / *bradley.roche@tesco.net* / www.ratair.co.uk

SACKVILLE GC (62):
Sackville Lodge Fm, Riseley MK44 1BS
01234 708877

SCOTTISH GLIDING CENTRE (8):
Portmoak Airfield, Scotlandwell, By Kinross KY13 7JJ
01592 840543 / *office@scottishglidingcentre.co.uk*
www.scottishglidingcentre.co.uk/

SEAHAWK GC (63): RNAS Culdrose
tony@trevonehouse.fsnet.co.uk / 01326 221670 / 07808 348450
Launchpoint 07791 001384

SHALBOURNE SOARING SOCIETY (64):
Rivar Hill Airfield, Henley, Nr Marlborough SN8 3RJ
01962 779333 / www.shalbournegliding.co.uk

SHENINGTON GC (65):
Shenington Airfield, Shenington OX15 6NY
01295 688121 or 680008 / *Gliding.club@virgin.net*
www.shenington-gliding.co.uk/

SHROPSHIRE SOARING GROUP (66):
Sleap Airfield, Nr Wem SY4 3HE
01939 232045 / Chris Fox (Secretary)
07734 926514
tyddynonn@bigfoot.com

SOUTHDOWN GC (67):
Parham A/F, Pulborough Rd, Cootham, Pulborough RH20 4HP
01903 746706
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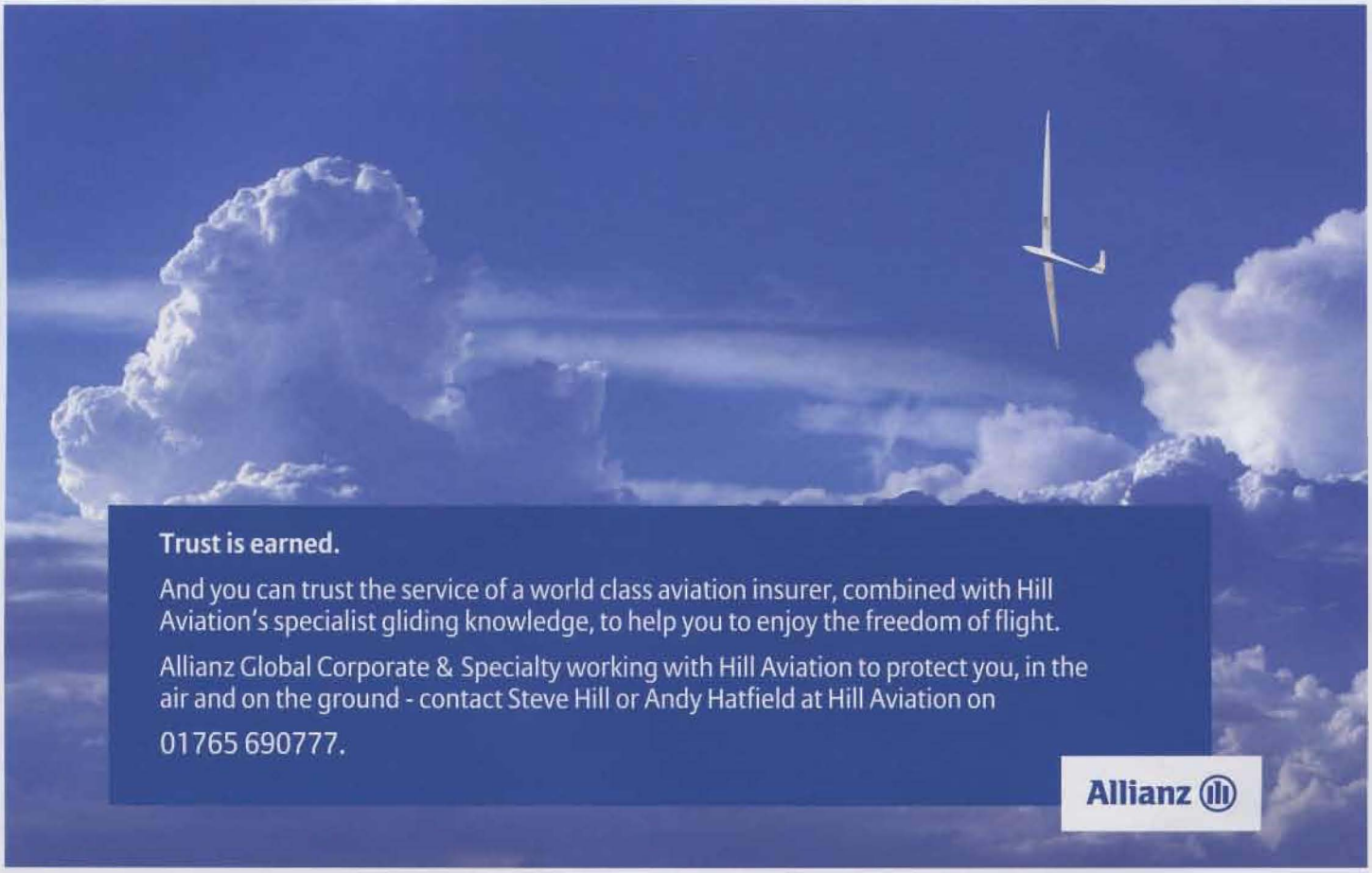
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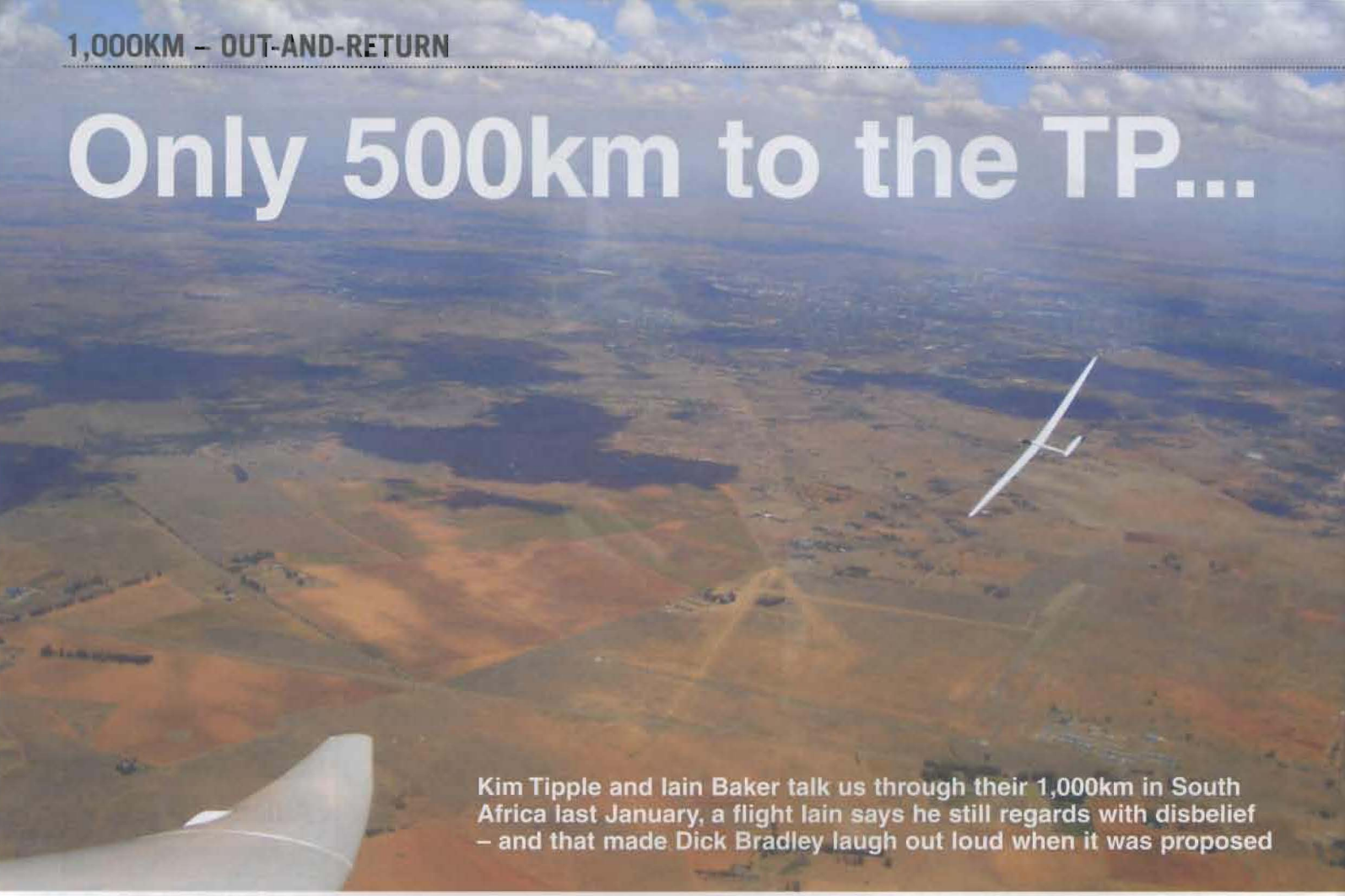
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Only 500km to the TP...



Kim Tipple and Iain Baker talk us through their 1,000km in South Africa last January, a flight Iain says he still regards with disbelief – and that made Dick Bradley laugh out loud when it was proposed

OCCASIONALLY a day comes along in gliding, *says Kim Tipple*, when I just realise how totally privileged I am to experience our wonderful sport. The location was New Tempe, near Bloemfontein, where Dick Bradley and his Soaring Safaris host the South African Nationals. The comp was over and this was to be my last flying day (January 10, 2007) before returning home.

Since my arrival on Boxing Day, in an unusually damp and very green landscape, the weather had been drying out and warming, yet with none of the typical late-summer storms. Consequently the cloudbase and thermals had been improving daily, with bases to the south west expected to be 16,000ft and "dangerous" thermals (whatever that means!) of 10kts-plus.

I've been going to South Africa *adds Iain Baker*, each European winter since 1995, and without doubt this latest season was the best. By January 10, I'd flown a 1,000km yo-yo, a decent 750km, and a very fast (for me) 500km triangle. The previous day was a touring flight around the Bloemfontein TMA, with conditions being so good that there was time for a sightseeing diversion to the mountains in Lesotho. By the 10th I felt relaxed and positive, ready for a truly interesting flight.

KT: Having met Iain here last year, I already knew he always wanted to try something a little more interesting so when I approached him that morning with plans for a treble-turnpoint 1,000km he quickly binned the idea and suggested a more outrageous 1,025km out-and-return to the south west.

IB: Dick Bradley had burst out laughing when he saw this 1,000km O/R earlier in the week, but I felt the day's forecast made it worth attempting. In any case, I wanted to do something different and challenging, not some yo-yo-yo-yo OLC-ing back and forth over the same territory.

So far away was the proposed turnpoint at Maanhars, it was off my usual one-mil airspace map. It didn't exist in my iPAQ waypoint database, either, so over breakfast Phil Jeffery kindly assisted by putting it in and named it "Wanky"! Iain was flying the Ventus 2cT and I had the loan of Shaun Lapworth's Discus 2T. I knew that if we started at 10.30hrs we needed to average 140km/h to complete in seven hours.

I launched second at 10.04hrs, soon after Tex's latest 1,000km bid. After scrabbling around in nothing, I began to imagine that he was staying up through sheer willpower, whereas I had to resort to the 2cT's engine within ten minutes, inevitably almost instantly flying into a thermal. Is it true that firing up a turbo triggers them?

The local area at launch was blue with a marked inversion at 7,000ft (2,500ft agl) and just soarable with 1-2kt thermals. I was anxious to get going and unable to raise Iain on the radio. (Possibly the engine was running!) I tried to make my intentions clear and flew past him across the startline.

I found crappy lift, nothing firm or with form and suddenly Kim had already disappeared. Expletives in several languages came to mind as I felt incapable of staying airborne, let alone trying to keep up with Kim. Then his confident radio call ("The ploughed fields are working well") and, strewth, he was right. Not great, but surprisingly consistent. OK, I was behind, but not totally out of touch. Anyway, I thought, Kim could mark the thermals for me. If I caught up.

Drifting along from one field or saltpan to another, I rarely got above 2,500ft agl. It was very frustrating to see small cu popping up either side of track, but just too far away to reach sensibly. At this point Iain was about 15km behind and struggling even more than me. We just had to hang in there and wait for trigger temp to be reached. Then north of Kalkfontein, a beautiful sight greeted me. A flock of maybe 50 storks at my height, looking stunning with their white wings caught in the intense sunlight. Truly mesmerising, they on their journey and me on mine. I find moments like these capture my emotions (old softie!).

Somehow (without knowing how) I caught



Left: Gliders thermalling above New Tempe airfield, the start/finish point for what Iain Baker describes as: a cracking flight, a feel-good flight, something stunningly gobsmackingly glorious of legendary proportions, daringly unique, bold and ambitious, priceless and best of all, declared and achieved... (Kim Tipple)

Right: Koffiefontein Diamond Mine is usually a thermal hotspot – and that hole's a mile across (Claire Bradley)

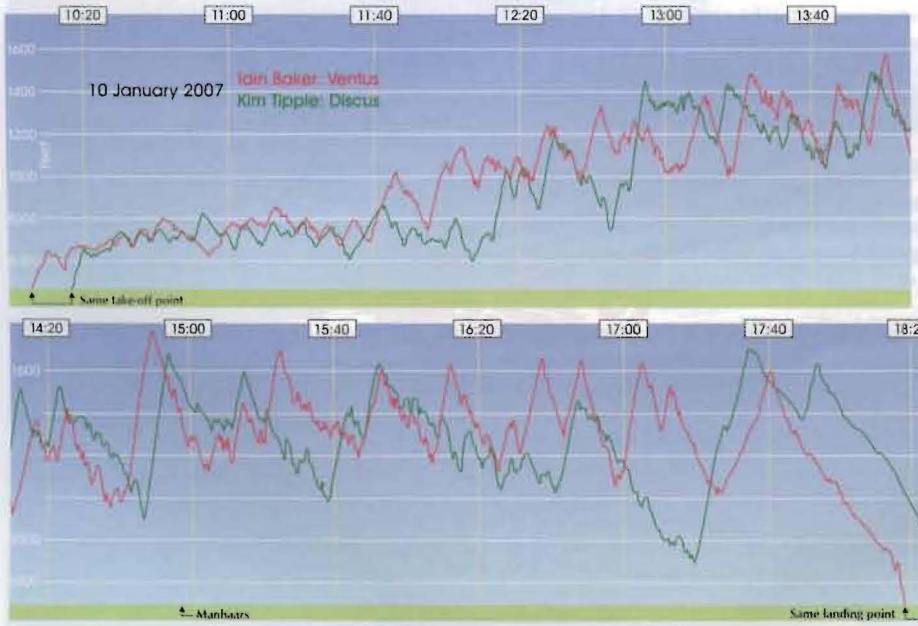
Below: barograph traces for the two pilots, who took off a few minutes apart (Steve Longland)

up with Kim at Kalkfontein as he took a weak thermal. "Only 1.5kts here," he said. Bizarrely I was climbing at 5kts. As our height difference was rapidly eliminated, I sensed Kim's frustration and he pushed on. I started to follow, and immediately flew into a strong bubble, steadily climbing at 7-8kts through 9,000ft, then up to 11,000ft.

I heard Iain call 4-5kts but I had already gone, gliding to the diamond mine at Koffiefontein, a sure hot spot! Running in, I was now down to 2,000ft agl. The airmass was becoming very alive and I just needed one half-decent climb to connect. The resident thermal from the mine was proving elusive so I had to push on south, knowing that one wrong move now would put me on the deck. Arriving rather desperately over a small farmstead I found a broken 1-2kts but I was able to hang in there. "Phew!" I thought – back to my old hang-gliding days (it was hot and sweaty, too!) when we often get low saves from interesting places! Unlike the earlier thermals, which were weak but consistent, this felt ragged and disturbed and liable to spit me out at any time. It was a huge relief when I re-centred into 6kts and thought "UP". As the farmstead dropped away, all previous problems vanished from my mind and I could embark on the second phase of the flight in increasingly fabulous conditions. A call to Iain confirmed that he had leapfrogged me as he contacted the "good one" a little earlier while I had been messing about down below. As hard as I tried, I would not see Iain for the rest of the flight as he maintained a lead of 20-30km.

The conditions now were unbelievably good. Cloudbase seemed uniformly high, with wall-to-wall cumulus in every direction from east to west. It may have been the same to the north, but no way was I turning to look. Trying to take a decent line of energy along track, I begrudged every turn, every second of dithering in sink. Kim had said we would be on target provided that the turn was made between 15.00 and 16.00hrs. I remained unconvinced – sunset was 19.15hrs and no way could I make 500km in three hours. Every thought was focussed on turning as early as possible.

Approaching the area between De Aar and Britstown, cruising at 14,000ft under a beautiful street I was relaxed – until trying to select a smaller scale map on the iPAQ when the whole thing froze! "***** Flipping iPAQs!" I said (or words to that effect). This was the main navigation display in 2T, so it was kind of essential. Especially as a map in these parts is almost useless and the sun is almost overhead! After numerous rebooting attempts I radioed Iain to say I would probably have to abandon and navigate home, which would be interesting (to say the least). Iain replied in his usual laid-back manner: "Can you see a town with a salt lake to the south west of it?" I scanned. "Yes, I think I can," I replied. "That's Britstown," he said, "See you there in 20 minutes!" "Blimey, what a cool guy," I thought, and set off in a more positive state of mind. If we could meet up then we could fly this thing together so all hope was not lost. Trying to mess about with a delicate iPAQ in the now very energetic air was incredibly difficult but somehow, and with much relief, I managed to get it back again and vowed not to touch it again for the rest of the flight!



Meantime I had my own problems, finding it increasingly difficult to keep the speed above 100kts as the Ventus' stiff wings made for a very rough ride. Feeling thrown around the cockpit, I longed for the soft ride of my LS6 but the only reprieves were occasional climbs, impressively strong and smooth.

With all systems running again I could concentrate totally on the flying and push on towards Maanhars. I could now see the edge of the high veldt (plateau) to the south east, where it drops by maybe 1,500ft. "I think I can see Cape Town!" I radioed to Iain. "It's another 500km away..." came the response. Must have been low on oxygen or high on adrenalin!

Approaching the turn, I thought a nice climb would be a rest from the shake, rattle and roll of the high-speed cruise and right on cue, contacted a core that started at 8kts and averaged 9.2kts for a 7,000ft climb straight

1,000KM – OUT-AND-RETURN





Iain (photographed above by Dolf Pretorius landing after the flight described here) *lives in Toulouse but speaks terrible French and mostly flies his UK-registered LS6 in Spain with pilots from Germany. Consequently he is a very confused person. His FAA licence allows him to fly all gliders "except for agricultural purposes". Despite this restriction, he has clocked up 1,800hrs gliding since starting in 1982. After collecting the complete set of badges and consistently failing miserably in competitions, Iain now prefers to use gliding as an excuse for interesting and exotic holidays with interesting and exotic people. He has blue eyes, GSOH and prefers cats to dogs*

Kim (pictured above at New Tempe) *got the flying bug in 1993 in Wiltshire after hurling himself downhill strapped to a Bog Rog (primitive hang-glider) and landing face down in a cow pat. Those were the days! He has 2,500hrs in hang-gliders, light aircraft and fixed-wing sailplanes and shares in a Nimbus 3DT, ASW20 and T-21. His most memorable flights include hang-gliding over the Himalayas, ridge soaring Mount Cook, flying 1,000km as a British Team member in the Europeans (Finland 2005) and, of course, this one. When not flying he also enjoys sailing, badminton, and some golf*

up to 18,000ft. I broke off near cloudbase, still climbing, thinking Kim would have a hard time to find something as good. Not that I really knew where he was. Although we had exchanged distance and bearings a few times, it wasn't until after the flight that I realised Kim was using magnetic bearings, and I was reporting true. With a magnetic deviation of 21° it makes a big difference. I turned Maanhars at 14.53hrs.

I eventually turned at 14.58hrs, on schedule with 500km to go and with up to four hours' soaring left it all looked very feasible. The next 250km were straightforward if a little frustrating at times as I was always unable to get a real good climb up to cloudbase. Running at 12-14,000ft did feel unconnected at times. With 17,500ft base you actually feel quite low even at 7,000ft agl.

Now the flight turned into a romp, flying hard and fast, rarely stopping. (Post-flight analysis shows I averaged 161km/h over 400km.) The ground below scrolled past, like some computer game. Long high-speed glides in fantastic conditions meant I could relax and enjoy the scenery. We were flying over the Great Karoo, arid scrubland with virtually no signs of human activity and very few tarred roads. It is boundless, endless rolling terrain punctuated by ridges and dry watercourses and strange circular rock formations like collapsed volcanoes. It's no place to get low, nowhere landable. It could take days for a rescue party to arrive at a crash landing. But the country has a stark beauty, a primeval quality that is untainted by man.

I was now down to 200km to go with 17,000ft available and approaching the last phase of the flight. It was nearly 17.00hrs and although the climbs were still impressive, they were beginning to become a little more sparse and the glides in the sink a little longer. I missed two climbs coming across the Orange River and found myself very low on the north side of the valley over some hills and gulleys. But they just weren't triggering and I was forced to move on to the last good-looking cumulus over a large plain north of the impressive Vanderkloof Dam. This was about 150km from Bloem, and probably close to final glide from cloudbase. I knew I was only one or two climbs away from success but I was struggling and in need of a little luck. With very limited landing options I was pushing my safety limits a little but I still had the iron thermal in the back of the Discus. The large cumulus cast an immense shadow across the plain and I would have to find lift quickly, as the ground was very close! To the left a small hillock got my attention, still just on the edge of the sunshine. Left I went and my reward was a 8-10kt climb! Isn't it lovely when things work out according to plan? By now Iain was climbing about 40km ahead over Kalkfontein Dam under what looked like would be his last climb.

Actually, I was pausing in a crappy thermal for a "comfort break". Plus the air ahead to Bloem looked rather flat, with some showery clouds blown over from Kimberley. I didn't want to mess up on the final glide.

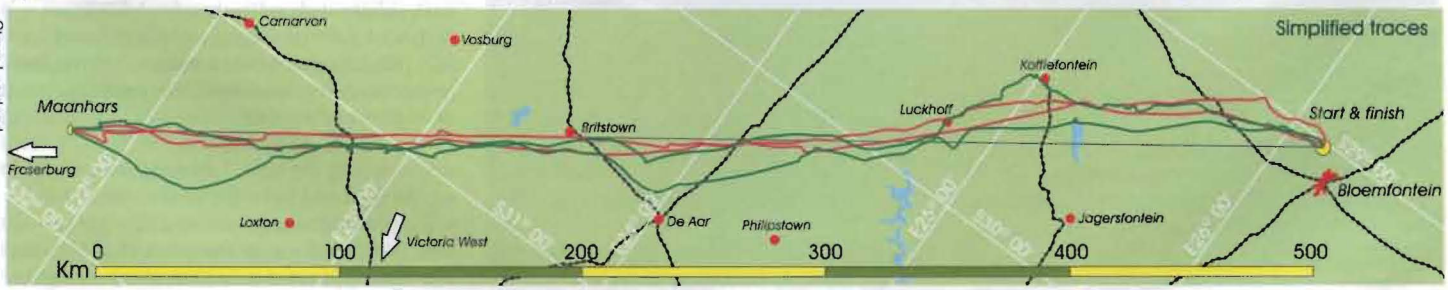
At 16,500ft and down sun I started to shiver a little. It was really very cool and I would be glad to be on final descent back to New Tempe. Another final 4kt climb took me back to nearly 16,000ft – with 100km to go and a gentle tailwind it was final glide! At last I arrived over the airfield with plenty of energy to do the obligatory low pass and end what was an epic and memorable seven-and-a-half hours.

Even now I have a sense of disbelief about this flight. Declared 1,000km O/Rs must be unusual, especially these days, with OLC encouraging following the best weather and turning multiple undeclared waypoints. Post-flight analysis shows I missed the British Open record by less than 20 minutes (there are no separate records for 18-metre gliders). But it simply doesn't matter about some badge or record. Badges are for boy scouts, records are for aged disc jockeys. This was a cracking flight, a feel-good flight, something stunningly gobsmackingly glorious of legendary proportions, daringly unique, bold and ambitious, priceless and best of all, declared and achieved. And to cap it, beating Kim shows that maybe I really am a decent cross-country pilot. On the right day. With the right glider.

Yes – this was cross-country flying on a grand scale, as only places like South Africa can offer. Endless sky, huge energy, and massive landscape! The kind of experience that will keep a smile on my face for a very long time. But, Iain, you did have flaps and three metres more span!

Yes, but I still beat you by 20 minutes ;-)

Steve Longland



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Try aeros this year



Charles Baker explains why starting your aerobatics career by competing isn't as daunting as it might sound



Left: you won't be able to remember the sequence to fly so you need a copy taped to the instrument panel

IT TOOK me many years of playing with aerobatics before I thought of entering a competition. Looking back, it was a mistake to wait so long. If you are new to aerobatics, I would urge you to fly a competition as soon as you are able. This will: provide a focus for your training; give a standard of flying discipline to aim for; let you meet and exchange ideas with like-minded pilots and, last but not least, have a good deal of fun. In this article, I hope to show you how you can learn from my experiences.

How competitions are organised

Competitions for gliders take place at Saltby (Buckminster) or Dunstable (London) under the rules of the British Aerobatic Association (BAeA). They are divided into four classes: Beginners; Sports; Intermediate and Unlimited. So far, the Beginners class has not been popular because, by the time they find out about competition aerobatics, most pilots would think it too easy. However, there are moves afoot to encourage less experienced pilots, so this class may grow.

Experience and equipment needed

Bronze Badge and about half a dozen instructional flights should be enough for a reasonably competent pilot to fly the Beginners sequence.

The K-21 is a good training machine. Indeed, the Dunstable Sports level competition is limited to the K-21. I fly the Puchacz when I can and there are several other suitable aircraft. Don't worry if you don't have a share in a suitable machine. The aerobatic pilots are a small group and if you ask around, it is usually possible to borrow something suitable.

Most competitors are men, but the contests are judged on precision and accuracy and are equally suitable for women. They are relaxed because you do not need a crew and are always home in time for tea.

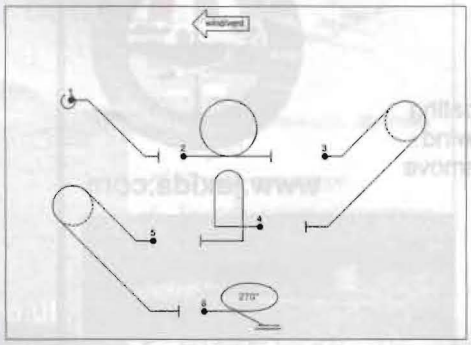
When and where

For various reasons, my first competition had to be the 2005 Nationals. Beforehand, that seemed a daunting prospect, but it turned out to be a stroke of luck. It was not at all like a cross-country Nationals. Since then, I have flown all the competitions and would say that the aerobatic Nationals is definitely the best contest for the first-time entrant.

This year the Nationals are on June 7-10 at Saltby. This is a straightforward site, the club is supportive and all four classes are available. Normally, there are fewer than 20 competitors. There is no need for a crew and so the total group is small enough to be quite sociable.

The aim

The aim of competition is to fly a sequence of figures with precision and accuracy. In addition, the sequence is marked on positioning and harmony.



The Beginners sequence for 2007 in aerobatic notation – see the text at the top of the next page to interpret it

Normally, you fly parallel to the runway. The judges are positioned opposite the centre point looking at right angles to the line you are flying. A well-positioned sequence has equal numbers of figures to the left and right of the judges. An harmonious sequence has equal intervals between figures, neither so short that the sequence looks rushed, nor so long as to look hesitant. Most beginners rush the sequence and would do better to slow down.

At Beginners level there is no penalty for an interruption (break between figures) so, if needed, it is worthwhile pausing and adjusting speed and direction before the next figure.

Penalties are awarded for showing off after finishing a sequence, intentional soaring or performing too low. That should not be a problem because you will be allowed ample height.

Nobody can remember a sequence so you will need a copy taped to your instrument panel, as in the photograph above.

The Beginners sequence

Beginners fly only a "known" sequence. This is published at the start of the year so pilots can practice.

At the higher levels there are "unknown" sequences published on the competition day so pilots fly them cold.

The Beginners sequence for 2007 is:

Start heading parallel to the runway heading into the "official" wind direction. Diving line, loop, chandelle (to reverse direction), humpty bump (canopy down), chandelle and three-quarter turn.

The turn can be in either direction. A useful tip is to turn away from the runway so that you can see it for the roll-out, directly at right angles.

Whilst you are performing your sequence, the judges will be dictating remarks to their assistants. Shortly afterwards, the scorer will give you the score sheets. The judges' comments are intended to be helpful and it is very worthwhile studying these carefully.

Know the rules

The fee to enter your first Beginners contest is included in your BAeA subscription. If there are two or more of you from the same club, it is cheaper to join the BAeA as a club membership rather than individually.

The BAeA contest rules say that you may not practice at the contest site in the week before to minimise noise nuisance. However, this rule does not apply to gliders. Indeed, practice week is a sociable and useful gathering. Experienced pilots are usually happy to chat and offer advice and tips. It is possible that there will be some more formal assistance before this year's Nationals.

On the day

There is a roll call and a full daily briefing, followed by the usual gliding club drill of getting the gliders to the launchpoint. Unlike a cross-country competition, launching is leisurely, because there needs to be a minimum of ten minutes between launches to space out the competitors. When your class is not competing, you can visit the judging line and listen to what is going on.

Go for broke: enter at two levels!

If you can fly some of the Sports figures but are not confident of them all, consider entering at two levels. The rules allow this to encourage pilots to practice for the higher level before formally competing. You are treated as a serious competitor at the lower level. At the higher level you can take a safety pilot or simply miss out some figures. You will be scored and benefit from the judges' comments but won't qualify for a prize .

More information

The BAeA website at www.aerobatics.org.uk is excellent. Once you have joined the BAeA you will get a contest information booklet. The website also has contact numbers for the check pilots. Most are very willing to answer questions and offer advice and help. If your own club does not have training facilities, Lasham runs courses. and Dunstable, Saltby and other clubs can arrange one-to-one training. Aerobatics should not replace soaring, but it is a useful skill to work upon when you cannot soar. Competition is good fun and gives you something to aim for. See you at Saltby in June, I hope!

Airspace update

Carr Withall, chairman of the BGA Airspace Committee, provides a brief assessment of 2006 and the annual reminder on airspace information and recommended procedures for cross-country flights

DURING 2006 the Airspace Committee was, as usual, continuously involved around the country as changes to, or increases in, controlled airspace gather pace.

This issue of *S&G* does not include the full description of all types of airspace. See *Gliding and UK airspace update*, April-May 2006, p44, for full details and descriptions of airspace. The BGA website airspace section now contains much of what is in this article and much other useful airspace information.

What is important is that we follow recommended practices that will assist our safety and other users of airspace.

Division Flight Level

This year on March 15 the UK came in line with the rest of Europe and adopted Flight Level 195 as the level above which ALL airspace is Class C controlled airspace. Class B airspace no longer exists. All aviation maps that General Aviation pilots use for flying will not show any airspace above FL195. Existing upper airways will continue to be used by commercial aircraft as they are today, but they will be embedded in Class C airspace.

Therefore it was essential that the wave flying areas were looked at to ensure that this important part of our flying continued. The Scottish areas were changed to reflect their most-used areas and the Borders club at Milfield, which is thriving, now needed an area as they often have climbs above FL195. The agreement with the Civil Aviation Authority and Ministry of Defence and method of activation for flying in the wave areas is going to be the same for all wave sites. This agreement, together with the maps, will be on the BGA website (airspace section) at *www.gliding.co.uk/airspace*. These areas will be referred to as Temporary Reserved Areas (G).

AIS

I know that the AIS system is still far from user friendly but please check the AIS website before flying cross-country (www.ais.org.uk). Last-minute briefing can be obtained from the freephone (0500 354802). The Red Arrows have their own website where you can see their display programme (www.raf.mod.uk/reds). The BGA website (Airspace) has a guide produced by Chris Nicholas and Michael Cross on how to obtain AIS and NOTAM information.

Former TRAs are now RA(T)s

As a result of European airspace classification changes, the current restrictions of flying known as Temporary Restricted Areas (TRAs), that are put in place to protect events such as air displays and major incidents have had a new name since January 18, 2007. Now they are known as Restricted Areas (Temporary) or RA(T)s. Pilots looking for events such as Red Arrows displays should look at RA(T) information. This change is to avoid confusion with the new Temporary Reserved Areas, which were introduced from March 15 to bring the UK in line with Eurocontrol Flexible Use of Airspace and coincide with the lowering of Class C airspace definitions.

Class D airspace

The increase this year, and in the future, of these areas of controlled airspace around regional airports will mean that cross-country flights will more often have to route through Class D airspace. The only good reason for controllers to refuse access to a glider to transit this airspace is if they are truly busy with other traffic. It is known that a couple of ATC units, Southampton and Leeds, often refuse access, whilst other ATC units are helpful. If after first contact with ATC you are refused access, immediately ask for the traffic information that is causing the refusal and politely remind the controller that it is Class D and you are flying VFR in VMC conditions. There is an agreed R/T wording for requesting a clearance and flying through Class D airspace and this is on the BGA website (airspace section). There is also a form to complete if a pilot has successfully flown through or been denied access to, Class D airspace, which is also on the BGA website.

On August 31, 2006 new areas of Class D controlled airspace at Bristol and Cardiff came into effect together with the Letter of Agreement to allow access for gliders flying through the area. The new areas are shown on the map overleaf and the Letter of Agreement is on the BGA website (airspace). Please read, and if in doubt talk to your CFI.

Code of Conduct for flights through Class D airspace

Remember you must obtain ATC 'clearance' to fly through any Class D airspace. Tell the controller that you are a 15-Metre/Standard or Open Class glider. Keep the controller informed of any change of your planned route, due to massive sink for example. Do not circle on the extended centreline of the airfield runway. Be prepared to initiate avoiding action notwithstanding your right of way priority. You are flying VFR rules and therefore separation is not provided from other aircraft. An R/T licence is required. However, safety and commonsense take priority over whether or not you have a licence when

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21-29 July . . . . . IC9 The Gliding Centre – Hus Bos
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For more information, or to book on a course, please contact the BGA office

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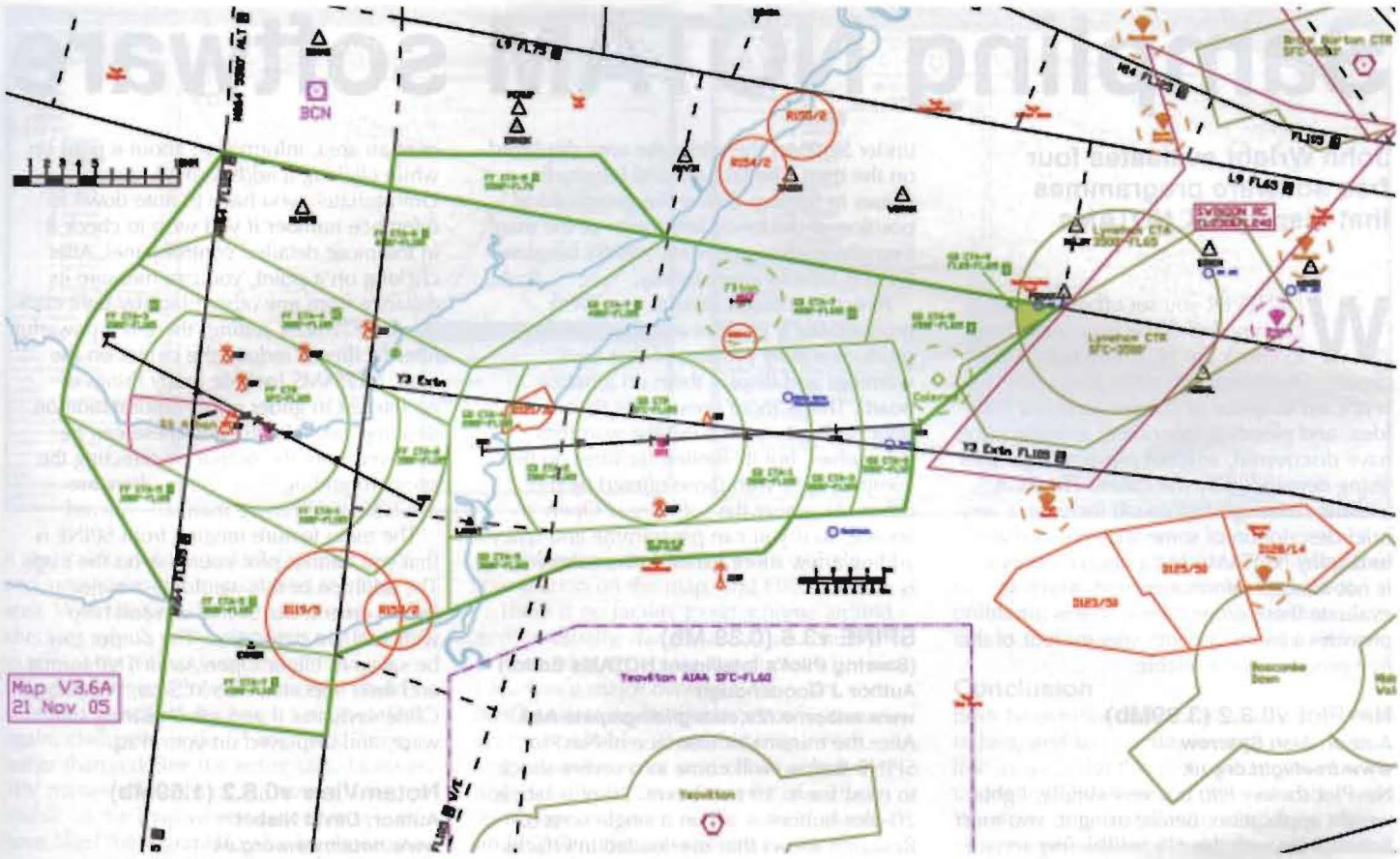
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WORTH NOTING

With the lowering of upper airspace to FL195 Aboyne will have the only 7 day a week access to FL245 in the UK – Diamonds any day of the week!



The "new" Class D airspace around Cardiff and Bristol, which came into effect last year. The Letter of Agreement is on the BGA website. If in doubt, consult your CFI

unavoidably drifting into Class D airspace. If the cloudbase is so high that one can fly over the top of Lyneham or Brize Norton zones please give them a call. They will see you on radar and will assume that you are in their zone and so divert their military traffic five miles from the radar target. They should be helpful. My personal experience last summer with Brize Norton met with "keep clear of controlled airspace" every time but I have discussed this with them and trust this will not happen this summer.

Parachuting Drop Zones (DZ)

The list of parachute sites and appropriate contact ATC frequency is on the aviation maps as a block of information. Contact the ATC unit and they will be able to say if the site is active. The glider pilot can then request the DZ frequency to obtain the current activity. By talking directly to the parachute site one may either be allowed to cross safely, if they are having a break, or fly around the zone if they are busy. However, most importantly, in the event of a nil response from the parachute site frequency the glider should act on the strategic information given by the ATC unit and remain clear of the site. **YOU WILL NEVER SEE A FREE FALL PARACHUTIST IN TIME TO TAKE AVOIDING ACTION. IF IN DOUBT KEEP OUT.** The major sites at Langar, Peterborough/Sibson, Weston on the Green and Hinton-in-the-Hedges are very busy. Be sure to make in-flight R/T calls to ascertain actual status of DZs on your route. An R/T licence is NOT required.

Airspace infringements

Once again we have had a good record. Flying on the QFE altimeter setting, which is our normal practice, can, however, more easily lead to an infringement. The BGA airspace committee suggests that the airfield QNH be written down on the map before take-off. When flying close to the base of controlled airspace this QNH setting, or 1013, as appropriate, should be set on the altimeter. It is bad practice to add the airfield height to the altimeter reading during flight.

Airproxes

Despite the new symbol for gliding sites on aviation maps there were several airprox reports involving gliders at less than winch launch height, both military and civil aircraft disregarding the symbol on the map. There were also many other incursions over gliding sites well below winch launch height.

Please report every occurrence of light aircraft flying low over your site. There is a simple form to fill in and send to the CAA Safety Regulation Group when this happens.

If you are considering filing an Airprox or suspect one may be filed against you then please contact either Hugh Woodsend (*Hugh_Woodsend@compuserve.com* or 01993 830588), Bruce Cooper (01628 521360, *bruce.cooper68@virgin.net*) or Carr Withall (carrwithall@btinternet.com/ 01442 862577) as soon as possible. If carrying a logger please keep the trace. The use of traces may well provide evidence against exaggerated claims.

Maps

There is much useful information at the bottom and side of the map that can greatly assist on cross-country flights: for example, parachute site contact frequencies, ATZ frequencies, Danger Area activity, etc.

In our increasingly-congested skies, it is essential to use every bit of airspace possible. This can only be done if the correct frequency is immediately to hand when you wish to inform airfields that you likely to fly close to or over fly.

Always fly with the current map. NOTE the new half-million aviation maps only show airspace up to FL195. Above this level it is ALL Class C controlled airspace. You will have read earlier that wave areas have been agreed so that high-level gliding can continue, albeit not every day.

Finally, if you're lost...

Remember if you are truly lost and are worried about infringing controlled airspace call on the distress frequency 121.50. This service can very quickly find you as long as you are above 2,000ft and south of Manchester.

Updates and other useful information are at *www.gliding.co.uk/airspace*

Sampling NOTAM software

John Wright evaluates four free software programmes that display UK NOTAMs

WHENEVER you set off on a cross-country flight, it is very important to check the NOTAMs before you depart. Stumbling into some temporary restricted airspace or danger zone is a bad idea, and pleading ignorance, as some pilots have discovered, will not prevent large fines being demanded by the courts. The BGA website (*www.gliding.co.uk*) includes a very brief description of some software available to display NOTAMs, but a couple of lines is not enough information with which to evaluate these programmes, so this article provides a more in-depth view of four of the free programmes available.

NavPlot v0.3.2 (3.99Mb)

Author: Alan Sparrow

www.freeflight.org.uk

NavPlot *(below left)* is a very simple, light-weight application. Before using it, you must first register with the AIS SelfBriefing service (which is free), then add your user name and password to the software's Settings tab. Next select the day and area (London, Scottish or both) for which you wish to view NOTAMs.

On clicking the Get NOTAMS button, a PDF is created and displayed, with a map of the UK, below which is listed all of that day's NOTAMs. The map includes a few gliding sites to help you orientate yourself, as well as some key permanent airspace. There is no filtering of the information other than by date, but all plotted navigation warnings are numbered, described, and their position indicated on the map. Non-plotted navigation warnings are listed as well. There is no way to draw a task from within the software, but is extremely easy to use. There is no documentation supplied with this product, but the bigger the width used under Settings, the wider the area displayed on the map. The latitude and longitude values in Settings define the geographical position of the lower left corner of the map. Everything else is obvious, mainly because there is little to alter anyway.

At first this might seem a very weak product, but it enables a club to quickly produce a daily printout of that day's warnings and display them on a notice board. This is more convenient than every pilot having to search out the warnings themselves, but its limited facilities do not compare well with those offered by the others. However the software is Open Source, so if you can programme and fancy adding a few more features, the source code is available.

SPINE v3.6 (0.39 Mb)

(Soaring Pilot's Intelligent NOTAMs Editor)

Author J Goodenough

www.enborne.f2s.com/gliding/spine.htm

After the minimalist interface of NavPlot, SPINE *(below)* will come as a severe shock to most users: 19 text boxes, 20-plus labels, 20-plus buttons – all on a single screen. Research shows that overloaded interfaces are harder to use. A nice menu would make a huge difference to this programme.

SPINE has many options that can be set, and a reasonably good Help file explaining what it can do. On clicking Get NOTAMS, it fetches those for the current and next few days, which can be viewed in its crowded interface along with the distance from your home airfield. You can work through this list manually, or plot them on a map. The map is one of SPINE's strong points. It is fully zoomable, centred on wherever you click and scrollable, shows the BGA TPs, major airspace, danger areas and of course the NOTAM areas, based on the date range you select at the top of the map window. Check this matches the day you intend to fly on, as you could be viewing several days' worth of warnings at a time. On holding the mouse over an area, information about it pops up, while clicking it adds a small cross. Unfortunately you have to note down its reference number if you wish to check it in the more detailed control panel. After clicking on a point, you can measure its distance from any other place by right clicking there. Under *settings* there is a powerful filter facility to reduce the clutter on the map. NOTAMS include many things of no interest to glider pilots (information on de-icing, oil, ILS, etc) and these can be removed from the output by selecting the standard gliding filter. Other filters are available and can be manually altered.

The main feature missing from SPINE is that you cannot plot your task on the map. The addition of this would be a major improvement. But SPINE can still help with in-flight navigation. The output can be saved in either Open Air or TNP format, and then imported into XCSoar, Winpilot, GlideNavigator II and other soaring software, and displayed on your iPaq.

NotamView v0.8.2 (1.69Mb)

Author: David Nisbet

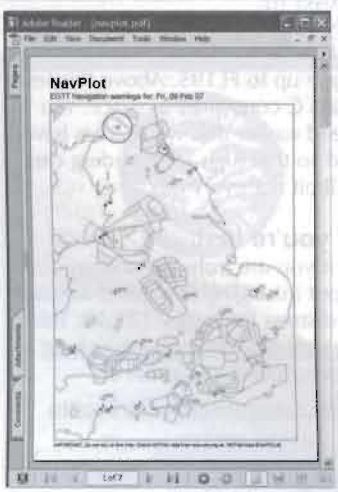
www.notamview.org.uk

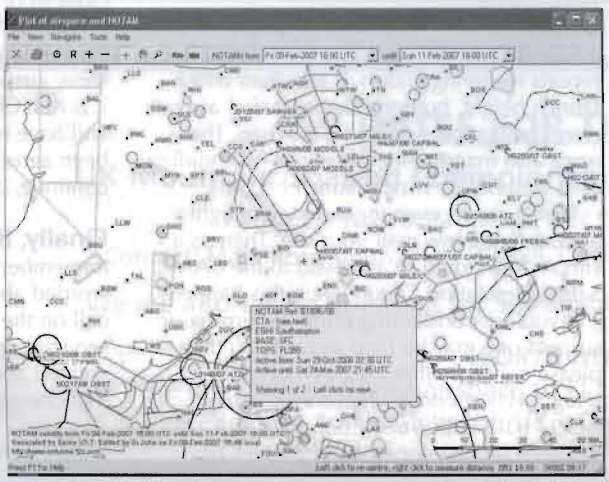
This programme *(seen opposite, above)* is very easy to use and some operations you are likely to repeat require very few mouse clicks. Downloading the latest NOTAMS requires just two clicks. The title bar also indicates how long since you last downloaded the data. By default it collects today's data, but this can be altered to other dates if necessary. The data is shown in tree view in the NOTAM panel, and can be expanded by clicking on items. To the right is a map, centred on your chosen home site. The Map Panel is a tabbed view, and the NOTAMS are listed in full in the other tabs. The map is zoomable from the menu, and right clicking a point re-centres on the new position.

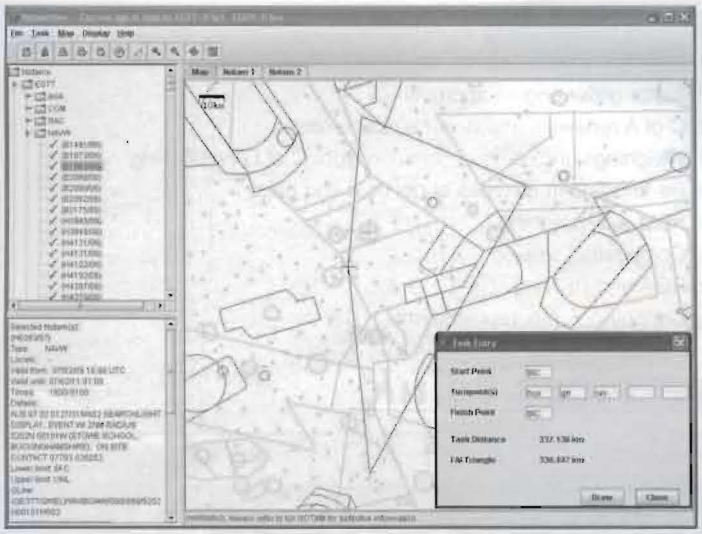
As well as the actual NOTAMS, important airspace, danger areas, and parachute drop zones are also shown. The items on view can easily be altered from the drop-down menu.

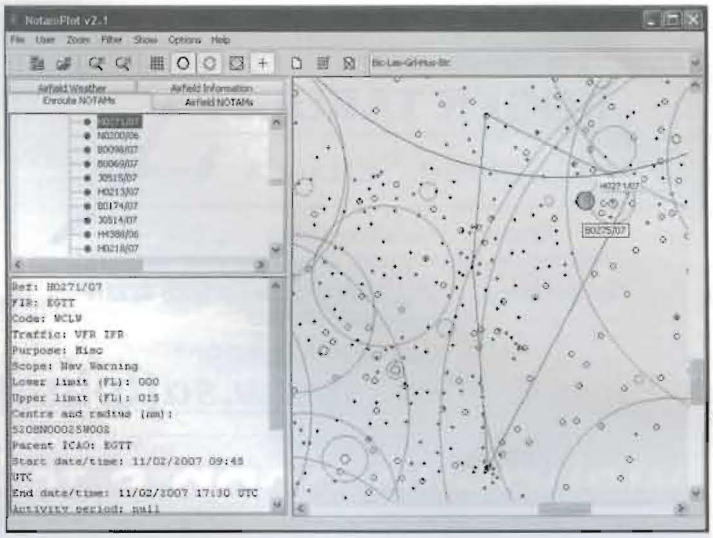
Warnings are marked in red, and clicking on the map marks the nearest warning area with green cross and orange circle. This was about my only real complaint – I felt some of the colours used were a bit low contrast. The actual warning text is displayed in the Details panel below the tree view.

You can configure the programme to use your home airfield as its starting point. Task setting is particularly easy in NotamView, which comes with the current BGA TP list and ICAO codes. Simply select Task from the menu and enter the trigraphs in the appropriate boxes - if you miss-type one, on clicking Draw it will be highlighted in red. This is very much faster than NotamPlot's approach to drawing a task. As a bonus,









it also calculates the task distance as well, and auto-scales the map around the task area. With the task drawn on the map, checking which of the warnings are likely to affect you is then very straightforward. I liked the ease with which the task could be altered if a conflict occurred. Just open Task again, change a single TP and click Draw, rather than redefine the entire task. However TPs' names (trigraphs or full names) are only visible on the map when you zoom in – I'd have liked the trigraph to also be shown on mouseover of a TP. As with SPINE, there are several useful filters available to reduce map clutter. A newer version will soon be available, and among other improvements, you will be able to set an AAT, and choose your own colours for map items and airspace. The current version has the old AIS web site URL, but straightforward editing instructions to alter this are included.

NotamPlot v2.1 (4.9Mb)

Author: Ian Fallon

www.notamplot.flyer.co.uk

This programme *(above right)* comes in a free and paid version. The free version adds a nag screen and downloading the data takes more steps than any of the others. Specific airfield NOTAMs can also be downloaded, making it useful for power pilots. You must sign up with *Avbrief.com* (free) to use this. The paid version includes several extras, such as METARS, airfield information on the map, and FIRs.

There is no facility to set a home airfield and, unusually, danger areas, parachute drop zones and airspace are not displayed, which I felt was a major oversight. BGA TPs and ICAO codes can be displayed or hidden on the scrollable, zoomable map which, unfortunately, is not centred on screen in any useful way. On mouseover of a TP, its trigraph is shown, while airfield names and ICAO codes are also displayed.

Screen layout is similar to NotamView, using three main panels the same way. Clicking on a warning either adds a colour fill, which is more noticeable than NotamView's current coloured cross, or changes the warning area outline from brown to blue. A full description is also shown in the lower left panel. A filter limits warnings to a given day's, but activates an annoying red flashing bar.

Tasks can be drawn on the map to check for conflicts, but this is a much longer process than it needs to be, using long lists to find a TP, and unless you store a set of frequently used tasks, you will find NotamView much more convenient to use. It took at least ten times as long to set up a new task using NotamPlot! Of course once saved it can be recalled quickly, but changing a single TP is more involved than necessary, as you have to rename and save that route too. Task distance is not calculated for you. Built-in Help is non-existent, but online there is a good User Guide that covers most of what you will need to know.

Conclusion

Both NotamPlot and NotamView are written in Java, and so you may have to download that as well. But this means they will run under any OS, while the other two are Windows only. Installation of all four programmes was extremely easy. Of the four, SPINE has the most features, but lacks the vital task-drawing facility. NotamView is clearly the easiest and fastest to use.

Bear in mind that although these are free programmes, they all work well and represent many hours of hard work.



John, a computing lecturer, gained all three Diamonds in Club Class gliders, upgrading to an LS8 at the end of last year. A member of Windrushers since 1981, he has more than 2,400hrs and an Assistant Instructor rating

A version of this review, which may include some of the commercial packages as well, will be placed online at *www.sky-web.net/notamsoftware.htm* in July 2007



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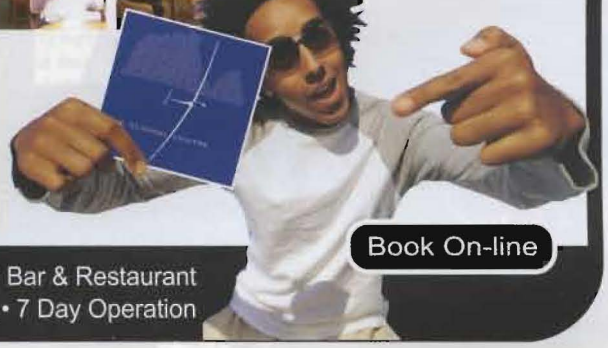
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Club news

Aquila (Hinton in the Hedges)

WE flew through the winter due to an excellent dry site, welcoming members from waterlogged ones. Duncan McKay, tug pilot and ex-CFI, who last flew a glider in 1998, went solo in February – slightly overdue on a currency check! The club is discussing with the airfield owners building a new clubhouse. This will be more central and afford hot and cold catering facilities and good public car parking; in the interim we are moving in with Pilot Flight Training. We are very grateful to PFT: thanks! Because we are planning a seven-day operation we are encouraging clubs from poorer soaring sites to run summer expeditions to Hinton, one of the best soaring sites in the UK, thus facilitating completion of badge flights. Daily morning briefings with met and task setting with de-briefings at the end of the day will take place on all cross-country days. We do not charge a day membership. Camping/caravan is available with on-site catering and excellent pubs. The club's soaring and cross-country weeks for 2007 are May 8-17, May 28-Jun 1, July 16-20, Aug 13-17 and 27-31. All pilots are welcome.

Rod Watson

Bannerdown (RAF Keevil)

CONGRATULATIONS to a couple of solos – Lynda Davies and Brian Poulson, and to Tim Roberts, who's converted to the motorglider. The Arnolds' new Discus 2c has arrived and been flown and Bob Bromwich's ASG 29 has also arrived. The AGM is due to be held in March. Work is starting on the new toilet and shower facilities. Pete Brownlie is doing amazing things with the MT, including an automatic cable towing arm for one of the retrieve trucks. On the aircraft side winter maintenance is nearly complete with all but the K-13 having new Cs of A. A number of people from the club are planning on joining the RAFGSA expedition to Llewent Parc in March.

Debb Hackett

Bath, Wilts & North Dorset (The Park)

DESPITE indifferent weather we still have busy flying days, particularly Saturdays, plus many members are also working at jobs around the hangar. One Saturday saw Brian Ashbourne building a new battery charging stand, Adrian Ruddle painting the club field marker, members led by Geoff Pook rebuilding the Puchacz trailer, Merv Pocock repairing retrieve tractors and Dave Parkes organising the talk for the day. Club thanks go to Alan Bailey whose engineering company has built a new Puchacz trailer base for Geoff's team to build on. The winter talks have been a great success with some diverse topics such as cliff rescue and climbing Kilimanjaro mixed with useful gliding subjects. The talks have encouraged members to come out to the airfield even on non-flying days. Plans are in progress for a concerted effort to recruit new members and to encourage old members to join the club expedition to the Mynd in May.

Jan Smith

Bidford Gliding (Bidford)

BY the time this has gone to press, we should be well on the way to a fantastic season's start. It has been a record winter – but we will leave it for you to guess what record was broken! Considering the weather we have had over the past 12 months, we were very pleased with our first year here, and hope to be building on those foundations this season, with our newly-refurbished Puchacz JSR alongside our new Capstan and Motor Falke. We are looking forward to our Regionals on June 16-24 – keep up to date at *www.bidfordgliding.co.uk/turbo_comp.htm*

Lynne Burkert

Black Mountains (Talgarth)

FOLLOWING the departure of Don Puttock, we are delighted to have recruited Bo Nilsson to take over as our resident summer instructor/manager. Bo, well known in this country and in NZ, and will be at Talgarth from mid-April. We plan an intensive course programme through the summer to maximise the fun at our unique site for members and visitors alike. A detailed course programme is being drawn up now so get ready to hook on your trailers and head to Wales – remember that we have excellent thermals in the summer, not just ridge and wave! We are actively looking for a glass two-seater to complement our K-13 fleet. All the expense of field drain installation a couple of winters ago has definitely paid off with a much drier field than before and we are now starting to look at various grass reinforcement systems to further improve our winter operation.

Robbie Robertson

Booker (Wycombe Air Park)

BOOKER'S 2007 calendar includes a Bronze flying course in April, a cross-country training camp/task week in June, a Silver course in July, our Regionals in early August followed by another task week and a "Get Your Solo" week in September, all run by member instructors who are helping to push the club's positive ethos in helping our members to develop their gliding. Congratulations to recent solo Graham Morfey and to DCFI Mike Collett, who has been selected to fly for the British Junior Team.

Roger Neal

Borders (Milfield)

JANUARY turned out to be a mix of poor weather and some fantastic soaring. Andy Bardgett started the year with a wave climb to just under 16,000ft in his LS4. Mike Smith completed his Bronze, and in February his five hours Silver duration. Well done from all of us. Graham Mitch got dressed up for a couple of lumberjacking weekends (where he got his size 12 high heels from is still a mystery!). He did a great job of cutting down approximately 100 trees, giving a much wider approach when landing to the north-west. Mike Charlton gained his MGIR, well done. However, on a sadder note, the K-7 "The Magnificent Seven" left Milfield for the last time, bound for Wales. One syndicate member was in the Seven for over 40 years. Truly the end of an era.

Rich Abercrombie

Bristol & Gloucestershire (Nympsfield)

WE have had talks with neighbouring Aston Down about a joint initiative aiming to develop closer co-operation and strengthen the informal links between us. The move is expected to not only benefit existing members of both clubs but also to improve the excellent gliding facilities in the area. Three members went solo in one weekend – well done, Rob Amor, Adam Fisher and Andrew Staniforth. Hywel Moss organised a series of 10 Bronze lectures. The chairman and secretary, Richard Grey and Andy Townsend, were returned unopposed at the AGM and Trevor Stuart was formally elected treasurer. The new committee is now Andy Davis, Julia Dawson, Jon Meyer, Alan Price, Kevin Neave and Rob Thompson. A profitable year was reported but careful planning was needed to keep the club on track, the chairman said. We're hosting the Western Regionals from July 21-29. Our website has been improved – see *www.bggc.co.uk*

Bernard Smyth

Buckminster (Saltby)

A GREAT start to the 2007 season with John Tilford and Chris Tansley both soloing on the Falke and Adam Spikings converting to the Astir. Adam has already put his name down for the Saltby Inter-club team! The smell of bacon rolls can now be

Please send news to *editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk* or to Helen Evans, BGA, Kimberley House, Vaughan Way, Leicester LE1 4SE **to arrive by April 10** for the next issue (later deadlines at *www.gliding.co.uk*)



From left: Len Dent, Ron Davis & Dennis Driver, of the "Magnificent" K-7, bid it farewell at ***Borders****. One member has been in the syndicate for 40 years – can anyone out there beat that?*

experienced each weekend from 8.45am and seems to be getting more members out each morning. Three priorities at Saltby for 2007 – more members, more flying and more fun. Ten new members have taken advantage of a special half-price 2007 deal – welcome to you all. The annual awards dinner was a great success with the honours being spread very evenly. I am personally looking forward to the 'Paul vs Dave vs Colin vs George' battle this year for top cross-country honours! We are extending the members' hangar due to overwhelming popularity. Saltby is open seven days are week; visitors are very welcome.

Chris Davison

Burn (Burn)

OUR annual Christmas party and awards ceremony was very well attended and a good time was had by all. Trophies were awarded to Matt Ellis, Paul Bassett, Alastair Mackenzie and Mike Howey. We have been using the winter period to build up enthusiasm for cross-country flying. Mike Howey organised a highly-successful all-day seminar, which was attended by 40 members. The profits from the course fee were donated to the Yorkshire Air Ambulance. We intend to hold a cross-country briefing at the start of each flying day throughout the soaring season. Congratulations to four of our cadets – Sarah Bannon, Daniel Robinson, Nathon Mills and Paul Bassett – on gaining Royal Aeronautical Society Flying Scholarships.

George Goodenough

Cambridge (Gransden Lodge)

WITH our seven-day operation recommencing in April, we will be running a series of 'Rustbuster' days Monday to Friday through the month, to allow pilots to prepare for the new season. Bookable, with a 2:1 pupil to professional instructor ratio, glider pilots from other clubs will be made very welcome. Aerotow, winch and motorgliding on tap every day. Talk to our office, or see www.glide.co.uk The inaugural Sigfrid Club annual lunch was held on February 3, with 25 people attending – there is also a gathering on the first Saturday of every month. The clubhouse has been re-decorated by the members. We have Robert Theil back with us again as our full-time instructor together with Andy Beatty. If you want to enter the Gransden Regionals, August 18-26, you need to apply ASAP. Peter Buchlovsky and Martin Hughes of CUGC have both soloed.

Paul Harvey

Carlton Moor (Carlton Moor)

CRAIG Sheppard has become our newest *ab initio* member. Brian Kylo and his gang have continued repairs to the roofs of the clubhouse, hangar and trailer shed and the hangar door. We have an appropriate fire risk assessment: have you done yours? The first weekend of February found us flying in summer conditions. We hope this does not mean that the summer will be foul.

Nigel Ling

Channel (Waldershare Park)

MEMBERS are looking forward to an excellent season following the success of recent fundraising efforts. A cadet scheme with the local Dover ATS has been drawn up and promises to provide new, young blood to invigorate the club. We also have recently attracted two new junior members. The bowling green, sorry airstrip, can also look forward to a bumper year as ➢









➢ *We've had such a super selection of* Club News *photographs sent in to us that we thought they deserved a whole double-page spread to themselves. Enjoy...*

This page, from top left: It's ***Borders GC****'s Rich Abercrombie in his ASW 15, in wave*

Top: Simon Else (left), ***Nene Valley*** *treasurer, was sent solo by CFI Roger Morrisroe and (above) the BBC's* Escape to the Country *film crew visited* ***Lincolnshire GC***

Left: Chris Huck's Ventus 2cT in wave. He and Simon Lucas of ***Cotswold*** *overwinter their gliders 400 miles away at Portmoak. "It was a particularly successful weekend," he says, "with 25 hours flying between us, both going to 20,000ft in wave, and Simon getting his Diamond height. But a 70kt headwind made going cross-country difficult"*

Below: On two consecutive Sundays, says Mike Greenwood, ***Midland GC*** *unpacked the hangar before sunrise, making the best of beautiful winter ridge and wave days*



This page, from above: Judging by the big *smile on Fred Brown's face, Polly Whitehead isn't the only one who's been having fun flying from Dishforth (see p30). This photo of Fred at around 7,500ft in the* ***Clevelands*** *K-21 was taken by his syndicate partner, Bob Crick. We thought it was their CFI who was nicknamed "Grinner"? Maybe it's a local rule*

Right: Seeing double at ***Cranwell*** *with the arrival of a newly-refurbished launchpoint bus*

Below right: ***Imperial College*** *had a wonderful winter expedition to Portmoak: everyone got above 10,000ft. This is by Shaun Murdoch in 776, looking north-east from 12,000ft*

Below: Remind us again which Dave White took this (see letters, p6)? Ah, yes, this one came from Dave White of ***East Sussex****, who took it on the club expedition to Denbigh*

Our thanks to all contributors for sending these in. Remember, if you'd like to submit your previously-unpublished photographs for possible inclusion somewhere in S&G, *do send them to* editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk *– it's always good to see them* ➢







Club news



*Christine Davies, who at the age of 16 is congratulated by Mick Lee after he sent her solo – **Cranwell GC's** first solo of 2007*

Ian Dawkins has sourced a new tractor to tow the mower and perform retrieves in wet conditions. Ian also acquired (don't ask) a set of three flagpoles, which are being rigged for windsocks. The only other acquisition needed for a truly fine season is a new, glass single-seater. The chairman and CFI are hopeful this can be finalised shortly.

Nigel Shepherd

Chilterns RAFGSA Centre (RAF Halton)

IT has been a fairly wet and uneventful winter, with the airfield closed on a number of occasions due to waterlogging. There have been very few good ridge soaring days. Some lucky b****** are enjoying mountain soaring in the Andes. Colin, our CFI, is about to sit his final set of written exams for the CPL in preparation for when he leaves in 2008; Bloggs (Pete Brown) has become the CFI of Windrushers, but is still an employee of CGC. The annual Burns night supper had a reasonable turnout of some 32 or so – though some of our more voluble Scottish members were away at the time; they will have to make better arrangements next year. We still await delivery of the new Duo Discus Xt, further delayed as a result of a Tech Note on the 'iron thermal'.

Andy Hyslop

Clevelands (RAF Dishforth)

SADLY, the weather didn't come up to scratch for our annual Christmas Wave camp. We had the odd flying day, but mostly it was fog, rain or strong winds. However, the wave we have experienced since the start of the New Year has more than made up for the disappointing Christmas period. We have had climbs over 10,000ft in a variety of (sometimes challenging) conditions; some days promised nothing but had surprises in store *(see p30)*. Most local pilots have already bagged Gold or Diamond heights, but for those who needed them, badge claims have been blighted by equipment failure. We are planning a recruitment campaign for early spring, and are looking forward to our 40th anniversary celebrations at the end of March.

Polly Whitehead

Cotswold (Aston Down)

JANUARY found us in the dinner dance season and Richard Kill our social secretary had arranged a new venue close to home that provided excellent food. The following members were awarded trophies: Steve Daniell, pre-Silver; Ken Lloyd, over-70; Simon Buckley, height gain; Paul Lazenby, club triangle; Olly Ward, best comp flight; Tom Gooch, best new member; Robin Birch, best cross-country; and Sam and Max Lazenby, best juniors. At our February AGM we re-elected an unchanged committee with our chairman, Mike Weston, keen to commence his second year in office. Mike reported an increase in membership, healthy finances but a reduced number of launches for last year. After a lot of debate we introduced our new launch support team rota in March to enhance both launch rate and safety. We welcome several members from Bidford who have been flying with us recently. In addition several members from North Hill joined us to sample the PW-6 trainer. We are thinking hard about a new private owner hangar following John McWilliam's work investigating the new hangars at Portmoak, Borders and Saltby.

Frank Birlison

Cranwell (RAF Cranwell)

CONGRATULATIONS to Christine Davies, who is seen (above left) being congratulated by Mick Lee after sending her solo at 16 – our first of 2007. Christine would like to thank all her instructors, especially Mark Evans, with whom she did quite a bit of work. Whilst she said she was a little bit nervous, she wasn't half as nervous as dad Tim Davies who watched the proceedings in the background. Our new control bus is now operational, a very big thanks for all the hard work put in by John Morris, Rob Sumner and all those other club members who assisted and an additional thanks to Mick Baker, our negotiator throughout this project. The launchpoint facilities now include a new briefing and planning room together with the electronic signalling equipment, light signals, radio computer logging and hot water tank. Downstairs there are new sinks, a new boiler, cooker, fridge, storage for parachutes, ballast and nav/met equipment as well as seating. All we need to complement this hard work is a fantastic soaring year – let's hope it happens.

Zeh Zamo

Deeside (Aboyne)

THE Christmas party was held in December and the following trophies were presented by the chairman, Paul Boath: the Bob Kerr Cross-Country Cup, Roy Wilson; the Most Meritorious Flight,



*New solo pilots at **Denbigh** are, from left to right, Peter Higgs, Roy Farragher, Tony Gillard, James Gibney and Andy Gibney*

Charlie Jordan; the Height Gain Trophy, Bruce Cooper and the CFI's Award was shared between Iain Donnelly, Dave Pirie, Steve Thompson and Roy Wilson for instructing above and beyond the call of duty. Congratulations to Laura Cameron, who went solo in December. Club members took advantage of a good north-westerly wave day at the beginning of February, achieving 500km and 250km cross-country flights. Entry forms for the UK Mountain Soaring Championship in September and wave booking forms for 2007 are at *www.deesideglidingclub.co.uk*

Sue Heard

Denbigh (Denbigh)

WE have been experiencing excellent ridge and wave, with average flight times for ridge-cleared members over the hour. We are now looking forward to spring expeditions from other clubs. Consider timing your visit to coincide with Cosford's expedition in April to take advantage of their Super Chipmunk for aerotow. Contact the club for details on 07896 882537. The financial status of the club is much improved – and the future looks promising. It is great to see the crop of new solo pilots: Peter Higgs, Roy Farragher, Tony Gillard, and James and Andy Gibney.

Paul Jewell

Derbyshire & Lancashire (Camphill)

IT'S not been a good winter so far, and for the first time in my memory we have had to close the airfield because it is so wet. A few flying days have seen ridge soaring and wave up to 7,000ft, and the thermals started a couple of weeks ago. One day the wind reached 120mph and the front of a private hangar was blown in with minor damage to the glider. On one of the flyable days we had a visit from Bob Pettifer, who re-validated Ian Carrick's Assistant Rating. Finningley now hangs over us and

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many others and if they get their way, the south will be virtually cut off from Yorkshire and the north. One of our Cirruses has gone to a new home and we hope to see it do well eventually in the Junior Worlds.
Dave Salmon

Devon & Somerset (North Hill)

CONGRATULATIONS to Andrew Muggleston, who has now qualified as a Basic Instructor. Peter Harmer has joined our elite group of tug pilots. Our club web site www.DSGC.co.uk has now been fully revamped thanks to the hard work of Simon Leeson and four out of our five summer courses are already fully booked. At our AGM and prizegiving, Peter Startup won the trophy for the Club Ladder and John Pursey two trophies: one for the longest cross-country flight and one for the first Diamond distance. Richard Barden was awarded the shield for best progress and finally Nick Hine our "Wily Old Bird" Trophy for always managing to get where the action is, be it Portmoak, Junior Nationals or Denbigh!
Kaye Alston

Dorset (Eyres Field)

PLENTY of wet weather made our field unusable for a lot of December and January, but the field dried enough in February to provide some flyable (even soarable) days. Mathew Hale went solo, and his dad Paul went solo on aerotow the same day. Our Italian student, Christian Vale, also soloed. A lot of equipment refurbishment and maintenance has been going on. Our winch should be back by the end of February, and our bowser has been refurbished. As always, our thanks go to those that have done the work. We now have a three-year lease on Eyres Field, thanks to the tireless endeavours of our chairman, Doug Every. The club dinner in January was well attended, and the club trophies for the 2006 season were awarded as follows. Peter Molloy – Height gain. Tim Linee – Best achievement. Rob Linee and Guy Jarvis – Cross-country. Colin Weyman – Local Soaring. Mathew Hale – Under 21s. Bob Wootton – CFI's mole-catcher award. Rob Linee – Club Ladder. Carol Marshall – Task Week. Alan Coatsworth – Bovington Garrison Award. Special thanks to Bill Cook, Barry Thomas, and Alan Coatsworth for tug and glider maintenance, and Tony Law and Gary Shaw for our club kitchen refurbishment
Colin Weyman

Dukeries (Darlton)

WE have flown from our new field over a wet winter and been surprised how well the grass strip has coped. Signs of how good a soaring site Darlton may prove to be were evident with a little bit of midwinter thermalling. We still have our friends from Newark & Notts with us and in many ways it feels like one club. Who knows, if they are unable to sort a new site one day we might just be one club. The new hangar stood up to the gales that seemed to bring down half of Sherwood Forest but one trailer was blown over with thankfully little damage to the glider inside. Ron Vickers has managed to source and fit out a new bus for our launchpoint (thanks Ron) and we are all looking forward to a very successful first full year at our new home.
Mike Terry

East Sussex (Ringmer)

THE heavy clay of the Sussex Weald has slowed activities down somewhat, but members have been looking with great expectation to the southern side of the field, which has been levelled and seeded and requires a year or thereabouts to settle before use. The club is pleased to welcome back James Warren (son of one of our much respected instructors, Roger) after some years' absence. Randall Williams enjoyed some good soaring in the Andes but was comprehensively outflown by a Condor with a three-metre wingspan. The clubroom has seen some frantic swotting by those members yet to gain their Bronze with lectures and an exam planned for a February weekend.
Jim Ball

Essex (Ridgewell/North Weald)

CONGRATULATIONS to Darren Smith on his Bronze Badge. But there's also not so good news. Considerable disruption was caused by the January storms when a tornado tore through our Ridgewell site, ripping roofs off local properties, destroying our Pawnee's mobile T-hangar and damaging two others. Luckily the Pawnee was not in it at the time and no club gliders were damaged. We hope, by the time you read this, that we will have a new hangar for our Pawnee. As to the syndicated and private gliders, all their trailers were pushed up against one another by the wind; happily, it seems that no serious damage occurred. Another casualty was the club's anemometer, which decided it had had enough after recording a peak gust of 70kt! It is expected to make a full recovery under the expert hands of club member George Booth. Members have been hard at work, welding hangar frameworks, having a bonfire with a destroyed empty wooden caravan and generally tidying up the field. Many thanks to everyone for their fine efforts.
Peter Perry

Essex & Suffolk (Wormingford)

CONGRATULATIONS to Caroline Billing on going solo, Will Ellis for winning the National Ladder (Wood) and Richard Robinson for completing Silver distance. One of our K-13s has been completely refurbished with a superb finish thanks to John Gilbert. We have completed our new winch hangar, which considerably improves the working environment for maintenance of winches, club trailers and other non-flying equipment.
Bob Godden

Fenland (RAF Marham)

WELCOME to Episode Two of the Mitch saga. I left you on the edge of your seat worrying about Mitch and his dose of Man Flu. He made a full recovery and pledged to continue his quest towards being a Full-rated Instructor. The path is fraught with pitfalls; not least the dreaded weather. Mitch is also fighting that Gremlin that, no matter how many cars you have, they are all rendered unroadworthy. On more mundane matters, we have almost completed the move to the new clubhouse. Everyone's helped so thanks to all. Some of you may remember that Oscar-nominated video "Dual". Well it is my sad duty to report that the location for the filming of that epic is soon to be reduced to rubble with space at Marham being at a premium. As we go to press the Astir is fixed with a beautiful rear wheel and other bits, thanks to Steve for all his work. The Discus is next to go to the doctors and should come back with a shiny new coat, and if the savings jar has been scraped enough we may well have winglets as well. The book's still open on that one! Congrats to Jon Oakley, who has converted to the motorglider and I have returned from the Mynd with a bungy launch in my logbook. Highly recommended.
Graham French



*Tornado damage at **Essex GC's** Ridgewell site included this T-hangar. Roofs were ripped off local properties (David Jones)*

Four Counties (RAF Wittering)

CONGRATULATIONS to Jon Morris, Laurence Homer, and Chris Bellew, Loughborough University's first solo pilots since joining Four Counties. The club has acquired a second bus, which is the first phase in Pete Pearson's grand scheme to improve our launchpoint facilities. Alongside this, the club has now invested in the LogStar computerised logging system, which will hopefully make the jobs of the Field Treasurer and Stats member a lot easier. In January we welcomed members from Welland GC while their own site was suffering from all the New Year rain. The Yellow Peril (our new Rotax Falke G-FLKE) is settling in



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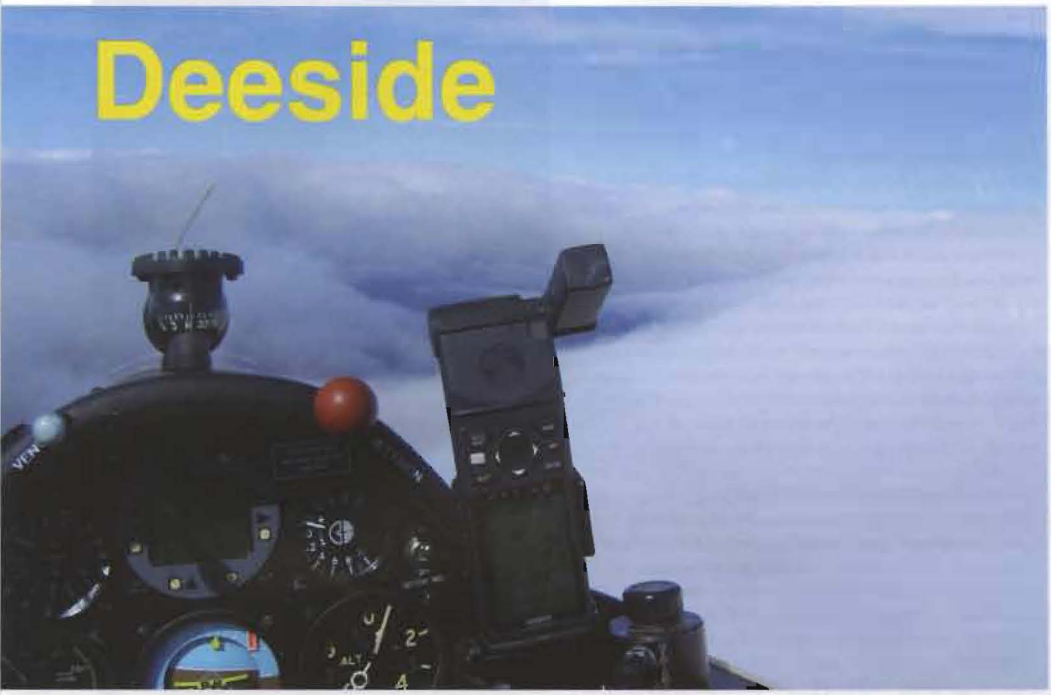
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Deeside



At a glance

Full membership cost: £180 pa (£90 Juniors)

Launch type and cost:
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Club fleet:
3x Puchacz, 1x Junior, 1x ASW 19b, 1x Discus BWL

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The site as we know it has been under continual change since its origins in the early 1960s. In those days it was a rough and rocky field, but with the help of club members, the field was ready for its first flight in 1964. This was short lived however, when the winch stalled and resulted in a badly damaged T-31! Almost a year later, the glider had been repaired and flew the first successful flight from Aboyne in June 1965.

Aberdeen GC and Deeside GC amalgamated two years later to form the present-day club: a prosperous and internationally-recognised gliding site. The club has grown to become arguably the best wave soaring site in Europe.

Aboyne has always been known for its huge height gains (the British record, set in 1995, was 38,000ft) but is increasingly exploring the use of wave to cover massive distances at speed. Speeds well in excess of 130km/h have been achieved on 500km flights, while 840km free distance has been achieved, with a remote finish offshore!

Aboyne was also the launch place for an epic flight to Lasham (by Gordon MacDonald and Afandi Darlington – see the August-September 2004 *S&G* for the story). 500km wave flights during winter months are commonplace, as are huge flights on the long summer days, proving how soarable Aboyne is year-round. Diamond height climbs can be achieved all year round. In the summertime we can also rely upon powerful thermals spawned by rocky outcrops of the surrounding magnificent mountain ranges, with cloudbases above 10,000ft.

The club operates with a core of experienced and dedicated instructors, and will fly throughout the week if soarable from our two Tarmac runways. We utilise a glass fleet, equipped with oxygen and cloud flying instruments, and are serviced on-site by Aboyne Aircraft Services. As a Scottish club we benefit from ASH-25 925, which can be used for advanced cross-country and competition training.

Each year Aboyne hosts the UK Mountain Soaring Championships. This non-BGA-rated competition provides the opportunity to race over some of the most spectacular scenery Britain has to offer whilst maintaining a highly competitive, yet friendly atmosphere. In 2006, we had six soarable days out of seven, with a variety of wave and thermal tasks.

Aberdeen is the nearest city and is a destination for many budget airlines, making access to Aboyne easier than ever. If you fancy tasting the Aboyne experience, we are happy to host visitors year-round with exclusive glider hire, based in our on-site accommodation or at excellent local B&Bs.

Aboyne enables soaring in its purest form, with few airspace restrictions and beautiful countryside to soar over.

Whether you wish to extend your soaring season, or to gain that elusive badge, please don't hesitate to contact us at the Deeside Gliding Club.

Charlie Jordan





Main picture, top: passing through 6,000ft and still going up (Charlie Jordan)

Above: Aboyne, with its distinctive narrow hard runways, with the river Dee on the left

Left: Mark Boyle, another Aboyne junior, took this as Charlie was lying under the wing

Club news

well, and while no match for the Supermunk, is providing good aerotows on the days when the winch just can't hack it! Looking to the year ahead, we have planned expeditions to various clubs around the country, and are hoping to rejoin the ICL scene, having been out of the loop for several years.
Peter Davey

Herefordshire (Shobdon)

DURING the wet winter, Shobdon, with its hard runway, has been a good place to fly. The soggy ground has never stopped us, although the grass strip where we would normally land has been waterlogged and we have had some 'fun' pulling unwary power pilots out of the mud. The soaring in December and January was a bit disappointing for cross-country flying, but we have had half a dozen pleasant days of wave up to about 9,000ft off Radnor Forest and the Black Mountains and also some ridge soaring locally. We've made use of the BGA Duo Discus, based here for the winter, to introduce some of our less experienced pilots to wave soaring. We were pleased to see Paul Kite, who responded to our weekly 'wave alert', and motored up from Lasham in his Grob 109 on two occasions to join us. I am writing this at the end of a day of ridge and thermal soaring, when Brian Laurie clocked up half an hour in thermals – in January! We are grateful to Barry Walker of Nympsfield, who has been lending us a tug complete with tug pilot while ours is on annual overhaul. As usual we welcome expeditions and would also welcome any permanent or visiting members, especially any interested in doing some instructing with us.
Diana King

Imperial College (Lasham)

WE are fresh back from a wonderful winter expedition to Portmoak in Scotland. We took our Discus, ASW-24, and Lasham's DG-1000 plus no fewer than four instructors and another eight members. We lost only one day of flying, which is a record for icGC trips, and everyone got to experience gliding above 10,000ft. Many thanks to everyone who helped to make it possible, including Lasham for letting us nick their toy (!) and Portmoak for a great time as always. Many Gold heights were achieved: well done to Andy Cockerell for actually claiming his; and to Aki for not getting hypoxia. Congrats and commiserations also to Rory Condon for his 9,000ft Silver height! Back at Lasham, icGC hosted its annual dinner on Feb 17, and will host its Old Fogies weekend on Mar 31-Apr 1 (contact us if you'd like to attend). Celebrations are also in order for Imperial College, which is 100 years old this year.
Shaun Murdoch

Kent (Challock)

THIS season, we'll be rolling out our brand new Summer Soaring Course programme; and wish Pete Carpenter (DCFI) and Dave Shearer all the best in their new appointments as Course Instructors. With a bustling Community Flying programme planned and the return of our "Home Cross-country Week"; aspiration and achievement will no doubt be the key areas of focus in my next news section! Our congratulations go to Michael Pickin, who soloed on his 16th birthday back in December 2006. Having soloed a K-21 on aerotow, he proceeded to solo four powered aircraft – namely a Jungmann, a Super Cub, a CAP10 and a Jodel. Keep up to date on our new-look website at *www.kent-gliding-club.co.uk* and if you're heading to the Garden of England... why not pay us a visit?
Darren Palmer

Kestrel (Odiham)

WORK on the fleet Cs of A progressed well during what turned out to be a rather wet and in our airfield's case 'boggy' start to the year. Our tent hangar has survived yet another winter of storms; all are convinced it has moved, as it seems not so far to push the gliders to the airfield! The ability to operate alongside the Chinooks on selected Wednesday afternoons is proving to be a great advantage to the club in attracting new service members.
Neil Armstrong

Lasham Gliding Society (Lasham)

MANY improvements have taken place recently. Additions to our two-seater fleet include the new DG-1000T (complete with turbo). We now have two and during the last season a novel development has been the aerobatic training in this robust glider. A change has also taken place in the single-seater fleet, now available to all full flying members. The club expeditions are very popular: Aboyne was a mixed one with several members achieving Gold heights, but much of the soaring was thermic as opposed to the longed-for wave. Jaca was most popular – a fun holiday with wonderful facilities there. LGS has made itself a second home with two expeditions a year. On April 14 is our prizegiving dinner (after the AGM) while on June 23 there is a 1940s dance in the World War Two hangar. It coincides with ATC's Open Day and 'War on the Line' on the Watercress Line over that weekend.
Edmund Mason



***Imperial College** took their Discus and ASW 24 (above) and Lasham's DG-1000, 776, plus four instructors and another eight members on their winter expedition to **Portmoak**. They lost only one flying day, which they say is a record for icGC trips (Andy Cockerell)*

Lincolnshire (Strubby)

THE membership enjoyed an evening presentation by Andrew Keith, Red 3 with the Red Arrows. We are also to appear in the BBC TV show "Escape to the Country" and have had a crew spend a day with us filming. This is due to be shown in August.
Dick Skerry

Loughborough SU (RAF Wittering)

WE started the year with Laurence Homer, Jon Morris and Chris Bellew all completing their first solo flights. Both Jon and Chris started with nil experience, which is a first for many years, and thanks go to the Instructors at Four Counties for their effort and encouragement! Looking into the immediate future, plans are now being made for our K-13's return from a slightly longer refurbishment than forecast and the Loughborough University Students Union GC expedition to Portmoak at Easter.
Timothy Pennock



*Carl Pierce – who's the club's new treasurer – after his first solo, being congratulated by instructor Ken Payne at **North Wales***

Mendip (Halesland)

THE club was stunned at the end of January by the sudden untimely death of Brian Headon. As the leading light of our Thursday group it was fitting that his funeral was held on a Thursday. The huge attendance at the crematorium reflected the esteem in which he was held.
Keith S Simmons

Nene Valley

JUST before Christmas Simon Else went solo, well done. Our winter shutdown saw the list of jobs required to be done grow in length, but we had a great deal of help. We completed most tasks, including stripping, recovering and painting the K-7/13 wings. Winch2 now has a new fuel tank and the tractors a new compound gate. The annual dinner saw the CFI's trophy going to Steve Jarvis, the Chairman's Trophy to Brian Cracknell, the Life's a S*** Award to Brian Palmer, the Clutching Hand to Paul Daly, the Silver award to Paul Ridgill and the Gold award to John Young.
Dave Mansfield

Norfolk (Tibenham)

THE recent high winds damaged two caravans, one trailer and a glider as well as causing minor damage to the doors of the recently-completed power hangar. Our new web site is up and running at *www.norfolkglidingclub.com* and will be further developed in the coming months. Our winch is to be fitted with a new engine. A first for the club is that Chris Lawrence is to be awarded The President's Rolex Trophy by The Royal Aero Club; he needed a new watch, anyway! Initial plans are under way to establish a 445th Bomb Group Heritage Centre on the airfield. We are looking forward to the season and the competitions we are hosting: the Eastern Regionals, 15-Metre Nationals, and the Junior Nationals. The relevant teams have been assembled and plans are well under way. Apart from Directing the Junior Nationals, Ray Hart has also agreed to coordinate and revitalise our cadet scheme.
Mark Wright

North Wales (Llantysilio)

I AM pleased to report that our club is in a sound financial state. Our able treasurer of five years John Farley will be standing down at our next AGM so a really big thank-you goes to him. It is always good to report a new solo pilot but in this case doubly so: Carl Pierce came late to gliding after a lifetime dedicated to the NHS. Now 70 and extremely fit, he has reached another goal, to fly solo, congratulations Carl. While still in a euphoric state Carl was talked into standing for the treasurer's position by the instructor, sneaky or what? On a slightly more serious note while Carl, as stated, is very fit and passed as competent to fly the insurers have put some draconian restrictions on his flying. We would be interested to know if other clubs have their more senior members singled out in this way.
Brian Williams

Club news



Instructor Alan Clark (left) congratulating Neil Shaw after his first solo – also the first of the year at ***Portsmouth Naval GC***



***Portmoak's** Kevin Hook won six trophies and some kind soul (or was it John Williams?) decided six people should hand them over*



Andrew Boneheyo being congratulated by CFI Steve Wilkinson and deputy Ray Parkin after his first solo flight, at ***Trent Valley***

Northumbria (Currock Hill)

WE'RE all set up for what we hope will be a good year's flying with some much better weather. Our tug has just completed its major three-year inspection and, thanks to John Allan and Gordon Dixon, our three Puchaczs have had modifications made to their rudder cables. Some of our retired members – and those who can get away from work at a moment's notice – have done some hastily arranged but successful *ad-hoc* flying on weekdays other than our usual Wednesday flying days, whenever the weather has given them the chance. Congratulations to Russ Spencer, a former member of Burn GC about ten years ago. He went solo off the winch, just a few months after joining us.

Richard Harris

Portsmouth Naval (Lee-On-Solent)

THE lengthening days and generally mild winter weather could allow one to fondly imagine that spring is only just around the corner. This perception is strengthened by some extraordinary (for us at least) local soaring with some flights of over an hour. Over the winter we have kept the winch in the hangar so as to avoid churning the field into a bog. As a result we have been launching exclusively by aerotow from the runway, which has involved some delicate footwork to operate alongside the increasing light aircraft traffic at Lee. Fortunately the field has dried out sufficiently to allow us to reinstate the winch, which should ease things. Preparations for the coming season continue in the hangar with the Wednesday evening crew busily progressing Cs of A on the club fleet. The CFI and his team are also busy performing annual flying checks with everybody. With 2007 less than a month old Neil Shaw, who only joined the club in November, became the club's first solo of the year initially on aerotow and then on winch the following week. Congratulations to Neil.

Steve Morgan

Rattlesden (Rattlesden)

DAWN Goldsmith organised a fun quiz night in January; the bird brain trophy was won by the 'Couch Potatoes' – Martin and Julia Raper, Julian and Yvonne Wood and Graham Drewery. Paul Roche has returned from Australia, where he flew a LS7 and completed a 100km flight. Congratulations to Graham Drewery, who has soloed on aerotow.

Helen Page

Scottish Gliding Union (Portmoak)

THE first week of the year saw three Diamond heights and, between the floods, our two-seaters were busy – our DG-400 did 266km then the day after did 410km at 112km/h; a K-21s did 190km. Our summer evening programme has started with lectures and the flying in the first week of official BST. Early February saw our annual dinner and award evening and was a complete sell-out. Our speaker was local historian David Munro, with numerous stories about the Portmoak area. Annual awards went to the following: Santiago Servantes and Valerie Alexander (Thorburn Two-Seater Trophy) [See the last *S&G*]; Tony Brown (Boyle Altitude Trophy); Kevin Hook (Marshall 100km Triangle, Parker Distance Trophy, Docherty Handicapped Distance Trophy, McLay Championship Trophy, Peter Copeland Trophy and Height Gain Ladder Trophy); John Williams (Andy Penswick Trophy and Lomond Trophy); Dave Clempson (Sutherland Trophy and Service Salver); Z Goudie (Hot Wings Trophy); Charlie Guthrie (Darren Powell Shield); Garry Simpson (Nick Wales Trophy); and John Riley (Instructors Quaich).

Ian Easson

Shropshire Soaring (Sleap)

AFTER a few weeks of low cloud and fearsome winds, things are looking up. In December, Al Gillson was at Omarama flying an ASW 17 in "a bit of a lead and follow" behind Justin Wills in a Libelle and achieved 25,000ft with a gain of height of 19,500ft to claim Diamond height. At Sleap in January the powered element of Shropshire Aero Club, daunted by a crosswind of over 30kt on the duty licensed runway, left the sky to the gliders. So for his first flight back in the UK Al proved it was no fluke when he reached 22,500ft over Dolgellau after three hours, breaking off to avoid upper airspace. Conditions at low level were difficult: Al reckons that there seemed to be a dual wave system, with half the wavelength at the lower levels, which threatened to down him and the other five aircraft. So the actual height gain was better than in New Zealand. Chris Fox and Ric Prestwich in the Janus ran out of oxygen and so made only 16,000ft. Matt Woodiwiss did a very creditable two hours in his longest wave flight.

Keith Field

South Wales (Usk)

VERY little flying has over the winter due to weather and its effect on the airfield. However certain members of the club have been hard at work, with Simon France recovering the second of our K8s, EEM, in a colour scheme you have to see to believe. Due to the monumental efforts of Andrew James and a little bit of help from casual labour our Grob 103 is now in its new T-hangar. Our new CFI Dave Jeffries is settling in nicely, making small but positive changes to encourage better fleet utilisation. He has already appointed two new BIs – we welcome Stewart Renfrew and Chris Cole. At our AGM, George Robertson and Adam Deacon joined the committee as executive officers. As I write this a number of us are looking forward to a visit to Jaca in Spain.

George Robertson

Southdown (Parham)

THE mood generated by a dreadful December was alleviated somewhat by a thoroughly successful Christmas party. Man of the moment was Ian Ashdown, who carried off the major flying award. January brought strong northerly winds and spectacular flying along the snow-capped Downs. Visitors from Lasham, Nympsfield and Booker joined in the fun with Southdown's Dick Dixon flying a memorable 450km. With an eye to the future, we have introduced a cadet scheme for the 15-18 age group, and places are already being taken up. The club is moving towards an all-glass fleet, so our K-18 and K-13 are up for sale (contact the secretary). The website goes from strength to strength, the spring Bronze lectures have been well attended and our Introduction to Gliding courses are ready. Congratulations to Geoff Rogers, who kept his New Year's resolution by soloing during the big freeze.

Peter J Holloway

The Gliding Centre (Husbands Bosworth)

CONGRATULATIONS to Gary Carr on going solo. A new club K-21 is on order for June. We have a much-improved office layout – thanks to everyone who helped with this. Our Burns Night supper was most enjoyable – thanks to chief chef 'Kangurs'. We are holding a club film night each month, which is growing in popularity. We are hosting the 18-Metre Nationals and the Midland Regionals this summer. Task week starts on Aug 25. We are very sad to report the death of founder member Lou Frank.

Siobhan Crabb

Trent Valley (Kirton in Lindsey)

CONGRATULATIONS to Andrew Boneheyo on going solo. Flying hours are down compared to last winter due to the wet weather of the last two months and the boggy state of our grass runways. In spite of this, attendance is up and a number of maintenance jobs have been completed. Our Christmas dinner was held in our clubhouse and was a great success. Our CFI Steve Wilkinson has also been our Air Tech for a number of years and is giving up this latter role. Steve has kept our fleet in tip-top condition and has our thanks for all his work maintaining the gliders. Our dinner-dance and awards is on March 23.

Ian Johnson

Ulster (Bellarena)

THE new management team was elected at our AGM in December. On behalf of all club members I would like to thank the outgoing chairman Jay Neathercott for all his hard work over the past three years, and to welcome Michael McSorley who takes over. Thanks to Stephen Johnston and Martin Earle for their hard work over the past year. Welcome on board to Ralph Erskin as secretary, to Alan McKillen as safety officer and to Owen Anderson as director. All other committee posts remain unchanged. Congratulations to Bob Goodman, who becomes our youngest solo pilot at the age of 16. Congratulations also to Stephen Johnston on completing his Silver Badge and to Chris Ward on completing his Bronze Badge. This year has seen our insurance costs soar (no pun intended) even though we had a claim-free year. I wonder have other clubs seen, or are they about to see, the same high increases! With the arrival of our new K-21 now even closer we will be offering our K-13 for sale as well as our K-6. Jaca in Spain will again be our expedition hotspot this year between May and June, with all places booked.

Finbarr Cochrane

Welland (Lyveden)

THE field has finally succumbed to the cold and rain and has largely been unusable. Despite this, Rob Marsh went solo and flew both days that weekend. On other weekends, many members have been enjoying the hospitality of Wittering with its 9,000ft of Tarmac and are sharing a series of Bronze lectures.

Strzeb

Windrushers (Bicester)

NEW Year's Eve saw eight hardy souls and the K-21 achieving winch launch heights in excess of 2,000ft. New Year's Day was bright but windy with limited gliding. However, the motorglider went off on an expedition to Leicester and back. Peter Brown has succeeded Gary Binnie as CFI. Gareth Cunningham and Dickie Feakes have joined the Board of Directors. January saw us host the Vintage Flying Club Snowball Rally – with the traditional results; miserable weather. We did attract the grand total of four

visitors, two from Hinton and two from Henlow. The arrival of a Pilatus B4 on the site has proved interesting. According to some who have not flown one for some time, the cockpit seems to be narrower than they remember from 20 years ago.
Dave Smith

Wolds (Pocklington)

THE new clubhouse has been christened with the Christmas party and also Dave Binney's 50th birthday/New Year's party prior to the official opening in early March. After eight years at the back of the hangar the Swallow has returned to flight and has been delighting Tony Kendall and Sarah Sheard with its gentle ways. After reverting back to steel cable from Dyneema we have seen much greater reliability from our winch launches and we look forward to the continuation of this in the coming season. Soaring has continued throughout the winter in wave and on our ridges, which has helped to maintain enthusiasm on those cold winter mornings. There are still places left for the Standard Class Nationals (July 21-29) so if you have flown a rated competition before then why not come and try yourself against the UK's top pilots? See more at *www.glidingcomp.com*
Sam Roddie

Wyvern (Upavon)

ALTHOUGH our airfield has become soft and muddy in the incessant rain we have managed to keep flying through the winter and instructing both Army students and the new batch of QinetiQ students enrolled in the graduate airmanship scheme. Our seemingly tireless team of technicians and glider inspectors have completed C of A inspections on both K-21s and the Junior and the DG-1000 has gone to DG to be fitted with a sustainer auxiliary engine to convert it to a DG-1000T. A collection of parts recovered from the winches transferred from Kestrel GC have been sent to Skylaunch for assembly into a new LPG-powered winch with Skylaunch controls, so by the start of the season of training courses this will replace the Bedford-mounted Tost as the club's second winch. The Annual Dinner held in the Upavon Garrison Officers' Mess in February was thought to be one of the best ever. Guest of Honour was the President of the Army Gliding Association, Brigadier Iain Thompson, Director Army Aviation, who admitted he encourages soldiers to fly at WGC in the hope that he might sometime recruit them into the Army Air Corps!
Andy Gibson

York (Rufforth)

IT has been windy here for quite some time but on the good days we've had some excellent wave flights with Mark Shuttleworth showing a height gain of 16,584ft on January 14. Congratulations also go to Mike Clarke and Harry Southworth on their first solos. The early nights have provided the opportunity to build knowledge and understanding of gliding skills through our winter seminars. Positive relationships with the Army have proved to be a great benefit and by Christmas the Royal Engineers had helped refurbish our runway and had taken advantage of a unique opportunity to further develop construction trade training through some superb work within and outside our new clubhouse. In January, the club was able to help prepare an Army Air Corps Squadron for its impending deployment. The airfield provided the ideal setting for an exercise in icy weather very similar to those in theatre. We wish Army and RAF personnel who took part in the exercise all the very best. *Ouse News* is now available by email.
Keith Batty

Yorkshire (Sutton Bank)

CONGRATULATIONS to Rory O'Connor, who now has all three Diamonds – well done, Rory! Our winter seminars were well supported. Thanks to our CFI, Dick Cole, who gave lectures on air safety and airways, they were much appreciated. This year, Sutton Bank hosts Competition Enterprise and the Northerns. Andy Parish says he has done a deal with the weather gods! Hope it was in our favour, Andy! And special thanks to all who helped redecorate the bar and restaurant: by... we do look posh!
John Marsh

Especial thanks to Debb Evans for juggling looking after young baby Grace with editing this issue's Club News. *Welcome to the team, Grace! – Helen Evans, editor, S&G*

Obituaries

Lou Frank – The Gliding Centre

IT IS with great sadness that we report the death of Lou Frank at his home in Rock Hill, South Carolina, USA. Lou died, aged 77, after a short invasive illness. Lou was one of gliding's great characters . He became a member of the Coventry Gliding Club when it was at Baginton in 1963 after learning to fly at Lasham. He was deeply involved in the establishment of the club at Husbands Bosworth. He contributed considerably to the development of the club, serving as Chairman and CFI, and ultimately going on to be a BGA regional examiner. He was a very charismatic character, in fact ahead of the times in his methods of dealing with people, always ready to help and encourage those around him. He developed the view that it was not necessary to have lots of money to enjoy gliding. To this end he presented the club with the Seaside Trophy, to be awarded to the pilot(s) of older gliders that landed closest to the sea. This has resulted in some incredible flights and adventures over the years: the Tutor to the Isle of Wight, the T-21 to Plymouth – the list is endless. He left the club in 1990 to start a new life in Florida and he became very actively involved in his gliding in America at the Seminole Glider Port before moving to Rock Hill, South Carolina, where his ashes will be scattered at his club, the Bermuda High Soaring Club. We at Hus Bos have many happy memories of him and we send our deepest sympathy to his family on their sad loss.
Derek Abbey

Richard Gerrard – Booker

RICHARD Gerrard passed away on January 26, aged 66, following a long battle with cancer, which he fought courageously. A keen cross-country pilot, flying both a DG-300 and more recently an ASW 27, Richard was a member at Booker for about seven years and also enjoyed flying at Aboyne, Jaca and Shobdon. Before taking up gliding he had been a power pilot. Typically of his committed approach to gliding, he had become a committee member and a regular assistant to Dave Richardson in the glider workshop. He will also be missed by the many who enjoyed his famous soups in the clubhouse during the winter months. A very loyal and committed member of the type that gliding today needs more than ever.
Roger Neal

Brian Headon – Mendip

WE were all deeply shocked and saddened to learn of the death of Brian Headon (1940-2007) after a very short illness. Brian came from a farming family in Devon and his love of all things aviation started at an early age. He decided not to join the family farming business and started his working life with motorcycles, as an apprentice. Brian joined his local Air Training Corps squadron as a civilian instructor, was commissioned in the RAF VR(T) and became the squadron Commanding Officer. He was planning to join the RAF but a serious motorcycle accident put paid to that ambition, and he became a college lecturer, spending 35 years at Soundwell College in Bristol. He became involved with gliding in taking his cadets to 621 VGS at RAF Locking near Weston-super-Mare, eventually becoming an instructor there. He was also a member of the University Air Squadron at RAF Colerne. Brian was a guest at a Buckingham Palace garden party in recognition of his services to the Air Training Corps. He became an instructor at Mendip GC in about 1995 and soon became the mainstay of our Thursday group, and his commitment and enthusiasm were an inspiration to us all. He was also a keen vintage gliding enthusiast and spent many hours flying his beloved T-21 at Aston Down. Brian and his wife Jean were inseparable and she accompanied him on his activities. Our thoughts and prayers are with Jean and her family at this very sad time. The world will be a poorer place for his passing. We will all miss him dearly.
Barry Hogarth

Hugh Hilditch – Lasham

DR HUGH Hilditch passed away in his sleep on January 17, aged 84, and is well remembered by Lasham's older members as one of the original "pundits" of the society. He gave up gliding in about 1983, he said due to his age. Lasham was sorry to lose him. He was famous for his casual approach to long-distance cross-country flying, astounding us lesser mortals with his epic flights. His passion was gliding, and his hobbies were photography and playing the piano. He had his own darkroom at home and would return with pictures of faraway places such as the cathedrals of York and Ely, leaving an archive of plate-sized pictures of much of the UK. He was also noted for his quiet self-effacing style, and was much loved and respected by his peers. He was always ready with helpful advice to aspiring young pilots. His quiet manner hid his love of his fellow man, and he left gliding to dedicate himself to charitable works both to his patients and to his church.
Edmund Mason

BGA Badges

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
BGA 750km DIPLOMA			
60	Hugh Kindell	755 (New Tempe, South Africa)	
Diamond goal			
2-1351	Macied Handke	Cambridge (S Africa)	11.1.2007
Diamond distance			
1-1067	Malcolm Lassan	South Wales (S Africa)	6.12.2006
1-1068	Minoo Patel	Booker (S Africa)	12.1.2007
1-1069	Macied Handke	Cambridge (S Africa)	11.1.2007
Diamond height			
3-1670	Robert Nichols	Burn (Milfield)	28.10.2006
GOLD BADGE			
2427	Peter O'Connell	Lasham (Aboyne)	28.9.2006
2428	Robert Nichols	Burn (Milfield)	28.10.2006
Gold distance			
Dominic Polhill		Mendip (Dunstable)	24.7.2006
Maciez Handke		Cambridge (S Africa)	11.1.2007
Gold height			
Mark Boyle		Deeside	11.9.2006
Peter O'Connell		Lasham (Aboyne)	28.9.2006
Robert Nichols		Burn (Milfield)	28.10.2006
Richard Noble		Burn (Milfield)	28.10.2006
SILVER BADGE			
11737	Charlie Jordan	Deeside	4.9.2006
AEROBATIC BADGE			
Std Kwn	Andrew Cockerell	Lasham	5.11.2006

AAIB Update

In the latest of our series based on the UK Air Accident Investigation Branch's bulletins, here is a summary of a report from February 2007 into a fatal accident. The two safety recommendations to the BGA are being actioned

Aircraft Type and Registration: LS1F Glider, BGA 4665
No and Type of Engines: None
Year of Manufacture: 1976
Date & Time (UTC): 9 August 2005 at 17.25hrs
Location: Near Husbands Bosworth Airfield
Type of Flight: Private
Persons on Board: Crew – 1; Passengers – None
Injuries: Crew – None; Others – 1 (Fatal)
Nature of Damage: Extensive damage to the left wing, left aileron separated from the wing and damaged right winglet
P1 Licence: BGA Glider Pilot's Certificate (Gold and Three Diamonds)
P1 Age: 24 years
P1 Flying Experience: 692 hours (of which, 317 on type)
Last 90 days – 111 hours
Last 28 days – 46 hours
Information Source: AAIB Field Investigation

Synopsis: The accident occurred during a race as part of the Junior World Gliding Championships. During the final approach to cross the finishing line a glider, flying at a height of approximately 15ft banked at an angle of about 20° to the left, passed a group of spectators who were standing on vehicles outside the airfield perimeter. The left wing of the glider struck one of the spectators, a professional photographer, causing him fatal injuries. The glider made a largely uncontrolled landing in a nearby field. It was seriously damaged but the pilot was unhurt.

The investigation concluded that gliders involved in the race had been flying unnecessarily low during the approach to the finish. The accident and other evidence suggested a problem with the safe conduct of race finishes and deficiencies in the training for and oversight of such events. Since this accident, the British Gliding Association has been proactive in trying to address some of these issues but its rules do not apply to gliding Championships conducted in the UK under the International Gliding Commission Rules. The AAIB made five safety recommendations.

2006-119: The British Gliding Association should seek approval from the Civil Aviation Authority for the wording of the Association's competition rules in respect of the minimum height for finishing a race.

2006-120: The Civil Aviation Authority should clarify and publicise whether permission from the Authority is required before exemption from the 500 feet low-flying rule in accordance with Rule 5 (3)(f) is applicable.

2006-121: The International Gliding Commission should, through national gliding associations, require, competition team coaches to include techniques for the safe conduct of race finishes within their coaching sessions.

2006-122: The British Gliding Association should comply with Civil Aviation Authority Aeronautical Information Circular (AIC) 86/2004 and include, in their notifications to the Authority, the frequencies to be used for the competition.

2006-123: The Civil Aviation Authority should instruct National Air Traffic Services Ltd, the organisation that manages the UK's Aeronautical Information Section, to endeavour to include any non-standard radio frequencies in NOTAMs about gliding competitions.

The full report can be found in the February bulletin of the AAIB at *www.aaib.gov.uk*

Accident/incident summaries by Douglas Every

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	REGISTRATION	Damage	Time	DATE Place	Age	PILOT(S) Injury	P1 Hours
148	DISCUS	3874	Substantial	08-Sep-06 15:15	nr Stow on the Wold	62	None	513

On a cross-country task the pilot stayed too long trying to centre in a weak broken thermal and, faced with strong sink, he could not make it back to his chosen field. The undershoot field was steeply banked and as he attempted to land into wind across the slope, the starboard wing touched the upslope, causing a ground loop. The tail dug in, the fuselage broke and the undercarriage was damaged.

152 None 19-Jul-06 Incident Rpt None
The pilot said his pre-landing checks, including U for undercarriage, yet failed to lower the undercarriage for landing.

153 VENTUS CT 3549 Minor 28-Apr-06 Seighford 61 None
After a normal touchdown, the glider hit a ridge that runs across the airfield with a sharp bump. The glider lifted off for a few yards and then settled down without any apparent damage. However, subsequent inspection at the C of A revealed damage to the undercarriage mounts in the wheel box.

---

005 KA8B None 01-Nov-06 Incident Rpt
Following a routine C of A the aircraft was flown with the elevator interconnecting lever incorrectly assembled and the error was not spotted prior to fitting the tailplane to the glider. Neither was it spotted during the pre-flight DI, which included a positive control check. The glider was test flown by an inspector who failed to notice anything amiss. Subsequently a second flight also by an inspector identified a knocking noise from the elevator circuit on landing. Investigating the noise established the cause as the elevator actuating arm having been misassembled resulting in excessive play in the elevator circuit of approximately 25-40mm at the top of the control column.

016 Astir CS None 29-Oct-06 Incident Rpt None
The pilot completed a normal circuit and landing but failed to lower the undercarriage.

017 JANTAR None 05-Nov-06 Incident Rpt None
The pilot completed a normal circuit and landing. Although he observed the position of the undercarriage lever and thought that it was down, when the glider touched down, the lever shot backwards and the undercarriage retracted.

018 PA25 PAWNEE None 17-Dec-06 Incident Rpt None
During final approach, the aerotow rope failed to retract fully and consequently it passed through the treetops close to a pedestrian, who reported the incident. Subsequent investigation revealed that a loop of rope on the winch drum had jammed the system.

019 Astir CS 2084 Minor 11-Dec-06 14:45 Denbigh 24 None 40
On returning from his first solo flight on site, and whilst concentrating hard on maintaining speed through a wind gradient on approach, the pilot failed to round out fully before touching down. A very heavy landing ensued, causing the undercarriage retraction forks to fail and collapse.

020 KA6E 2411 Minor 14-Jan-07 16:09 Brentor airfield 60 None
During the initial stage of the take-off run the tail struck the ground heavily, causing the tailskid mounting to become partially detached from the fuselage. The loosened king-post moved rearwards and jammed the rudder in the neutral position. The pilot made a left-hand circuit using ailerons and the aircraft landed safely.

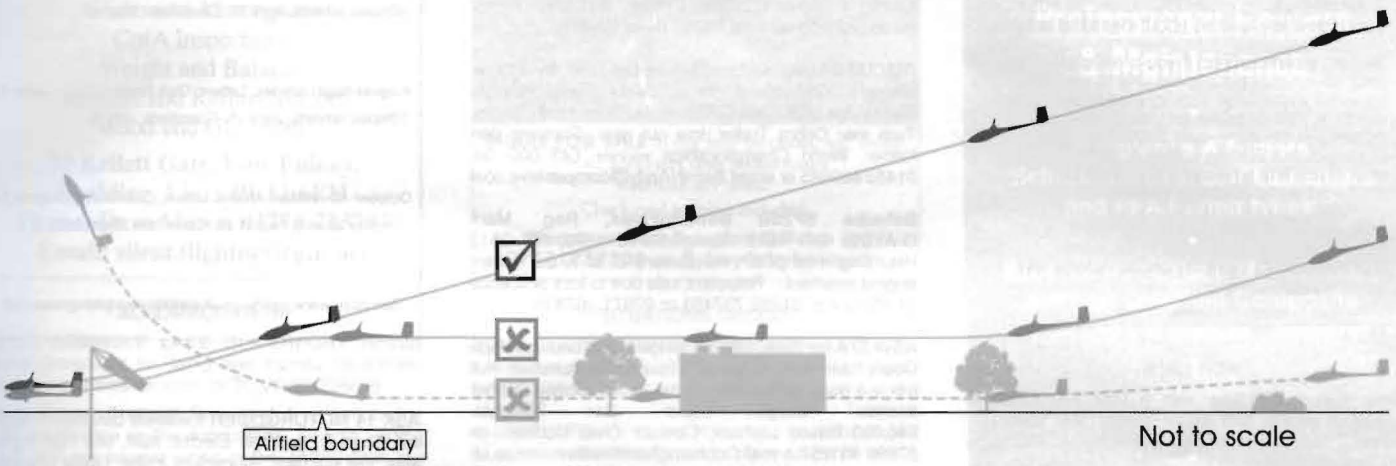
021 Pégase 101A 3107 Substantial 23-Jan-07 13:45 Chantbury ring None
The pilot selected a field for landing too late. On touchdown the glider groundlooped, skidded backwards and broke its fuselage.

022 Ka6CR None 01-Feb-07 Incident Rpt None
During an aerotow launch, and whilst on the ground run using large rudder inputs to keep the glider straight, the right rudder pedal stayed operated and the glider started to veer to the right. The pilot released and landed in the field to the right of runway. On subsequent examination of the glider the right rudder pedal was lodged behind the front fuselage frame rib, preventing it from coming off when left rudder operated. The glider was not damaged and the pilot was uninjured.

023 Astir CS Jeans Substantial 02-Feb-07 Incident Rpt None
Cables were being brought from the winch down a peritrack. The driver stopped to unhook the cables and offload the drogue chutes, but one cable was not properly disconnected. He then continued to drive down the track with one cable still on and turned to pass behind gliders, which were beside the launch vehicle. The cable contacted the fin of an Astir, turning it round, and then hit the canopy, which shattered. The driver responded to the shouted stop signal and the pilot who was sitting in the Astir was found to be safe.

Task finishes and approaching to land

Steve Longland



Regardless of the position of any finish line, glider approaches should follow a descending flight profile, other than to go around where necessary

Please make sure you read and understand this important information from the BGA about approaching to land at the end of your task

FOLLOWING the tragic accident at the World Junior Gliding Championships in 2005 *(see AAIB Update, opposite)*, during which a sailplane fatally struck an aviation photographer who was standing on a vehicle outside the airfield boundary, the AAIB has recommended that the CAA approve the wording of BGA competition finish rules.

The BGA takes public safety and the perception of public safety very seriously. Prior to the 2006 competition season, the BGA established competition rule changes that were aimed at addressing a potential public safety issue and encouraging pilots to comply with normal aviation practice.

Competition experience during 2006 has demonstrated that this measure was partially successful.

2007 BGA Competition Rules

During January 2007 and prior to the final publication of the AAIB accident report, the BGA and CAA met to discuss the AAIB recommendation regarding competition finish rules.

With an objective of encouraging pilots to maintain normal flying practices and thus minimise risk to third parties, the BGA and CAA agreed a number of changes to the BGA competition rules that have been detailed by the Competition Committee.

Following consideration and acceptance by the Executive Committee on February 6, these changes have been incorporated into the final version of the 2007 *BGA Competition Rules* as well as competition Directors guidance and notes.

All pilots: responsibility and guidance

The BGA Executive Committee has identified that the changes to BGA competition finish rules should be reflected in non-BGA rated competitions and other glider racing activity.

It has also identified a need to ensure that glider pilot obligations associated with ANO 2005 Section 2 Rules of the Air Rule 5 (low flying) and ANO 2005 Part 5 Operation of Aircraft Article 74 (Endangering safety of any person or property) should receive greater formal emphasis than is already the case within BGA glider pilot training and subsequent coaching.

The BGA believe that it is every glider pilot's responsibility to their sport to ensure that he or she flies legally and to ensure through responsible flying that third parties do not perceive that gliding activity threatens their safety in any way.

With that in mind, the following guidance should be considered by all pilots at BGA clubs:

i) Regardless of the position of any finish line, glider approaches towards the airfield should follow a descending flight profile (other than to go-around where necessary), and;

ii) during the approach the landing area should be in the pilot's sight, and:

iii) the approach should cross the airfield boundary at a height which cannot endanger persons (seen or unseen), vessels, vehicles or structures.

Notwithstanding this guidance, a pilot's primary consideration at all times should be the safety of the crew, the aircraft and third parties.

The CAA has made it clear to the BGA that they will continue to monitor activity at gliding sites and that the subject of gliding task finishing will be reviewed in the light of experience during 2007.

February 2007

Pilot briefing guidance

You can download a copy of this article, as well as the BGA's currency barometer, a prescription for a safe pilot, and other useful notes for qualified glider pilots, from the pilot briefing guidance page of the Association's website. Check it out at

www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/safety/bulletins/pilot-briefing-guidance.htm

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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 **June-July 2007** issue of *Sailplane & Gliding* is **May 4, 2007** after which any adverts received will be published in the following issue.

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

October-November: Articles, Letters, Club News – **August 14**
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See also: *www.gliding.co.uk/sailplaneandglidingnews.htm*

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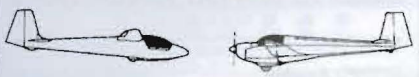
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Scotland	6 Jul 06 (Ed. 24)	20 Dec 07 (Ed. 25)
1:250,000 series		
1. N.Scotland West	31 Aug 06 (Ed. 4)	28 Aug 08 (Ed. 5)
2. N.Scotland East	6 Jul 06 (Ed. 4)	3 Jul 08 (Ed. 5)
3. N.Ireland	7 Jul 05 (Ed. 4)	7 Jun 07 (Ed. 5)
4. The Borders	13 Apr 06 (Ed. 5)	10 Apr 08 (Ed. 6)
5. Central England & Wales	14 April 05 (Ed. 6)	12 Apr 07 (Ed. 7)
6. England East	8 Jun 06 (Ed. 7)	5 Jun 08 (Ed. 8)
7. West & South Wales	4 Aug 05 (Ed. 5)	2 Aug 07 (Ed. 6)
8. England South	15 Feb 07 (Ed. 11)	14 Feb 08 (Ed. 12)
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