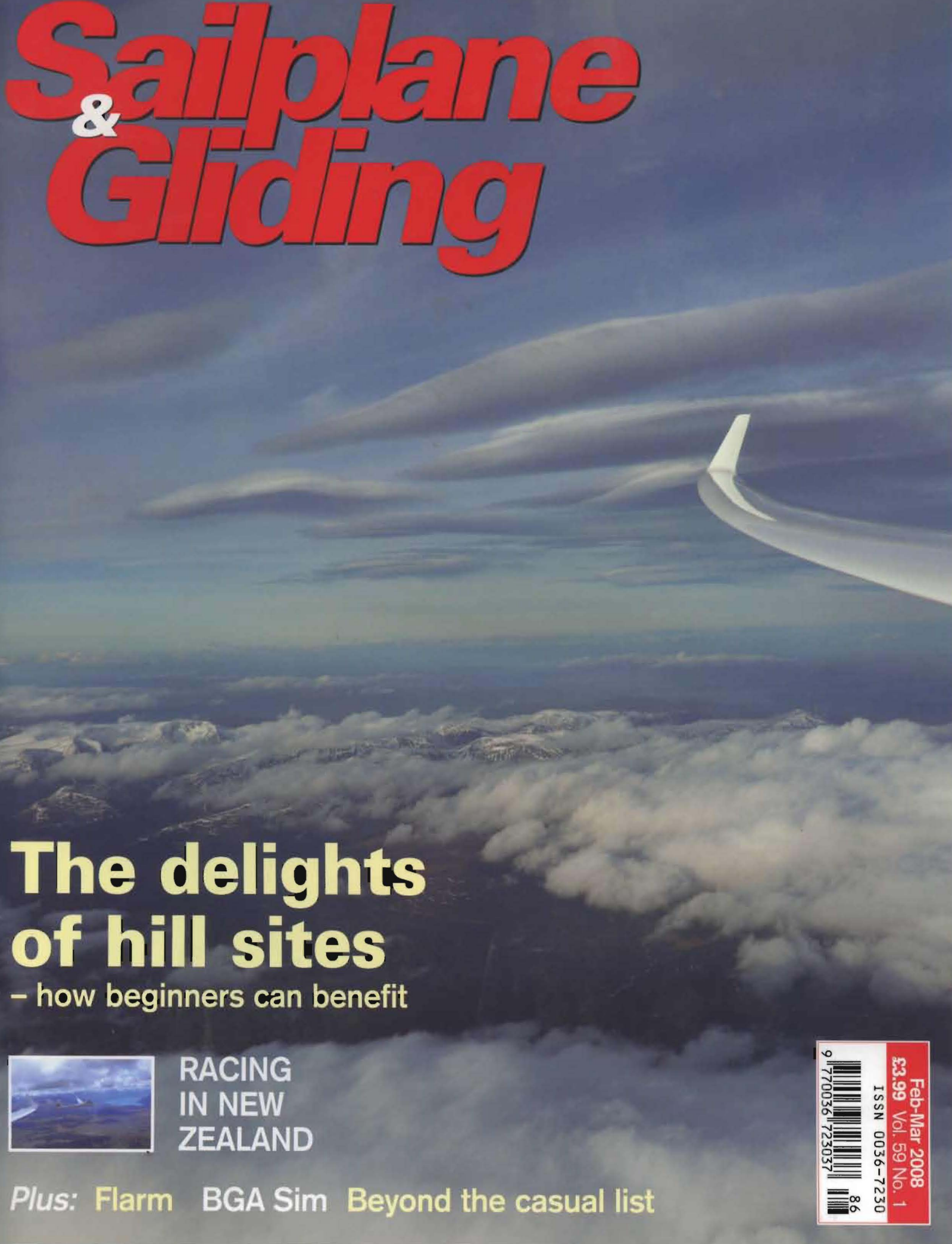
Sailplane & Gliding



The delights of hill sites

– how beginners can benefit

RACING IN NEW ZEALAND

Plus: Flarm BGA Sim Beyond the casual list

Feb-Mar 2008
£3.99 Vol. 59 No. 1
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BGA Sporting Conference 2008
Awards Ceremony & Dinner

Hellidon Lakes Hotel & Country Club, Daventry

Saturday 8 March 2008

Conference opens: 10:30 - Closes 18:00

Morning

- **"Scottish Wave"**
  Join John Williams as we hear about his stunning 2007 Scottish wave exploits.
- **"Psychology - is gliding a mind game?"**
  Pete Harvey on the psychological factors in improving your flying - from club outing to competitions
- **"The electronic cockpit"**
  A general overview of the current status of PDAs, flight directors, transponders, GPS, Mode S, etc - including connectivity, performance, benefits, pros and cons and managing the power to keep it all running.
- **"BGA Q&A"**
  Pete Stratten hosts a Q&A session on licensing and operations, Mode S, and other factors changing our flying environment.

Afternoon

- **Annual General Meeting of the BGA**
- **Exhibition Walkabout**
  Take a walk around the stands, view the latest gadgets or take a look at the gliders on display. The new BGA Flight Simulator will also be on display.
- **Soaring the Exotic**
  Exotic places YOU can go to glide. Inspirational insight into places that are actually accessible to 'Joe pilot'. What's involved and how easy it is.
- **The Need for Speed**
  Our guest speaker James Allison of Renault F1 on setting up complex, carbon fibre based, aerodynamic racing machines without the 18m wing span

Evening

- **Annual Awards Ceremony and Dinner**
- **Music and Casino Entertainment**
  Have a flutter with your BGA bucks, or grab a partner and boogie the night away

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

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

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"Better than shopping!" is John Williams's verdict on this scenic wave flight the day before Christmas Eve. But you don't have to win the RAeC Britannia Trophy (p7) to enjoy ridge and wave lift; pre- and early solo pilots can benefit, too. See Beginners' Corner *on p28*

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Member of the
Royal Aero Club
and the
Fédération Aéronautique Internationale



WHO on earth would do this to a beautiful sailplane? EB28 "13" that featured on the cover of the October-November *S&G*, and in the last issue too, was stolen in its trailer from its home airfield late last year. The entire front cockpit and engine were removed and what remained was dumped in a layby *(see above)*. The BGA comments: "This recent theft and damage should serve as a reminder that, unfortunately, our aircraft are not immune to risk from third parties whilst on the ground. Glider owners and all club members are advised to take all necessary steps to secure the safety of gliders and trailers and to remain vigilant to any suspicious activities on and around the airfield." A website at *http://www.genesys.net/eb28stolen/* has details of what missing parts and instruments to look out for and anyone with any information about the crime is urged to contact *StephenRLynn@aol.com*.

THE CAA has added an interactive R/T quiz to the Airspace Safety Initiative website. You can try it at *www.airspacesafety.com/content/news.asp*

THE BGA Treasurer is looking for some assistance with streamlining central accounting processes. If there is a volunteer with an accountancy background, practical knowledge of accounting software, and who lives within a reasonable distance of the Leicester office (not vital), who would be prepared to give advice on this specific issue and a small amount of hands-on time, please email *johnbirch@furneux.com*

THE CAA is reminding pilots that the law relating to alcohol and aviation applies to everybody involved in operating or controlling aircraft – not just to pilots.

THE latest CAA GA Safety Information Leaflet is at *www.caa.co.uk/docs/33/srg_gad_gasil4of2007.pdf* and the latest Europe Air Sports newsletter is at *www.europe-airsports.fai.org/node/357#attachments*

THE winner of the BGA 1000 Club Lottery for November was K. Brackstone (£27.00), with runners-up FJ Harding and F Strathern (£13.50)

Book now to improve your racing skills

THE women's development group ran three very successful weekends in 2006 and 2007, designed to help pilots move their cross-country and competition flying to the next level.

The group is planning another event for early 2008 with one major difference – having a Y chromosome will not disqualify you from participating! Although a number of places will be reserved for women, both genders are very welcome.

All pilots, male or female, who have flown in a rated competition (regionals or nationals – but see also the last paragraph) and who want to improve their skills are invited to the competition development weekend at Sutton Bank on April 5-6.

The weekend, run in conjunction with the BGA coaching operation, will offer a ground school and practical flying designed to improve your racing skills. This is a great opportunity to learn from current British team members, who will be supporting the event.

If you want to hone your skills ready for the new competition season with BGA coaches and members of the British gliding team – the world's number one – as well as, hopefully, enjoying some good flying in the process, contact Liz Sparrow (ebertoya@iee.org) to book. There are only 25 places available, so please book your place as soon as possible

If you have not yet flown in a rated competition, but have this in your sights, please also get in touch. It is hoped to offer something for you too but, at the time of going to press, details have not been confirmed.

Time to bid a fond farewell to your camera

The *Sporting Code for Gliders* is revised every October 1. BGA Badge Officer Basil Fairston interprets the latest changes which will affect glider pilots seeking badges or records.

A) The following note appeared at the start of last year's edition: "NOTE – At the IGC meeting 2004, it was decided that at some future date verification of badge flights will require the use of a flight recorder. Other means of verification shown in this edition of the Sporting Code will no longer be accepted." This has been changed in this year's edition to: "NOTE – It is expected that the use of photographic evidence for flight verification will not be allowed after 30th September 2008." This implies that while cameras will not be allowed for turnpoint verification after next season, barographs will be allowed for at least a year beyond that for height claims and straight distance flights. This shouldn't affect many pilots, as I haven't received a badge claim using photos for the whole of 2007, but still receive a few height claims and Silver distances using smoked barographs. However it is probably not a good time to buy and install cameras and a Winter barograph.

B) The second change is mainly of interest to record breakers:

"**1.4.1 b. A SOARING PERFORMANCE** may be claimed from any flight that meets the requirements of proof for that performance. (AL8)

"**1.4.3 Free distance performances for records only**

The WAY POINT(S) of free distance record flight performances may be declared post flight. Free distance courses may be claimed in conjunction with any other flight course (AL8)

"**3.0.2 Records in any one flight**

Any record or records may be claimed for which the requirements are met. (AL8)"

This is a change from the previous 3.0.2 that was introduced in 2005: "Any record or records may be broken in any one flight for which the requirements are met, except that:

a. A speed record will be certificated for the record distance immediately less than the official distance of the flight.

b. Within any single class and/or category, only one distance and one speed record may be certificated for the flight. (See Annex C para 4.5.)"

So you can now claim any records for which your flight qualifies instead of just one speed record and one distance record. You can for example claim a declared distance record and a slightly longer free distance record from the same flight. Also a very fast 500km triangle may allow you to claim 500km triangle and any smaller triangle speed records whose speed you exceed.

REGIONAL SAFETY OFFICERS

The BGA is seeking an additional 5 volunteer Regional Safety Officers (RSO) to provide enhanced safety management support to clubs. The RSO role is key to ongoing BGA and individual member club safety management and also provides a safety assurance function for the BGA as a whole.

Prospective RSO should ideally have the capability and capacity to visit an allocation of between 5 and 6 clubs on a rotational basis. They will also be invited to sit on the BGA Safety Committee, and help to establish BGA Safety Management System policy and direction

Applicants for this voluntary role should apply in the first instance to the Chairman BGA Safety Committee via the BGA Office. A short gliding CV outlining relevant experience should accompany the application, along with a suitable endorsement from either the applications club CFI or current RSO.

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Planning for a successful 2008

ALL Executive Committee members, BGA sub-committee chairmen or their deputies and most senior members of staff attended a day-long meeting in November. The thrust of the workshop was Planning for 2008 and the bulk of the time was spent on ensuring that the group has a good understanding of the broad range of BGA activities and that it has a clear view of what the BGA needs to focus on in the coming year and the resources – available and required – that are needed.

First discussed were BGA working assumptions and budget, led by treasurer John Birch, and plans and resources for the central core of the BGA, led by chief executive Pete Stratten.

Subcommittee and working groups followed, with individual chairs presenting a summary of current issues, priorities, plans and resource requirements:

- Airspace, Pete Stratten for Carr Withall
- Communications & Marketing, Marilyn Hood
- Competitions, Russell Cheetham
- Development, Diana King/Alison Randle
- Instructors, John Garrett/Mike Fox for Don Irving
- Regulatory, David Roberts
- Safety, Brian Penfold
- Technical, Howard Torode/Jim Hammerton

Then a group discussion facilitated by John Birch and Rose Johnson took place, focusing on resource requirements and capacity building, implications for BGA 2008 objectives/priorities and succession planning.

The balance of the time was spent on making sure that the BGA is also keeping a small number of strategically important areas in mind as it delivers its day-to-day business. Two main areas were discussed:

A. Operations developments

1. Airworthiness and Maintenance (Pete Stratten, Jim Hammerton and Howard Torode) – ongoing regarding the transition and Part M requirements.
2. Training System (Mike Fox) – in anticipation of future European licensing activity.
3. Interoperability (Patrick Naegeli) – focusing on the forthcoming CAA Impact Assessment that the BGA is actively engaged with.
4. General regulatory developments (David Roberts) – ongoing and future development of EASA regulation affecting gliding.



Alison Randle

Chairman Patrick Naegeli (left) *and Chief Executive Pete Stratten at the BGA's planning day in November 2007*

B. Youth gliding

Pete Harvey and Rose Johnson led a session on developing a sustainable strategy that will facilitate youth gliding to the benefit of member clubs and membership aspirations.

Patrick Naegeli closed the day by summarising the key points and thanking all present for their commitment to the BGA – especially the volunteers, who were giving up yet another weekend in support of the Association – and for their valued participation in what all agreed had been an informative and useful workshop.

Pete Stratten
BGA Chief Executive
pete@gliding.co.uk

Nationals, regionals and other useful dates

The BGA Sporting and Governance Conferences and AGM are on **Saturday, March 8.** For details see p14 or the ad on the inside front cover. See you there!

BGA-rated and International Competitions

Eastern Regionals	Tibenham	24/5-1/6/08
Overseas Championship	Ocana	26/5-6/6/08
Bidford Regionals	Bidford	21/6-29/6/08
Enterprise *(not BGA rated)*	North Hill	5/7-13/7/08
Open Class Nationals	Tibenham	5/7-13/7/08
15-Metre Class Nationals	Husbands Bosworth	5/7-13/7/08
Worlds (unflapped)	Rieti	7/7-19/7/08
Booker Regionals	Booker	19/7-27/7/08
Northern Regionals	Sutton Bank	19/7-27/7/08
Bicester Regionals	Bicester	19/7-27/7/08
Gransden Regionals	Gransden Lodge	2/8-10/8/08
Inter-Services Regionals	Honington	2/8-10/8/08
Standard Class Nationals	Lasham	2/8-10/8/08
20m (two-seat) Nationals	Lasham	2/8-10/8/08
Junior Nationals	Nympsfield	2/8-10/8/08
Worlds (flapped)	Lusse	3/8-15/8/08
Midlands Regionals	Husbands Bosworth	16/8-24/8/08
Dunstable Regionals	Dunstable	16/8-24/8/08
Lasham Regionals	Lasham	16/8-24/8/08
Club Class Nationals	Aston Down	16/8-24/8/08
Wolds Two-Seater Comp	Pocklington	17/8-24/8/08
18-Metre Class Nationals	Bicester	17/8-25/8/08
UK Mountain Soaring	Aboyne	31/8-6/9/08

Aerobatic events

Dan Smith (Sports Class)	Dunstable	29-30/3/08
Beginners' Day	Saltby	8/6/08
Comp Preparation (Sports)	Saltby	9-11/6/08
Nationals (all classes)	Saltby	12-15/6/08
Saltby Open	Saltby	5-7/9/08
Gliders v Power	Lasham	10-12/10/08

THE BGA working group on Mode S has contributed to three "industry" meetings with the Civil Aviation Authority and been asked by the CAA to review, along with other air sports, the draft Regulatory Impact Assessment for Phase 2 of its interoperability proposals, which are scheduled to take effect from 2012. As *S&G* went to press, the RIA was due to go out for consultation in January 2008 with a closing date in May. The BGA is currently reviewing the draft RIA and will provide further information to glider pilots via *www.gliding.co.uk*

A REPORT into a serious accident that happened last year stated that energy-absorbing cushions had a major effect in reducing the hazard of compressive spinal injuries in what were very significant impacts. The BGA is reminding all owners and operators that energy-absorbing cushions can save lives and strongly recommends that all gliders are fitted with them. For more details of the BGA recommendation, see RP38 in Laws and Rules.

CAA GA Safety Evenings for 2008 are listed at *www.caa.co.uk/srg/general_aviation*. Remaining dates include: Sleap, March 4; Caernarvon, March 5; Swansea, March 6; and Perth, March 12. The CAA encourages all pilots to attend these free events.

FURTHER BGA inspector seminars have been arranged for February 17 at the Scottish Gliding Centre, Portmoak; and April 5, at the RAFGSA Centre, Halton. For booking details please visit *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/technical/news.htm*

THE British Women's Gliding Team was one of only three shortlisted candidates for the Champions Award at the *Sunday Times* Sportswomen of the Year ceremony, which was won by world water ski slalom champion Nicole Arthur. Reaching the shortlist for this prestigious award was fantastic recognition for the team that was so successful in the 2007 Worlds.

AN independent review of the UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) has been commissioned by the Secretary of State for Transport and interested individuals and organisations have been invited to comment. The BGA will be responding, but is not asking members to act directly. More information is at *www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/aviation/domestic/caareview2007*

THE Letters of Agreement page on the BGA website has been updated and now contains details of those covering Luton TMA access (London GC), LTCA access during competitions (Lasham, Booker and Husbands Bosworth), and Lyneham and Brize Norton Class D access during competitions (any host club). You can check all current Letters of Agreement at *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/airspace/loas.htm*

THE BGA's 2007 decision to run Assistant Instructors courses at different sites around the country has proven popular and the Association will be expanding the number of sites at which courses will be held in 2008. Eleven courses will be take place between April and September 2008. An initial list, with details of how to book a place on a course, can be found at *www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/bgacourses.htm* and in the advert on p38 of this *S&G*. Further dates and venues will be added as they are confirmed.

Your letters

Too low and too slow

I JUST read Les Blows' letter in the October-November issue of *S&G* (*Appropriate accident analysis*, p6) on the Air Accident Investigation Branch report on BGA 1166 (AAIB Bulletin 3/2007). The accident occurred in August 2006 when a Dart 15 spun in at Sutton Bank, killing the pilot. Les Blows seemed to suggest that the main recommendation in the AAIB report was observance of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). He said this conclusion was "unfair and irrational" (his words). He was particularly scathing about the need for pilots to sign as having read SOPs before flying at the site at the first time, although this is a standard practice at many other flying fields where I have flown.

I have read the AAIB report closely with experience of some 50 years' instructing at the site, including serving as CFI for five years, and as a member of a syndicate operating a Dart 17 there for a similar period. My conclusion is that the pilot of the Dart 15 was flying too slow and too low, and his aircraft stalled with fatal results.

As always, the implied question is: how did this come about?

Sutton Bank is a very complex site. Being on the edge of an escarpment with two vertical faces makes the landing area have very varied and unpredictable local flows. My comment was that the report did not devote enough space to discussion of the local flows at the time of the accident and therefore was at a loss to say exactly what happened. This is all the more ironic because all the necessary information is contained in the report.

The AAIB report says:
– The accident happened at 17.50hrs;
– The glider crashed just south of the road that climbs the Bank;
– The winds were light – about 10kts – and declining;
– Two other gliders were soaring at the edge, presumably to the north of the road;
– The winds were 240/11kts at sea level and 270/15kts at 1,000ft (the approximate height of the landing ground);
– The pilot had had a site check the day before with the leader of his group.

The report quotes a paragraph from *Flying at Sutton Bank*, which was an updated and enlarged version of a document that the Flying Committee of the club had produced in my time as CFI. It clearly states that "a wind of 12kts is needed for the hill to work. The best area of lift in the bowl will depend on the wind direction. If it is insufficient to maintain 400ft (above the landing ground) you should land".

However, there is more to it than that. Sutton's local ridge is an almost semi-circular bowl. This is a great advantage in some directions but a snare and delusion in others. The reason is that the lift is highly directional. When the wind is in the south west, as it was at the time of the incident, the northern side of the bowl will have its face almost perpendicular to the local wind and will produce adequate lift to a height of 300ft to 400ft.

The southern half of the ridge by the landing ground curves around nearly 90° to the northern half. The low-level wind at 240° runs parallel with the southern face. The wind will therefore flow along the face and not across it, thus it produces no lift until the point where the road crosses the ridge. The point above Hood hill splits the flow and thus adds further confusion.

It seems to me that the pilot of the Dart did not appreciate this limitation of the area of the lift in which he was flying in until too late. He just assumed that as there were two gliders soaring successfully to the north of him, there was sufficient lift about to sustain his flight.

Others have crashed at the same place before and for the same reason.

Chris Riddell, HARROGATE, Yorkshire

Personal observations on Flarm

HAVING read much of the heated online debates about Flarm, I was keen to experience using it in an environment where most (nearly all) gliders were equipped before reaching my own conclusion.

The chance came last August, flying out of St Auban in French gliders which are all now, like most gliders flying in the Alps, Flarm equipped, and in conditions where visibility was often more like typical UK murk than the crystal clear alpine air expected. My observations follow.

1.The two alarms (as opposed to indications) were very typical UK scenarios and were potential lifesavers.

(a) Head on, 500ft under a cloud street – I think we both saw each other at the same time the Flarm alarm went off but if both had been looking at a map or GPS it could have been a very dangerous situation without the alarm.

(b) An alarm indicating a glider above and behind in a thermal. A glider had joined very close above and behind me and was far closer than was comfortable and the Flarm alarm went off because we were converging. Again the alarm drew attention to a very real threat.

2. Flarm requires a new discipline: not getting fixated on looking for gliders passively indicated by Flarm that are not an immediate threat. For example, when in straight flight, a new indication (red lights showing direction on a face clock and another light showing if above or below) of a glider above or below off to the right or left is not so critical as a glider at the same altitude. At first I found myself a bit too fixated on finding it at the expense of a more general lookout in my immediate danger zone.

3. Flarm does not warn you about everything. Flying below ridge height, two gliders flying abreast appeared around a spur about 200m ahead with no Flarm warning until they had appeared, so normal lookout and defensive flying techniques are still needed.

4. An indication of a glider's presence overtaking inside me on a ridge run set off no alarms as we were not converging but alerted me (via the clock face lights) to it whilst it was still in a blind spot and so removed any chance that I might not see it and converge on it.

5. The very sobering sight of the recent wreckage of a DG and an LS still lying on the slopes near Caduc clearly demonstrated that collisions can occur even where both gliders are Flarm equipped, which takes us back to observation 3 about Flarm being an aid rather than a replacement.

My conclusion based on my experience was that the Flarm concept is an invaluable aid to imminent collision avoidance. And, by providing greater situational awareness, it can reduce the likelihood of glider pilots finding themselves in situations where collisions are a serious threat – BUT it is an aid not a replacement.

Of course, there have been many arguments made against Flarm. For instance, many argue that Flarm is of no use if other General Aviation pilots don't adopt it.

My own perception, right or wrong, is that apart from the odd close encounter with the military ridge hopping in Wales most of the airborne danger to the gliding community is glider/glider and glider/tug convergence. Others argue that the cost is prohibitive, yet we all carry parachutes (which are much more expensive) as a "potential remedy". Others say that it is a waste of money as at some time in the future we will have integrated transponders with built-in collision avoidance – rather like saying wearing a seat belt was a waste of time before the introduction of air bags.

The only really valid arguments against buying Flarm in the UK at present is the fact that so few gliders have it fitted and that for some it might be an expense they don't think they can afford. Owning one at present might be compared with the plight of early users of email – great concept but no one to communicate with and everyone saying they will never really catch on. Well I, like many others, will be joining that small band of Flarm owners in the hope that others too will eventually accept that, even if we are all willing to accept the inherent risks in our hobby, we all have a duty to minimise those risks for the sake of our families if not for ourselves.

I have, however, experienced one set of conditions when it is clear that it really would be desirable to turn the Flarm off to avoid any possible distractions, and this is when sharing a very small amount of airspace with an uncomfortable number of gliders. The conditions in question probably occur several times a year at all clubs that have a ridge, specifically at times when the wind only supports a limited area of lift. In these conditions, gliders that would otherwise disperse over a wider area and other ridges find themselves operating in

what can only be described as somewhat crowded conditions. In this environment it is possible that any alarm might be a distraction rather than an aid – at least with Flarm there is the option to pull the plug – when we are forced to carry transponders that option will not exist.

Is it worth the money? At £400 per unit to potentially save one UK life every two years (maybe mine, maybe yours or most likely someone you have never even met) you have to make your own decision; after all, no one actually thinks they are going to have a collision. Having experienced Flarm first-hand I am convinced it is and would go so far as to say I would like to see all clubs make Flarm a compulsory fit together with usage training – that might help resolve the cost issue, too.

Graham Bowser, *via email*

For information on two UK clubs' experiences of trying out Flarm, see p18 – Editor

Platypus and the "H" word

I AM loath to mention the "H" word in a publication such as *S&G*, but what the Gossamer Condor looked like (*Paul MacCready – a Tribute*, by Platypus, December 2007-January 2008, p16) was not so much a microfilm model as a giant hang-glider. There... I've said it.

In fact, most of the top people in the MacCready team were or had been hang-glider pilots. Paul MacCready himself (briefly), his children, Jack Lambie, Taras Kiceniuk, John Lane and Bryan Allen the pilot amongst others... The list reads like a *Who's Who* of the early Californian hang-gliding movement. Yes, the Gossamer Condor wasn't weight shift, but it was a single surface, wire braced, low-speed and low wing loading rag-and-tube construction, just like an early Rogallo. Maybe it was MacCready's open mindedness which allowed him to accept that a lightweight sailplane was not the aircraft to take the Kremer prize, but what does this denial say about the open mindedness of the sailplane movement?

You could say that MacCready abandoned heavy, expensive, fast and dangerous sailplanes to take up hang-gliding.Whoops!

John Clark, NEW SOUTH WALES, Australia

Platypus replies: I realise that hang-glider experience and know-how were immensely valuable in shaping the ideas of the Gossamer Condor team. As you say, most of the Gossamer Condor team hang-glid, or -glud. However, there are close aeronautical resemblances between the outcome of their efforts – the Gossamer Condor – and microfilm models:

a) The aspect ratio of microfilm models is nearer to Gossamer Condor, approximately two or three times higher than Rogallos.
b) Microfilm models are powered, and Rogallos were not.
c) Microfilm models have horizontal and vertical stabilisers, and Rogallos do not.
d) Microfilm models' direction of turn in both planes is effected by tail tilting and wing warping, not by weight-shift. That is, they were much more like Gossamer Condor.
e) Microfilm models of the 1970s had much more wire bracing than Rogallos because they were made as flimsy as possible, like Gossamer Condor. Rogallos are pretty robust, with quite a high all-up wing loading. I have seen them crash hundreds of times, especially in the 1960s and 70s, and they need to be much stronger than was necessary for purely aerodynamic loads.
f) The sink rate of Rogallos was monstrous. I calculate from the all-up weight and likely sink rate they consumed well over one horsepower – four times the power needs of the Gossamer designs.
g) The chief resemblance which the Rogallo can truly claim with Gossamer Condor is that they both have a human pilot. That is important.
h) The clincher for me is that MacCready stated that he had designed, built and flown both indoor and outdoor rubber-powered duration models in his youth, and had been US National Free Flight Champion.

The consensus might be this: the hang-gliding culture liberated the MacCready team from thinking in terms of cantilever wings and ultra-high lift-drag ratios, which proved to be a blind alley. However, what they actually ended up with, as they struggled with ways to achieve ultra-low rate of sink and ultra-low all-up weight (which, taken together, determine the necessary power requirement), bore a much closer resemblance to microfilm models than to Rogallos.

Can we claim victory for both sides?

Puffin and polyester

AS I worked for ICI Plastics Division in the 1960s, I can add a little to Platypus' and Derek Piggott's comments on man-powered aircraft (December 2007-January 2008 p17). The covering pioneered on Puffin in 1961, and then on other British man-powered craft, including Toucan, was Melinex polyester film made by ICI.

Mylar polyester film made by Du Pont was used by Joseph Zinno in the USA on the Olympian (1972) and by the MacCready team from the start in 1976. At the time of the Channel crossing by Bryan Allen in Gossamer Albatross, it was reported that a journalist had asked the team what would happen if the aircraft ditched.

The Du Pont representative quipped that their logo would wash off to reveal an ICI roundel.

The film-covered SUMPAC can be seen at Solent Sky (formerly Southampton Hall of Aviation).

Alan Self, Congleton, Cheshire

References: www.spitfireonline.co.uk/popup/other7.html
Grosser M, Gossamer Odyssey *(Michael Joseph 1981)*

Please send letters (marked "for publication") to the editor at editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk *or the address on p3, including your full contact details. Deadline for the next issue is* **February 12**

Stay up to date about transition

IN RESPONSE to continuing BGA efforts to minimise the disruption to UK glider owners during the transition to the EASA airworthiness regime, the CAA has agreed that **newly imported EASA gliders** can be issued with a BGA C of A, valid until September 28, 2008. This will be transitioned into an EASA C of A with ARC (valid for one year) via the existing BGA transition process. The application for a BGA C of A complete with the EASA C of A transition application must be made via the BGA. Full details are available on *www.gliding.co.uk*. This applies to both new and secondhand newly imported EASA gliders, including self-sustainers.

The BGA has been told that the following aircraft types have been removed from the **Annex II** list - Scheibe Bergfalke (all variants), Spatz and L Spatz, SZD 9 bis Bocian 1D and 1E. These are now considered EASA aircraft and are subject to CAA registration and EASA C of A transition to the usual timetable.

There has also been a small change since the last *S&G* to the way in which the BGA office is processing all transition packs. Once a pack has been verified as satisfactory, the BGA C of A will be renewed up to **September 28, 2008.** This ensures that the aircraft can continue to fly with a minimum of disruption.

If you're a glider owner affected by EASA C of A transition issues, please keep an eye on the BGA website and monthly newsletter to make sure you stay up to date:
www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/technical/news.htm
www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/technical/easa/introduction.htm

Gliding scoops seven awards

NO FEWER than seven Royal Aero Club awards for 2007 have gone to glider pilots – including four to *S&G* contributors.

The Britannia Trophy for the British aviator achieving the most meritorious performance went to **John Williams** for the wave flights he has described so compellingly for *S&G*. The Nexus Trophy for aviation journalism went to **Michael Bird** – better known to readers as **Platypus**. The other five awards were: the Prince of Wales Cup for the British **Women's Gliding Team**; RAeC Gold Medal for **Derek Piggott**; Silver Medal for **Pete Harvey**; Bronze Medal for **John Glossop**; Diploma for **Jack "Weatherjack"Harrison**; Certificates of Merit to **John Blackmore** and **Derek Platt**; and the Old and Bold Trophy to **Jim O'Donnell**. Look out for more news on all these when *S&G* reports from the RAeC Awards Ceremony later in the year.

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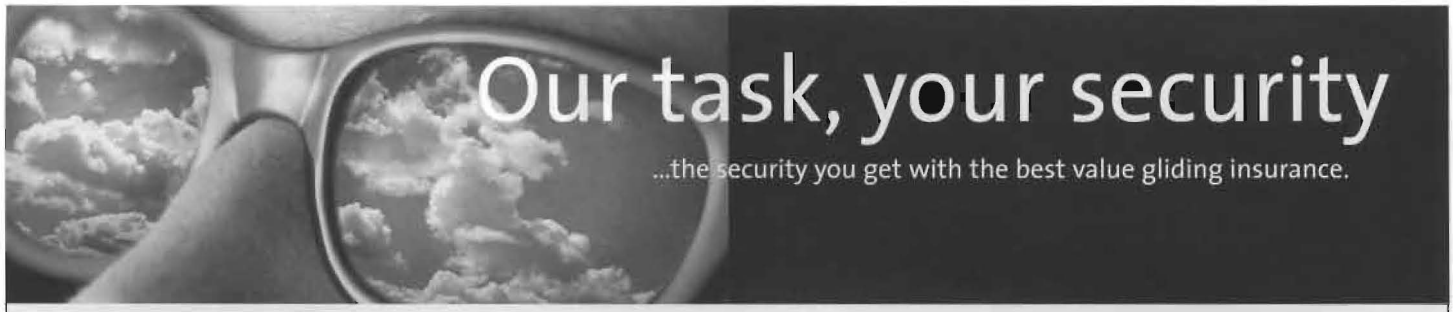
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What the BGA is doing about EASA-inspired changes to glider pilot licensing in the UK

BGA Executive Committee member Chris Gibson, who chairs the Association working group that's preparing for the change to an EASA-controlled system of pilot licensing, provides a first look at what could be happening over the coming months and years

IF YOU have been following developments with EASA (the European Aviation Safety Agency), you will be aware of the intention to extend its scope to include more responsibilities than it currently holds. These responsibilities will include pilot licensing and, in line with the rest of Europe, all UK glider pilots will need to have an EASA-compliant glider pilot's licence within the next two to three years.

The BGA has established a working group to monitor the development of EASA pilot licensing; to liaise with the UK authorities; to work with our colleagues across European airsports organisations; and to ensure the best possible outcome for UK pilots, taking advantage of any benefits of the change, while minimising the effects on glider pilots.

The licence options are likely to be:
The EASA Light Aircraft Pilot's Licence (Sailplanes) – 'LAPL(S)' – this is often referred to as 'recreational'.
The EASA ICAO-compliant Glider Pilot's Licence. These licences are likely to be very similar, if not identical, to each other, but details are still subject to formal ratification at the time of writing.

The principal difference is likely to be that the ICAO licence would require an ICAO Class 2 medical whereas the LAPL(S) would need only a GP endorsement.

Timescales are still uncertain but it is likely that the transition period will not start before late 2008 – and possibly later.

The licence format will be a modular one and will, in all probability, include ratings or endorsements for:

- **Cross country**
- **Launch method**
- **Night**
- **Cloud**
- **Aerobatics**
- **Flight Instructor**
- **Flight Examiner**

The BGA has been working closely with colleagues in the EGU (European Gliding Union), EAS (Europe Air Sports) and EASA in representing the interests of UK glider pilots and negotiating the most suitable licensing structure for our needs.

The exact method of transition, the maximisation of grandfather rights, and the effect on the way in which the BGA will manage glider pilot licensing, badges, and training are still to be agreed. However, it is likely that a standard not dissimilar to that required for the existing BGA Glider Pilot's Licence will be recognised as a 'benchmark' in the transition process.

The European legal process for formalisation and introduction will be similar to that for the new C of A system.

An NPA document (Notice of Proposed Amendment) is being finalised and will be issued by EASA for public consultation in the near future – that's likely to be by the end of the first quarter of 2008.

Following this consultation the new licence will be introduced over a period yet to be determined.

The NPA will cover the proposed Light Aircraft Pilot Licence structure and include sections relevant to glider pilots.

The BGA will issue a formal response to this on behalf of UK glider pilots but you will also have the opportunity to respond on your own behalf.

In the meantime, please keep an eye on the BGA website at *www.gliding.co.uk* for updates, information on responses, and its effect on you.

Chris Gibson 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. He is seen here at the BGA off-site in November talking with Marilyn Hood



Pictured right: *the BGA Executive's first off-site meeting that included key staff and contractors as well as Executive members and sub-committee chairs was held at Turweston aerodrome in November to make sure the Association's plans for 2008 were practical and doable. Pictured during a brief break in the packed day are:* (standing, from left) *treasurer John Birch, chairman Patrick Naegeli and Executive member Pete Harvey;* (seated, with their backs to the camera, from left), *Technical Committee Chairman Howard Torode and Chief Technical Officer Jim Hammerton;* (seated, facing the camera, from left) *Regulatory Group Chairman David Roberts, Licensing Working Group Chairman Chris Gibson, Executive member Ted Norman, BGA Chief Executive Pete Stratten, Competitions Committee Chairman Russell Cheetham, BGA National Coach Mike Fox; John Garrett and Brian Penfold. Also present were: BGA Development Officer Alison Randle, BGA Development Committee Chairman Diana King, and Communications and Marketing Committee Chairman Marilyn Hood.*



The BGA Chairman, Patrick Naegeli, reflects on 2007's successes and looks forward to 2008's challenges

I FIND, like many people do, that the Christmas and New Year period gives rise to a slight change in pace. This year's breathing space was, in particular, very welcome as it made it slightly easier for me to assess the year that was (at the time of writing) about to end and to consider the one about to start.

2007 was another good year for British gliding. It was characterised by many notable events and achievements, including, for example:
– The awarding of a number of highly prestigious national and international honours to members of the British gliding community for contributions to air sports in general as well as gliding in particular;
– GB retaining its position as number one in the international rankings – a reflection of the achievements of the British Team, the associated coaching structure, and, importantly, the vibrancy and performance of the national competition scene;
– A myriad of "firsts" at club level by pilots and those responsible for developing the movement alike. If people like John Williams keep pushing the bounds as they have done to date then the BGA Turnpoint List will have to expand further to include more of the outlying British Isles, tracts of our remoter territorial waters, and maybe even bits of Ireland and Norway!

2007 was also the year when EASA began to change.

For a number of years, EASA – and the increased level of European aviation regulation that it is seen to represent – had been mostly the subject of BGA reports about what was likely to happen. Few,



Alison Randle

Looking ahead to a pivotal year

if any, club-level officials, managers, glider pilots and owners had had any direct experience of the associated new regulatory provisions. The start of the transition process to the new airworthiness and maintenance regime – the first major example of regulatory development moving to implementation – signified EASA's move into the day-to-day reality of the mainstream movement.

The transition of airworthiness and maintenance is far from trivial. It requires several organisations – including the BGA, the CAA and EASA – to work effectively, individually and collectively, if things are to happen smoothly and within the set timescales.

I am absolutely confident that the BGA's years of careful planning and preparation will mean that we do what we need to do effectively and promptly. It is not yet clear to me how far the CAA will be able to execute its own responsibilities on a timely basis. Resource constraints together with the unusual profile of the initial, one-off workload will test its ability to process glider documentation whilst achieving the September 2008 timeline. The BGA will provide the CAA with whatever support we reasonably can to keep things on track and we are already discussing contingencies with our CAA counterparts.

Ensuring as smooth a transition as possible is a primary objective for the BGA in 2008. That there will, even so, be some degree of disruption and inconvenience is probably to be expected; despite the BGA's very significant achievements in making the process as painless as possible, those of us who own gliders are still having to adapt to this changing airworthiness environment. One small consolation – if it can be described as such – is that the airworthiness and maintenance transition process ought to provide a body of experience that will be useful in planning how we manage other new regulations to be generated by EASA.

Changes in the way we are regulated will be a fact of life for gliding – and other air sports – for a few years yet. Licensing is the next significant area that will be addressed. A substantial amount of professional and volunteer effort will, therefore, be required to focus on regulatory work for a while yet.

The same is true for the other key BGA development priority for 2008 – Youth Gliding. At the same time, the regular work of the various BGA subcommittees and working groups must also continue if day-to-day gliding is to operate effectively.

Conscious of the growing list of priorities and the finite amount of available resources, representatives from each of the BGA subcommittees and working groups, the key professional staff and the members of the Executive Committee met in November 2007 to make sure that our plans for 2008 were practical and achievable.

A report elsewhere in this issue *(see p5)* summarises the main areas covered during the meeting. One thing, however, particularly stuck in my mind from the day, and that was the extent to which the BGA is now severely resource-constrained – primarily in terms of people/volunteers. To the point where, without more volunteers becoming involved, it will be increasingly difficult for the Association to progress the work it needs to.

In early 2008, the BGA will be on the look out for people to fill specific volunteer posts. Some will be project related; others will be on specific sub-committees and working groups. It is very important that we find the right people to help; "many hands make light work" is an entirely appropriate truism. Please think about how you can help.

I know that glider pilots can do a great job of collective effort when we are up against things. In 2006 we did a great job together in providing the CAA with "input" to their partial regulatory impact assessment on Mode S. The time is nearly upon us where we will have to do something similar again.

Over the last 18 months, we have spent a considerable amount of time with the CAA expressing our concerns and stating our case for a more appropriate and proportionate approach on their part to the subject of interoperability. We have made solid progress, but are still not at the point where we are certain of a satisfactory outcome for gliding. The next few months will be key. The CAA will be publishing its full set of proposals for consultation very shortly and we will be making sure that gliding responds appropriately at all levels. The BGA will keep you apprised of developments through the website, *S&G* and other channels. Please take notice.

Have fun, stay safe.

Patrick Naegeli
Chairman, British Gliding Association
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Making club officials' lives easier

BGA Development Officer Alison Randle reports on two BGA projects to help your club, its committee and its members

TWO BGA projects have now reached the point where gliding clubs can benefit directly from them. They are designed to make the life of a committee member easier. Committee business is more straightforward if structures and processes are in place that act as a point of reference when decisions need to be taken. This in turn gives rise to a clear delineation of duties and responsibilities for each individual member. As a result the club runs reasonably smoothly and members feel well supported in their activities and can clearly see what they will be taking on as they progress through the club and it becomes their turn to volunteer and help to run it themselves. themselves. Collectively, such policies, plus accountability and transparent club procedures, are known as good governance and engender trust in an organisation. Any void created by a lack of good governance is simply waiting to be filled with some degree of exploitation, nepotism, corruption and so on. The effects of good governance are felt and appreciated within and outside an organisation; the committee is well placed to deal with external challenges, members are happier, new members are attracted to the club and partnerships and working relationships with organisations outside the club, including those that can provide financial assistance, are more effective and easier to build.

1. The BGA Club Policies Guidance Pack

Based on recommended best practice and existing club policies, a comprehensive range of policy documents, procedures and guidance notes has been created. These include the latest version of the BGA Child Protection Policy and Procedures that will need to be adopted by all clubs. A folder with a CD containing all the documents in electronic format has been sent to each club. The pack is available to download from *www.gliding.co.uk/policies*. We know that clubs have some really effective policies in place, but we also know that many clubs may have gaps or weaker areas. In any case, to be truly effective, policies need to be reviewed to ensure that they remain useful as servants of the club. A policy should set out the required behaviour in a given situation; it should not aim to pre-determine a future outcome based on past guesswork. The pack should prove helpful to clubs as they review their existing processes.

If you are reading this as a club member rather than a club official, your role will be to respond to the committee as and when they consult you about your club's policies. This will help them to put in place effective and practical policies and procedures so that you and your fellow club members (including the committee!) can get on with the important business of having fun and flying as much as possible.

The BGA secured funding from Sport England for this project because it was able to demonstrate a link between gliding activity and physical exercise and that improving club membership recruitment and retention would help the government to achieve its stated PPS3 targets of increasing the number of people taking regular exercise.

2. Club accreditation

The scheme focuses on activities for young pilots and is unlikely to be for all clubs in the land. In addition to raising the club's profile with the local sports and funding networks, benefits include marketing and membership opportunities. Sports clubs that have been through the accreditation process report a rise in the numbers of volunteers that get involved with running the club. We have developed a "playing programme" that details a minimum operating framework of criteria that clubs must meet in order to qualify. The key word here is minimum and the programme has been specifically designed to draw on existing BGA systems. So for instance, to qualify, a club must offer coaching (that is, instruction) for a minimum of one day per week in 40 weeks of the year, with the evidence being the BGA annual return. Supporting documentation for the accreditation process has been included in the Club Policies Guidance Pack.

As I write, four clubs are discussing with their local County Sports Partnerships (CSP) whether they wish to pilot Sport England Clubmark accreditation for BGA clubs. The BGA is not currently working towards becoming licensed to accredit clubs itself; instead is taking advantage of the resources available from CSPs to support clubs as they go through the process. This brings the added benefit of building strong working partnerships between gliding clubs and Sport England. We will in due course look at ways of accrediting clubs outside England.

CASC status – a reminder

Gliding clubs come in a bewildering variety of legal shapes and configurations. However, many have been able to configure themselves as required to become registered with the Inland Revenue as a CASC (Community Amateur Sports Club). Benefits include a standard 80 per cent rate relief (which is not discretionary) and the possibility of applying for discretionary relief on the remaining 20 per cent. There is also much to be made of the Gift Aid scheme. Recent figures from the Central Council for Physical Recreation show that as at the end of October 2007, 4,528 clubs are now registered under the scheme and have so far claimed benefits estimated to be worth £22.8m. Of this, £3.3m has been claimed under the Gift Aid scheme despite 90 per cent of those clubs registered preferring to let the Treasury keep Gift Aid money that rightfully belongs to the clubs (or would do if they claimed it). This could be interpreted as giving easy tax benefits to the Government! For details of how your club could help limit this leakage of cash, visit *www.cascinfo.co.uk/giftaid/*

Alison@gliding.co.uk

DEVELOPMENT TEAM ADVISORS

The BGA is seeking volunteers to join the team of expert advisors attached to the Development Committee, who together provide support and advice to clubs, assisting them with their successful management and development.

In order to support the existing team of professionals and volunteers, there is a need for specialist experience and expertise in the following areas: Site moving; Club strategy development; Environmental management; Volunteer management; Financial management and funding; IT Management; Building and project management; HR. Individuals recruited to these positions are likely be asked to contribute to the development of guidance material for clubs, to advise individual clubs on a particular issue as needed and contribute to the occasional Development Committee meeting.

If you think you could contribute to any of these voluntary positions, please initially contact the Chairman of the Development Committee, via the BGA Office, specifying which area interests you and asking for a description of the role.

Diana King, Chairman, BGA Development Committee,
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THESE, *writes Alison Randle,* are just a few of the comments from the 75 delegates to last year's Chairmen's Conference and Treasurers' Forum. Greatly valued by gliding club officials because it focuses on the practical issues their clubs face, the annual Chairmen's Conference has evolved over the past decade. In recent years, it has been one of the two main events the BGA regularly organises. The other, of course, held each spring, is the "BGA weekend" – the Association's AGM and Conference, which includes its awards ceremony and dinner dance.

While all are welcome to the BGA weekend, the Chairmen's Conference, traditionally held each autumn, was devised purely for BGA club chairmen or nominated committee colleagues. In 2006, specialist sessions for club treasurers – the Treasurers' Forum – were added for the first time.

The success of this has now inspired a review of the existing BGA events format; and the teams behind both the BGA weekend and the Chairmen's Conference are working together to bring together opportunities for everyone under one roof on one day.

To provide targeted support to the full range of hardworking and indispensable volunteers who run clubs while still welcoming all comers with an interest in gliding, the plan for 2008 is to have two conferences – for the former, a Governance Conference and, for the latter, a Sporting Conference. The two will run alongside one another, with a break so that all can attend the AGM and certain other sessions.

The **Governance Conference** *(see opposite below)* will consist of a set of parallel sessions of varying lengths for club officials as well as the chance to compare notes with your colleagues.

The **Sporting Conference** *(see below)* will offer general interest sessions, as the BGA weekend has in previous years, for those glider pilots who aren't on gliding club committees, or find themselves with time between sessions.

What does the new format aim to achieve?

Furthering the BGA's mission "to provide effective leadership and continuity of gliding and soaring in the UK", we will be gathering expertise to create stimulating sessions for the benefit of the sport of gliding in the UK. We will preserve the essence of the Chairmen's Conference, which is highly valued as a chance to focus on pertinent issues, to share experience with other club chairmen and to network. The organisational teams have already been seeking suitable speakers, from both within and beyond gliding, to put together relevant and thought-provoking sessions to support the work of the volunteers who run gliding. On these pages, we've included as much detail as we can at the time of writing (just before Christmas). We hope this will whet your appetite to attend and to look for more detail, which you can find on *www.gliding.co.uk/conference*

Most of all, don't forget to put the date in your diary, to book your place now if you're planning to attend the Governance Conference – and why not remind your friends and colleagues at the club, too?

Feature Session – *Raising our Game*

We will be maximising opportunity, time and energy by bringing everyone together to discuss issues of interest to more than one type of club official. We expect discussion on sports club management, specifically how to help clubs recognise their own potential, including looking at how clubs meet those challenges that threaten survival or otherwise prevent clubs from thriving. At the time of writing we are lining up an exciting speaker from outside gliding. This session will be open to all – regardless of whether or not you are on a committee!

The BGA Annual General Meeting

This is a crucial part of the day – the BGA is your Association – and everyone is invited to find out what is being planned by your BGA for the year ahead (and beyond) as well as to hear the Association's officers present reports relating to recent BGA activity. Your own club's previously nominated representative – usually the chairman if present on the day – is eligible to vote.

The exhibition

All manner of gliding-related merchandise and

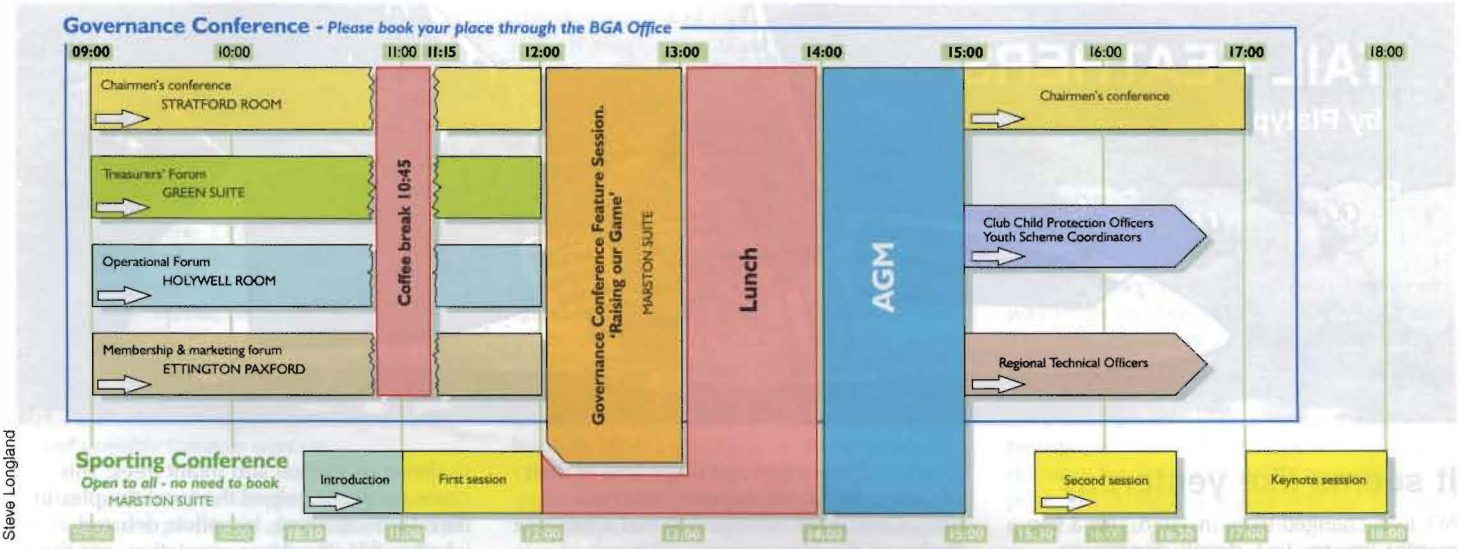


Successful clubs, happy pilots – that's what we all want, and the 2008 BGA weekend aims to help volunteers to run the former while also providing sporting sessions that put a smile on everyone's face (Alison Randle)

More gliding fun, whatever you fly

THE BGA's **Sporting Conference**, unlike the accompanying Governance Conference, does not require advance booking and it's open to all – just turn up and register on the day. The format will be highly recognisable to anyone who has attended previous BGA weekends. The day is designed to be entertaining and informative and is for any glider pilots (and their partners), from the newest arrivals in the sport to pilots in the British Team, whatever your personal gliding ambition might be.

As in previous years, sessions will focus on gliding experience or closely related subjects that are of interest to glider pilots. For 2008, the European Open Class Champion and BGA Executive Committee member Pete Harvey is leading the co-ordination of the agenda and he already has an exciting list of potential topics and speakers. This will include John Williams' extraordinary wave flights in Scotland, ideas on exciting places to go to fly and on the psychological aspects of flying. See the advert on the inside front cover of this issue for more details of everything that's on offer.



Steve Longland

The diagram above is intended to illustrate how the various strands of a packed day are interwoven but please note that rooms, exact timings and details of content may change

wares will be available for you to look at and to buy. You could purchase anything from an item of clothing (and take it to another stand to get it embroidered to a design of your choice) to a new glider. Already got a glider you're happy with? Then there will be a range of technological gadgets and gizmos just begging to be re-housed in your instrument panel. And, of course, you'll be able to try out the new BGA Simulator.

The annual dinner and awards ceremony

This is *the* big social gathering of UK gliding, with plenty of opportunity to catch up with friends from other clubs, to meet new people and to talk about plans for the season ahead and to reminisce about adventures from last year. The formal dinner is followed by the presentation of awards to winners of BGA Cups and Trophies following meritorious performances both in and out of the cockpit in the last year. As last year, the fun Casino event with various prizes will be followed by live music. If you prefer a more gentle evening, Hellidon Lakes has numerous areas for quiet conversation. Dinner tickets are available from the BGA: they sold out last year, so book early to avoid disappointment.

The venue and accommodation

Hellidon Lakes near Daventry offers a great deal besides commendable conference and hotel facilities. Not only is is set in glorious countryside, but other available activities include golf, walks, bowling, swimming, gym, pampering facilities and so on. So if you're bringing someone who would rather avoid spending the day with glider pilots, they'll be spoilt for choice for alternative activities. Given that a large hotel is not to everyone's taste, a list of alternative local accommodation is available.

So there we have it, a day with something for everyone – can you afford to miss it?

BGA Governance and Sporting Conferences – make a note in your diary now: Saturday, March 8, 2008, at Hellidon Lakes Hotel near Daventry, and remember to book if you want to attend the Governance Conference. For details, see the inside front cover of this S&G or *www.gliding.co.uk/conference*

Great ideas, contacts and support for club officials

THE Governance Conference involves four parallel sessions for a whole range of club officials. Fear not, as you can see from the diagram, these don't last all day and we are structuring them so that you can also attend sporting sessions and the BGA AGM and visit the exhibition.

Club delegates will need to secure their place at the Governance Conference by paying a small booking fee to the BGA. That also ensures you get a free lunch, coffee and tea. The BGA is sorry that the level of planning needed for Governance sessions means we won't be able to accommodate officials who turn up without booking.

Making it happen in real life: The way for clubs to get the most out of the day is to send officials to each parallel session, who can arrange to meet and swap ideas when they get back to the club so they can work out how to use to best advantage what each of them has learned. Given that the event lasts for just one day and the issues affecting clubs are often complex and interlinked, it is simply not practical to expect one delegate to be able to cover all relevant topics. We are designing the sessions so that they complement each other while trying not to repeat ourselves – and where information needs to go to everyone, we plan to put it in one of the sessions that are open to all. However, we also plan to use different sessions to examine differing aspects of the same issues.

The Chairmen's Conference: The style of the day will be highly recognisable to those who have attended before (although in 2008, we've dropped syndicate sessions). After consulting you, we are again using the club slots to investigate topics of interest to participants whilst giving clubs the chance to share experiences and to learn from one another. Phil Burton will brief chairmen on the important changes, with implications for all clubs, in the new legislation to protect children and vulnerable adults. Roger Coote will present a session on the rating of airfields. There will also be the all-important session on safety, a BGA briefing and aspects of membership recruitment and retention. Club secretaries are most welcome to join the chairmen.

The Treasurers' Forum: This will again be led by the BGA Treasurer, John Birch. In addition to briefings on the latest situation with regard to insurance and so on, the forum will involve the sharing of good practice in relation to the financial management and associated challenges of running a gliding club.

The Operational Forum: This is new in 2008 and is an opportunity for those involved with the operational side of gliding, such as CFIs, and Club Safety and Technical Officers, to get together. Led by the newly formed BGA Operations Working Group, it will include presentations on safety and pilot licensing.

The Membership and Marketing Forum: How to gain and retain members will be under the spotlight. After another round of the BGA's successful marketing seminars earlier in 2008, the Communications and Marketing Committee is drafting in an external speaker for those involved with gliding club marketing.

Other sessions: These will include a drop-in SLMG surgery run by Andy Miller, SRE Motorgliders; a session by Phil Burton for Child Protection Officers and people running club youth schemes; and one for Regional Technical Officers, run by Jim Hammerton.



It seems like yesterday

MY LIFE changed early in 1958, just a few months into my first, deeply depressing Stock Market job[1], when I was lunching at a little restaurant run by a cheerful blonde female owner. Lunch cost three shillings and sixpence or 17.5p, which matched the value of the daily luncheon vouchers I received from my employers in the financial district of London, otherwise known as the Square Mile or The City. (When Göring heard the British Broadcasting Corporation announce in September 1940 "The City is in flames" he fondly but falsely imagined that the whole of London – some 60 times that area – was being incinerated.)

There I saw a young trader wearing a club tie – everyone who desired respectability in the Stock Exchange wore club ties in those days – in navy blue with a pattern of light blue aircraft in planform with long skinny wings. Having read Kronfeld's *Gliding & Soaring* some 12 years earlier and having lost model gliders over the horizon in thermals, I knew what that pattern symbolised and asked the young man if he was a member of a gliding club. He was indeed, and gave me the address of the London GC and the name of Ray Stafford-Allen, the manager. The young man said he lived for gliding and never missed the opportunity to fly. I wrote to Mr Stafford-Allen and asked how much time and training one needed to get a C badge. (Kronfeld's 1931 book had convinced me that the C badge constituted a pretty serious level of skill to aim for.) A letter came back full of characteristic Ray-Stafford-Allen-ish bonhomie, making it clear that I should come as soon as possible and that the Silver C was the very least I should aspire to. I thought, Gosh!

Up till then I had only once set eyes on a Silver C badge in real life, on the chest of the RAF officer in charge of a bunch of us schoolboy-cadets at Castle Bromwich aerodrome in 1949. There the object was a) to manufacture the maximum number of A certificates by high-intensity solo training and b) not to get too many schoolboys killed. (I succeeded on both counts.) I noted that the second objective had much lower priority than the first, parents in those days being less inclined than nowadays to sue the King[2] for the sudden and tragic loss of their offspring, which did happen from time to time. I was quite overawed at that Silver Badge on the blue uniform – this was Superman, here was one of Kronfeld's heroes! So I did know what was meant by Ray's incitement to go for a Silver C.

I enrolled for a five-day course and on May 12, 1958 travelled from London by a very slow Green Line bus to Dunstable town centre and then walked two miles to the London GC on the Downs, made famous in Terence Horsley's books.

(It was more than four years later, by the way, in late summer 1962, that I bought a car, a used VW Beetle. Meantime, before I got the car, I had owned shares successively in a Kite 1, a K-7 two-seater and a Skylark 3f. You see, I had my priorities right. The Skylark 3f was almost the first new thing I ever owned; my first bike and even my first long trousers had been secondhand. *(Will you please stop trying to make the younger readers feel bad about their ridiculously pampered existence these days? It does the circulation of* S&G *no good at all! Ed.)*

'I was slightly disappointed that the smooth grassy contours of Dunstable Downs shown in photographs of the 1930s had given way to dense vegetation and infant trees'

Crabbing sideways along the ridge under a layer of slate-grey clouds, there were, exactly as portrayed in the classic texts, sailplanes with unimaginably long wings – 18 metres! I was thrilled. They were, I discovered, the Club Sky, Geoffrey Stephenson's[3] Skylark 3 and the Club's Skylark 3, all looking very much like the pattern on the young man's tie. Smaller gliders grovelled in and out of the bushes on the ridge. Maybe it was then that the durable, if very occasionally misguided, philosophy of TINSFOS[4] crept into my soul. Big wings meant you could literally look down on little wings, or better still watch them scurry through the Tradesmen's Entrance to a hurried landing and a chat with the CFI, or pile into a bush on the hill, or land on the golf course on the plateau behind the ridge.

I was slightly disappointed that the smooth grassy contours of Dunstable Downs shown in photographs of the 1930s had given way to dense vegetation and infant trees. This cover no doubt helped the local couples in their local coupling, but pilots debated whether this (the dense vegetation, not the coupling) spoiled the laminar flow of the ridge lift. Those vital issues aside, what we do know is that the cruel and deliberate introduction of myxamatosis after World War Two killed off the rabbits that had previously nibbled the vegetation to the texture of an undulating billiard-table. The rabbits are back now, but the bushes and trees are big enough to be nibble-proof.

I often wonder how life would have turned out if, instead of button-holing the young broker, I had chatted up the delightful young café-owner.

As for the young man with the club tie, despite his avowed passion for the sport, I never saw him again. It was clear Fate had sent him to me as a messenger and, having steered me away from the cute cook towards cu-nims, he returned to that spirit world from which he had surely come.

Was it a helicopter, a box kite, or an airship?

Last December 17th I raised a glass to the Wright Brothers, who made their first powered flights on that day 104 years ago. The small news item below seems to have been considered important enough to have appeared at the very top of the front page of the *New York Times*, at the head of the sixth of seven columns. (The *New York Times* is a very great paper but its design and general eye-appeal are not much further ahead even now, owing to lack of competition.)

AIRSHIP AFTER BUYER
Inventors of North Carolina Box Kite Machine Want Government to Purchase It

WASHINGTON, Dec. 25 — The inventors of the airship which is said to have made several successful flights in North Carolina, near Kitty Hawk, are anxious to sell the use of their device to the Government. They claim that they have solved the problem of aerial navigation, and have never made a failure of any attempt to fly. Their machine is an adaptation of the box kite idea, with a pro-

peller working on a perpendicular shaft to raise or lower the craft, and another working on a horizontal shaft to send it forward. The machine, it is said, can be raised or lowered with perfect control, and can carry a strong gasoline engine capable of making a speed of ten miles an hour. The test made in North Carolina will be fully reported to the Ordnance Board of the War Department, and if the machine commends itself sufficiently, further tests will be made in the vicinity of Washington, and an effort made to arrange a sale of the device to the Government. The use to which the Government would put it would be in scouting and signal work, and possibly torpedo warfare.

The totally erroneous phrase "a propeller working on a perpendicular shaft to raise or lower the craft, and another working on a horizontal shaft to send it forward" would indicate that the journalists thought the inventors had built some kind of helicopter. Maybe they saw some reference to two propellers and assumed (possibly under the influence of Jules Verne, who imagined monster helicopters displacing airships) that they each had different roles. The brothers are un-named, and the dates of the claimed flights not mentioned.

All in all, the journalist, poet and story-teller Rudyard Kipling would not have approved of the paper's lack of detailed information:

I keep six honest serving-men
(They taught me all I knew);
Their names are What and Why and When
And How and Where and Who.

So, although one should make allowances for the slow and expensive communications of the day, the *New York Times* got only the *Where* right, with pretty well everything else in Kipling's essential checklist either wrong or omitted. Looking at *Why*, I suppose you could say the idea of using heavier-than-air flying machines to drop torpedoes was highly prescient, though it only really got the full attention of the *New York Times*' readers 38 years later, on the seventh of the month, early on a Sunday morning.

Platypus's bookshelf

In my smaller study (don't you like the sound of that, the way it implies that I have not only a larger study but a library, plus a modest-sized recital room with two Steinways and an adjoining billiard room?) I still have some of the prizes I received as a schoolboy in the 1940s. In 1948 I was given Terence Horsley's little book *Gliding and Power Flying* as a prize in classics – Latin, Greek etc. This was not just luck– the school had an enlightened policy of letting boys choose within a range of prize books; I was a fanatical aeromodeller, and was preparing to go on my first gliding course a year later, so it was a natural choice. Much of the book is humdrum basics – what ailerons do, etc – but Horsley was clever enough to sell the sizzle as well as the steak. The descriptions of cross-country soaring are still exciting and quite moving, especially when you think of the unspoilt countryside and almost total freedom of airspace pilots enjoyed. In the first chapter the anonymous pilot climbs away from Dunstable under what he calls a "front" in a westerly and gets to 8,400ft in short order, briefly climbing at 18 knots – though modern expressions like knots are of course not used. I calculate he must have been smack over the middle of Luton during the blackest and roughest part of the climb, which if you did it today would result in your spending what should have been the best years of your gliding career in a crowded and smelly cell. (On the other hand in 1960 I scratched all the way across Luton in a very distinguished gaggle, including George Burton, Alf Warminger and Mick Kaye at 700ft agl, which today would also be frowned on, to say the very least.)

Horsley leaves it unclear whether this flight, most probably a compendium of different flights by different people, occurred before World War Two or after. I suspect before the war, since the book was printed in 1947; it takes quite a while to write a book and find a publisher (unless you are foolhardy enough to be your own publisher, as I was) and cross-country soaring had barely re-started after the World War Two ban on gliding was lifted in 1946.

The other thing that makes me suspect that this was taken from pre-war accounts is that in the 1930s there was an obsession, which now seems quaint, with "fronts". Any reasonably darkish clump of cloud coming towards the ridge was described as a "front". My guess is that glider pilots had been tremendously excited by the flights done in Germany such as that by Günther Groenhoff, who flew the Fafnir along a squall line in continuous lift for hundreds of kilometres. Sailing along in this way was the ultimate Wagnerian dream of any red-blooded glider pilot. I don't know whether after World War Two people became more sophisticated about gliding weather, but I have never heard that kind of talk about fronts – except in the usual, large-scale, meteorological way – from any soaring pilot in the past 50 years.

'A Japanese diplomat in Taranto personally witnessed this display and was hugely impressed by seeing what aerial torpedoes – plus surprise – could achieve...'

For his *nom de plume* Horsley called himself Stringbag. (By the way, don't authors give themselves bizarre pen-names?) Stringbag is the affectionate naval aviator's term for the Swordfish torpedo-biplane which, despite being horribly obsolete – doing 90kts with a following wind – helped sink the Bismarck by immobilising its rudders, and before that destroyed most of the Italian fleet at Taranto in November 1940. A Japanese diplomat in Taranto (Japan and Italy being best mates at the time) personally witnessed this display, was hugely impressed by seeing what aerial torpedoes – plus surprise – could achieve, and phoned his fellow-samurai back in Tokyo with some red-hot news. The rest is history. Which takes us, purely by chance, back one of the few items the *New York Times* managed to get right in 1903.

Let's help launch this

One definition of true fame is to have your wax effigy on display at Madame Tussaud's. But these models of great or notorious figures just stand there mute, looking, in my opinion, only vaguely like someone you have seen on television or in a tabloid newspaper. I very much hope that we can do more for Britain's most famous glider pilot, Derek Piggott. Derek was the first pilot to succeed in pedalling a machine off the ground without any external aids. SUMPA – Southampton University Man-Powered Aircraft – first took off from Lasham's runway in November 1961, All being well, a life-sized model of Derek will not stand silently but will be seated, permanently pedalling away in a restored SUMPA in Basingstoke and delivering a running commentary in his own recorded words.

What I most vividly remember about Basingstoke, apart its having grown mightily since 1961 when I (in the company of 89 other nationals competitors, including Derek Piggott) first used the thermals arising from the town, is that if you left it at 2,000ft you could glide comfortably into Lasham and have plenty of height for a circuit. If you left much lower you had an exciting time scanning possible fields all the way and, with luck, getting over the line of trees.

Southampton, Basingstoke and Lasham are of course all in Hampshire, and The Hampshire Museums and Archive Service would like to create this SUMPA exhibit in Milestones, Hampshire's Living History Museum. However this needs money, and the main hoped-for source, Lottery money, has been drained by the 2012 Olympic Games in London. I shall show great restraint and not deliver a rant about the curse of the Olympics – at least not in this edition. In excess of £50,000 is needed to restore the aircraft and create the pilot. The head of the Hants Museum Service, Alastair Penfold, will oversee the fund. He can be reached at *alistair.penfold@hants.gov.uk* or 01962 826703 (fax 01962 869836) or by post at: Hampshire Museum Service, Chilcomb House, Chilcomb Lane, Winchester SO23 8RD

platsandg@blueyonder.co.uk

1. My salary of £600 had the purchasing-power of £11,000 today, which is less than half the national average of £23,500 in 2007.
2. Our present Queen's reign dates from 1952. So far as I know you cannot sue the monarch anyway.
3. Dunstable's ace pilot, the first to soar across the Channel (1939) and National Champion 1959.
4. For the millionth time: There Is No Substitute For Span

Two views of Flarm

A decision is expected shortly on the allocation of a UK radio frequency, 868.2, for the Flarm anti-collision system. Two clubs that have been trialling Flarm describe their experiences – first, Yorkshire *(below)* and then the Scottish Gliding Union *(opposite)*

THE Yorkshire Gliding Club at Sutton Bank, writes its CFI Richard Cole, is one of the UK's most spectacular gliding sites. With year-round soaring opportunities in ridge, wave and thermal lift, the club welcomes visiting glider pilots, and has an enviable fleet of club gliders, a Rotax Falke and three tow aircraft. Winch launches on to the ridge are available, and a recent competition wave task for 35 gliders was launched on to the ridge in just over one hour. Local traffic densities during launch and getting away were, on this occasion, fairly high, but a straightforward climb into 12,000ft-plus wave lift quickly dispersed the competing gliders both horizontally and vertically. On a more normal ridge flying day, it is not uncommon to have in excess of 10 gliders soaring at roughly the same altitude within 5km of the site, and the "see and be seen" principle of collision avoidance can (and does) reveal its limitations.

As a result of a tragic collision between two visiting gliders at Sutton Bank in 2006, the Club decided to equip its fleet with Flarm (FLight alARM).

Flarm is essentially a proximity detector based on GPS, which operates between aircraft in a manner similar to ADS-B. The device was developed for gliders in an attempt to address the serious collision hazard encountered in glider mountain flying at the traffic densities encountered in certain parts of Europe.

Flarm is designed for gliders, and has an audio alarm and a simple visual display. The device determines which of any potential conflicts is significant and the audio alarm increases in volume as the target approaches. The audio alarm can be muted for periods when one or more gliders are close for significant periods of time. The audio alarm automatically comes back on after five minutes.

The device costs less than £500 and has a power consumption acceptable for use with glider batteries.

Flarm does suffer from the potential to shift a pilot's concentration to inside the cockpit (head-down), but the audio alarm is intended to minimise this downside. Experience shows that under the conditions applying in Europe, the device has significant advantages, but it is only an aid to providing a confliction alert at a greater distance than unalerted see-and-avoid. The strong advice is that pilots must not become over reliant on the device – vigilant lookout is still required if the device is to have a positive effect on flight safety.

Yorkshire GC acquired enough Flarm sets to equip the club fleet, and a significant number of private owners have fitted Flarm to their gliders. A set with an approved audio input to the intercom system is to be fitted to the Super Cub, and will be used to assess Flarm's usefulness in a tugging environment. The two K-21 and the DG-500 gliders have the Flarm installed in the rear seat in order to maximise instructors' situational awareness and minimise student distraction. The Flarm sets in the K-21s have been installed just below eye-line and do not obstruct the available field of view from the cockpit; the club single-seaters have a similar arrangement, and the DG-500 Flarm display is fitted in the rear seat instrument panel.

Flarm has proved to be very reliable; one set was returned to the distributor with an altitude transducer snag (a replacement Flarm was provided), and one has sustained some glider-pilot boot damage without affecting its operation or performance.

Club pilots at Sutton Bank are briefed on Flarm's application to the see-and-avoid principle, and to include the visual display in their normal "lookout-attitude-instrument" scan.

Several copies of the Flarm manual are available at the club for self-briefing, and a short Flarm report form was published so that pilots could provide written feedback from their experience with Flarm.

Some feedback from the reports, along with my remarks in italics, is summarised below:

Flarm audio alert sounds on short finals against gliders ahead stopped on the landing area, and vice-versa.

Fly the glider, do not be distracted. Mute Flarm during the pre-landing checks, if you are happy with the circuit traffic situation.

Audio alerts in thermals and on a busy ridge are very distracting.

Mute the Flarm and continue to lookout and avoid other gliders. Re-read the manual.

Gliders presenting head-on are practically invisible, Flarm enables earlier avoiding action by both gliders.

In normal circumstances you still have to see and avoid. Flarm helps put your eyes and attention in the right place.



Above: *Flarm in YGC's DG-1000 and,* right, *alerting the pilots to another ridge-soaring glider in Scotland*

"...flying in wave, near a lenticular...we would have collided...white gliders near white clouds...Flarm saved the day."

One of three reported near misses that were avoided thanks to Flarm.

Before the display 'computed' a direction and relative height, the green receive light illuminated.

This is seen during every flight when more than one Flarm glider is airborne. Scan the display regularly but do not fixate on it or your lookout will be compromised.

Flying with other gliders on the ridge, the audio alert goes off in 'very close' mode as gliders turn close together.

This is just what Flarm is designed to do. Read the manual and understand what the system is giving you.

Flarm has improved my lookout and awareness a lot.

Say no more.

In conclusion, Yorkshire GC's experience with Flarm during just one gliding season has been positive and much more than a little enlightening. In an ideal world, every glider would be fitted with Flarm, but even a partial Flarm environment has been shown to be noticeably safer. As pilots have learned to use Flarm and understand its limitations, the equipment has become an accepted part of their aircraft instrumentation.

Without a great deal of help and enthusiasm from a number of sponsoring organisations and individuals, the Club's Flarm project would not have happened. We are extremely grateful to all our sponsors and individual Flarm supporters: Total Fuels; McLean Aviation; North Yorkshire Sailplanes; Hill Aviation; John Delafield; Jamie Quartermaine; Andy Wright; David Latimer; Rory O'Conor.



The discussion and conclusions here are from the Scottish club's trial – you can glean lots more useful detail from their full report

THE main function of Flarm, *writes the report of the SGU Flarm Trial Group,* is as an aid to See and Avoid that can alert the pilot to a potential intersection with a glider that he may not have been aware of because of e.g. poor visibility, poor look out, or the other glider being out of his field of view. Our experience has shown that in general cruising flight, and in low density thermal and ridge soaring, Flarm is very effective at giving appropriate warnings about gliders approaching from a distance on a collision or near miss flight path – the glider that "just appears out of the blue". However there is a trade-off between the benefit of alerts of this type that help the pilot to see and avoid such a collision or near miss and the distraction of those that do not give new information. In general local soaring and thermal or wave cross-country flying we conclude that the trade-off is very favourable and that widespread use of Flarm will be of considerable benefit to flight safety.

Club pilots and instructors gained a significant amount of experience of ridge soaring with Flarm. In a dense low speed environment such as local ridge soaring, especially, in high winds, we identified some issues that tended to reduce the acceptability of Flarm. We believe that a combination of technical refinement of the software (and, possibly, the hardware), combined with pilot education about the characteristics and use of Flarm, have the potential to increase the benefit of Flarm in that situation.

Although we had less experience of the use of Flarm in thermal gaggles our impressions tended to confirm the advice from the Flarm manufacturers about the primacy of see and avoid over reliance on Flarm alerts in gaggles. For example, no technical solution can prevent poor airmanship such as one glider turning into the path of another glider that is very close to it.

Our experience has confirmed that gliding imposes very specialist requirements on aircraft collision alert systems because of the constant glider energy exchanges and, frequently, close proximity flying. The fact that each Flarm unit broadcasts a glider-specific prediction of its own future path is necessary to enable Flarm to operate to function satisfactorily in gliding. However, that characteristic (as well as the track versus heading issue that we have identified) also introduces the possibility that some Flarm alerts may not be not displayed exactly where the pilot might expect from a perfect "magic box" if one or other glider's flight path varies from Flarm's prediction. We believe that the best safety benefit from Flarm will be gained when pilots have gained a full and realistic idea of the characteristics of the system by briefing or training.

We believe that the Flarm software is already very useful for general gliding and we recognise that many of the issues and technical recommendations we have highlighted originate from our trial being carried out in a different soaring environment from previous trials. There are, however, several other busy ridge soaring sites in the UK for whom our finding may be directly relevant and, furthermore, we think that some of our technical recommendations may enhance the usability of Flarm for all users.

The trial group at Portmoak hope to undertake further analysis and, by providing feedback to the manufacturer, to help to enhance the contribution Flarm may make to flight safety in the future. The Board of Scottish Gliding Union have purchased Flarm units and displays for both cockpits of their two seaters and they are continuing to use them on an ongoing trial basis and are considering whether and how to integrate Flarm into their normal flying activities.

Conclusion and recommendations

The main outcome was that, overall, Flarm would be of considerable benefit to flight safety. This benefit will be maximised if the technical, human factor and training issues we identify are constructively addressed. To this end our recommendations are:

1. The BGA to consider whether it should encourage the voluntary uptake of Flarm compatible technology in the UK gliding fleet over the next two to three years.

2. Instructional techniques and materials to be developed to aid training about the use of Flarm for new and established glider pilots.

3. Swiss Flarm to continue addressing the specific technical issues raised in Appendix 1 of the Portmoak report.

4. Further studies to be considered:

– The SGU Flarm Trial Group would like to repeat the ridge soaring congestion trial after possible future Flarm software revisions that address the relevant issues raised in Appendix 1.

– Examination of alternative Flarm hardware solutions and displays.

– Trials of Flarm in flatland thermal soaring gliding sites.

The Trial Group thanks the Board and instructors of the Scottish Gliding Centre; Urs Rothacher of Swiss Flarm; John Delafield of LX Avionics; and John Ferguson

The BGA position is to support efforts that will develop potential users' understanding of all the operational implications of Flarm. Since many BGA members and glider pilots will be interested in the SGU Trial Group report – which is not a BGA report – the full text has been made available via the Association's website at www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/safety/sguflarmreport.pdf

A great confidence booster

In the final part of our series on 2007's glory days, Andy Holmes *(this column)* and Jed Edyvean *(see opposite)* tell the stories of their first 750s, flown on July 30

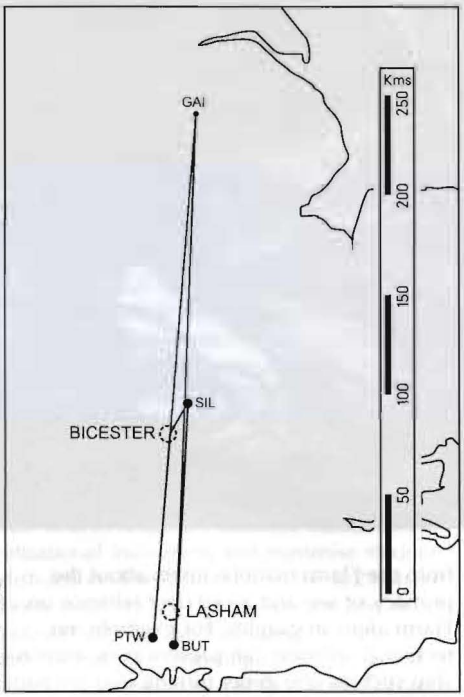
AS I rolled to a halt at Bicester, it was just before 19.10hrs on Monday, July 30, 2007. I'd been airborne for most of the day – my task had taken just under nine hours. At that point, if I'd even seen another Geo Bar I think I would have been sick. My main emotion was disbelief – I'd actually done it and it had been relatively straightforward. In a daze, my girlfriend Claire and I parked the glider and phoned for some pizzas to be delivered. Just another day's gliding. Yeah, right!

It all started at the Bicester Regionals, which the previous year I'd flown quite well. However, in 2007 a mixed bag of bad luck, lack of practice, some iffy decision-making and trying to fly too heavy led to a poor result. I started to get in the groove towards the end of the comp and, with time off afterwards, decided to watch the weather in case it was worth staying a few extra days. Several of us spotted it looked promising for the days immediately after the comp, and the met man also highlighted this in the briefing on the last day.

No plans developed until late Sunday evening, when Mike Pettican and I checked through the met on the internet. The best task area looked to be a classic north-south zigzag with 500km-plus on the cards. Out came the maps and Ipaqs and we messed around swapping TPs and ideas until, much later than intended, we had a rough plan for a 750 and a 500. I slept well but woke early, as I was quite excited about the prospect of an early start for a big flight. At 05.00hrs I was messing with my Ipaq to test the idea I'd had in the middle of the night about a remote start. At about 06.45 I gave up trying to get back to sleep and was pleasantly surprised when Claire said she was happy to help me rig straight away to make sure I was ready early enough.

By 08.30 we were eating sausage toasties, with the glider already rigged – 18 metres with 100 litres of water in – and parked ready to go at the launchpoint. I felt this was a good compromise for the wing loading between being able to climb well early in the day and being able to cruise fast later on. Breakfast was spent looking at the task on the map and wishing I was ready earlier (it looked launchable from before 09.00hrs). But I was quite relaxed, as I knew that if I launched by 10.00, I was in with a chance.

After final preparations (loggers, map marking, paperwork and a chat with Mike about how to do the remote-start tow), I took the first launch of the day at 09.55, north



Steve Longland

towards my remote start at Silverstone. The air felt buoyant, which gave me confidence that I wasn't too early. Cloudbase was already 3,000ft above Bicester. I released above cloud at 10.05, planning a high start/high finish within the 1,000-metre rule. I didn't do a high-speed release from tow or anything clever like that – it didn't seem necessary. Ten minutes later I was heading south, east of Bicester, and reporting my first 2-3kts average to others waiting to launch. I turned the radio off, as I find it a distraction, and also to save my batteries. Time to concentrate on covering some ground.

My main concern on the first leg to Butser

'To the south west I could see low scraggly wisps of cloud in lots of blue – sea air – while I was under a large black street'

Hill was that thermals in some areas might not yet have started properly. So I took it steady and climbed at every opportunity. This, coupled with the tailwind, meant that the first leg was at a respectable speed, considering it was all flown before 11.20. Passing Lasham area on the way south at 11.10, conditions were really staring to brew up with my first good climbs to over 4,000ft amsl and useful streeting. I recognised Pete Masson's DG and switched the radio on to see what he was planning. Pete was starting his 500km heading north, while I left the thermal in the opposite direction for Butser Hill. We wished each other good luck and got on our way.

Good streeting and 4-5kt climbs meant the next leg towards Gainsborough began really well; I was heading north past Bicester by 12.35, having already done about 230km. North and north-east the sky looked poor but some caution and a detour west of track, which seemed necessary all the way to the Leicester airspace, kept me moving with average climbs still around 3kts. The weather from here onwards was fantastic with strong climbs, good runs and cloudbase around 6,000ft amsl.

On a big task, I like to have decided on ballpark times for various points so I can assess progress and cut short if necessary. I thought 15.00hrs at Gainsborough would mean this task was on; 18.00 at the last turn (Petersfield West) would give me a chance of getting home. It was a fantastic feeling to turn Gainsborough at 14.55 under a great sky, and have the wind behind me again. I saw quite a few other gliders all turning Gainsborough; it was nice to have company, particularly from the two other 18-metre LS8s of Paul Fritche and Graham Drury, and also Tim Macfadyen in his ASW 20. I think if everyone turning Gainsborough that day had landed there, we would have had enough pilots to start a new gliding club. Conditions further north looked great – I must get the northern map for my next big flight.

The run south required a similar route to the previous leg, although luckily the tricky bit between Bicester and Leicester was less pronounced. My biggest chance to have improved my speed was here, though: conditions were very good with huge clouds marking multiple cores. It was a reminder that it pays to search under the whole cloud as much as possible, or you can easily climb at 3kts when 5kt-plus is available. This is tricky when the clouds are so huge.

Passing Bicester again on the way south at 16.35 with about 550km completed I gave them a call to tell them the task looked on and I was continuing. Conditions were still good with cloudbase at 5,500-6,000ft amsl and the best climbs still averaging 4kts. The view from the Didcot area towards Lasham was something I've seen a lot returning to Lasham at the end of a good day. Off to the south west I could see low scraggly wisps of cloud amongst lots of blue – sea air – while I was under the centre of a large black street that covered a wide area. In the past, I'd done best in this situation by going hard right to the western, sunny edge of the street then turning along it to run in good lift. On this occasion I went towards Newbury before turning along the sunny edge and was rewarded with some great climbs for the time of day, and some fantastic runs in the exact direction I needed to go. This got me to Petersfield West at 17.40 with just over 100km to go and still at 5,300ft amsl, 20 minutes ahead of my target time of 18.00hrs.

The last leg went back along the same energy line and the only difficulty was

choosing when to leave the comfort of the street, as I was heading way too far west. After a bit of indecision just west of Newbury – I was now getting a bit tired – I eventually took a long glide under the huge street and the large blue, sinky gap beyond it to arrive at the Didcot area, where I connected with 3kt from 2,500ft amsl. I took this to about 2,000ft above glide for Bicester, as I couldn't remember my exact start height and I didn't want to mess up the 1,000-metre rule. I set off for home, elated that something would have to go seriously wrong now for me not to get back. After a relaxed glide over the airfield, during which I ran through a couple of 2kt thermals just south of Bicester (could I have gone further?), I dumped all my water and flew a nice, big, easy circuit to make sure I did a decent landing when absolutely bushed.

Writing this three weeks later, what are my lasting memories of the flight? Firstly, I'm not sure I ever decided to do a 750. We just looked at the weather, planned some tasks, and as it looked like an early start I thought, why not? Secondly, at no stage in the flight was I in doubt that I could complete it: it was just a case of launching early enough, making sensible decisions and staying out of trouble. Having a sponge bag and towel with me was quite a fun idea. As the next day looked good, my plan was not to worry about retrieves but just to keep going if it got tricky and land at a gliding club if necessary, for a launch the following day to fly home.

It was great seeing other gliders at various points in the flight and I enjoyed checking the ladder afterwards to see where people went. Well done, all. During more than nine hours in the cockpit, a bit of company and someone to fly with for a while helps keep you sane. Another thing that stands out was the feeling of everyone helping me get launched in time and wanting me to succeed – particular thanks to Claire and to Mike. I couldn't have done it without your help.

The flight still seems like a dream: it all went so well. I can't believe I did it. It was so much fun and a great confidence booster to plan, manage and complete a 750. It had such an effect on my flying and confidence that at my next comp the following week, I achieved my best ever result (fourth) in the Midland Regionals at Hus Bos. This was mainly due to having the confidence to make my own judgments about the weather, tactics and decision-making and take a reduced interest in what other pilots were doing.

If you're struggling in comps, try a big flight on your own to boost your confidence in your own ability.

Finally, I feel very lucky that we chose the right turning points, which kept me in the best weather. There is a large amount of luck in forecasting the right task area for big flights and I think we got this one right. Thank you to all the glider pilots who spend their time providing us all with really useful weather information on the internet. Without this help it would be difficult for us to spot these good days and pick the right task.

I wonder if we could have done 1,000km

HAVING retired to bed the previous evening early, I had no idea that Mike Pettican and Andy Holmes had spent a large part of their time stuck in front of the task planning computer (long into the night) at Bicester and when Mike shoved the task sheet at me at 07.45hrs I was distinctly unimpressed. A little later, however, under the shower I thought "hmm – why not?" So a second look at the task and I realised that there were a number of options available if the weather did not live up to expectations (SIL-BUT-BIC is around 180km, SIL-BUT-GAI-BIC roughly 600km).

The Nimbus is kept rigged at Bicester so all I had to do was remove the covers and tow the glider around to the water point. Whilst the water was going in I did a DI: I had to remove the seat pan and give the glider a thorough going over to check that the Short-tailed Vole that had joined me for a wave flight the previous day had not taken up permanent residence.

Whilst I was conscious that time was passing I wasn't too concerned: having flown a 660km task from Lasham a few years before I knew that I could delay my take-off until 11.30-ish. I grabbed some food and water to take with me and by 10.20 had towed the Nimbus to the launchpoint. Andy had taken off 40 minutes before and reported conditions were already good so I launched and pulled off tow at Silverstone at 3,200ft at 11.35; cloudbase was around 2,700ft (all heights agl Bicester); thermal strengths were already 3-4kts and I meandered down towards the first TP, initially keeping my inter-thermal speed down to around 60-70kts, which at 750kg is not far off best glide in the Nimbus. By the time I arrived in the Lasham area the cloudbase had risen to 3,500ft and I upped my inter-thermal speed to 70-80kts. I rounded the first TP, Butser Hill, at 11.35, giving a leg speed of 120km/h.

Passing west of Reading on the second leg, I found that cloudbase and thermal strength continued to improve; I increased my cruising speed to 80-90kts. I also deviated slightly east of track to avoid the corner of the Daventry CTA at FL45 at Northampton: this, it turned out, was a complete waste of time.

Passing Silverstone, cloudbase had reduced to 4,500ft and at Northampton was down at 4,000ft; the thermal strengths had also reduced with long distances between good usable thermals. These conditions persisted until north of Melton Mowbray, whereupon I burst out into a classic-looking sky and was able to start romping along again. Cloudbase was now up to almost 5,500ft; I turned Gainsborough at 14.32, giving a leg speed of 91km/h.

The conditions remained good for the start of the third leg but I could see that I would be flying back in to the area of bad weather. I realised that this was being created by an influx of moister air through the Cheshire gap so I topped up as high as I could near Langar and slowly pushed back into the murk.

In terms of performance the Nimbus towards the higher speed ranges is beginning to lose out



Jed (left) and Andy celebrate at a post-flight barbecue

to the current generation of 15/18-metre ships but when you bring the speed back to best glide the Nimbus just keeps going on and on and on and that's where big wings reign supreme. My wife Susy was with me at Bicester – she had taken the week off work, just like me, and although her bad back has improved and stabilised a Nimbus de-rig induced relapse is probably not the best present that I could give her. Not having arranged any other crew, I was forced to stop and climb a number of times in weaker thermals just to stay high.

South of Hus Bos I climbed up to final glide height for Bicester and decided that if conditions didn't improve that was as far as I was going to go, and set off back towards home. I came out of the crud at Silverstone and at Turweston had a good strong thermal up to a much higher cloudbase. I could see that conditions were looking good again so I revised my decision and decided to continue at least as far as Didcot; another good climb near Chalgrove thwarted my plan to pass west of Hampstead Norris and I was forced to break off good climbs to stay out of the LTMA.

At Basingstoke I could see a clear line of energy all the way to Petersfield. I ran down this street and arrived at the TP at 17.00hrs at 5,000ft, giving a leg speed of 107km/h.

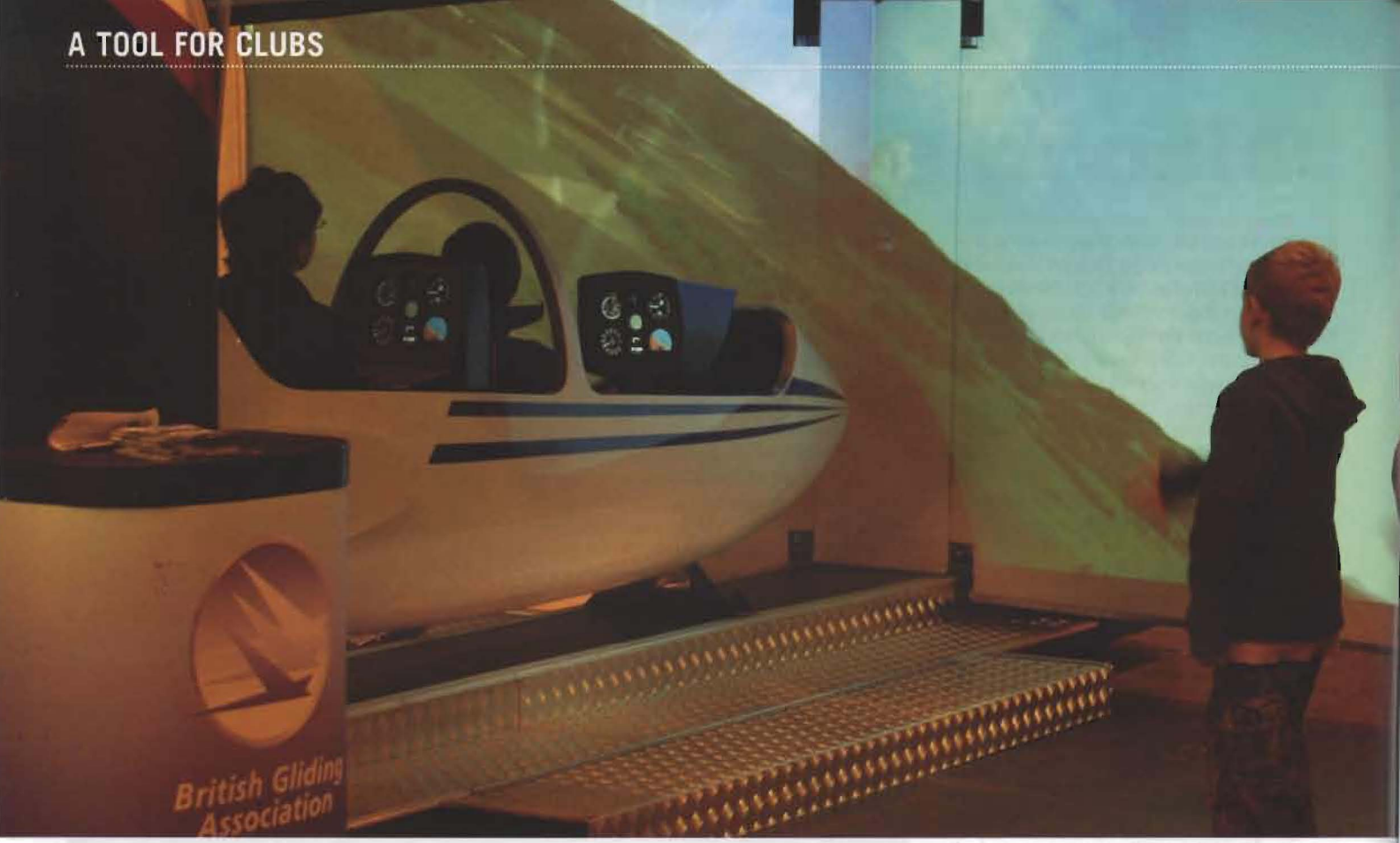
The last leg was the best: after rounding the TP I returned along the same cloud street to Basingstoke then diverted west of track to take advantage of higher airspace levels: one climb to cloudbase (nearly 6,000ft) south of Newbury; dive under L9 and home via Didcot, starting at 90kts then passing abeam Oxford accelerating up to 120kts for the remainder of the flight; yes, I know, far too high at Newbury but, hey, it's not a race, landing back at Bicester at 17.54hrs.

Total time on task 7hrs 20mins – average speed over the distance of 758km was 103km/h.

Given that I could have started almost an hour earlier and that Andy landed some two hours after I did I will let you ask yourself: could it have been 1,000km?

And the next day (Tuesday) was almost as good but I just pottered around a 500.

For accounts of other 750s flown on July 30 and 31 and in early August, see the October-November S&G, p28 and the December-January issue, p22.



The new BGA sim has

Roddy Maddocks looks at the Mark II version of the BGA's very popular soaring simulator

THE original BGA soaring simulator, built more than five years ago, was suffering from wear after years of extensive use and so the Association took the decision to invest in a new version.

"The simulator is an excellent vehicle for promotion and showcasing of the sport in a variety of venues," explains Marilyn Hood, chair of the BGA Communications and Marketing Committee. Some team members involved in the original construction – namely Iain Evans of Shirenewton Sailplanes, assisted by Jon Hall and Paul Shuttleworth of Gliding Shop – drew up a proposal for an improved simulator. "The proposal was very exciting," says Marilyn, "and the BGA Communications and Marketing Committee recommended it to the Executive Committee for approval."

"The greater ease of use and towability of the new version," she added, "will make it more accessible to clubs and university clubs and increase scope for access by a wider audience. In addition, the new software makes the simulator more dual purpose for use as an instructional tool, able to be used by the BGA coaching staff and instructors for training and development.

"The Communications and Marketing Committee also use the simulator as a passport to promoting gliding at shows where we would otherwise have to pay to exhibit, as it is seen as a major attraction and crowd pleaser.

"We are delighted to have the Mark II simulator and look forward to seeing it in use all over the country," she said.

Construction at Shirenewton Sailplanes commenced in August 2007 with the target for completion being the Sport and Leisure Aviation Show (SPLASH) at the NEC, Birmingham on November 24-25, 2007.

The overall concept for the new BGA simulator remains the same as before. There is a box enclosure housing the fuselage, projection screen and computer system. The enclosure is on castering wheels and for transportation it is winched on to a trailer.

There have been a number of significant improvements to the simulator, both in terms of the realism of the soaring simulation and in terms of ease of use. The most significant of these are:

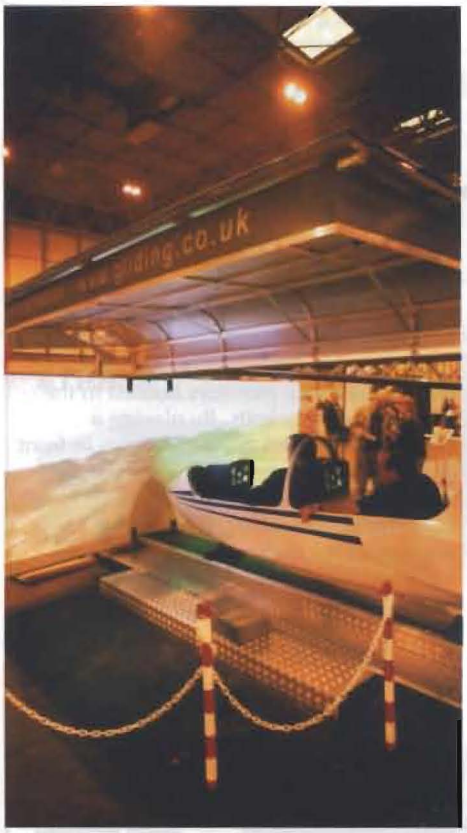
– The use of Condor simulation software, which gives far higher realism of simulation;
– The use of two projectors for a greater horizontal field of view;
– Realistic instrument panels in both front and rear cockpits;
– An enhanced sound system, including a powerful bass speaker which provides vibration during the ground run
– A small keyboard mounted in the rear cockpit such that the instructor can manage the settings of the simulator
– A totally new enclosure, which is more aerodynamic to tow, easier to rig and derig, and easier for pilots to get in and out of the cockpit
– The computer system is contained in a lockable housing at the rear of the enclosure
– All cabling on the simulator is hidden.

What is it like?

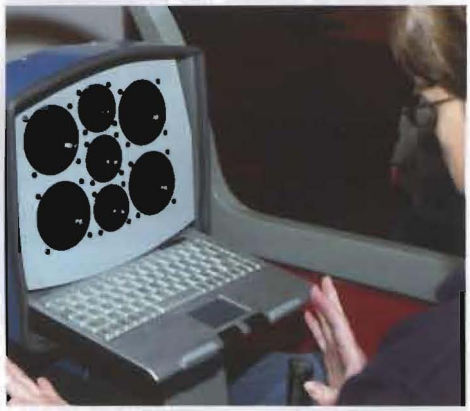
So the real question is what is it like to "fly", and how does it compare to the original BGA simulator and the other well-known soaring simulator at Lasham?

First impressions are very good. The Grob Twin fuselage from the original BGA simulator has been refinished, so it appears to be new. Stepping up into the front cockpit is easier than the old simulator as there are some purpose-built steps.

Once you are seated in the cockpit, the instrument panel is well equipped with ASI, electric and mechanical vario, compass, turn and slip, horizon and altimeter. There aren't any harness straps, as fitted to the Lasham simulator, but since the BGA simulator is more focussed on marketing soaring to the







Clockwise from opposite left: *the new sim on its first outing, to an event at the National Exhibition Centre.* Opposite: *the sim helps inspire young people (Jon Hall)* Left: *sharing the excitement of soaring with new people is one goal of the simulator (Roddy Maddocks)* Above and right: *the computer-generated instrument panels are behind a cut-out that adds realism (Jon Hall) An improvement on the first sim is a keyboard in the back so that P1 can manage the settings (Jon Hall)* Below: *The sim is an eye-catching part of the BGA presence at events and exhibitions. See overleaf for tips from the BGA's Communications Officer about how your club could benefit (Roddy Maddocks)* Bottom: *on approach to land – the view from the rear seat of the new simulator (Roddy Maddocks)*

arrived

public than training, the lack of straps is understandable. Control column and rudder pedals are complemented by the standard Grob Twin arrangement of a small elevator trim lever just inside the airbrake lever. At this early stage in the new simulator's lifespan there aren't any ancillary controls for cable release and undercarriage.

These functions and others such as water-ballast, flap settings, wheelbrake, and so on, are currently controlled by the keyboard in the rear cockpit.

The manufacturer's intention is to develop the simulator further and provide ancillary functions in a realistic manner.

In flight the controls work well. There is virtually no slack in the control column, so even small movements affect the attitude. The control response seems reasonably correct, although as the control forces are provided simply by springs, the stick forces are too light at high speeds. This issue is no worse than the previous BGA simulator or the present Lasham simulator.

The visual horizontal field of view isn't quite as wide as the Lasham simulator, which uses three projectors rather than the BGA's two. But the new BGA simulator visual doesn't suffer from the problem that the Lasham simulator has, where objects on the side projectors appear to change their distance when you turn and the object ➢





How to use the new sim

THE original BGA simulator made its first public appearance at the BGA conference in 2003 and since then has proved to be an invaluable tool in our efforts to take gliding to the British public. We have used it at a wide range of exhibitions and other events and, generally, it has proved very successful. However, at the end of 2006, we felt that it was time to move on.

There were a number of areas where we felt that the old simulator was not ideal. A new generation of software had become available, offering the opportunity to present a much enhanced experience and, after four years of intensive use, the simulator was beginning to show its age – not ideal for a tool designed to be one of the public faces of gliding – and there were some concerns about the continuing road-worthiness of the rig.

We sought proposals for a completely redeveloped simulator and were immediately impressed by the plans presented by Shirenewton. These promised a more realistic flying simulation in a package that would be much easier to transport and set up.

Also, importantly for a marketing tool, the total package would look much smarter and would, we felt, allow British gliding to present an even more professional image.

Although the new simulator has just made one appearance at the time of writing – at the SPLASH exhibition at the National Exhibition Centre – and while there are still a couple of outstanding issues to be resolved, it would appear that the Mark II simulator is going to match or even exceed our expectations.

At the SPLASH show, the simulator proved to be one of the major attractions and never seemed to sit idle. A constant stream of visitors queued to have a go and 'customers' seemed to be impressed, as was the team of volunteers who staffed the BGA stand and 'flew' as P1.

The simulator is scheduled to make its next public appearance at the BGA conference in early March and other planned outings include our major gliding Expo, which will be held in central Birmingham in April.

However, the simulator has not been produced solely as a marketing tool for BGA teams to use at BGA-sponsored events. We hope that member clubs will make full use of it to support their own promotional activities.

We know that the simulator is a great crowd puller and you can be sure that it will work its magic for you at exhibitions, open days and the like. However, as the simulator has been designed to provide a reasonably realistic gliding experience, it should prove invaluable, too, in other less overtly promotional but still recruitment-oriented exercises such as events run for local youth groups and the like.

When using the simulator, experience has taught us that it is important that you tailor the experience to your audience and objectives.

If you make every flight a full trial lesson, you will not necessarily get the most out of the sim. Indeed, it may actually be counterproductive if you give every participant the full trial lesson experience. A flight, covering all phases from take off to landing, may completely satisfy the customer – and leave no reason for him or her to visit your club to try the real thing!

At exhibitions, we have found that it is more productive to start the simulation in free flight, typically at no more than around 1,400ft. This gives time for the customer to experience the effects of the controls and have a bit of a play. You can even, if you feel that your passenger is up for it, do some gentle aerobatics. This can give a real kick and gets across the message to P2 and to the watching crowd, that gliding is pretty exciting. After this, it usually works well if P2 sets the glider up in the circuit and flies as much of the final approach as possible, with P1 gently coaxing things to a (reasonably!) successful landing, being ready to take corrective action if things go too wrong.

This approach will, hopefully, leave P2 ready to try the real thing and, at this stage, you should be selling the benefits of coming to your club in the near future. These abbreviated flights also help to keep queue lengths down, enabling you to cycle as many as people as possible through the simulator. All too often, we have seen over-enthusiastic P1s giving 20-minute flights – often doing too much of the flying themselves – leaving the prospective new member restless and causing others in the queue to go off and try something different.

When giving flights in the simulator, particularly at open days, exhibitions and the like, remember that this is a selling exercise. It is beneficial if the person having the flight can identify with the instructor. This will help them feel that the sport appeals to people like them and that they will fit into your club environment. Do consider using, as P1, members of similar age, background and, where appropriate, gender, to the target customer group. Remember – these aren't trial lessons in the accepted sense: P1s do not need to be instructors. Obviously, they need to be able to fly the simulator reasonably well and their flying skills should be of a level that they come across confidently and authoritatively, but it is equally important that they are able to relate to P2, understand what your club's objectives are, what your selling messages are, and are able to get these across in a not too pushy way.

However, the most important message that I want to get across is that the new simulator is a marketing tool for all clubs. It won't be doing its job if it is parked up in a hangar, gathering dust. Please use it!

Keith Auchterlonie
BGA Communications Officer
keith@gliding.co.uk

If your club would like to hire the BGA simulator, it will be available from mid-March and terms and conditions will be notified on *www.gliding.co.uk* Booking is via the BGA office – please contact *debbie@gliding.co.uk*

moves from a side on to the centre projector.

Another feature I like on the new BGA simulator are the realistic instrument panels in both front and rear cockpits. The panels are in fact software simulations rather than mechanical. Initially, mechanical instruments driven by servos were prototyped but then rejected as they were noisy, fragile and suffered from inaccuracies. The simulated instruments are provided by a software add-on Simmeters (*www.simmeters.com*), which interfaces with the main Condor soaring simulation.

The simulated instruments are displayed on two flatscreen monitors housed in the front and rear cockpits. By placing a blanking plate with circular cutouts in front of the flat screen monitor the illusion that there are a number of standard glider instruments is created. The overall impression is excellent. The instruments have extremely realistic faceplates and the indicators move very smoothly.

Audience reaction

The people I talked to at the SPLASH show in November who had tried the simulator were all enthusiastic about it. Particularly from those pilots who had flown the previous BGA simulator, there was universal praise for the new simulator and agreement that it was substantially better than the previous version.

The visitors trying a soaring simulator for the first time were also enthusiastic.

One typical response was from Gary Wirdman, a 737 pilot flying with EasyJet, with substantial hang-gliding and some gliding experience:

"A great simulator," he said. "Having flown multi-million pound simulators, I was surprised how realistic this was. Good fun!"

As could be expected when first using a complex system such as a soaring simulator there are a few issues:

– Communications between the front and rear cockpit can be difficult due to the enhanced sound system and the high ambient noise at a show such as SPLASH;

– The fuselage is currently mounted at slightly too high an incidence relative to the visual so the instructor's view over the pupil's head, particularly on approach, is worse than in a real glider.

– Getting the enclosure on to its trailer at the end of the show revealed a few small snags.

The intention is to address these and other issues such as the provision of realistic ancillary controls as part of planned further development of the simulator.

Your first chance to see the sim in action will be at the BGA weekend on March 8 – see p14 or www.gliding.co.uk *for more details*

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Opportunities in aviation

Andy Perkins provides his annual update on how to get into gliding and further your flying – especially (but not only) if you're under 25

LAST year I wrote an article outlining scholarship opportunities available to the gliding community. The majority of these are aimed at young people and those eligible to be a member of the junior gliding community. This is an update on that article with a few additions. Even those who don't know the exact route they wish to take should be able to find a starting point. This information here is by no means exhaustive as the opportunities out there are enormous.

Gliding Scholarships – pre-solo

Upward Bound Trust – Set up after WW2 by the Glider Pilot Regiment with the specific aim of sending 16 to 21 year olds solo. Having grown up with the Upward Bound Trust, I am still in awe of the dedication of volunteer members to enable extremely affordable gliding for young people. Costs to solo vary depending on your circumstances. Disadvantaged youths who can demonstrate a desire to learn have previously been trained for no cost, with maximum costs to all limited to very affordable levels. All the Upward Bound asks in return is dedication in terms of help running the airfield and keeping the launch rate moving! Contact: Dave Bramwell on 07887 623529.

Royal Navy Gliding Scholarships – These awards cover the full cost of a gliding course (about eight days), food and accommodation in the Officers' Mess at the appropriate Naval Air Station, or Naval Establishment, and all travel costs. Held at Lee-on-Solent, Yeovilton and Culdrose. *www.faasquadron.org.uk/glidingawards.html*

Cadetships – Most clubs around the country now offer reduced rates to students learning to glide in exchange for help around the club and the operation. Availability is country wide. Benefits range from free membership to free launches and/or soaring fees in return for a day of work. If the club near you does not offer such a scheme why not see if you can set it up yourself? The majority of glider pilots realise that for gliding to survive and grow, young members must be encouraged. Click on *Find a Club* on the BGA website at *www.gliding.co.uk* or call 0116 253 1051 for a list of club contact details.

Air Cadets – The Air Cadets offer several different levels of training for 13 to 20 year olds: training in Grob Tutors, Vikings (Grob 103) or the Vigilant (Grob 109b) motorglider. These can take you from a novice all the way to becoming an instructor. For example, courses of 40 launches in a Viking or 8hrs in a Vigilant are available. Cadets have the opportunity of gliding camps in the summer, which can include rides in operational aircraft with the RAF. Some are even lucky enough to fly in a fast jet! *www.aircadets.org*

Post-solo and skills development

Churchill Award – £100 paid direct to your club by the BGA to offset flying fees at your club on achieving your Bronze Badge before the age of 18. Contact 0116 253 1051.

Caroline Trust – The Trust awards bursaries to young people, generally under the age of 18, and to disabled people of any age who want to experience gliding. Their emphasis is on getting young people (15-16) into gliding, helping them achieve milestones of solo, Bronze, Basic Instructor, and so on. If you have the enthusiasm, it is not unheard of for people to receive scholarships for consecutive years. Approximately 30 bursaries are up for grabs each year and you can find out more about the trust at *www.carolinetrust.org.uk*

Royal Aeronautical Society Bursaries – The Royal Aeronautical Society Centennial Fund has again generously provided funding enabling the BGA to offer scholarships, although exact details have yet to be finalised. In previous years the scholarships have been available to young glider pilots and to other young people wishing to take up the sport. Previous recipients had to be between 15 and 17 years of age, in full-time education, and have not yet flown solo. Both existing club members and newcomers to the sport were eligible. The scholarships were payable in the form of a credit to the successful applicant's club flying account. Club CFIs will be sent full details of the scheme. In previous years the applications – which were countersigned by your Chief Flying Instructor – had to be made to the BGA office by September 30 and all the successful applicants were notified by October 31.

BGA Courses – These courses by coaches for the BGA offer tuition towards an instructor rating. If you are a junior pilot (under 26) then you are eligible for a saving of 50 per cent on the course fee! For dates and booking: *www.gliding.co.uk*

Competition and advanced training

Junior Nationals – An awesome, amazing, incredible institution that should not be missed for the world! To be a part of this team/party is a privilege. Old age in this case starts at 26. The flying skills attained, personal life training and the friends made here are second to none. Get the idea? Yep, it's a must. To become a part of the "Juniors" (as they are more commonly known) all you have to be is 16 to 25 years old with a Silver Badge or higher qualification. The Junior Nationals competition is held each year and owes its success to the dedication of many people. Through their relentless effort, generous sponsors and support from one donor in particular, last year each pilot received up to five launches and the entry fee, thus allowing young pilots of all backgrounds the opportunity to compete virtually for free! Most of the British Team are ex-Junior pilots. You need to be there. Not 16 yet? Don't worry; you can still take part with a FREE place in the two-seater scheme. *www.gliding.co.uk*

Ted Lysakowski Trust – This fund, open to all ages offers some of the most advanced tuition around. After seven successful years of activity with three awards made each year, The Trust has decided it is time to seek other ways to benefit UK gliding. A broad range of potential activities for 2008 is currently being considered but at this stage there is nothing specific to say about their activities. *george_metcalfe@uk.ibm.com*

Barron Hilton Cup – For the pilots who achieve the greatest accolades possible such as world records or extraordinary flights there is an opportunity of taking part in the Barron Hilton Cup. The prize offered is an invitation for the pilot to participate in the flying camp at the Flying M Ranch at the edge of the Sierra Nevada, with airfares provided from Honolulu to the ranch and return, and accommodation at the ranch for pilot and accompanying person. By invitation only. *http://barronhiltoncup.org*

Power flying

Many glider pilots are keen to become tow pilots or just to develop their skills by moving into power flying in addition to their gliding. The subject of sponsorships for power ratings has been covered extremely well in many General Aviation magazines. The organisations mentioned below just scratch the surface of what is available.

Disabled Flying Scholarships - Each student completes a six-week residential course of



Simon Buckley

Above: Matthew Cook after his first solo, at Cotswold GC. with his father Stephen. Whether – like Matthew – you're already solo or you're just starting on your flying career, the opportunities outlined here could help you

training, which includes ground school and up to 40 hours of dual and solo flying. This is provided at no cost to the student and currently flight training takes place at flight schools in the USA and South Africa. Mini scholarship students complete a one-week course of training in the UK, which includes 10 hours of airborne tuition and ground school. Training for mini scholarships takes place at The Goodwood Flying School, West Sussex. see *www.worldwings.org or www.toreachforthesky.org*

Air Cadets Powered – Air Cadet members looking to move into the Armed Forces can apply for: 12hrs or solo in a light aircraft at a civilian club; 10hrs at an RAF club including some service flying; or 10hrs to solo in an RAF microlight. *www.aircadets.org*

Royal Air Force – There are several options: Flying Scholarships; RAF Pilot Scholarship; RAF University Bursary. All these are currently under review. *www.rafcareers.com*

RAF Association Flying Scholarships – Separate from the RAF awards, the association offers five Flying Scholarships to be awarded in 2008:
– 1 x 35 hrs flying toward NPPL
– 4 x 15 hrs flying toward NPPL to achieve "First Solo Flight"
Closing date: January 31, so make a note for next year if you've missed this year's round. Contact Anne Henson on 0116 268 8752 or *www.rafa.org.uk/scholarships.asp*

University Air Squadron – There are 14 University Air Squadrons teaching undergraduates to fly whilst at university. All the flying is FREE! Squadron members also have the chance of flying operational RAF aircraft. Although this flying won't get you a Private Pilot's Licence (PPL) it can count if you go on to take civilian exams. For information see *www.universityairsquadrons.com*

Air League Educational Trust – This is an exceptional organisation that offers a variety of awards. Last year more than £100,000 of scholarships was awarded from full NPPLs to Gliding and Balloon Scholarships. The opportunities, career advice and aviation network available through The Air League are second to none. If you want a career in aviation then you need to be a part of this fantastic organisation. I am sure others agree this is an organisation that is held in the highest esteem.
– *Flying scholarships.* 12 or 15 hours flying training towards a National Private Pilot's Licence (NPPL). Offers up to 50 awards a year! Through the NPPL system a certain level of glider experience means this scholarship would enable a pilot to attain an NPPL at very low personal cost.
– *Flying Bursary.* Between 5 and 8 hours of advanced flying training to PPL holders, such as IMC ratings, and advanced manoeuvres.
– *Balloon PPL Scholarship.* Funded by Breitling, co-ordinated by Brian Jones, for 17-26 year olds to gain a full Balloon PPL.
– *Gliding Scholarships.* A variety of awards: cross-country, aerobatics, SLMG NPPL.
– *Prince Philip Flying Scholarship* – A full NPPL for an exceptional Air Cadet who has achieved their Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Email *scholarships@airleague.co.uk* or visit *www.airleague.co.uk* for details.

GAPAN (Guild of Air Pilots & Air Navigators) – The Guild scholarships provide a unique opportunity for people who want to become pilots or to further their pilot qualifications:
– Jet Orientation courses.
– Full PPL courses.
– Flying Instructor Ratings courses.
There are some excellent links on the web page of ways into a career in terms of what is required in industry. *www.gapan.org*

Royal Aeronautical Society Centennial Scholarship Fund. This Fund makes awards to those who will contribute to the future of aerospace and who need financial help to realise their aspirations. There are lots of opportunities available and changes are afoot for more diverse awards over the coming year or two. Watch this space and their website: *www.raes.org.uk/*

Royal Aero Club – Bursary Scheme for young people who wish to upgrade their existing qualification in a wide range of air sports and aviation-related activities. Provides scholarships of up to £500 per person. The scheme is divided into two categories:
– Flying Bursaries/Grants for those wishing to advance from one recognised level of air sport to the next higher level and wish to upgrade their existing qualifications;
– FlightSim Bursaries/Grants for computer Flight Simulation enthusiasts wishing to gain practical experience of flying or an air sport.
www.royalaeroclubtrust.org

BWPA (British Women Pilots Association) –
– Full PPL each year.
– Amy Johnson Memorial fund – up to £2,000 towards the issue of your first professional licence (ATPL, CPL). Can include MMC courses etc. *www.bwpa.co.uk*

Girls Venture Corps Air Cadets – Scholarships for gliding via Ducat-Amos Gliding Scholarships. Last year six grants were awarded for 12-20 year olds. These comprised a weekend course at a local gliding club. *www.gvcac.org.uk*

Commercial aviation

There are lots of opportunities out there and a shortage of experienced pilots. There are several sponsored schemes, which require a large commitment of time and future funds, but the shortage of pilots is already showing and many airlines will soon need to start recruiting cadets again. The Air League, GAPAN and The Royal Aeronautical Society have many contacts; their publication *So you want to be a pilot* gives a superb insight into what's available. For contacts, see above.

Summary

The opportunities to join the UK aviation community are enormous and you don't require an endless source of money to get involved. The adage of "If you want it badly enough..." still applies. The assistance that's available is more accessible than ever before so if you want to join in the fun, make the most of it and find out more. Good luck!

KEY:
Black = for young people (16-25 years)
Blue = for all ages
Red = for women only



The delights of hill sites

If you're getting frustrated by short winter flight times, why not go somewhere that has its very own lift source? John Marsh explains

IN THE LAST issue I covered how, as a relative beginner to gliding, you can get the best out of flying during the winter months (p30). Perhaps (now that you're suitably dressed in warm clothing) you've already gone solo and are looking for another challenge, or maybe you're just frustrated by limited flight times in unsoarable conditions. Well, you'll be pleased to know that there is an answer. Fortunately, within a couple of hours of most UK clubs, there will be a gliding club on the top, bottom or half-way up a hill... So, what happens at a place like this, that's unavailable at your own flat site?

First and foremost, given a favourable wind – both in direction and strength – you can remain airborne for hours if you wish. You'll hear this called "slope soaring" or "hill soaring" or "ridge soaring".

As a beginner, you will have realised by now that a glider is always coming down, even when it's going up! So how does a 2kt climb that lasts all day grab you? Given no changes in wind direction and strength, that's exactly what happens. Put simply, the wind hits the slope and is then directed skywards. Depending on the height and contours of the hill or mountain, a 15kt wind could create air that's rising at 400ft per minute. Subtract the glider's sink rate, say 200ft per minute, and – bingo! – we have a rate of climb of 200ft per minute.

Another important consideration is that many, though not all, ridge sites fly seven days a week to take advantage of the prevailing conditions – handy if you can create time to fly midweek.

And that's not all. Most, although not all, hill sites will have access to "wave" as well. This is nothing to do with paddling at the seaside (it's winter, remember): wave lift, for many of our more experienced pilots, is now regarded as the ultimate form of lift. Flights of more than 1,000km in the UK are possible and height gains are measured in tens of thousands of feet.

Such is the glider pilot's desire to get into the air and remain airborne during the winter months that some flatland clubs organise expeditions to hill sites. It really doesn't matter if you are learning to glide, or



if you're early solo, or if you have hundreds of hours – these expeditions can be real fun, not only will you fly, weather permitting, but you will be smug with the satisfaction of knowing that your gliding buddies back home are limited to a four-minute sledge ride from the top of a winch launch.

From a beginner's point of view, slope soaring will be a challenge, especially if you come from a flat site and have never done it before. I personally found learning to carry out co-ordinated turns low down very intimidating. However, 360° thermal-type turns are seldom used. And during your pre-solo training there are many different exercises that, once demonstrated and then practised by you, will result in a loss of height, which is no problem at a hill site if the ridge is working. Any height lost can be recovered by either your instructor or you, so you can repeat the exercise in question.

What was the first exercise that you were ever taught during your first glider flight? Here's a clue. What do you always, always do before you instigate a turn? LOOK OUT! Such an exercise is vital before any turn, and never more so than when you are flying in a crowded area such as a ridge, which, on a busy day, can resemble an airborne dual carriageway. Remember, gliders flying on a ridge will seldom reveal their presence in plan view. Most of the time they will be travelling towards you or away from you, therefore their profile will be at a minimum, so a good lookout is absolutely vital.

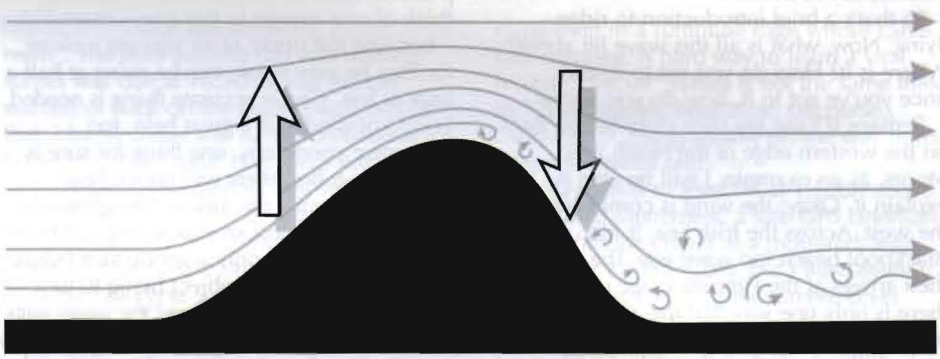
It is also worth remembering that, as well as producing lift, the hill is also producing sink and pockets of turbulent air. Conditions on and around a ridge site can be fickle. So much, in fact, that even experienced pilots may need one or more check flights with an instructor who is familiar with the site before they are sent solo.

Take, for instance, "curlover", which has nothing to do with hair styling (but believe me, get caught in curlover and your hair could well stand on end with fright!). So what is it, and how do we avoid it? Look at the diagram *(right)*. Notice how the wind flows across the flat landing area and then plummets down in turbulence. Put your glider here and that nice steady full-airbrake descent you planned on to your chosen landing area could, in a blink of an eye, become impossible. The trouble is with curlover is that you can't necessarily see it – even the windsock may be deceptive. Only pilots with local knowledge or plenty of experience will be aware of its existence. So, when you're visiting another site and before you get airborne, talk to pilots who regularly fly there to find out its peculiarities. Read the club's briefing material for visiting pilots, too.

Because you will at times be flying in far stronger winds than you might normally expect at your flat site, "wind shear" can, once again, catch out even experienced pilots. To overcome this, speed management is vital. In very strong winds, you may need to start the descent from your final turn ➢



Opposite: *Paul Barker and Ian Symms slope soaring in Southdown's new DG-505. The photographer, Craig Lowrie, was standing on top of the local ridge. He also took the in-cockpit shot* (bottom) *of soaring along the South Downs;* Above: *Even top achievers sometimes just enjoy admiring the view: John Williams, who did 1,540km in one Scottish wave flight in 2007, took this over the Cairngorms on December 23. "Much better than Christmas shopping," he says;* Below: *a simplified explanation of how windflow over a hill can generate lift, sink and turbulence (Steve Longland)*



Eight top tips for ridge and wave flying

1. Dress sensibly for the conditions. It might be a few degrees above freezing on the ground, but the higher you go, the colder it gets.

2. Don't be disheartened you're asked to take a flight with an instructor even if you're a solo pilot. It could save your life, or at the very least an embarrassing landout!

3. The same rules for winter flying (see last issue) apply to ridge flying: beware of misting-up canopies, wet wings, frozen airbrakes and, for that matter, frozen pilots! Don't ever fly unless you are properly prepared. The same applies, as a matter of interest, to your glider.

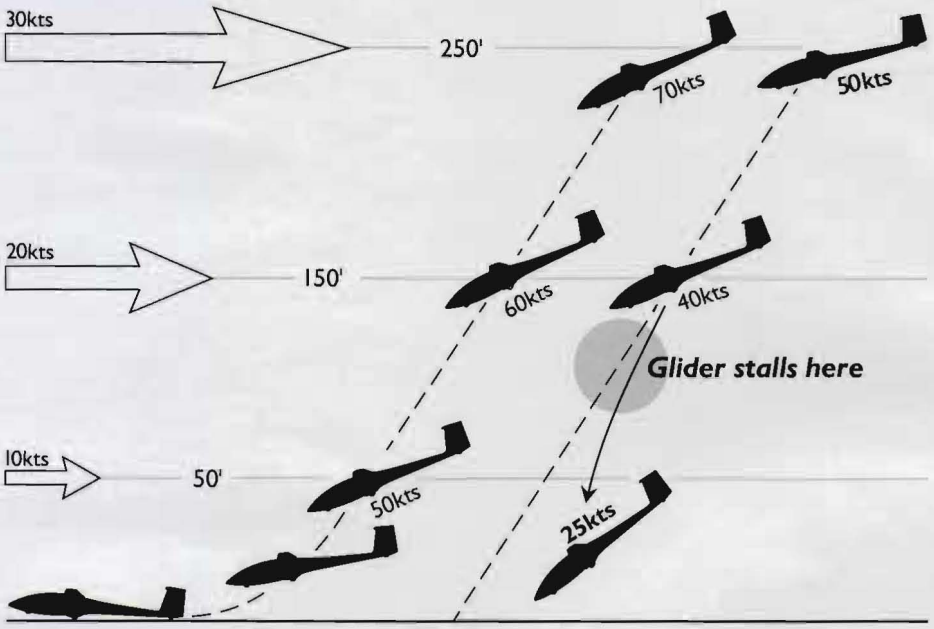
4. Look out! Always look out before you turn. You might just be on your own in a thermal on a summer's day, but you definitely will not be on your own at a ridge or wave site.

5. Expect approach speeds to be much higher and approach paths much steeper than at your own site. Think carefully about your circuit and landing.

6. Fly at a sensible speed while on the ridge: 50kts is the absolute minimum for most gliders and I don't object to another five until over 1,000ft.

7. If the lift is not what you expected, land. Don't press on thinking it will get better, it seldom does. I have great respect for pilots who land too soon rather than those who decide to hang on in there, their options of a safe landing slowly diminishing. If in doubt, land.

8. You may, of course think that ridge and wave lift only happen in winter. However, they occur all year round, assuming the prevailing winds are playing ball. So, above all, enjoy your visit to a ridge site, there is always something to learn.



at 70 or 80 knots or more, depending on the conditions *(see diagram above)*. This means that when you arrive at your roundout, where, due to surface friction between the wind and ground objects, and features, the air is flowing much more slowly, you'll have some speed in reserve to carry out a controlled roundout.

So that's a brief introduction to ridge flying. Now, what is all this wave lift about? Where is it? How do you get to it, and once you've got to it, how do you use it?

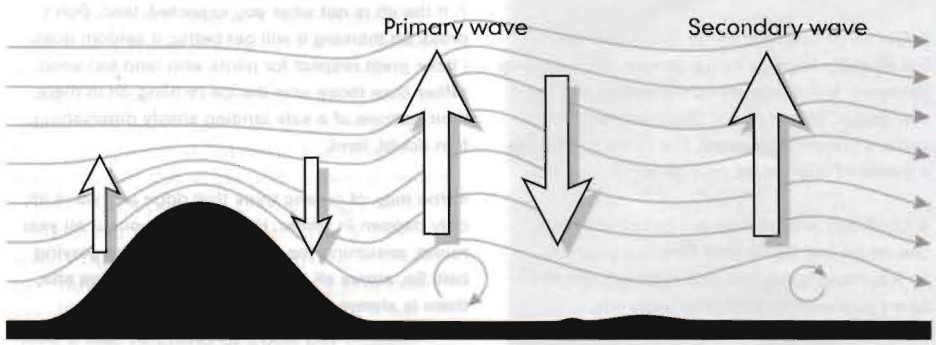
Perhaps if I use my own club, Sutton Bank on the western edge of the North York Moors, as an example, I will be able to explain it. Okay: the wind is coming from the west. Across the Irish Sea, it hits Blackpool beach (no wave yet). The wind then arrives at the Pennine range of hills and there is only one way that the air can go: up! In the right conditions, it flows over the top of the hills, down the other side, hits the ground and goes up again *(see below)*. Only this time, it may not go so high. The whole malarkey is then repeated time after time: just like the ripples in a pond, when you throw in a stone, the smaller they get as they travel across the pond. So it is usually with wave lift, the further downwind you go, the lower and less intense are these waves of unseen rising and falling air.

I say unseen, but that isn't always true, as sometimes the top of each wave is marked by a flat thin cloud called a lenticular cloud. The glider pilot aims to find and climb in the bit of each wave that's going up while being wary of the turbulence and sink associated with the bits that are going down.

Right, so we think that wave lift might be present. How do we get to it? I can only think of one answer to this one – carefully! – because the ripple of air you are looking for may be very weak, maybe rising at half a knot or less. Gentle accurate flying is needed. Local knowledge is a great help, too.

In wave conditions, one thing for sure is that even us beginners will notice how smooth and quiet the airflow has gone when we're in wave. Most of your flying will be in a straight line with only a gentle turn before the lift decreases, the object being to turn into wind then fly back along the same track on the ground as before. If your rate of climb remains low, then be prepared to stick with it and, as a beginner, don't get disheartened because you see other gliders climbing away thousands of feet. Ask any experienced wave pilot and I'm sure they will agree that a certain amount of luck, not to mention skill, is involved.

I will finish by saying that you will never ever forget your first wave flight, be it on your own, or with an instructor in the back seat: it's absolutely magic.



Graham White, who is an early solo pilot at Borders, shares the feeling of taking his Skylark IV on his first high wave flight

JUST two miles east of Northumberland's Cheviot Hills – 400 square miles of high country, topped by The Cheviot at 2,670ft – lies Borders Gliding Club. The prevailing west or south-west airstream is forced upwards by the *massif* and this can trigger lee waves up to 25,000ft or even higher. However, hills to the south-east and north can also trigger lee wave from those directions. Borders does have a "main wave season" in autumn and winter, but wave can occur in any week of the year.

Student pilots at Borders often encounter wave during their early training; it is simply a normal flying condition at our Milfield site, along with ridge lift and thermal soaring. As an early solo pilot, struggling to gain my one-hour Bronze duration flights, it can rankle when one of our experts casually remarks: "Well, I pulled off at two thousand, soared the ridge to about two-eight, took a thermal to three-five, jumped to the first wave bar at four; went on oxygen at ten and topped out at sixteen; *just the four hours, nothing special*"!

Saturday, October 27 was an historic occasion for the club, with five Diamond heights in a single day for: Jules Sutton, Brian Brown, John Richardson, Mike Crews and Iain Russell. A sixth Diamond height was missed by only 500ft when Dave Wilson broke off his climb due to low oxygen. Having missed this spectacle, I turned up on the Sunday to blinding sunshine, deep blue skies and scattered cumulus. There were vague rumours of "weak wave" and "blue-sky" wave. The usual suspects – Andy Bardgett and Derek Robson – had last been heard from at 10,000ft and had gone stravaiging around the Borders; but they always do this, and beginners like me who try to follow them generally fall out of the sky in 20 minutes.

Around 13.00hrs the launchpoint was quiet and tuggie Kevin Charlton was looking for customers. He said that there was "just a tickle" of weak wave above Akeld and promised: "I'll try to find it again; mind, though, the rotor will be rough!".

"Ah," I thought, "*The Dark Side*... why does there always have to be a dark side?" – rotor turbulence being the shadow of smooth wave.

Minutes later I was going through my checks in our 1962-built Skylark IV, reassuring myself that this classic was originally owned by Frank Irving and her 18-metre wood-wings would cope with rotor just fine. Whether an early solo pilot would cope was a different matter.

As it turned out, the rotor *was* scary – the full tumble-dryer effect, and then some – but at 2,000ft things gradually smoothed out.The vario drifted gently into one up, where it stayed for 20 minutes as I flew

This is what it's all about





Above: *Graham and his Skylark (Lianne Hollingsworth)*
Right: *Tom Farquhar, also an early solo pilot at Borders, with the club's K-21 and a sky full of lenticular clouds*

Photo: Graham White

around in the cloudless blue searching for the wave bar – of which there was no visible sign. When I reached 4,000ft I was feeling really great since the vario was now three up; at 6,000ft it reached four up and stayed there until beyond 10,000ft – where I soared in silent glory for the next two hours.

As I climbed higher the Cheviot's corries shrank to mere crinkles in the landscape far below. The Border rivers – the Tweed, Till and Bowmont – flashed bright silver; I had seen these before, but usually from within the bangs and buffets of a low thermal, or while ridge soaring in stomach-wrenching gusts. But here in the high wave there were no buffets or gusts, just silky, smooth silence, with only the gentle hiss of air over the canopy to show that I was moving at all. With the aircraft finely trimmed it was possible to fly hands off and there was time to gaze in wonder. The adjectives "ecstatic", "glorious" and "sublime" come to mind, but these are mere labels for an experience that cannot be captured in words.

It suddenly struck me: "*This* is what it's all about". All that training: the stalls, spins, wing drops, circuits and theory were merely the entrance fee for the right to enter this transcendent world of high flight. I felt a deep gratitude to all those who had brought me to this place: my instructors, our club seniors and tug pilots, our engineers, our venerable committee.

But, relaxed as I was, I could still hear my virtual instructor whispering from behind me: "Where is the airfield?", "What is the weather doing?", "Has the wind changed?", "Keep the scan-cycle going", "Watch out for hypoxia!", "What are you going to do next?". The brief autumn day was waning; sunset was due at 16.30hrs and the CFI wanted us back on the ground well before that. I banked east and turned downwind for home but, in a classic beginner's error, clung like a miser to the height I had worked so hard to gain. Arriving over the airfield at 10,000ft at 15.45hrs, I thought I had left plenty of time for the descent. However, from the cloudless western horizon a reef of stratus suddenly grew and dark shadows raced eastward from the Cheviot.

I pulled the Skylark IV's speed-limiting airbrakes and put her into a firm dive – but lift seemed to increase along with speed;

'Ironically, the landscape beneath my wings was still brightly lit by the setting sun, but I was diving upwind into the darkness of the hills.'

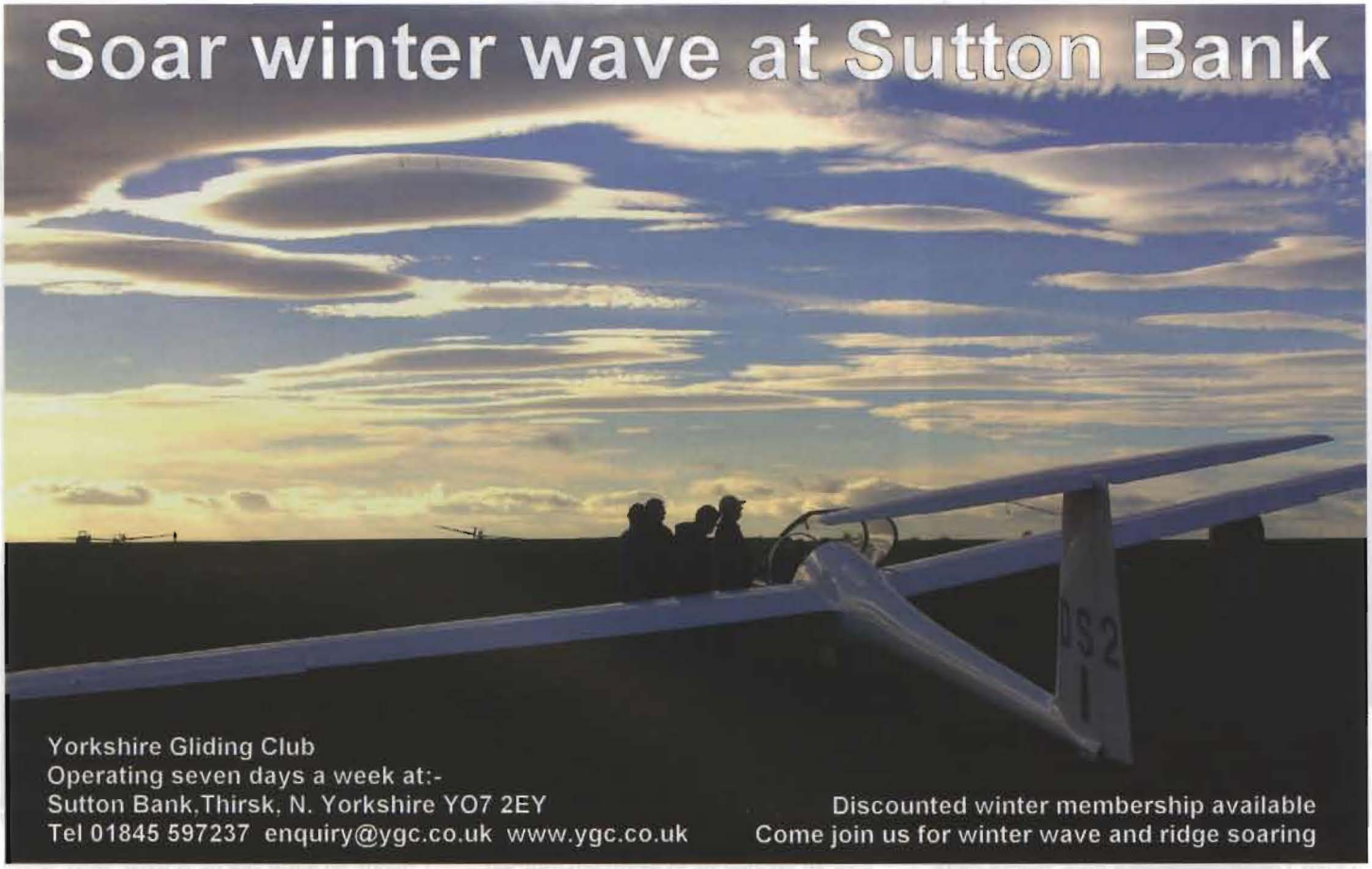
I was not going down! I steepened the dive markedly and increased speed to 65kts, mindful that VNE rough-air was only 70kts; but it still took a *long* time to lose height.

The mountain shadows ran eastward like a pool of spilled ink; time was definitely running out. It took me almost 15 anxious minutes to dive to circuit height, and I was literally standing on the rudder pedals. Ironically, the landscape beneath my wings was still brightly lit by the setting sun, but I was diving upwind into the darkness of the hills; I could see my instruments but not much else; I was plunging down a 10,000ft mine-shaft in a rumbling cage whose cable had snapped. A hard way to learn a vital lesson: "official" sunset is not the same thing as "local" sunset. Next time, of course, I will lose height gradually on the way home – from ten miles out!

My plan was to level off at 1,500ft above the Milfield Monument, a safe GPS landmark, and to start the circuit at a thousand, well upwind of the boundary, but I was severely shaken when I fell into the tumble-dryer again at 2,000ft. My neat and tidy circuit plan degenerated into a white-knuckle, hog-back, roller-coaster ride and on final approach a vicious wind gradient robbed me of 20kts airspeed in a heartbeat. Fortunately, we are trained for these conditions at Borders and I coped; the Skylark shrugged it all off, like the tough old girl she is, flared nicely and sighed gently across the grass; I was safely down. As I unlatched the canopy in the gathering dusk I took some long, deep breaths and offered up thanks for Slingsby's classic design and the rigour of my instructors' training.

In the clubhouse the usual suspects were paying their launch fees; they listened indulgently to my babblings, patted me on the back and shared a few laughs but – I realised later – they had flown in wave many, many times before and to vastly greater heights. For an early solo pilot, one's first high wave flight feels like a culmination and an achievement; but on reflection I sensed that my club seniors saw it as merely the beginning; I had paid the entrance fee but there was still a long, long way to go, and so much still to learn.

Soar winter wave at Sutton Bank



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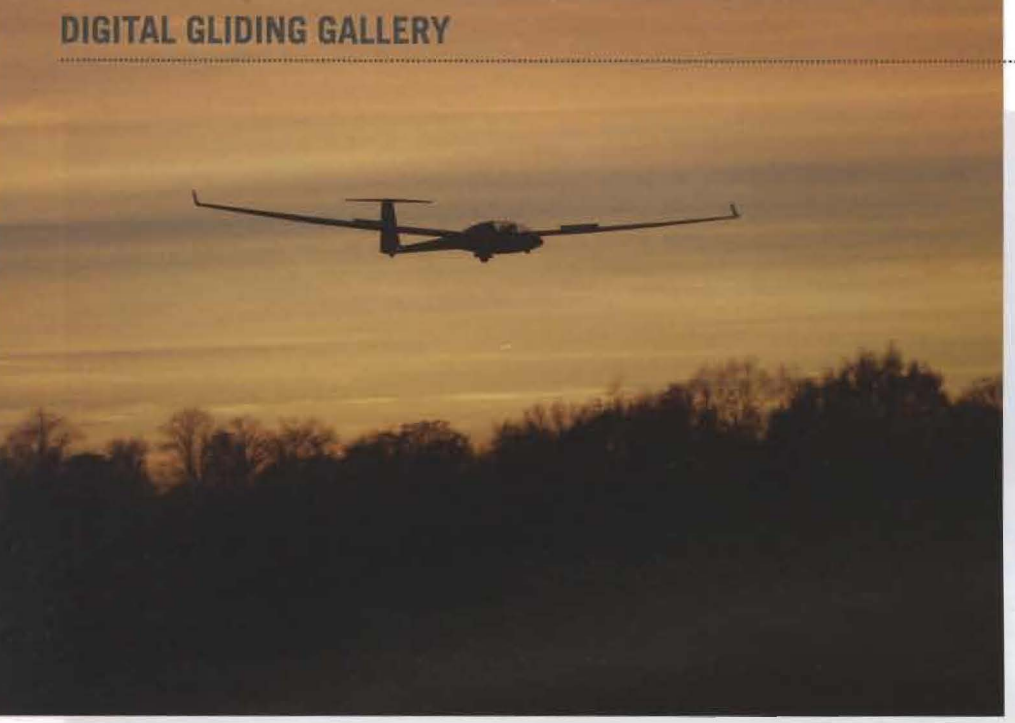
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The light fantastic





OUR THANKS and appreciation to the people who took these beautiful photographs:

Top row, from left: *Only darkness stops play at a ridge site, says Craig Lowrie about the photo he took of this DG-505 landing at Parham, the base of the Southdown GC; Our invitation to send in ends-of-day photos inspired Hugh Stevenson to dig out some prints from 2003 – this is ASW 20L 600 at 15,400ft west of Feshiebridge; Dave Jesty of Dartmoor Gliding Society, who soloed in 2005, took this in December 2007 in his four-year-old LS8t G-CKEZ – it's his first glider, which he bought last October*

Middle row, opposite: *Southdown's DG-505 again, about to cross the river Arun on the last tow of the day. "It's that nice sunset time of year !" says photographer Stuart Ross; The Surrey Hills GC Grob Twin Acro at its Kenley home last November (Chris North)*

Opposite: *Martin Kroke over in the French Alps in his Salto. For more photos and his Icare prizewinning video* Wingsuit versus Glider, *see* www.martinkroke-gaptallard.com/

Above left: *DG-500 X97 at Aboyne in the "Gentlemen's Gliding Week" – an autumn exped from Four Counties, Windrushers and The Gliding Centre (David Smith)*
Middle left: *at 12,000ft near Nympsfield in wave on November 10, 2007 (Alison Mulder)*
Bottom left: *If you're interested in aviation architecture, here's Bicester control tower in a new light. This photo was taken during the 2007 regionals (Steve Blundell)*

If you'd like your (previously unpublished) photos to be considered for the Gliding Gallery, *or for anywhere else in* S&G, *we'd love to see them. Please email them to* editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk *with few details about the picture and about yourself*




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Sebastien Kawa

Left, below: *Sebastien Kawa from Poland was first in the Diana 2, his fourth World Champion title, with 30 points. Ben Flewett* (right, heading for a different airmass and lower cloudbase) *came second with Germany's Uli Schwenk. The UK's Steve Jones* (opposite left, near Lake Ohau) *came 4th while Pete Harvey* (far right) *came 10th overall, winning the finat day. All photos are Pete's unless otherwise stated*





A puzzle to solve, stunning scenery, a conversation with nature, shared with friends... Pete Harvey reflects on the GP

THE mountains around Omarama are unique. This gliding Mecca is just 40kms east of the Tasman Sea and its southern ocean trade winds, but separated from New Zealand's west coast by four majestic ranges of over 8,000ft. By the time the sea air reaches Omarama, almost all the moisture has been wrung from it. This is a semi desert – arid and brown – yet within a couple of thermal cycles, the terrain is mountainous, ice and rock cliffs dominating the high country. The mountains are young and unstable. They are incredibly steep, high and cold. Time has not yet smoothed their upward thrust. The plentiful rain and nightly frosts mean the rock is literally being blasted from the peaks, forming extensive scree slopes and piles of huge boulders. It's a treacherous place for hikers and climbers, but so beautiful for our silent craft as they skim the slopes in search of lift.

We (the 18 World GP qualifiers) were in New Zealand for two events – the GP World Championships based at Omarama before Christmas, and the New Zealand Air-Games, to be held at nearby Wanaka on and December 27-28.

Local hero Ben Flewett was favourite going into the contest, having won the Omarama qualifier. But the competition was absolutely top class, with German ace Uli Schwenk always doing well here in New Zealand, world number one Sebastien Kawa flying the formidable Diana 2 and Italian Giorgio Galetto a mountain specialist. Steve Jones and I were here as the UK qualifiers. Steve knows the place, having flown the 1995 worlds here, but contest director Brian Spreckley made it clear that team flying would not be tolerated. Like naughty schoolboys, we weren't even allowed to share a table at morning briefing!

Ticking off aside, the officials were pretty much a dream team, with Brian directing, Gavin Wills of GlideOmarama task-setting





Sebastien Kawa

Conversing with nature

and Roland Stuck, European Gliding Union president, scoring. We'd be in good hands.

As per the previous Omarama GP, the gliders were fitted with satellite-linked trackers and later the cockpit cameras. During tasks, live telemetry was broadcast over the web, allowing a huge virtual audience to witness the unfolding drama. Later, for the Air Games, similar technology was added to hang-gliders, parachutists, paragliders and aerobatic aircraft to provide unprecedented media access to the action.

Gradually, the awful weather of the practice period improved until the opening day arrived, clear, blue and still. No wave! But as Gavin Wills observed, just as the Inuit have multiple words for snow, we should have multiple words for convergence. We would be tasking over a very three-dimensional terrain, with thermal hotspots, ridge lift and a fast changing airmass. Racing hard, with a GP-style scoring system – 10 points, 8, 7, 6, and so on – meant that each day, half the competitors would score zero! Australian sheep farmer Bruce Taylor said he'd never flown so hard for no points. Indeed, if you found yourself positioned with a couple of gliders slightly ahead and you the lowest of a small gaggle, you're going to get nothing unless you can do something clever.

On most days all the points were gone within four minutes of the winner's arrival. In a normal contest, that would get you 95 per cent of the winner's score. A conservative strategy would usually be successful. Not here. Each day we had a different day winner and a new leader. It was very volatile, but hugely exciting.

The gliders (all 15-Metre Class) had sponsors' stickers over everything, plus the obligatory names. Mark Holliday's glider even sported an almost-tasteful "hot rod" motif airbrushed on – all part of the media razzamatazz. Whilst the ASW 27s and Ventus 2s all performed much the same, the Diana 2 is in a different class. In choppy, turbulent air, its critical airfoil allowed us to remain "in touch", but on the long glides it invariably flew away and uphill.

The detailed results are available on the official website – *www.gpgliding.com* – so there's little point in elaborating here. Perhaps a more enlightening approach would be to join the other flies on the cockpit wall as we tackle Day Three.

After launch, we drop on to the nearby Mount Horrible and climb at 4-6kt in light thermal to the higher-than-normal cloudbase of around 7,500ft. Today will be a good day. After a 10-minute wait, Sue Wild announces the 20-minute countdown. No point straying too far away now. As the countdown goes through the 10, then five minute warning,

'This is task-setter Gavin Wills' puzzle. Should we curse him or admire his cunning? The latter, methinks – this is fun!'

we're gradually closing in on the Omarama start line – a 5km line we've got to cross, today max height 5,000ft and at less than 90kt. It requires considerable concentration, with a sharp lookout for the other pilots. Fortunately the airmanship is of the highest quality I've ever encountered in a comp.

Somewhere amongst all this, we have to decide which direction we're going to head in – those nearby(ish) mountains, but off course, or a long glide and low to the mountains at the Lindis Pass?

It's a huge decision, possibly with the success of the flight hanging on its outcome. Pressure indeed.

As the seconds count down, all 18 of us cross the line practically together and I head for the nearby mountains to the left. The cumulus above looks good and it delivers. Banking hard into the strong, but narrow lift, I notice four other gliders speeding into my turn. That means the other 13 went direct. As we climb up I can see the others, just specks in the crystal clear air, gliding towards the Lindis, way ahead.

As our increasing altitude generates a better vantage, I notice there is considerable cloud shadow around the Lindis. Maybe our route is the best.

As the lift decreases, I leave immediately towards the next cu, with the St Bathans mountain range beyond at over 6,000ft, already showing up as the next key obstacle. With another good climb to the (now) higher cloudbase – it rises over the higher terrain – our small group is well set to glide over the Bathans and towards the first turn. As we round it and head north-west, we see the others spread out low along the foothills, surrounded in shadow. Oh, yes!

Running into the stunning high mountains and iridescent lakes north of Wanaka, our next major decision is soon to come. The twin lakes of Hawea and Wanaka are so large they influence the air and thermals around the neighbouring mountains. The direct route takes us close to the water and the "soft" air over the immediate mountains, but will the more thermic north route be faster? This is task-setter Gavin Will's puzzle. Should we curse him or admire his cunning? The latter, methinks – this is fun!

I slow down to study the clouds better. We need one climb at the next mountain, then a long glide over the blue water to the second turn point. It needs to work, so I'm happy to invest a little time in this decision. There're a couple of gliders, slightly lower, pushing towards the next mountains. It's the first of the "other" group who admits later, over a beer, taking a 10-knot climb to put them back in the race.

Our group splits, with the other chaps choosing the more thermic air and heading



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north. I pick a very specific ridgeline and, pushing hard to the far end, take a strong climb to cloudbase, joined mid-climb by Seb Kawa. This is coming together really well! The "thermic route" chaps find nothing and I spot them gliding out some 3,000ft lower. It's taken five minutes to separate us by 10kms and 3,000ft. Change is fast in these mountains.

Seb and I take the long glide to the next turn then head north-east towards Mount Cook, still some 80km away. I can't keep up with the Diana, so work hard to avoid the air he sinks in and try to intercept the air he bounces up in. This requires constant concentration and movement, but we remain linked despite the Diana's superior performance.

We have the sky to ourselves. The others are behind, or too low to provide useful information. And then Seb chooses a route too far off course for my liking. Finally on my own, I concentrate on finding a route through the high Mckerrow range. The clouds north look good and are further away from the cold lakes. However, looking even further north, the cloudbase is lower. What's going on? Poor weather pushing into the task area? A convergence from the nearby Southern Ocean? I lose sight of Seb and reach the Mckerrows just below the ridge summit. I can't find a low gap to nip through and there's no climb. For a frustrating 10 minutes I search for lift, whilst other gliders join me. The company's a joy, but the previous advantage is lost.

Eventually I've enough height to fall over the ridge and to the dramatic new vista beyond. It's like that out here. A quick check on the PDA for the "oh shit!" option – where to go if the sink's bad. There's one landing within 20kms here, no road, no people, but an aerotow can be done (assuming they know you're there). I do a visual check on the ELT tied to my parachute harness and press on. The mountains here are shaped as my kids would draw them and the lakes an impossibly bright blue, like some cheap holiday postcard. The magnificent Hunter range is next and it's ridge soarable. That means the wind has switched and is stronger. Might explain the previous lack of lift and lowered cloudbase (always worth learning from the mistake). There's a glider about 3km ahead running the ridge. It soon becomes clear that I'm gaining – must be heavier – and I finally pull up alongside Steve in his Ventus 2. Time for a quick wave and exchange of pleasantries on the radio (we're all on the same channel), then Ben Flewett appears as if from nowhere. This is looking better. Steve's near the lead overall and Ben's got the local knowledge to get us home quickly. Let's go!

As we run along the Hunters and their spectacular mixture of ice, rock falls and steep-sided slopes, the cloudbase lowers until the gaps between snowline and cloudbase are like a series of letterboxes. The task direction means we need to slot through very soon and, once again, we make a quick



Above: *The All Blacks Captain and keen glider pilot Richie McCaw* (left) *with Pete Harvey (John McCaw)*
Below: *Omarama is on South Island (Steve Longland)*

turn, past a sheer rock face and then witness another dramatic breathtaking vista change. Just ahead, high on the next rock face, too sheer for ice or snow, four gliders are climbing. With the final turn point some 20kms ahead, it means Steve, Ben and myself are battling for points 5, 4 and 3 assuming we don't get bounced by another group behind us. Arriving at the sheer rock face, the previous climb is no longer there. Grrr. Stay calm. Beautiful view, nice day. Concentrate. Where's the climb?

There's nothing else for it, we've got to push towards the next and final range, the Ben Ohaus. Lower than we'd like, since the lift is usually better higher up, but with this savage scoring system, there's little point



waiting, since the others would catch us. It's lower risk to push on, covering more air and potential lift sources. As we meander towards the Ohaus, Steve's line is better, or ours worse, and suddenly he's 500ft higher. Seems he does that a lot out here. Climbing on the Ohaus, Steve needs less and he's quickly over the ridge and racing towards the turn. We're almost on final glide now, albeit 70kms to home, so it's vital to get each turn right. Another two gliders join Ben and myself, just 100ft higher. Oh noooo! The points are almost gone. Now we've got a race, but it's for the scraps! The next 20 minutes are a blur of ice, snow, craggy rock faces and scree slopes, slowly giving way to the smoother lower slopes, then scraggy grassland and finally opening out to the dry Mackenzie basin and the glide home.

It's been an adrenaline ride. A three-hour rush that Alton Towers would sell for £10 per minute and have queues for. A puzzle to solve, stunning scenery, a conversation with nature, shared with friends. It really doesn't get much better.

"A conversation with nature" was a phrase coined by Herbert Weiss in answer to the question: "Why do you glide"? It's by far the most eloquent description I've ever heard, made all the more poignant when later that evening, after a brief search, the wreckage of his glider was found on a mountainside – the most beautiful of locations for the saddest of outcomes. Herbert was gone and there seemed no logic or reason. We'd been so happy and now grieved together. After two days we decided to fly again. It was time to enjoy this wonderful thing we do. I think Herbert would have approved.

After a tense final day, Seb Kawa emerged as winner. Steve led for a couple of days and looked like he might add a GP World Championship title to add to his 18-Metre one, but it eluded him. Next time, mate.

The New Zealand Air Games were led by IGC president Bob Henderson, with a good representation of air sports. Paragliders jumped out of helicopters and looped the loop. Skydivers dived, Jurgis Kairies, world aerobatic champion, turned his Sukhoi 29 inside out, aeromodellers stood on the ground and everyone seemed happy. It was fun and although rain stopped play on the Saturday, the Sunday delivered an 181km glider task, with full-on telemetry, filming from the helicopters, 4,000 spectators and commentary from laid-back glider pilot Kirk Davis. We had a media event and the crowds actually waited until 5.30pm for the race to end – they were hooked!

It bodes well for the future. Airsport's Peter Newport's dream and drive to bring together the technology to connect the public with our private sport is finally working.

So many memories. My thanks to Bob King for rashly lending me his fabulous ASW 27, to Gav Goudie for loading the container, buying beer and being a diamond and finally to Steve for rescuing the hire car after my VNE dash to the airport was abruptly curtailed by the boys in blue...

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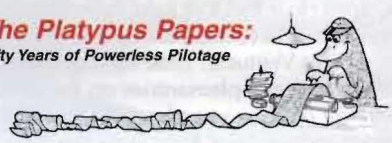
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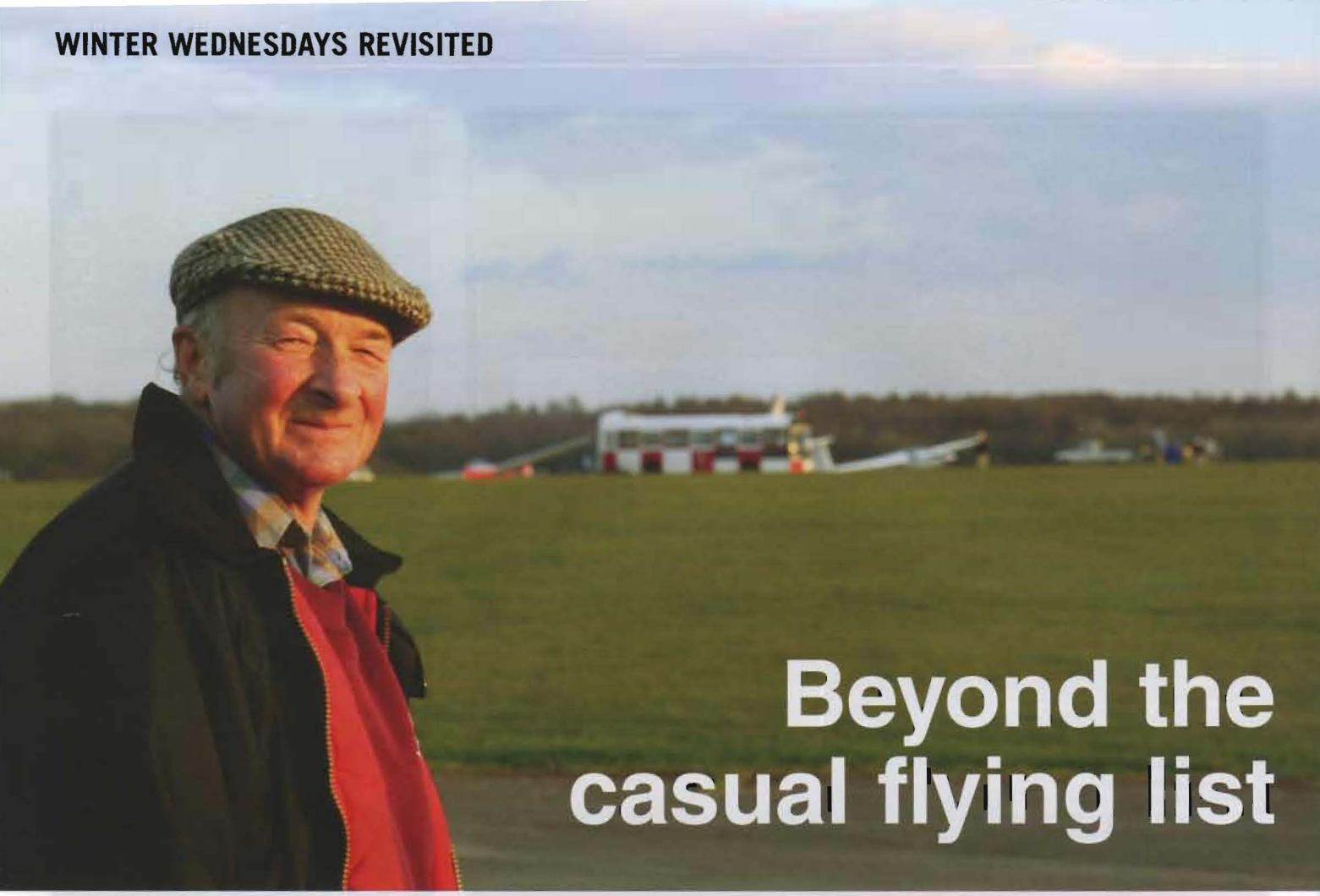
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Beyond the casual flying list

Phil Newman *(right)* updates us on what's worked so far – and what needs refining – in one team's business-minded, member-led approach to helping pilots progress during the UK winter

Instructor Dave Bowtell (above) *in the late afternoon on a "Winter Wednesday" in March 2007, which began frosty, continued sunny and ended chilly, and* (below) *Phil Newman on the retrieve winch earlier the same day*

Photos: Helen Evans



THE Winter Wednesdays (WW) flying group at Lasham works by matching the supply of instructors, gliders and other resources to the demand for gliding instruction, type conversion, specialist and advanced training using a pre-booking system that replaces the club's casual flying list on Wednesdays from September 30 to March 31. I help Dave Bowtell, a full-rated instructor, run WW, and this is its third year of operation.

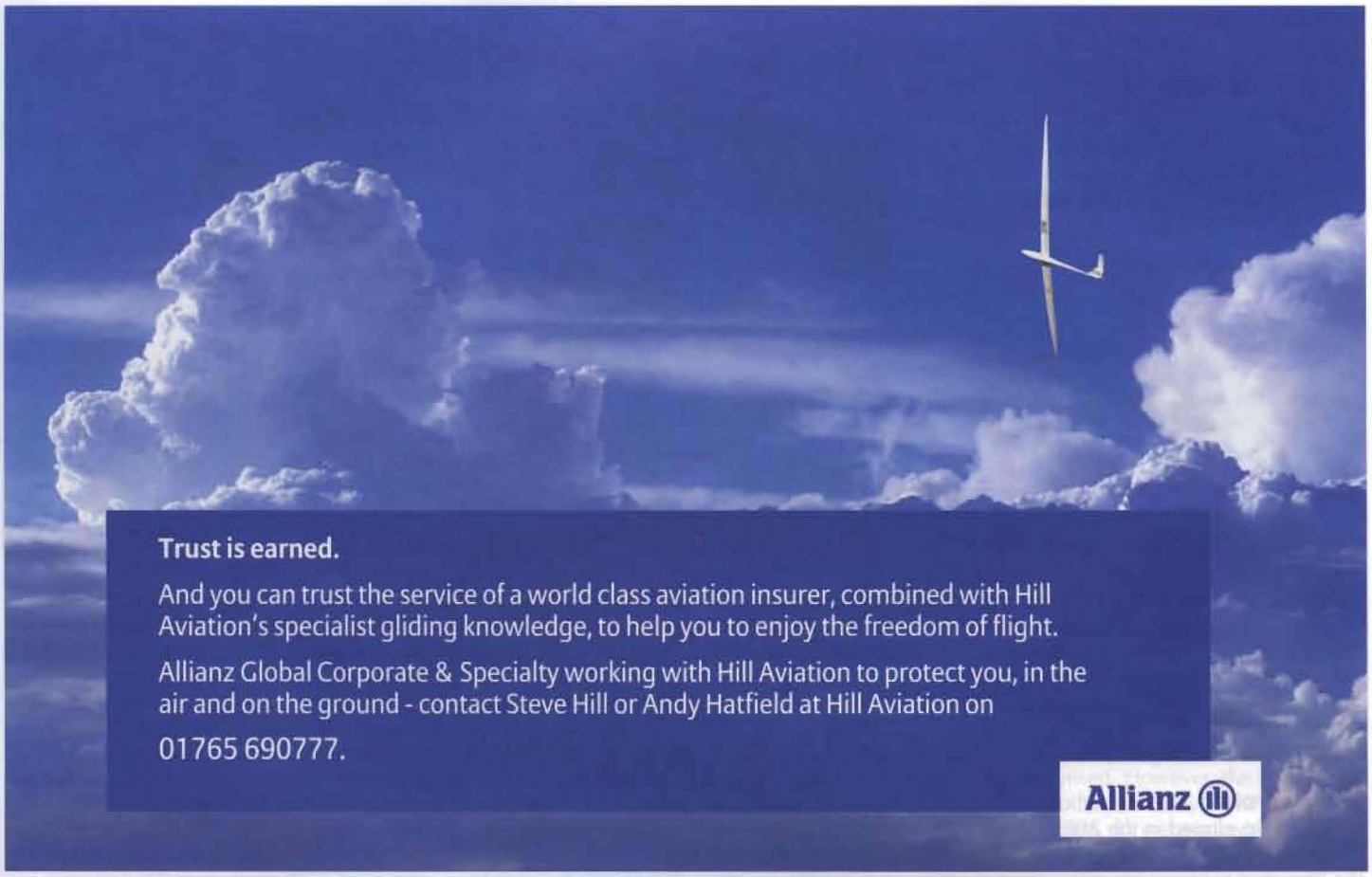
The reasoning behind WW is that out-of-season flying is good for pupils and can be used for early solo pilots to make progress with both basic and advanced training: there is seldom enough lift to tempt you away from a chosen task, and there are often more challenging weather conditions to deal with. It's an informal group – there are no joining rules, forms or fees – Lasham members (and those from other clubs) can just turn up, although we prefer to hear from them first! WW is a means of trying out some different ways of organising a flying club's days to deal with what several people in articles in *S&G* and Lasham's club magazine have discussed as the changing face of the sport – in particular the perception that gliding has become or is becoming the sport of the cash rich but time poor, and that the traditional way of managing training using a casual flying list is no longer satisfying club members' expectations.

Can I say first of all that we don't have all the answers, and this article's aim is to report what we have done on WW that has succeeded, what has failed, and where we think WW needs to go next to make further improvements. Can I also say to all those pilots who were helpfully critical of our early 2007 season that Dave and I agreed wholeheartedly with you – we fixed the problem, and as I write this WW has been operating for nearly three months this season. We have also looked outside WW at what others are now starting to promote at Lasham for some further improvements.

Is the system broke?

The traditional system of what at Lasham is called the Casual List has worked splendidly for decades, but is now seen to be less than ideal. To exaggerate in order to illustrate (and in fact the staff and volunteers bend over backwards to make this happen very rarely) – quite simply, in summer Weatherjack gets the blame:

1. The day is rated a rarely-seen 4, and so 50 pupils arrive at 08.00hrs and sign on the casual list. However, the only way they will ➤





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get a flight with a volunteer instructor is to sit on their lap while they are flying the cross-country task in their own glider!
2. Conversely, the day is rated a 0 and no-one turns up to keep the 10 available instructors company.
3. If you can only come on the afternoon of a good soarable day and you add your name to the bottom of the very long casual list you probably won't get to fly at all.

Volunteer instructors and pupils all have work and family pressures so instructors won't keep turning up if they don't get customers and nor will pupil/pilots if they don't get instruction. If they are lost to the club then the sport is in big trouble!

Whatever happens now that Weatherjack has retired, I don't expect that lazy glider pilots making their own weather forecast (or cheating from another source) will change this situation until someone can convince them that a 0 or 1 rated day is a good day for training or keeping current.

The alternative and simple answer is for all pilots to book on a week-long course with one of the professional instructor staff – the problems, of course, are firstly getting the cost and the time off work approved by the rest of the family, and secondly, in 2007 in particular, choosing a flyable week...

The approach

WW was developed in the 2005 winter season by Dave Bowtell to give trainee pilots the opportunity of regular and intense training through the winter months, whether in the air or on the ground. We used the Lasham Onelist email group to publicise and to report upon its successes, and to help organise weekly flying. We made sure there were activities to keep pupils making progress with training whenever the weather stopped flying, including use of Lasham's glider simulator.

In the 2006 season we used the Lasham email list to encourage pre-booking of flying, and about 50 per cent of those attending each week either emailed or phoned to let us know they were coming, and then we organised instructors and gliders to cope with what we estimated would be total demand on each day. This level of organisation meant that:
A) We could regularly achieve more than 100 launches in a day, even on the short midwinter days;
B) We could run mini-courses, allocating an instructor and glider to two or three pupils for intense day-long training; the cohort briefs and debriefs together, and those not flying retrieve and launch their glider to ensure a quick turnover. (In my view this is the single most important way to address the shortcomings of casual list flying).
C) As we know people are coming in advance then if the weather makes the day partly or wholly unflyable, we can organise things to do on the ground.

We made such an impression (not least upon club statistics and finances) that Lasham very kindly awarded Dave and me its Peter Davis Trophy for an outstanding contribution to a flying group for the 2006 season, and this encouraged us to improve upon our success. I have to say that the award should really be shared with the instructors, both staff and volunteers, and all those who attended and worked hard to achieve this success – Wednesdays certainly has a team/club feel to it even if it does focus like a business on meeting customers' demands!



"Wednesdays certainly has a team/club feel to it even if it does focus like a business on meeting customers' demands!" says Phil Newman. Type conversions like this one are a specific goal that can be achieved in winter weather but even if the weather's unflyable a programme of activities ensures that pupils progress (Helen Evans)

Changes to the formula

For 2007 we made some changes:
1. Booking in advance via our email address – *winterwednesdays@yahoo.co.uk* – has been made easier, and those who book get priority over those who don't! Pilots can book for the morning or for the afternoon, telling us what time they are arriving and leaving – particularly useful for those at college or at school, managing school children, or taking half days off work. There's also a phone line for those who are not on email.
2. By Tuesday afternoon we have compiled separate morning and afternoon flying lists, with each pupil allocated a training slot with a glider and an identified instructor to do whatever they have told us they need, from specific pre-solo training to advanced training or red card/Bronze tests. That instructor works their way through their morning and then their afternoon allocation – if they finish their list they start over again if there is time.
3. We have changed and improved the way we organise and operate on the ground, speeding up the launch rate, and making sure pupils are ready to fly when their slot comes up. We get and rely completely upon great co-operation from instructors, tug and winch crews, which means continuous operation through lunch.

What hasn't worked?

During each of the first four weeks of the current WW season (autumn 2007-spring 2008) we had 35 to 45 pilots, and more than 8-10 training gliders out – busier than most weekend groups! In this time we had only one full flying day on the main runway. However, each week, even starting after midday, we have given everyone at least two flights, and on two October Wednesdays we twice had more than 100 launches. And in this success lay our problem(s):
1. Coping with this number of pilots and giving each of them exactly what they have asked at particular times of the day requires too much and too complex organisation. Getting everyone flying, particularly on short or interrupted days, means that we were not been able to offer mini-courses, and that we struggled to give most people what they have asked for. There are too many pieces of paper at the launchpoint, and it needs a flying list "secretary" to manage them (one of the better developments which means people were retrieved from jobs around the airfield in good time for their flying slot).
2. Organising and running the complex flying lists increases the risk of volunteer burnout, which has afflicted most other successful groups.
3. With these numbers we are under pressure to fly in more extreme conditions – which could encroach unacceptably on the safety margin.
4. With 10 instructors and 10 training gliders we were operating at maximum capacity all the time – a capacity we rarely needed last year, when often WW ended when everyone had flown as much as they wanted to at or before sunset.
5. Increasing the launch rate increases supply (the number of flights) but, because briefing time is lost between flights, can diminish the quality of training.

And what have we done about it?

We learnt from the development of Lasham's Friday Group, and from the end of October, restricted the number of training gliders in use and rigidly enforced limits on list size. This has allowed us to re-introduce mini-courses, which, with the better weather of November, meant some great successes. With 100 per cent advance booking into the course list and nearly 100 per cent into the flying lists we continue to run at full capacity, but we are now flying fewer people a lot more – some have up to eight flights per Wednesday – and flying regularly with the same instructor. Our usual aim is to fly each pilot more than three times. Only those who arrive later in the afternoon have had their flying curtailed by the progressively shorter afternoons of mid-winter. We are encouraging high aerotows rather than multiple winch launches to provide longer basic training flights and so give better training opportunities – the aim is to get as much training out of one or two flights as out of three or four, for no more significant cost to the trainee.



Our aim in the sport is surely now to manage and to meet pilots' expectations better than we have in the past, and to provide the most beneficial training solution, says Phil Newman. Matching supply of training with demand from pupils by advance booking is a key part of how WW is seeking to achieve that *(Helen Evans)*

What others are doing

I apologise to anyone at other clubs who is also trying to organise flying in different ways – I know it's going on, but don't know enough to include what you are doing in this article (if you've got a story to tell on what your club is doing, please contact *S&G*'s editor). What I can describe is what's been happening at my own club.

Summer evening groups at Lasham this year tried out some of the WW booking and mini-course ideas, with some success. In the autumn, another day group – Fridays R4U – has developed at Lasham from the best of what WW has done – 16 mini-course slots are available each Friday, each with a minimum of three training flights with regular high-calibre course instructors. Booking on to these is completed by internet or phone, and the course flying operates alongside the traditional flying list which, of course, is significantly limited in capacity. All in all, a far more productive set-up!

The take-up of the course slots is slowly building, and Fridays R4U is a welcome development, whose start up coincided with us getting control of WW in late October.

What is working at WW?

While I'm not convinced that the change to cash rich/time poor pilots is nearly as complete as others believe, we can, with good organisation, cater for all. We will continue to attract people into the sport, and retain them, if they are convinced by their experience of advance booking they will get the training and support that they require. This is what WW and Fridays R4U are achieving.

Now that WW has shared some of our USPs what is it that still marks us out? This is a member-led and club-supported group – the club support is at all levels and is absolutely essential. It seems we have finally introduced the use of the internet to get a day's flying organised. Plenty of others have tried this but very few succeeded, and what we believe makes WW unique and has achieved this success is the way which we communicate with members. Nearly half of the Lasham membership subscribes to our mailing list. Each week we put out three emails to all members of our mailing list and together these generate a momentum which lasts throughout the week and keeps all WW members informed and enthused:

1. The Monday morning email is to remind everyone to book in, and that there will be things organised if flying is delayed or abandoned – so far this year, in addition to navigation, airspace and circuit planning sessions, we have been introduced to driving the launchpoint bus, towing it with the winch in case of emergencies (at Lasham we often have to move off the main runway for a 757 or similar to use it), rigging some of the club's gliders, aerotow ropes inspection and most recently lectures on gliding accident trends and use of radio at the launchpoint. This email includes the booking form in two different electronic formats.
2. The Monday evening email is from Roger Barber, our resident meteorologist, who sends this from wherever he is in the world. It helps people identify if this is the week for them to do something particular.
3. The WW Report, which often also goes out to the Lasham Yahoo Group as well, is a report of what we did on each Wednesday, so people can see what we do and what they could have done.

What I am told is the single biggest factor in making use of the internet accepted by so many members is that, in addition, nearly every single email or booking request receives a personal acknowledgement.

We are often told by senior instructors and pilots that what we have been doing is so much better than the situation the casual list system has fallen into that they hope it is the way in which the sport will in the future become organised. However, the popularity of WW over other weekday and even week-end flying groups during winter is potentially its own undoing, and the sport therefore needs other groups to promote their own initiatives before the momentum and the progress to pre-booking using the internet or email built up by us over the last two years is lost.

Our aim in the sport is surely now to manage and to meet pilots' expectations better than we have in the past, and to provide the most beneficial training solution. This cannot now, it seems to me, be achieved by relying solely on the traditional system, which lacked business organisation, and in spite of its undoubted successes for most of us in the past, underachieved for and often disappointed customers.

WW has the advantage of organising demand and matching it with supply, but without restricting demand, WW, or operations like it will also underachieve.

Dave and I are very happy to encourage and if asked help other groups develop the systems we have been using in order to spread demand until the *status quo* allows us to restore and further improve the WW organisation.

The Lasham groups mentioned in this article can be reached at the following addresses:
winterwednesdays@yahoo.co.uk
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fridays_r_4_u

The larger clubs like Lasham may have better resources of instructors, pupils and equipment, but we know it's not only the big clubs that are improving the ways they operate. *S&G* would love to hear what other clubs are doing – just email *editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk*

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Racing at Rieti



Main picture: *launching at Rieti and* (inset) *soaring Terminillo.* Above: *Rieti Airfield and town* *(Photos: Robin May)*

Rieti in Italy is the venue for the 2008 World Championships – here's how the British Team got on in the 5th Junior World Championships held there in 2007. Mark Holden reports

AS A TEAM we all decided to go to Rieti for two weeks of practice before the start of the competition. Most of the team had flown in Rieti the previous year, but since we had very little mountain flying experience between us we wanted to get as much practice in as possible. After a 20-hour drive we all arrived safe and sound in the picturesque valley that was our destination.

Rieti is approximately 70km north east of Rome, lying in a wide flat valley at the base of a 7,000ft mountain called Terminillo. We were greeted by the very friendly locals but nothing appeared to be ready for the competition and everything seemed to be organised chaos. The task area given to us for the Worlds was not very big, but there was still an advantage to be had from knowing the local hot spots and routes in and out of the valleys well.

Our team coach, Robin May, had given us objectives to achieve in the practice weeks. The tasks in Rieti are usually of a set format: down to the south across the plain of

Avenzano and then back north either on the front faces of the Apennine mountains or jumping across to the eastern chain in the L'Aquila valley.

The final glides can be very interesting because there is a valley that lies just to the north that can be used to gain on your final glides. This "service valley" works with pretty much any westerly component in the wind and you can arrive below glide at the start and end up running the ridge for about 20km or more (depending on how brave you are) – gaining on glide the whole way. It can be a very unnerving experience on the first few attempts, but after a while we got used to it and knew exactly what heights we needed to keep it safe. From very early on we decided that this would save us valuable minutes on each flight so we made sure we did a final glide from this direction whenever possible.

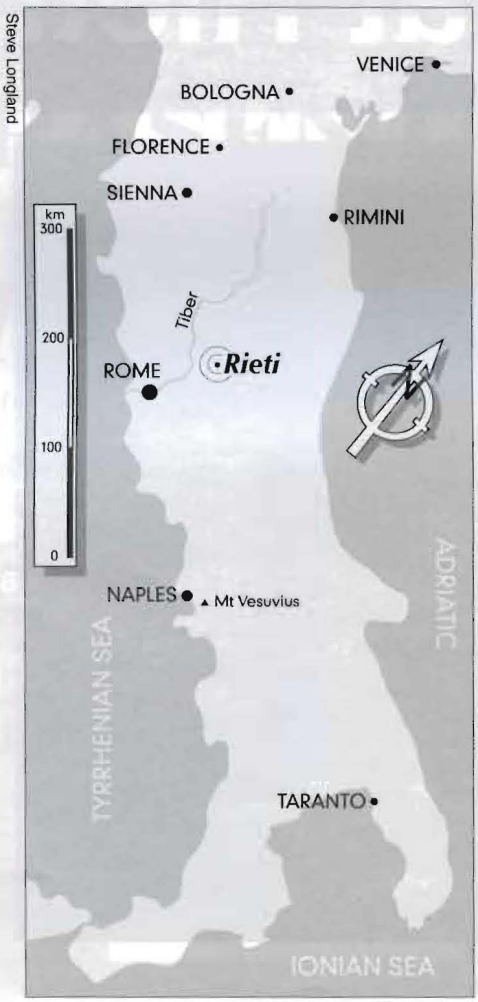
The practice week started well with convergences and 12,000ft cloudbases. We managed to see most of the task area, but unfortunately the weather was so good we didn't really manage to run the ridges and get in amongst the mountains. Each day we were achieving flights of well over 300km and carrying out some of the tasks given to us by Robin. One day the team all flew the same 400km task at ridiculously fast speeds using the convergences. The Standard Class did just over 150km/h with the Club Class coming in at a more pedestrian 135km/h (actual speeds!). The convergences set up perfectly on the second and third legs, enabling us not to turn for 200km.

At the start of the second week the weather began to deteriorate and we started to see a different side of Rieti. In the first week the temperature had been around 45°C; now it had dropped slightly but the air had become more stable. We still managed to fly most days but there were no convergences to go and play with.

We were now able to start flying on and in the mountains proper. We all had some rather memorable moments where we went off exploring and managed to get stuck over interesting terrain. Andy May and I got low the in the L'Aquila valley to the east of Mount Terminillo but managed to climb away and escape back to Rieti through a valley that the locals very rarely use as it is totally unlandable. Simon got separated from us on one practice day: we had just enough height to pass over a saddle into a safe landable valley, while Simon had to creep back around the front of a ridge over some rather interesting terrain. We later found out from the local pilots that we should have not flown down that particular valley with conditions as they were.

With the weather not being particularly good we decided to take a drive out to some of the valleys we would be flying over to look for safe landing options. On arriving in some of these valleys we started to discover that most had only one or two safe places to land and even these would probably result in some damage to the gliders. We spent time discussing what the safest options would be and how we would approach landing in these fields. This time later proved to be extremely valuable, as we found out during the competition itself. Other teams that had not spent so much time looking into safe landing fields ended up with damaged gliders. Many gliders were damaged through field landings; the airfield workshop regularly had competition gliders in it.

With the first competition day rapidly approaching the Italian organisation did start to come together. The teams were invited by the mayor to an official function at the town hall, where we had to listen to seven different speeches in Italian and then listen again as they were translated. All this was done in a small room with all the pilots and team captains squashed in, at a very uncomfortable 40°C temperature. We then had to go through a similar experience at the opening ceremony, this time, though, with some rather interesting aerobatic displays from some very slow motorgliders and a K-21.



The first day arrived and we were feeling reasonably happy with all our preparations and were looking forward to putting all our hard work to good use. Unfortunately, they don't seem to like launching before 12.30hrs in Rieti, even if it is quite soarable. This meant that the tasks were quite often shorter than they should have been. The results in both classes for the first day were not that good, with disappointing performances from all the Brit pilots. We put this down to poor choice of start times and went in to Day 2 still feeling confident.

During the next few days we all managed to put in consistent results and managed to make up for the points we lost on the first day. The weather was not behaving itself and was not up to usual classic Rieti standards. This meant that the Club Class tasks were relatively small and restricted to the front face of the mountain chain, generally no more than 300km. The Standard Class had a bit more diversity in their task setting and were sent to some of the more interesting places. This allowed the pilots in the Standard Class to think for themselves and fly their own flights, whereas in the Club Class you always had to keep an eye on what the gaggle was doing. Inevitably we would come across the gaggles at some point along the front face.

The Standard Class didn't fare so well over the first few days. Day 3 was particularly difficult with the task being over set and with sea air encroaching into the valley that they had to cross to reach the second TP. The met provided at briefing was interesting with a soaring index given each day. Every day the index would change but no-one actually seemed to know what it related to. This made the task setter's job difficult and we never seemed to make the most of days.

Day 4 was also challenging: it looked like it was going to be a straightforward AAT, but as we were leaving briefing we were told of a small forest fire in the drop zone area. No-one thought any more of it, but after the first launch time had been and gone we started to ask the organisation what was happening. Apparently Italian air law states that there is a requirement to have a five-mile exclusion zone around any forest fire. Even though the pilot of the plane who was extinguishing the fire had said it was okay for us to launch, the organisation were not happy to let us go. This put the launch time back several hours and the task time was reduced accordingly. When we finally launched at 15.30hrs it proved very difficult for us to get up to a sensible start height. We could see people starting above us and we really wanted to go, but just couldn't quite get the climb. Eventually once we had started and got to the first sector we had caught the gaggle but didn't have a good run back and lost nearly five minutes. This put us well down the results for the day.

The next two days proved to be very productive for both classes, with some very

Rieti is the venue for two Classes of Worlds in 2008. The teams representing Britain in World Gliding Championships in 2008 are: (at Rieti): Club Class – Pete Masson and G Dale; Standard Class – Leigh Wells (Champion), Richard Hood and Jay Rebbeck; (Lusse, Germany): 15-Metre Class – Leigh Wells and Tim Scott; 18-Metre Class – Phil Jones (Champion), Mike Young and Russell Cheetham; Open Class – Pete Harvey and Steve Jones



The Juniors at Rieti, pictured from left:

Simon Barker
Mike Collett
Mark Holden
Shaun McLaughlin
Andy May
Tom Smith

The photo was taken by Team Coach Robin May, Andy's father

good results for the Standard Class and two back-to-back 1st and 2nd for myself and Simon Barker. This allowed Simon and me to get to fewer than 40pts from Gold, putting us in a good position for the second half of the competition.

The Standard Class were also still in a good position and, although not as close to medal positions as the Club Class, were still doing well and anything could happen.

Day 7 proved to be the worst day of the comp for Simon and me in the Club Class. It saw a return of classic Rieti conditions – lots of cumulus and a high cloudbase with the potential of a convergence setting up on the second leg going back north.

With all this to look forward to we set off on the 340km task – looking forward to having a good flight and romping around. We did manage a very fast long first leg, but after that it all started to go wrong. On getting back to the first big mountain after crossing the valley to the south, it was all in shadow from a large shelf of spreadout. This stopped us from getting high enough to get over the mountain and to the convergence that had set up on the Gran Sasso to the east. Most of the other Club Class pilots had gone around in their usual large gaggles and managed to get over the mountain to get to the convergence. All three of us then had to work our way up the front face. On looking at the results for the day we had lost over 200 points on the leaders. The met was now showing that we had possibly only two days left to make up the lost points.

The Standard Class had a better day with higher placings after a good run in the convergence to the east. Andy and Shaun were still on for a good placing in the top ten.

The last two days of flying saw relatively short tasks with both classes putting in solid performances. Unfortunately Simon and I were not able to gain back the points we lost on Day 7. Even with the help of the Standard Class boys we just couldn't quite get the extra 100 points we needed to get into the medals. Simon and I had a great last day, starting almost last on the 190km task, catching up the pilots in medal positions. Simon managed second for the day, whereas I pushed too hard toward the end and didn't get the climb I needed to get on to a fast final glide. This was a frustrating day because we could have flown a much larger task, allowing us to make up valuable points, but the organisation (after some deliberation) made us change runways after briefing, which lost a large amount of usable day.

Overall, flying in Rieti was great fun and I would thoroughly recommend it to anyone wanting to experience mountain flying. All of the team enjoyed themselves and we would like to thank our crews and especially Harry Middleton and Marjorie for acting as our Team Captains and also Robin May for sharing his knowledge of mountain flying as Team Coach. Rocket Software, our sponsors, also provided us with funding that allowed us to compete and practise for two weeks before the competition. Good luck to the guys who will be competing there at the Worlds this year.

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The British Gliding Team Manager, Brian Spreckley, intends to 'retire' from this voluntary role during 2008.

If you feel that you are able to contribute to the ongoing success of the British Gliding Team in this voluntary leadership role by maintaining the focus on excellence and continuing to develop our strong competitive philosophy, we would really like to hear from you. Please forward a brief CV including covering letter headed 'Team Manager' to;

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Soaring over Namibia

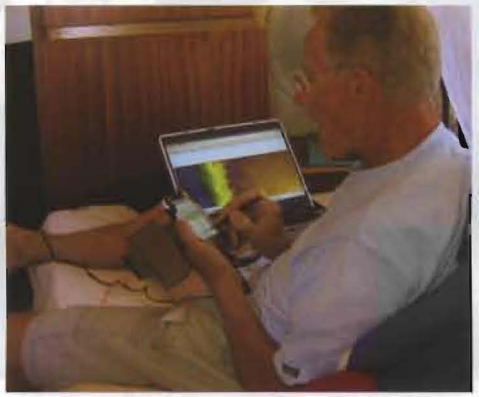
Sigi Baumgartl, twice Barron Hilton Cup winner, describes his first flight over the deserts of Namibia in South West Africa

I HAD already heard and read a lot about Bitterwasser, most recently via a postcard from Uwe Förster, member of the council of Bitterwasser, in which he reminded me in his obliging manner about the site, having waylaid me last spring at an information stand at the Aero in Friedrichshafen. After I had contacted Lydia and Jürgen Casper, everything else, such as the registration, the formalities for the transport of the glider and the remaining preparations for an unusual journey, went almost automatically. At first I hesitated as to whether I should make the trip to Namibia in that year, but Lydia, the hard-working President of Bitterwasser, with her Bavarian-Swabian thoroughness, left me with no alternative, and I am glad she did.

Following the flight to Windhoek, the short drive to Bitterwasser gave me my first impressions of the country of Namibia, with its wide open spaces and only 1.8 million inhabitants, who are so widely dispersed that human contacts are something special. After three hours' drive through blinding light, with one eye on the tempting sky and the other on the wide landscape of savanna and desert, the gliding farm appeared from nowhere.

The next day the parts of the glider, which had already been transferred from the container to the hangar, were put together to make the familiar aircraft. By the time I had acquainted myself with the details of Bitterwasser, the next day had arrived. I took off for my first flight after the other pilots at around 12 noon, to test the instruments and to get accustomed to the country.

"Go straight there," the glider pilot thinks. When I got "there", although I was 50km away from the Bitterwasser pan, at 3000m above ground and with a superb view of the Namib Desert, it seemed no more than 20km. It is good that we have GPS, moving maps and other innovations, such as a turn point list in which landing fields are marked. Thanks to this good preparatory work by Bitterwasser glider pilots, I was able to fly further north-west with no uneasy feeling, from one landing field to the next. I just had to click the next landing field on the TFT display of my iPAQ computer and it showed me the arrival altitude, which was always over 800m. Hardly aware that I was flying in a strange country over savanna and mountainous desert, I soon found myself 220km from the start point.



Sigi in a chalet at Bitterwasser planning his next task

Forgetting my original intention to fly only two hours, I followed a cloud street to the south which was marked by considerable turbulence and clouds hanging down like flags from the Cu bases. A few days later I realised that I was enjoying the famous "Bitterwasser convergence", produced by warm desert air from the east meeting maritime air from the west.

The result is a band of ascending air boosted by a mountain range, running from north to south at the boundary between the Namib Desert to the west and the higher inland plane, the savanna.

This phenomenon can stretch for more than 500km, as I learned later. On my first flight I experienced 370km, flying 76 per cent of the time in a straight line (on later flights I achieved 88 per cent) with a mean airspeed of 250km/h and a mean glide ratio of 80, at a wing loading of only 35kg/m^2 (Ventus CM 17.6m, without water ballast). The altitudes at which you can fly in Namibia are fantastic, on this day between 4,000 and 5,000m MSL. This increases the ground speed by about a quarter. Over the distance of 370 along the Namibian desert I averaged 135km/h with ease.

But the view was magnificent. Whilst easily reachable and landable turnpoints rushed past on the moving map in the cockpit, a spectacle I had never before seen unfolded outside. Ahead, deep blue sky alternated with white cumulus clouds, which dissolved into grey, downward-hanging tails, or so it seemed. Sometimes these tails were mixed with reddish-brown ones reaching over 3000 m down to the ground, again seemingly. In reality, it was sand being carried up from the ground and mixing with the condensation of the convergence,which sets in far below the general cloudbase.

For a short time I heard a noise like raindrops hitting the glider, but I could not see any rain. It was sand from the Namib desert, although the sand trails were far behind me. Thus there is sand at an altitude of 4500m, which is invisible, but can be heard due to the speed and the resonance of the glider.

Below, the savage desert mountains, jagged and grey, and the dry canyons displayed their characteristic shapes and colours. To the left – I was flying south – I could see the high savanna of the west edge of the Kakahari Desert with its many dry lakes and long, straight, red sand dunes, 10m high, stretching for many kilometres. There are plains with regularly arranged trees which survive the desert climate, and green vegetation along the dry rivers. Suddenly a farm appears, in the middle of a vast unpopulated area. This part of the world is certainly difficult to land in and hostile to intruders who do succeed.

But these are only hypothetical thoughts, because from 3000m above ground you can reach landable areas and above all such strong thermals that make you catch your breath, as indicated by the warning signal of the oxygen supply.

The scenery on the right, where the west boundary of the convergence can be seen, is the climax of Nature's spectacle. Everything which is produced by water vapour and desert sand in the sky, and then disappears, ends here. The deep blued sky is the complementary colour to the orange of the Namib Desert, with its tongue-like intrusions into the chain of mountains running from north to south. The bare desert, consisting only of sand brought from South Africa by the Oranje River, lies in the glare of the sun moving from the zenith to the west.

It is hard to believe that all this sand, so the geologists say, came from the river mouth more than 1000km away and was carried here by the surf and the wind. On the other hand, it is feasible if you consider the time – tens of millions of years – which the wind had to accomplish the transport.

Viewing this enchanting panorama I flew almost three hours due south at an average speed of 136km/h; then the convergence line bent to the south-east, and I, as if drawn by magic, wanted to follow it.

I had long ceased to worry about the time, when I saw from the moving map that I was 280km from Bitterwasser. It was 16:45, only two hours and 45 minutes to sunset. In the direction of Bitterwasser, a blue sky without cumuli smiled at me maliciously.

I began to get worried, because, given the 10km/h head wind, I needed to average 110km/h to land before sunset. This meant I needed an average climb rate of 3m/s, which I did not expect to find in blue thermals so late in the day.

In gliding, the longer way is often the faster. So I flew back along the convergence

with a deviation of 40° from the course to Bitterwasser, and enjoyed the spectacle once more, this time with mixed feelings. After 130 km, I turned towards Bitterwasser, and despite the 15 per cent extra distance I had three advantages: my average speed until the change in course was 140km/h, the head-wind component was smaller and there were some isolated cumuli to mark the thermals.

The safe final glide with the potential energy of 3000m above ground, with the reassurance of the electronic aids in the cockpit and the sun behind me, lasted almost a hour. This was the perfect end of a gliding day, with new colours and shapes appearing as the sun was setting. Details on the ground became visible, without any worries about being too low, even though the landing point was still far away. The figures on the computer display said every-thing. In the warm evening light they showed a positive height above the glide path, the course and the time of arrival. What more can the glider pilot ask for?

Approaching Bitterwasser, a voice on 123.60 MHz woke me from my reverie and reminded me of the practical piloting matters. It was the unmistakable voice of Jean-Renaud Faliu in French German-English which brought me back to reality.

He wanted to know all the details of my approach, and above all for me to report "gear down and locked". When I also succeeded in stopping at least 100m before the wind sock, as he instructed, I was completely satisfied, and able to look forward to the next briefing with no fear of reproach.

The flight was hardly more than a sight-seeing flight and did not make full use of the meteorological possibilities of the day, as my small mean climb rates and forward speeds show. On good days, the mean rate of climb is 2.8m/s, as I later found out.

In Bitterwasser, landing is always followed by the second climax of the day, the dinner, which deserves a lot of praise. The hosts also ask about your flight, and if you tell the truth and perhaps say a word too much, Uwe smiles even more and demands a report.

Flight data (from SeeYou):
Ventus CM 17.6m, 38 kg/m²
duration: 7h 39min
average height 4000m amsl
date: December 9, 2005
distance flown: 938km (three turn points) 998km (over the ground)
average speed: 123km/h
average climb rate 2.2m/s
circling time: 28 per cent
mean glide ratio 56 at 150km/h IAS

Sigi Baumgartl has been flying for 44 years and did his first 1000km flight in 1974 in central Europe. Winner of three world records, 15 German records, 10 German class records he has twice won the Barron Hilton Cup, in the 15-metre and two-seater classes





Clockwise from above:
Namib Desert (looking west) at the border with the north-south mountain range, taken from a point 200km from Bitterwasser at a height of 3,500m AGL;
Thermalling above the 10-metre high sand dunes;
Namibian mountain desert from 3000m AGL;
The chalets and lines of palm trees at Bitterwasser;
Thunderstorm during a cross-country flight

All photographs courtesy of Sigi Baumgartl







The recipe for a great season





Jeremy (left) *with help to derig the K-21 after his first landout, and* (right) *earlier in the season next to the K-8 after doing his five hours on only his second flight in it*

This story from Jeremy Hamill-Keays, a Briton who lives, works and glides in Sweden, demonstrates that the vital ingredients for a great gliding club are the same wherever in the world you may be

FROM THE pundits I have heard that last season was not so great, but all I can say is what a great season I have had. Conversion from fabric to plastic, solo, five hours (in my second flight in the K-8), Silver height (on my third flight in the K-8), starting to fly local tasks as fast as I can, a minute's flying inverted, cross-country training, my first outlanding and the last flight of the season, a crack in the Discus – what a plane.

Luck, some good weather, great aircraft, and getting out of bed early have played their roles. But there was one other vital ingredient, without which all of this would not have been possible, and every club needs it...

How about the many instructors I have flown with? They have provided continuous support, concentrating on what I did right, showing me how to fly better and showing patience and good humour no matter how long it takes me to get something right. They sit in the back, letting me fly as much as possible when they could be soaring in some high-tech ship. What stars they are. Their advice and encouragement – "You are doing great, fly it as much as you want and have fun!" gave me five hours on my second flight in the K-8. I needed a Volkslogger to do my Silver height. I had the K-8 to myself, and was pottering about. Having mentioned I was used to barographs (if you don't remember them, enjoy your youth), a Volkslogger, cables, attachments and all sorts of advice came courtesy of a helpful comp pilot. After 20 minutes the K-8 was cabled up and ready to go. Dumped into a thermal and off to cloudbase... Silver height in 10 minutes.

Despite this help, though, the Volkslogger in the K-8 still remained a frustrating problem for me. No regular attachment and so much hassle to get it fitted. One Saturday after an hour mucking about on my own, I gave up, but had mentioned it to some of the older members of the club. Next day I had a phone call: "Jeremy the K-8 is wired up and mountings fitted, just place the Volkslogger on the mount, connect and you are good to go." Amazing, I am so grateful.

The next weekend I attempted the local 50km task. I managed to screw up, so missed a turn point, but getting the logger up and running took one minute of time and I hit the best part of the day. Without the generosity of others I doubt I would have even attempted it.

And I did fly a 100 km task this year. Okay, it was in the Dimona but it was great, and only possible due to a lovely chap who was willing to throw himself into the air despite the low cloudbase and the football on the telly. We looked at fields, flew the route and practised final glide. It has given me so much encouragement to get cross-country.

"We flew for three hours, chatting, having fun, and even soared with a buzzard. We must have done over 200km, just pottering. What a great way to spend an afternoon!"

I love aerobatics but am not qualified. Despite this, I have had several flights this season. Each time I asked, I got a "yes". Same instructor every time. It made otherwise dull days absolutely brilliant – who cares if the sun isn't shining?

If you have never done it you have to roll 180° and fly inverted for a minute. Roller coaster rides are for children!

One day due to various problems, I couldn't fly the K-8. Instead I sat on the ground in a bad mood, sulking. An angel appeared and asked if I would like to fly in the DG-1000 with him. I agreed, maybe not with the best of humour, but he smiled, stuck me in the front and we were off for one of the best flights that season. I was shown how to fly fast into thermals, pull up, turn and hit thermalling speed in one easy movement. We flew for three hours, chatting, having fun, and even flew with a buzzard. We must have done over 200km just pottering around locally. What a great way to spend an afternoon.

One of my last lessons was to land out in a field. The season was slowly winding down, and there were not so many people out at the field. To gain the official certificate we would have to derig the K-21. I thought my chances were nil: who wants to stay late after a long day's flying when it's cold and beers are calling?

Well, the instructor, the duty pilot, another instructor with a tow hook on her car and a student who I had met for the first time that morning – they all did. No wavering from any of them, just go off and do your thing Jeremy. And I did. I still owe you guys dinner.

I think SSFK is a great club, fantastic planes, absolutely gorgeous area to fly. All I can say is if you need any help just ask – I'll be there.

My advice to others is: if you see some poor lost soul running around, see if you can lend a hand. Don't be shy. It makes all the difference between a so-so season and a great one.

Jeremy flies at Stockholm Segelflygklubb (SSFK), north of Stockholm near Enköping in stunning countryside and clear uncontrolled skies. He started flying at Chilterns at RAF Halton for 50p a launch when he was 15. "I enjoyed training and going 'solo' so much, I have done it three times," he says, "the previous time in the UK about 15 years ago at Edgehill. In total I have 80 hours, an awful lot of them in K-8s..."

Club news



Banbury (Hinton-in-the-Hedges)

AT our AGM in November there was a unanimous vote to change our name from Aquila to Banbury Gliding Club. We are confident this will help promote the club and gain more local support. We had the annual awards for various achievements. Nick Tarbox received the award for "Most Promising Pilot of the Year:" Peter Fincham and Roger Coombes received the Jim Wright Trophy for "Clubmen of the Year", Tim Wheeler and Tony Limb received awards for the "Best Flight of the Year" and "Cross-country" respectively. John Giddings won the club ladder. We have all had a very wet year but in spite of this our airfield has remained operational and with the onslaught of winter we would be happy to invite members from other clubs to fly with us if their airfield is waterlogged.

Rod Watson

Bannerdown (RAF Keevil)

MIXED conditions have resulted in a lot of fun at Bannerdown this winter. November saw the ridge taking a cloud street to 5,000ft and also some wave, with Ron Peach up at 7,800ft. There was confusion around the launch point at the sight of Neil Geraghty painting a magnolia square on the side of the runway one weekend. It became clear when the K-13 and K-21 kept landing "near" it. The overall winner of the spot landing competition was Jon Arnold closely followed by Mark Critchlow. We welcomed three new junior members – Jenny Allen; Ben Dowler and Matt Wilding – to the club. So far December has been wet and windy, ideal for getting lots of odd jobs done.

Debb Hackett/Andy Miller

Bath, Wilts & North Dorset (The Park)

DICK Yerburgh has now completed the modification on the Pawnee after working many long hours. He is now dealing with the C of A. Our thanks go to Dick for his efforts. Congratulations go to Mike Tobin, who has re-soloed after a long break. Mike has been a quiet but active member since he joined, and his help in the summer was invaluable. The Presentation Evening was a success and well supported. Congratulations go to Colin Field, cadet member, who won a number of trophies, but is currently away taking a gap year in Canada. His father collected the trophies for him. Familiar names Mike Thorne, Mike Schlotter, Geoff Humphries, Stuart North, David Parkes and Laurie Smith collected the remaining trophies. Geoff Pook collected the well-deserved award for his outstanding contribution to the club during the year. Without Geoff we would not have a serviceable Puchacz trailer.

Jan Smith

Bidford (Bidford)

I THINK many of you will join us in saying goodbye and good riddance to last year. It certainly was a challenge for us, and we also wish a continued speedy recovery to those of our members who did not have the best of health. We have had some good news though, and we congratulate Phil and Chris Haylor, Mike Wells and Ken Fairclough for achieving their first solo, and to Peter Fabian for re-soloing after a break. Well done as well to Keith Brackstone and Alan Wallace for managing to get enough instructing in last year for us to put some money back into their flying account. Keith is well on his way to doing the same for this year already! To find out more about this, see *www.bidfordgliding.co.uk/instructors.htm*. We will try and rekindle our usual fantastic weather 'window' for our Regional Competition this year (which runs from June 21-29) – you can download your entry form from our website at *www.bidfordgliding.co.uk*

Lynne Burkert

Booker (Wycombe Air Park)

THE 2007 Booker expedition to Aboyne achieved the following: Jim Pengelly, Louis Quartly – Gold height; Steve Brown, Steve Williams – Diamond height and five hours; John Herman - Diamond height. After two years as treasurer Jim White is handing over to Graham Morphy, a retired accountant and former treasurer of a sailing club. Welcome Graham and thanks to Jim. Some of you will have caught news items suggesting the airfield has been sold; this is not true but the BA subsidiary company, which held the lease and manages the field, has been sold to a property and hotel investment group, The Arora Family Trust. Surinder Arora learnt to fly at Booker and has accumulated over 800 hours. The date for this year's Booker Regionals has been set from July 19-27. Historically we have managed surprisingly well for weather in British summers, even last year. Still to come this winter, after the series of Bronze lectures and aerobatic courses, are the last two such courses for this winter, in February and March. Finally David Scott and Ian Simmons, with the support of Wycombe Council, have produced a book on the history of aviation in the area, available from the club, with proceeds to the Thames Valley Air Ambulance.

Roger Neal

Borders (Milfield)

OUR wave weeks proved to be another great success with some fantastic flying. In the last week of October John Richardson (Cirrus), Mike Crews (Vega), Ian Russell (Skylark 4) and Brian Brown (DG-300) all climbed to Diamond height. Jules Sutton (LAK 17) reached our TRA(G) wave box limit at FL240 and had to break off his climb. Dave Wilson (ASW 15b) did what is now commonly called at Borders a 'Bob Cassidy', missing out on his Diamond by 500ft. Well done to all, and a thanks to the BGC tug pilots for enduring the rough, without any smooth! Kate Ashley was sent solo by our CFI Bill Stephen in October. Well done from all of us at Borders for that. Also syndicate partners Mike Smith claimed his five hours Silver duration and Graham White climbed to 12,000ft in their Skylark 4. We are now starting to take bookings for our next lot of wave weeks. See our website diary for more information on how to book.

Rich Abercrombie

Bowland Forest (Chipping)

IT is with great sadness that we must announce the death of Alan Forbes following a long illness. Alan was a longstanding and very active member, putting many years of service in on behalf of the club, with no personal reward. He will be greatly missed by ➢

Please send news to *editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk* or to Helen Evans, BGA, Kimberley House, Vaughan Way, Leicester LE1 4SE **to arrive by February 12** for the next issue (later deadlines at *www.gliding.co.uk*)

Above: ***Burn GC's** oldest and youngest solo pilots present Lee Davison of the Yorkshire Air Ambulance with a cheque for £500. Frank Thompson, aged 88, is a former chairman, CFI and tug pilot, and remains an active pilot and winch driver. Paul Basset soloed on his 16th birthday last June. The money was raised by the club through the year and presented during the Christmas lights switch on in the village of Burn*

Below: *Chris Haylor has soloed recently at **Bidford***

Middle: ***Banbury GC's** Rob Cronk, John Giddings, Tony Limb and Phil Dolins with their club awards*

Bottom: *the trophy winners for 2007 at **The Park***









Below: *These Blokarts – mini landyachts with a three-wheeled steel chassis and a single hand-controlled sail steered by a tiller bar – took part in the British Blokarting Championships at Aston Down in November,* writes Cotswold GC Chairman Mike Weston. *Around 50 Blokarts – operated in the UK under the British Land Speedsail Association (BLSA) – raced, following a successful Blokarting trial at the site. It all started when Cotswold GC was approached by a group of enthusiasts looking for an alternative place to sail their Blokarts, the usual location being a sandy beach. Because Aston Down is a very large airfield with two hard runways and plenty of grass for landing, the club decide losing a small area of a runway would not present a problem. This would also be an opportunity to diversify, would complement existing gliding and model flying uses, and would increase membership and bar sales! CFI Simon Buckley created a operating agreement to define the operational areas and procedures. The Blokarters operate on a small section of whichever runway is not in use at the time and will always be on the upwind side of the launch operation. They sail around a course of inflatable buoys, requiring a surprisingly small area. Blokarters are associate members, which allows the use of the airfield and facilities with an agreement to operate within defined rules. We have proved that the two sports can coexist and interest has been such that at least one CGC member has bought a Blokart and a local Blokart agent is offering membership of CGC with every sale. This venture has brought in new members, revenue and new opportunities; we hope to host more Blokarting competitions and we are also considering combining the two sports in corporate and group events. Blokarting is a relatively new sport and the BLSA is looking for other possible venues. Check out* www.theblsa.com *or contact me on* chairman@cotswoldgliding.co.uk *if you want info on joint operations. With our mile-long runway, we await the right day to go for the Blokarting land speed record!*



Above: *an unusual view last summer of the lion on the Dunstable Downs that advertises Whipsnade Zoo, as seen from a London GC tug* (www.blacknosugar.com)

Below: *A self portrait of Jim Pengelly in wave in Discus 208 at Aboyne during the 2007 Booker expedition*

Bottom: *Graham Wadforth of Wolds was at 32,000ft over Southern Canada, north of Lake Michigan, on November 1, 2007, when he saw these cloudstreets, aligned north-west to south-east, at 1130hrs local*





Above: Brian Harvey enjoys his first flight from Sisteron during the ***Chilterns*** *'07 exped*

Right: Congratulations to Laura Stevens, of ***Shenington****, on her first solo – on her 16th birthday last November*

Below right: ***Bristol & Glos*** *arranged for a glider to go to the Composite Structures Development Centre at Airbus UK in Filton for a day so engineers could see a glider and learn about its construction – and about the sport of gliding, too (Bob Page)*

Below: *Kate Ashley of* ***Borders*** *was sent solo by CFI Bill Stephen on October 24, 2007*

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





Left: *Dave Jesty of* ***Dartmoor*** *did Brenton's first homegrown Gold height for many years in October. His panel shows 2kt up at the start of the climb*

Right: *ex- (and much missed) member Pat Rowell cutting* ***Dishforth's*** *anniversary cake*

Far right: ***DSGC's*** *Pete and Jill Harmer receive a trophy from CFI John Burrows for best flight in a two-seat glider*



by his many friends. Reg Wooller and Caroline Weston attended the North West roll out of the Heartstone Festival of Flight, a charity for the benefit of BME, with the result of offering flights early in 2008. Following his recent retirement from instructing and work, congratulations go to Brian Lomas on achieving Gold height on a recent trip to Feshiebridge. Dishforth are once again being host to several of our members over winter. Good wave climbs along with training in our K-21 have been most welcome in keeping current. We plan to hold a series of Bronze lectures in February and March for those who need it or want refreshing.
Phil Punt/Tracy Joseph

Bristol & Gloucestershire (Nympsfield)

A new soaring ticket is available from £299 as a follow-on from our Solo and Beyond scheme. A one-off payment gives 12 months' free soaring in single-seaters plus access to refresher training. An "adopt a glider" scheme has also been started for volunteers to help maintain the fleet, and the first EASA Cs of A have now been completed. In a recruiting bid, a glider was taken to the Composite Structures Development Centre at Airbus UK in Filton for a day so engineers could see a glider and learn about its construction. Well done, Simon Bawden on completing Silver, former hang-glider pilot Alistair Scott, first to go solo under our new Solo and Beyond scheme, and Anthony Clerici, who also went solo. Our re-engined Pawnee and repaired DG-505 were due back on line in January. Julia Dawson and Jon Meyer left the committee but continue to provide help. At the AGM the officers were re-elected and Martin Talbot and Alison Lees joined the committee. Several good ridge-running days have been enjoyed by members and visitors, with some getting into wave.
Bernard Smyth

Burn (Burn)

CONGRATULATIONS to Ian Myles on going solo. We have held our annual Christmas party and awards ceremony, which was a great success. Flying awards were given to Dave Peters, Bob Baines, Keith Springate, Mike Howey, John Firth and Rob Nichols. Dave Butler and Richard Cust won a prize for failing to switch their logger on in a competition "as it was too technical." The achievements of the Tea Ladies, Doreen Eastwood, Pat Stirk and Jean Pinder, were also recognised. John Stirk has retired as a club instructor after 47 years of unbroken service. John came to the club from the air cadets in 1959 and is the only remaining founder member still with the club. He resoloed early in 1960, flying visitors by June and appointed instructor in the July. How times have changed!
George Goodenough

Cairngorm (Feshiebridge)

WINTER is now upon us and with the demise of the summer thermals, members and visitors have been enjoying the mountain wave whenever possible, which fortunately for us is reasonably often! Our overworked inspectors have been busy with all the Cs of A and to them we all extend our deepest thanks, and appreciation. Mayfest dates have been decided and will run from May 3-18, 2008. Bookings have been coming in thick and fast, and the first week is now almost fully booked out. If you wish to join us for this enjoyable occasion please let the secretary know ASAP at Chris@capercaillie.flyer.co.uk. We will be flying right through the winter whenever possible, so check out our website on www.gliding.org. Look forward to seeing you at Feshie, the friendly club.
Chris Fiorentini

Clevelands (Dishforth)

ON November 3, we celebrated 40 years of flying as a club at Dishforth Airfield. Members old and new came together for a splendid celebration at a local hostelry, organised by Liz Kiely. Leigh Hood regaled us with tales of how he flew the Primary Leeming to Dishforth during the move, and more importantly, how it used to be used as a hangover cure! Jimmy Taylor (ex-Spitfire pilot) announced he had decided to retire from gliding with the Leeds University Gliding Club (LUUGS), and following a poignant speech, donated a beautiful trophy to be awarded annually to the best LUUGS pilot. A delighted Phil Kellman was the first recipient. Winter has been heralded by the arrival of our regular winter wave visitors from Bowland Forest and with the continuing progress and achievements of the very active LUUGS contingent, the club atmosphere remains buoyant. At the time of writing, we are looking forward to our annual wave camp over the two weeks of Christmas.
Polly Whitehead

Chilterns RAFGSA Centre (RAF Halton)

Congratulations to Jonathan Davidson, who soloed on October 28, 2007, his 16th birthday, the only person other than his instructor, Zoe, to fly in the awful weather that day. He already has two Bronze legs and a two-hour flight under his belt since then. Well done also to Neil Beattie; he completed his Assistant Instructor rating in September 2007. Following the success of our club summer ladder, Ken has set up a winter ladder with BGA TPs supported by some additional ones, predominantly along the line of the Chiltern Hills' scarp slope, which is providing some focus for our winter ridge flying; Peter Mann is setting the early pace. Our Skylaunch has been refurbished, and now sports two drums of plastic cable complete with appropriate heads – we look forward to seeing how they fare compared to the one plastic, one steel arrangement we used last year. We are looking forward to Ian (Gally) Gallagher becoming our new CFI on February 1, as announced at our AGM on 22 December (more news on that next issue). Our regular club expedition to Sisteron is planned for April 25 to May 11. Lastly, many thanks are due to Colin McInnes for his excellent guidance and coaching during his stint as CFI.
Andy Hyslop

Cotswold (Aston Down)

SINCE the summer rains left us we have had a productive autumn with a number of new members joining to benefit from our fixed-price-to-solo scheme. Matthew Cook was successfully sent solo by his father Steve on the day after his 16th birthday as it was raining the day before. After careful study of hangars at other clubs we have finalised the design of our own new hangar and we now are at the mercy of the planners. It would be great if we could make a start next spring so that it is ready for the arrival of our new two-seaters. Work is under way to complete the paperwork and inspections to progress the club fleet to G-registration and EASA airworthiness. Our annual autumn expedition to Portmoak was one of the best for many years with most of our pilots being able to reach 10,000ft. No Diamonds, though, as we all seemed to "top out" at about 16,000ft. A number of local Blokarters (think windsurfer on wheels) have become associate club members to use our tarmac runways for blokarting. They like howling gales and don't mind rain and can operate from quite a small area so they will not interfere with normal operations. They held their National Championships on one of our runways (see p54) and it is clearly a growth sport – and could improve chances of a lottery grant?
Frank Birlison

Crusaders (Cyprus)

GREETINGS from the sun and the airfield of eternal crosswind. For any visitors from the RAFGSA you can find us behind the golf course at Dhekelia base. We are open on Wednesday for visitors and weekends for club members. Congratulations to Kevin Vickers, who soloed on only his 68th launch – quite an achievement at Kingsfield. Kev had been lucky enough to attend the last CSJATC course in October (run by the nice guys from RAF Halton) and has continued his attendance at weekends to get him to this point.
Jo Rigby

Darlton (Darlton)

MARGINAL weather conditions affecting the airfield during October and November reduced flying activity significantly from the highs of August and September. However, whenever flying was possible our eager members did not miss any opportunity. Congratulations go to Chris Gadsby on his K-13 solo and early conversion to the K-8 and to two other members for recent achievements missed by the writer: Gold Badge and Diamond goal for John Maddison (CFI) and Diamond distance and goal for Robert Starling. Two expeditions were mounted by almost half the members to savour the delights of wave flying at Portmoak and Milfield, where some notable performances were achieved for endurance and height. One member demonstrated his hitherto unknown climbing ability to great effect in Wooler. Repeat visits are already being planned for next year! Club social events are also flying with the very first Darlton club annual dinner and flying awards in October. Our now retired ex-CFI, John Swannack, celebrated his 70th birthday and was showered with congratulations and presents at a dinner, plus grateful thanks for his dedication and to the club and the sport over many years.
Geoff Homan

Dartmoor (Brentor)

THE hero of our input for this edition is Dave Jesty who, not long after gaining his Silver distance and having recently purchased an LS8-18, soared the easterly wave over Brentor to 12,800ft agl in October, thus gaining his Gold height. As if proof were needed (and his claim has been ratified) the picture above shows his instrument panel, with two up at the point of his departure from the climb. This is the first Gold height claimed from Brentor for many years. To cap it all, Dave then eked out his descent to achieve a flight of over five hours, thus completing his Silver. On the personnel front we have greeted the arrival of Bob Pirie as a very welcome addition to the Instructor's roster. Bob will also continue to instruct at Lasham. On the ground we have survived a relatively hostile early winter, with some vicious storms putting the drainage of our all grass field to the test. We have taken the opportunity to do some fence mending, both literally and diplomatically, and Gus Pearce's efforts to give the 'old' winch a mid-life update are making good progress – so good in fact that he has ordered blue and yellow paint to make it look like a real Skylaunch!
Martin Cropper

Derby & Lancs (Camphill)

CONGRATULATIONS to Craig Hopkins and Dave Harrison for going solo, and to Tony Wade for re-soloing after a 15-year lay off. Bill Hughes has been appointed President of the club,



Left: *Peter Stafford Allen in festive mood at* ***Fenland***





Right: *Steve Brehaut's is given his wings by instructors Carol Marshall and John Swayles outside the hangar on the day he soloed, November 4. Another person to solo at* ***Dorset*** *that day was* (far right) *Shaun Reason, who is seen being congratulated by his instructor, Gerry Cox, who also took the photo of Steve*

and will have his first official duty at our AGM on December 15. Thanks are due to a number of committee members who are retiring, and we look forward to some new blood at the helm, or should that be, at the stick. A winter programme of talks is up and running, which will include some of general interest as well as lectures. The first of these was "Flying the Tornado" by one of our instructors Dave Moss, and included video apparently not to be seen by his former employer. We also have joint meetings with the hang and paraglider pilots of the Derbyshire Soaring Club. The simulator now seems to be doing more flying than the gliders due to the almost incessant rain and wind. Thanks are due to all those who assisted with this major project, and a program of repairs to our perimeter track is under way. We have said "auf wiedersehen" to Dieter Polack, whose aerospace job has taken him and his Phoebus back to Germany.

Dave Salmon

Devon & Somerset (North Hill)

CONGRATULATIONS to Paul Summers, who has gone solo. Nick Hine celebrated his 40th birthday with a charity parachute jump from 15,000ft at Dunkerswell, our local power flying airfield and in the process raised £1,000 for Cheshire Homes. At our AGM Pete Startup won the trophy for the club ladder, Pete and Jill Harmer the trophy for the best flight in a two-seater glider and Roland Clarke the Wily Old Bird trophy for his Diamond goal flight. Mike Robinson, who keeps club equipment running, and this year designed and built our impressive new launch control vehicle, was presented with a special plate depicting the launch vehicle surrounded by gliders in various attitudes with Mike piloting them all.

Kaye Alston

Dorset (Eyres Field)

WE have had a fairly dry autumn and managed to do a record number of flights and trial lessons this year, despite the indifferent summer. Congratulations go to Shaun Reason and Steve Brehaut who went solo on November 4. Nick Barnes took his K-6CR to Nympsfield in November, where he enjoyed his first experience of hill soaring. Our new workshop was 'officially' opened mid November, and there are approved plans for a couple of other storage facilities for other equipment. Our thanks as always to those who have done the bulk of the hard work over this past year. But let's not forget those that have 'hogged' most of the flying, for without them, and the instructors, and trial flights, where would the club income have come from?

Colin Weyman

East Sussex (Ringmer)

LAST year was akin to the curate's egg, just like the weather. The introduction of plasma rope was a great success. In the spring, operations moved to 24L/06R and teeth-rattling ground runs were a thing of the past. The works to level the remainder of our field continued so it was a juggling act to keep things going, especially when part of it became an archaeological site for six weeks. The western side should be ready for re-seeding next autumn and the years of mud, dust and disruption should be over. In the meantime, despite the lack of space, we are keeping busy. Amidst many achievements, Val Phillips completed her Assistant rating course while Ollie Barter completed his Diamond goal and competed in the Junior Nationals. It was nice to welcome visitors from Challock and Channel, who flew in during the summer.

John Weddell

Edensoaring (Penrith)

WE have had a good start to our existence in 2007, with flying open to visiting pilots in September and October. Each week has seen locals and visitors using the hill, all 45km of it, and also amazingly good thermals in October, with transition to wave and mountain flying over and in the Lake District. Fingers crossed, after Bruce Cooper's hard work, for the raising of the airway over the Lakes from FL125 to FL160 early in 2008, to supplement our FL195 over the site and the Pennines. The wave boxes are also being tidied up to allow easier access up to FL245. All looking great for 2008. We shall be re-starting in May with "Penrith Week" on May 10, places nearly filled. There will be other informal task weeks open to visitors this the year, please see www.edensoaring.co.uk for details. At other times between May and October club groups or informal groups will be welcome to use the site if they have someone suitable to takes charge, please contact us to arrange this on office@edensoaring.co.uk

Pete Whitehead

Essex (Ridgewell)

CONGRATULATIONS to Bob Cassels on his Full Instructor rating. Tuesday, October 16 was a special day for Sam Fisher, our youngest member – his 16th birthday and the day he was sent solo. Well done, Sam. Many thanks must go to all those who made a special effort to open up the airfield especially for Sam to realise his dream. We must not forget another of our young members, Tim Harvey, who has from time to time made use of the club stove and provided us with culinary delights. Thanks a lot Tim. Well done also to Dave Charles in qualifying as a winch driver. On the social side, Guy Fawkes was duly celebrated with an enormous bonfire, fireworks and barbecue party and this together with excellent food, thanks to Sue and Geoff Martin, ensured that all those members who attended enjoyed a very good time. As to the winter, the Anglia GC at Wattisham has again very kindly invited us to fly with them when our own field at Ridgewell becomes too wet. Thanks, Anglia, we very much appreciate your offer and look forward to flying with you all.

Peter Perry

Fenland (RAF Marham)

CONGRATULATIONS go to me, Graham French on achieving my Assistant Instructor rating. Welcome to Rob Stallard, who joins us as Deputy Officer in Charge. The main event in our social calendar was this year's Christmas Do, held in November – I know, a little early, but it didn't diminish the enjoyment of the evening. Those who came along had a fantastic evening, as the photo of our Pete Stafford Allen shows. The main event for us recently was a Leadership, Ethos and Air Power (LEAP) day held at RAF Marham where lots of mini-events took place. Paul McLean arranged a gliding event as part of the day and we flew 30 service personnel around in, admittedly weather that you wouldn't leave the bar for, with a cloudbase just above the winch launch height. All gained an insight into our sport with a few promising to return. We shall see. Thanks to all those who helped make the day such a success. Another event is due in January; if this continues we shall soon have flown the whole camp.

Graham French

The Gliding Centre (Husbands Bosworth)

BONFIRE night was well attended and the firework display was spectacular! The third hangar door has now been completely refurbished. Many thanks to everyone who helped, and particularly Gary Carr. We are extending our bar in to the new clubhouse area – even more room for beer! Happy New Year (belated) to all our members and happy soaring in 2008.

Siobhan Crabb







Darlton

DARLTON Gliding Club is a brand new club formed in June 2007 from the Dukeries club (from Gamston Airfield, Retford) and Newark & Notts (late of Winthorpe Airfield, Newark).

Both clubs lost their previous sites, largely due to development, at the same time in mid 2006 and had previously combined efforts, initially searching for two new sites. Circumstances intervened and the two came together to form a single new club at Darlton, located in North Nottinghamshire, a few miles east of Tuxford, off the A1 Great North Road.

Each of the merging clubs had been based at its previous location for many years. Dukeries, then Bassetlaw GC, started in 1987 with stalwarts Tim Bowles, John Rawlins, John Rice and John Swannack flying at Gamston Airfield with a T-21, Swallow, K-7; they had a hand-built winch and rigged and de-rigged daily for seven years before getting a hangar. Life was tough in those days!

Newark & Notts, formally Rotherham & District GC, started flying in 1968 with pioneers Ted Frost, Tony Faulkner, Fred Mann, John Cawrey and Jack Parker before moving to Winthorpe in 1975 and changed to South Yorks & Notts GC with T-21, T-31, Capstan and Swallow gliders.

The club slowly developed, building its own hangar and clubhouse and eventually renamed as Newark & Notts GC in 1978, as it remained until June 2006.

The new Darlton club operates from a 28-acre site with a 1,300-metre grass runway (05/23) remote from most local population, and controlled airspace, in the very peaceful North Nottinghamshire countryside. The site is still being developed with full utility services planned but a new hangar and temporary clubhouse are already in place. A planning application has been made recently to operate tug aircraft and motorgliders, which if successful will add an exciting dimension to the evolving club.

Currently membership stands at 65 full members with efforts being made to recruit new members from our extended catchment area of North Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire. Winch launching, from our stable of three gas or diesel winches, currently achieves average heights up to 1,400ft, but heights of up to 2,000ft have been recorded, resulting in excellent soaring opportunities from numerous thermal hotspots adjacent to the site. Some notable cross-country flights have already been recorded. As the club is on the south-west boundary of the Lincolnshire Area of Intense Aerial Activity, with several adjacent active RAF airfields, we have more than a few fast military jets passing by so a good lookout is a top priority!

Although the Darlton site has been active only since July 2006, and operating as a combined club (Dukeries plus Newark & Notts) since June 2007, the members have made tremendous progress in turning what were fields of oilseed rape into an efficient gliding site. It is, perhaps, an excellent example of what can be achieved in developing a brand new gliding site from scratch in our rather difficult and restrictive planning and environmental circumstances. As always, each and every visitor to Darlton can expect a warm and friendly welcome.

Geoff Homan

Photographs on this page clockwise from top left, show:

The new gliding site at Darlton, where the former Dukeries and Newark & Notts GCs are based, last summer. The 28-acre site, has a 1,300-metre long grass runway aligned 05/23;
Construction work stops for delivery of container. A new hangar and temporary clubhouse have already been built;
Winter flying at Darlton.

All photos courtesy of John Maddison





At a glance

Full membership cost: £185 pa

Launch type & cost: Winch only - £5.50

Club Fleet: Janus B, Sport Vega, K-13 (x2), K8

Private gliders: 16 plus one motorglider

Instructors/Full flying members: 20/65

Types of lift: Thermal and wave

Operating days:
Weds, Saturdays, Sundays & Bank Holidays

Contacts:
Launchpoint mobile – 07772 704178
Secretary: Mike Terry – 01777 870675
www.darltonglidingclub.co.uk

Site location:
50.14. 728 N 00. 51. 505 W

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Club news





Two new solos at ***Portsmouth Naval****: left, Ernie MacNeil (left) with instructor Ben Bennett (photo by Neil Shaw), and, above, Jonathan Stockley (right) pictured with instructor Geoff Clark*



Above: *the 2007 Oxford GC trophy winners: From left, Martin Brown, Steve McCurdy, Carole Shepherd, Louise Walker, Emma Cuthill, and Claudia Buengen (Photo: Damien Dyer)*

Herefordshire (Shobdon)

WE have enjoyed some pleasant wave and ridge days during the autumn – no great heights or distances, but a few people have had climbs to 12,000-14,000ft and have flown some short cross-countries in the wave. We were hoping for some more exciting and reliable conditions over Christmas and New Year, when some of the members were planning a week's flying. Before then we had our Christmas dinner at a local hostelry. Our Blanik is again serviceable following an AD, with Mike Dodd our CFI and team completing the work under the appropriate regulatory supervision. Many thanks to all involved. Mike Hayes, our tugmaster, is arranging for the tug's overhaul to be done by stages during mid-week, so that we should have the use of the tug every weekend without having to borrow from elsewhere. New seat covers have also been fitted to the tug, providing maximum comfort for our hardworking tuggies.

Diana King

Highland (Easterton)

THERE have been some notable individual successes recently. Seven is now Tom Brennan's lucky number. He went solo on only his seventh training slot and then topped this by climbing at 7kt to 12,500ft on his seventh solo to claim Silver height. Callum Reid also achieved Silver height, in his case by going to "only" 10,000ft. Obi-Wan has taught him well! Congratulations also go to Don Scobbie, who went solo in November. Some other good news is that the club's hours of operation have been extended and flying now takes place every Friday. We are currently evaluating Glidex software and Callum Reid is fulfilling the role of local "super user". It is hoped that the system will reduce the administrative burdens involved in calculating flying fees, checking pilot currency, ensuring medical and instructor rating renewals are not forgotten, etc. Peter Goodfellow deserves a big "thank you" for the excellent job he made of creating a new office out of the store cupboard. At the end of October, our youngest members enthusiastically demolished their Kids Club cabin and used the debris to build a fantastic bonfire for the fireworks night. They are now fundraising for a new clubhouse.

John Thomson

Kestrel (Odiham)

CONGRATULATIONS go to Nic Marchment for his first solo at Kestrel and conversion to a new type. After much cajoling the CFI finally got his way and sent two of the club instructors off on a Full Rating course, at this point we should like to thank Roy Gaunt for his patience, understanding and nerves of steel. End result we have two new Full Rated Instructors – well done to Brian Garston and me! Our aircraft members managed to get a jump on the winter maintenance cycle and started in late November, and works are now well underway for completion. Many thanks must go to David Calvert for the floor-to-ceiling rebuild of the clubhouse kitchen (and we do mean floor), which has vastly improved things. Lastly all at Kestrel would like to pass on their thanks to Sean Reynolds, who as chairman has been the driving force behind the recent changes at the club.

Neil Armstrong

Lasham Gliding Society (Lasham)

LOOKING back on 2007 it's good to see that flying activity for the year as a whole was up despite some dreadful weather in what should have been the busiest months of the year. Let's hope this trend (the flying, not the weather) continues. Gordon MacDonald, our longstanding CFI, has decided to step down from his post in the next few months, having made an enormous contribution to the society over the years. While we hope that he will stay on in a different capacity, this leaves us looking for an enthusiastic and energetic replacement. We hope to have the new CFI in post in time for the new season. Many congratulations to a previous CFI, Derek Piggott, who has been awarded the Royal Aero Club Gold Medal. Additionally, the Royal Aeronautical Society has appointed Derek an Honorary Companion of the Society – yet another great honour, richly deserved. Best wishes to all for good flying in 2008.

Alastair Mackinnon

London (Dunstable)

THE winter programme is in full swing with Bronze lectures on Wednesday evenings, NPPL ground school on Tuesdays, and on Saturday nights we have a range of events including presentations on safety, the mysteries of weather forecasting, and our annual prizegiving. Daniel Chilcot, Andrew Sampson, Mike Sapwell and David White have completed their Basic Instructor course, many thanks to coaches Andrew Roch and Tom Sage. Along with Ewan Crosbie and Adam Roberts who qualified earlier in the year, the 2007 intake of new BIs will help to support the future development of our instructor base. Despite the damp conditions we have enjoyed some good flying including several "sporty" ridge flying days and the occasional hint of wave. In fact the hill started to work as soon as soaring fees were terminated for the winter (free flying time for members lasts through to the end of February). The spot-landing contest promises to draw a large entry, as always the only problem will be where to put the spot. Ground crew will be practising for the fastest retrieve. We are looking forward to the new season with Easter expeditions to Shobdon and Cerdanya. The Dan Smith aerobatics competition takes place on March 29-30.

Andrew Sampson

Mendip (Halesland)

2007 was a mixed year that, despite the awful weather, saw Colin Little and Terry Hatton both complete their 50kms in their Astir. Patrick Hogarth completed his 300km. Andy has flown his socks off as usual by completing his 300km, achieving his Gold and Silver heights on a solo trip to Aboyne followed by completing his Assistant Instructor course. Unfortunately, we report the very sad loss of our dear friend Tom Fisher who passed away in November. Tom was a great friend of many and his skills and personality will never be replaced.

Terry Hatton

Midland (The Long Mynd)

AFTER another successful course season the club has resumed winter opening times, four days a week, although any potentially good days are open by negotiation. The Mynd is a spectacular site in winter and we have already had some memorable wave days. The committee is developing a five-year strategic plan for the club. This is now available to members (on the website), and has stimulated considerable discussion on how we should move forward. Congratulations to Luke Sanders and Helen Johnson on their Bronze Badges and to Keith Ellis and Jeannette Griffin on going solo. Unfortunately Jeannette's husband was not on site to witness the occasion but was summoned later to collect her from the celebration in the bar.

Steven Gunn-Russell

Nene Valley (Upwood)

AFTER the AGM we now have Kerry Mertz as our new treasurer and Simon Gent as our new PR member, the webmaster (a non-committee post) will be split from the PR member responsibilities, but will liaise with Simon. The usual January shutdown will be a hive of activity: EASA preparation, concrete floor middle section in the hangar and unpinning the sagging clubhouse south-west section, to name but a few. Annual flying checks for pilots are also planned over the winter months.

Dave Mansfield

Norfolk (Tibenham)

AT the end of season dinner the flying silverware was carried off by Ray Hart, Tim Davies, Pete Ryland, John Roche-Kelly, Paul Woodcock and James Francis. Berkeley Pittaway was a worthy recipient of the AGIP trophy for services to the club. Our new fuel delivery system, close to the clubhouse, has been brought into service making life easier for the powered aircraft. With our club manager and resident instructor Mick Hughes in charge of our weekday operation we are continuing to provide aerotow and winch launching seven days a week throughout the winter as well as cross-country checks for those that need them. Visitors are very welcome. In 2008 we are hosting the Eastern Regionals from May 24-June 1 and the Open Class Nationals from July 5-13. Let's hope for less rain than we had in 2007.

Michael Bean

North Wales (Llantysilio)

I THOUGHT this was going to be a "slow news" issue but things have been happening. The first day of December the forecast was awful but some of us with faith in local weather variations made our way to the airfield and were rewarded with a splendid day's flying. In a brisk westerly wind we had winch launches of 1,750ft, hill lift, traces of wave and grins all round – winter is not all bad. On a sadder note we learned of the death of Dave Sprake, aged 63. Dave had been at one time an instructor with North Wales and also at the Mynd, while with us Dave put much into the club and will be missed by all who knew him. We are glad to welcome back Ian Skinner, a past member and instructor, who left us to transform himself from accountant into an airline pilot, this achieved he now wishes to involve himself once more in gliding and hopefully become checked out to instruct again, taking a little pressure off our hard-pressed existing instructors. Lastly, one bit of very good news is that an appeal against being charged, and backdated, for business rates on all our portable structures, including a T-hangar and two large containers, has been successful thus keeping our little club solvent. Thanks to our new treasurer Carl Pierce, who achieved this single-handedly.

Brian Williams

Oxford (Weston on the Green)

THE end of the summer season saw a grand fireworks evening, in which hardly anyone got hurt! A few weeks after that we had the annual event designed to ensure that I get no trophies, otherwise known as the AGM and awards evening. This was fully successful, and I did indeed get no awards. Again. Congratulations, however, to the worthy winners, pictured above. At the AGM

Club news



Greg Beattie after going solo on his 16th birthday in October at ***York***



Rattlesden's *Alan Towse receiving a certificate to recognise all he has done and does for the club, from president Roger Watts, at the annual dinner*

chairman Paul stood down, after two camper vans and three years' hard work. Thanks Paul, seriously. However, we have replaced him with a new chairman Paul, and we even have a new vice-chairman. Also called Paul. One re-solo to report – Alberto Araoz who first soloed in an Argentine club some 20 years ago. The Tuesday night team are now in full EASA C of A mode, the first job was to change our much loved CGQ into CGO. The club welcomes our new inspector, Andrew Butterfield, who has already had a few tricky questions about airworthiness on his weekends off. And finally, congratulations to our friends at Aquila (now Banbury GC), who upheld the Midland League's honour by winning the Inter-Club League final. Super job, chaps!
Neil Swinton

Portsmouth Naval (Lee on Solent)

AUTUMN produced some notable successes. First Steve Morgan achieved Gold Height at Aboyne. Then Ernie MacNeil was sent on his first solo by Ben Bennett, and a month later Jonathan Stockley (aged 16) followed after instruction with Geoff Clark. Meanwhile, Richard Lovett qualified as a Basic Intructor, and membership secretary Kevin Hills won press acclaim as a "daring test-pilot", after taking a Jodell light aircraft on its maiden flight after five years of build activity from another airfield user. Congratulations to all! The club has now acquired a Falke motor-glider, which will greatly increase our training capabilities. Finally our status cannot be covered without mention of ongoing issues on the airfield, which affect our GA friends, and unnecessarily frustrate enjoyment. These cuminated in a Parliamentary debate, much coverage in the local media, and moves towards legal action by the GA community against closure decisions by the airfield management. We trust matters will be quickly and satisfactorily resolved.
Neil Shaw

Rattlesden (Rattlesden)

CONGRATULATIONS to Michael Jillings on going solo last October. The club's annual dinner and awards evening was held at Ickworth House, Bury St Edmunds in November; Dave King won the Woody Winch Trophy, Paul Roche the club ladder, and Gren Croll the Numb Bum Trophy for his 516km flight. David Salvage was awarded the Landlords' Cup for the most improved pilot; Martin Raper won the Cunningham Trophy jointly with Mark Taylor and Paul Roche. Alan Towse was given a special certificate to recognise all he has and does for Rattlesden, along with life membership to the club. Pete Harrison and Brian Griffiths were awarded with a crystal glider each for all their hard work instructing every Wednesday. It is with great sadness that we heard that Karen Wright collapsed and died on Sunday, December 2, 2007; she will be greatly missed (see also p61).
Helen Page

Scottish (Portmoak)

WE had another successful cross-country course week in early September, and a number of our members ventured far and wide to claim their Silver distances. One visitor in September was Ed Downham in his EB28. He and Kevin Hook flew over the mountains to the west coast and Kevin is still talking about the flight. Ed's interest in our part of the world was fuelled by the flights that John Williams and Kevin had been posting on the ladder. These two have been swapping the lead most of the year and, as reported in the last issue of S&G, they even manage to do two "laps" of declared 500 or 750s! Not satisfied with the UK Ladder, John has beaten off a strong European field to win the OLC Championships – and remember that his flights were all within Scotland! Other achievements include: Alan Manning, Steve Wrigley and George Ballantyne (first solo) Ally Doig, David Reitter, Andy Graham and Donald Carmichael (Bronze and Cross-country Endorsement) Maurice Williams (Bronze and Silver height), Alan Gillanders (Bronze, Cross-country Endorsement, Silver height and Gold height), Frank Fiddess (Silver duration), Ken Roberston, Alastair Mutch and Peter Sharpehouse (Silver Badge and Gold height), Keith Morgan (Gold Badge and Diamond height), Vic Leitch (Silver and Gold Badges and Diamond goal), Alan Cridge (Gold height at Talgarth), Colin Hamilton (750km), Chris Robinson and Gerry Marshall (Full Ratings). Keep an eye out for my Colibri, which was stolen from my car (NCP car park in London) - S/No. 15324, thanks.
Ian Easson

Shenington (Edgehill)

LOOKING back on 2007, there are times when a hill-top site has its advantages. Despite local flooding during the peak months of the season our field drained quickly, enabling midweek flying to continue largely uninterrupted. Our wooden ships competition was won by Tom Edwards in his K-8 and saw much of the club fleet landing in the same field. Saturday evening "cook-ins" have turned into a regular event and are well attended, as was our fire-work party in November with over 100 people present. Thanks to John Watson for his efforts as CFI over the last year and course instructor Derek Woodforth, who takes over the reigns for 2008. Derek will continue to run day and weekly courses through the coming season, supported by fellow instructor Dick Skerry from Strubby. As I write, we are planning an informal Christmas party in the clubhouse and preparing for our annual dinner dance in early February. We are also looking forward to hosting more visits from other clubs again next summer. Feel free to call in check out our reputation as "the friendly gliding club"!
Geoff Purcell

Southdown (Parham)

The Christmas dinner and dance seemed an ideal moment to celebrate the year's achievements at Parham. Gez Smith was given a well-deserved ovation for organising the party, and for choosing the James Bond theme. It suggested just the right combination of danger and risk assessment to get even the most superannuated members on to the dance floor. Flying awards went to Paul Fritche, Paul Tickner, Julian Hitchcock, Angus Buchanan, Derek Whitney, Ian Ashdown, Derek Eastell and our chairman, Craig Lowrie. Jim Heath is one of the club's engineering backroom boys, and his contribution to keeping us all flying was duly recognised and applauded. We were delighted to see former cadet Katie Simmonds, now with Virgin Atlantic, and to learn that she will take her ATPL course next year. Alan Haines soloed in November, and Hakan Andersson and Duncan Stewart have become Full Rated instructors. The club took part in Fittleworth School's aviation project, rigging a PIK20D in the playground, and the students'enthusiasm bodes well for future recruitment.
Peter Holloway

Staffordshire (Seighford)

OUR second twin Astir was collected from its French home at Belfort, thanks to Peter Gill, Alan Jolly and Graham Burton. The outward trip was quite eventful, with severe weather in the channel, torrential rain in northern France and finally snow as they reached Belfort. The return trip was less difficult and the glider is now safely in our hangar being prepared to go on the British register. Now that flying is at a lower level, we had a contractor working to remove the worst of the bumps on our aerotow strip, the smoothed areas are greening up nicely and our tuggies and motorglider pilots will enjoy much smoother take-offs and landings in the new year.
Colin Ratcliffe

Stratford on Avon (Snitterfield)

AMONGST normal business our October AGM provided the opportunity to recognise some notable achievements and celebrate some significant successes over the past season. It was appropriate to reminisce over how we 'scientifically' picked our expedition and badge weeks to deliver us some of the better summer weather. Our annual expedition to Sutton Bank provided 229 hours in the air and countless flights over 10,000ft. Our badge week saw us clock up 294 hours airtime and almost 17,000km, and over the whole season we flew almost 29,000km – a club record. A gaggle of individuals picked up trophies from both the flying and behind-the-scenes perspective. An eventful year was clearly had by Steve Pearce, who collected a trophy for topping the badge ladder and another trophy for most progress in the year, and becoming vehicle manager, and joining the committee. Of special note, Phil King and Martyn Davies were presented with engraved glass awards to commemorate their 750km flights in August. As the autumn progressed we had John Dickinson (our club chairman) join the ranks of Assistant Instructors, and we've also had Nick Jaffray (vice chairman) and Graham MacMillan become Basic Instructors. Winter flying continues with shorter, colder flights to match the shorter, colder days, whilst winter evening lectures see us focussing on radio procedures, using loggers and preparing for Bronze.
Richard Maksymowicz

Surrey Hills (Kenley)

I'LL start by congratulating the four members who have recently gone solo at the club. That being Chris North, Chris Mitchell, Chris Carter and James Dorman (Chris is starting to become a very popular name at our site). Further Congratulations go to Chris North, who has gone on to complete his Bronze Badge, and subsequently was awarded the Club Award at this year's prizegiving dinner. The Christmas Dinner and prizegiving was as ever a well-attended event, enjoyed by all. The other awards given were the ab initio award, which went to Chris Mitchell, and The Alex Wright Award (which is named after a founder member of the club and goes to the person who has put a lot of work into the club over the year) went to Keith Hampson. Well done to you all. On other club matters, work has now started on the modernisation of the club's facilities following our successful planning application. This will involve the replacement of our very old clubhouse with a new building, the replacement of our workshop and the recovering of our hangar. A big thank you goes out to all the members who have taken an active role in getting this work done.
Marc Corrance

Windrushers (Bicester)

LOCAL MP Tony Baldry visited during October to discuss our aims for the future with the management committee. Autumn soaring continued into November with Keith Millar clocking up an hour in his Kestrel 19. Wednesday and Friday flying continues, being supported both by Windrushers members and students from Oxford and Cranfield Universities. At the AGM the following trophies were awarded: Chairman's Trophy: Clive Dalzell;

Obituaries

Most Meritorious Flight of the Year: Jed Edyvean for his 750km flight in his Nimbus 3 (see p21); Member of the Year: George Tvalashvili; CFI's Trophy: Alan Smith; The Alfar Memorial Award – awarded annually to the member who has made a significant voluntary contribution to club operations without thanks or favour: John Wright; The LX Cup awarded to the member who, in the past year, has completed the fastest handicapped 200km closed circuit task, went to Dave Watt for 203km in 1hr 50 minutes 14 seconds at an average of 106.3km/h.

Dave Smith

Wyvern (Upavon)

DESPITE the continuing threats to our flying from Upavon the annual winter routine of maintaining the fleet has started with the first K-21 (EKG) in the workshop, and there will be the added workload of transition to EASA C of A for all our gliders. We hope all members will offer to lend the technical member a hand from time to time with whatever tasks he can delegate. Recent weeks have been marked by the completion of the technical repairs on the Falke T-61 motorglider (G-BTWC) and wishing it farewell as it transfers to Anglia GC at Wattisham. Chief Engineer John Collins has maintained it for so long he must be sad to see it go. Replacing it is a significantly more capable Grob 109B on which qualified pilots have been converting and new NPPL students training under the tutelage of the CFI. All future cross-country checks will be flown in the Grob as well using it for ab initio gliding training, so it's an asset that will get lots of use. Extra special congratulations to Andy Parker on being sent solo by the chairman after a long training period – yet another demonstration of a student's persistence and his instructors' patience.

Andy Gibson

York (Rufforth)

SOMEHOW the Rufforth news fell off the end of the last edition *(Sorry, my fault – Helen Evans, Editor,* S&G*)* so here's a double dose. The last days of summer saw two Rufforth gliders competing at Pocklington in the two-seater competition. The club team, flying our DG-505, finished 12th overall out of 33 with G-SORA just behind in 13th – a valiant effort. In the following weeks, any thermals finally died, but the wave gave us renewed hope. Tom Stoker has the greatest height gain so far at 10,560ft, while Jay Smith made a 313km wave cross-country and a max altitude of 13,530ft. We welcome back York University GC, and the enthusiasm they bring under the leadership of Laura Maksymowicz. Your correspondent is now an Assistant Instructor, and looks forward to seeing the back of your head in the future! We congratulate Greg Beattie on going solo on his 16th birthday in October. Greg has great enthusiasm for the sport and much potential, and we look forward to seeing him progress in the years to come. The annual club dinner-dance at the York racecourse was once again a great success. Many members enjoyed an evening of fine cuisine, sophisticated conversation and, let's say, 'elegant' dancing. Stepping down from the committee is Mark Boyle, who has made a great contribution over the last year. Mark will still be contributing to committee work as Deputy CFI. After seven years, Richard Smith also steps down as chairman of the club. Richard has always had great passion for the York Gliding Centre, and has put in a great deal of work to provide members with the successful and friendly club they continue to enjoy. A special award was presented to Richard in recognition of his service.

Andrew Batty

Yorkshire (Sutton Bank)

YGC members have not been in hibernation during the winter. Andy Darlington went solo; Jesper Mjels got his Gold height and is also now cleared for tugging. Congratulations to you both! The most important winter project has been our stimulator, sorry, simulator. Many a happy hour has been spent cutting up what, in the end, turned out to be a perfectly serviceable Puchacz. A special thank you must go to David Latimer for his engineering work and skills, and also to our computer wizard, Kelly Teagle, for sorting out the software. Also, a big thank you to everyone else who has helped with the project. Thank you to everyone who took part in our very successful and interesting winter lectures.

John Marsh

S&G's thanks as always to Debb Evans for editing this month's Club News *– Helen Evans, Editor*

Ronald William Asplin – Coventry, The Gliding Centre, Lincolnshire

RON Asplin (1924-2007), who has recently passed away, was a member at the then Coventry Gliding Club at Husbands Bosworth for more than 30 years, *writes Ron Davidson.* As well as being a keen cross-country and competition pilot , Ron was an instructor and tug pilot and could always be relied on to turn up for his duty. He flew his Std. Cirrus CNN for many years and his charming first wife Mary would often crew for him; her clear bell-like voice calling his call sign "Charlie Nooky Nooky" over the airwaves caused many a chuckle in the gliding world. Following wartime service in the Fleet Air Arm as an engineering officer and occasionally flying the fearsome Swordfish, Ron went into the aviation industry, finishing up at Warton near Manchester with British Aerospace. His last big job before retirement was the tanker conversion of the Victor bomber for the Falklands campaign, a task which took him and his team working 24 hours a day for two weeks in order to get the job done. Following his retirement, Ron was able to spend more time flying but, following the death of Mary, he met and married Mavis and moved to Lincolnshire. He joined Strubby but continued to visit Hus Bos, where his cheerful grin and wealth of aviation knowledge were always welcome. Ron joined the Lincolnshire GC, *adds Dick Skerry,* when he moved to the east coast in 2003. he quickly became part of the club and was a regular and enthusiastic club man. Ron would frequently grab a club aircraft and disappear returning as we were preparing the trailer. When the insurance rules caught up with him I regularly flew with him as a safety pilot. Ron's knowledge as an engineer was of great assistance to the club. If something needed mending Ron would take it away and bring it back immaculately repaired. When we couldn't fly he kept us entertained with stories of the Victor. Ron was always one of the first on the field and last to go, until a fall earlier in the year slowed him down. He will be greatly missed by all at Strubby. Our condolences go to Mavis and his family.

Ron Davidson & Dick Skerry

Jack Tarr – Doncaster, Trent Valley, Yorkshire

JACK Tarr (1922-2007) was born at Hooton Pagnell, near Doncaster, into a farming family. In 1939 he joined the RAF and initially served with 10 squadron on Whitley bombers. This instilled a lifelong interest in aviation into him. Jack will be remembered by many of the older members of Doncaster & District GC. He was deeply involved in its foundation during 1959 and was chairman for several years. Later he served as CFI at Sturgate, then the home of Trent Valley club. He was also a member of the Yorkshire GC, where he won the Northerns in 1970 in his Slingsby Sky! He was a well-known restaurant owner in the Doncaster area and always a colourful character. Jack sent me solo, in an open cockpit Tutor, between snowstorms on my 16th birthday. In 1960 Jack was receiving some unofficial circuit instruction in an Auster when the engine failed. This resulted in a glide into the International Harvesters Recreation field, on the approach to Doncaster Airport – during a cricket match! The local paper reported that when rescuers arrived, one of the pilots had asked: "Is it my innings yet"? That was our Jack!

Bob McLean

Karen Wright – Rattlesden

Karen Wright (1959-2007)was a stalwart member of Rattlesden GC for over 20 years; latterly devoting many hours as treasurer, social function organiser, point of contact and self-proclaimed "Radio Rattlesden". She first became a member of Rattlesden in 1989, joining then husband Mark and father Alan as an occasional participant. It took a while, but she was slowly lured into actively taking up the sport full time in the early 1990s. She became an avid and almost competitive collector of glider types, locations and instructor names for her logbook. Each of which was a new adventure in itself. Some of the highlights of her gliding career were eventually passing her Bronze in 2005, flying the BGA Duo Discus with Simon Adlard at Husbands Bosworth and being allowed to fly a K-18 solo at Camphill courtesy of Kevin Moloney, as well as winning the club's prestigious Most Improved Pilot trophy all of which took place in 2006. She was very much looking forward to the forthcoming soaring season with a positive attitude to overcome her lack of self-confidence in her abilities and planning to fly her beloved Mistral C cross-country. Karen was known to many people in gliding, especially in East Anglia or those who landed out at Rattlesden, as she was often the first person on the radio or welcoming them. It always filled her with pleasure to go to other sites and competitions in order to "see who I can see"; and, invariably, there were many. She was not averse to name-dropping a good many famous gliding names in the process. Karen died suddenly after collapsing on December 2, whilst out Christmas shopping with her partner after being at Rattlesden Gliding Club. All those who knew Karen are deeply shocked and saddened at the passing of a fantastic ambassador for gliding and her club. Our condolences to daughter Claire, father Alan and partner Bod.

DJ Graham



Karen Wright of Rattlesden GC, who won the club's Most Improved Trophy in 2006

BGA Badges

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
BGA 750KM DIPLOMA			
66	Phil King	752/SNI-PTF-TUX-LAS-SNI	8.8.2007
67	Martyn Davies	752/SNI-PTF-TUX-LAS-SNI	8.8.2007
68	Colin Hamilton	755/EDZ-CRN-MTR-SRN-FFR	10.9.2007
69	Peter Gray	766/LOK-BSS-FIN-OBA-ABO	10.9.2007
70	Bruce Cooper	768/LAS-BOT-BUL-SBY-LAS	30.7.2007
71	Kay Draper	757/LAS-GAI-POP-NAE-LAS	30.7.2007
DIAMOND BADGE			
723	Graham Paul	Shenington	8.8.2007
724	Michael Roff-Jarrett	Lasham	31.7.2007
725	Lindsay McLane	Yorkshire	8.8.2007
726	Terry Moyes	Gliding Centre	30.7.2007
727	Santiago Cervantes	SGU	30.7.2007
728	Michael Rubin	Lasham (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
729	Willy Hackett	Bannerdown (Moriarty)	28.5.2007
730	John Gorringe	Lasham (Omarama)	11.12.2006
731	Howard Torode	Lasham (Aboyne)	16.10.2007
732	Richard Whitaker	Lasham (Aboyne)	16.10.2007
733	John McWilliam	Bristol & Glos	31.7.2007
Diamond distance			
1-1083	Graham Paul	Shenington	8.8.2007
1-1084	Michael Roff-Jarrett	Lasham	31.7.2007
1-1085	Lindsay McLane	Yorkshire	8.8.2007
1-1086	Chris Sterritt	Lasham	30.7.2007
1-1087	Terry Moyes	Gliding Centre	30.7.2007
1-1088	Santiago Cervantes	SGU	30.7.2007
1-1089	Colin Macalpine	SGU	10.9.2007
1-1090	Willy Hackett	Bannerdown (Moriarty)	28.5.2007
1-1091	B Van Woerden	Cairngorm (Minden)	14.8.2007
1-1092	Jonathan Smith	York	30.7.2007
1-1093	John McWilliam	Bristol & Glos	31.7.2007
Diamond goal			
2-3191	Arthur George	Lasham	31.7.2007
2-3192	Andrew Whiteman	Mendip	31.7.2007
2-3193	James Pengelly	Booker	9.8.2007
2-3194	Paul Moslin	Chilterns (Honington)	8.8.2007
2-3195	Brian McDonnell	Gliding Centre	8.8.2007
2-3196	Lindsay McLane	Yorkshire	8.8.2007
2-3197	Philip Lee	Bristol & Glos	8.8.2007
2-3198	Matthew Davis	Bristol & Glos	30.7.2007
2-3199	Brian Palmer	Nene Valley	11.8.2007
2-3200	Chris Sterritt	Lasham	30.7.2007
2-3201	Jonathan Coote	Bristol & Glos	31.7.2007
2-3202	Roy Nuza	York	9.8.2007
2-3203	Tim Donovan	Shenington	8.8.2007
2-3204	David Bray	Oxford (Hus Bosworth)	8.8.2007
2-3205	John Rayner	Southdown	8.8.2007
2-3206	Ed Jenkinson	Gliding Centre	8.8.2007
2-3207	John Riley	SGU	10.9.2007
2-3208	Stefan Bort	Kent (Bioester)	9.8.2007
2-3209	Eugene Lambert	Cotswold	18.9.2007
2-3210	David Shearer	Kent (Lasham)	8.8.2007
2-3211	Michael Birch	Lasham	31.7.2007
2-3212	John McIver	Dumfries (Portmoak)	26.9.2007
2-3213	Victor Leitch	SGU	10.9.2007
2-3214	Oliver Barter	East Sussex	8.8.2007
2-3215	Clive Bruce	Southdown	9.8.2007
2-3216	B Van Woerden	Cairngorm (Minden)	9.8.2007
2-3217	Colin Baines	Shalbourne	8.8.2007
2-3218	Neil Swinton	Oxford	11.8.2007
2-3219	Stephen Powell	Lasham (Benalla)	26.11.2004
2-3220	Stephen Nock	Trent Valley	8.7.2007
2-3221	Timothy Lean	Lasham	30.7.2007
2-3222	John McWilliam	Cotswold (Portmoak)	17.10.2007
Diamond distance			
3-1678	Keith Morgan	SGU	30.8.2007
3-1679	Neil Irving	SGU	8.4.2007
3-1680	Andrew Whiteman	Mendip (Aboyne)	1.9.2007
3-1681	Michael Rubin	Lasham (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
3-1682	John Gorringe	Lasham (Omarama)	11.12.2006
3-1683	Howard Torode	Lasham (Aboyne)	16.10.2007
3-1684	Russell Fletcher	Lasham (Aboyne)	16.10.2007
3-1685	David Crowhurst	PSGC (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
3-1686	Robert Theil	PSGC (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
3-1687	Stephen Powell	Lasham (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
3-1688	John Richardson	Borders	27.10.2007
3-1689	Iain Russell	Borders	27.10.2007
3-1690	David Shearer	Kent (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
3-1691	Brian Brown	Borders	27.10.2007
3-1692	Louis Quartly	Booker (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
3-1693	Sheena Fear	PSGC (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
3-1694	Richard Whitaker	Lasham (Aboyne)	16.10.2007
3-1695	John Herman	Booker (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
GOLD BADGE			
2447	Keith Morgan	SGU	30.8.2007
2448	Lindsay McLane	Yorkshire	8.8.2007
2449	Mark Dalton	ex-pat (Minden USA)	27.8.2005
2450	Richard Logan	Ulster	19.8.2007
2451	Tim Donovan	Shenington	8.8.2007
2452	John Riley	SGU	10.9.2007
2453	Darren Judd	Lasham	7.4.2007
2454	John McIver	Dumfries (Portmoak)	26.9.2007
2455	Andrew Whiteman	Mendip (Aboyne)	1.9.2007
2456	Victor Leitch	SGU	10.9.2007
2457	Roy Nuza	York	16.9.2007
2458	Stephen Riddington	Gliding Ctre (Aboyne)	5.10.2007
2459	John Gorringe	Lasham (Omarama)	11.12.2006
2460	Stephen Williams	Booker (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
2461	Brian Lomas	Bowland (Feshie)	5.10.2007
2462	Stephen Powell	Lasham (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
2463	James Pengelly	Booker (Aboyne)	5.10.2007
2464	David Shearer	Kent (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
2465	Simon Boyden	Kestrel (Aboyne)	17.10.2007
2466	Richard Whitaker	Lasham (Aboyne)	16.10.2007
2467	Timothy Lean	Lasham	7.10.2007
2468	Alan Flintoft	PSGC (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
Gold distance			
Philippe Garang		Bristol & Glos	31.7.2007
Andrew Whiteman		Mendip	31.7.2007
Keith Morgan		SGU	30.8.2007
Paul Moslin		Chilterns (Honington)	8.8.2007
Matthew Davis		Bristol & Glos	30.7.2007
Brian McDonnell		Gliding Centre	8.8.2007
Lindsay McLane		Yorkshire	8.8.2007
Philip Lee		Bristol & Glos	8.8.2007
Brian Palmer		Nene Valley	11.8.2007
Jonathan Coote		Bristol & Glos	31.7.2007
Roy Nuza		York	9.8.2007
Tim Donovan		Shenington	8.8.2007
Richard Lodge		London	29.7.2007
John Rayner		Southdown	8.8.2007
Michael Procter		Wolds	9.8.2007
Ed Jenkinson		Gliding Centre	8.8.2007
John Riley		SGU	10.9.2007
Stefan Bort		Kent (Bicester)	9.8.2007
Darren Judd		Lasham	7.4.2007
Eugene Lambert		Cotswold	18.9.2007
David Shearer		Kent (Lasham)	8.8.2007
Michael Birch		Lasham	31.7.2007
John McIver		Dumfries (Portmoak)	26.9.2007
Andrew Whiteman		Mendip (Aboyne)	31.7.2007
Victor Leitch		SGU	10.9.2007
Roy Nuza		York	9.8.2007
Stephen Riddington		Gliding Ctre (Aboyne)	31.7.2007
Oliver Barter		East Sussex	8.8.2007
Clive Bruce		Southdown	4.8.2007
Ellie Armstrong		Gliding Centre	8.8.2007
Berhard Van Woerden		Cairngorm (Minden)	9.8.2007
Colin Baines		Shalbourne	8.8.2007
Neil Swinton		Oxford	11.8.2007
Carl Hutson		Trent Valley (Yorkshire)	9.8.2007
James Pengelly		Booker (Aboyne)	5.10.2007
Stephen Nock		Trent Valley	8.7.2007
David Shearer		Kent (Aboyne)	8.8.2007
Timothy Lean		Lasham	30.7.2007
Neil Harrison		Gliding Centre	9.8.2007
Gold height			
Keith Morgan		SGU	30.7.2007
Alastair Mutch		SGU	14.9.2007
Daniel Johns		DSGC (Portmoak)	30.8.2007
Ronald Ogston		Deeside	4.8.2007
Peter Sharphouse		SGU	10.9.2007
Andrew Whiteman		Mendip (Aboyne)	1.9.2007
Victor Leitch		SGU	10.9.2007
Roy Nuza		York	16.9.2007
Stephen Riddington		Gliding Ctre (Aboyne)	5.10.2007
Peter Smith		Cairngorm	6.10.2007
Andrew Bland		Lasham (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
John Gorringe		Lasham (Omarama)	11.12.2006
Tim Lean		Lasham (Aboyne)	7.10.2007
Bob Westlake		Lasham (Aboyne)	17.10.2007
Stephen Williams		Booker (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
Brian Lomas		Bowland (Feshie)	5.10.2007
Stephen Powell		Lasham (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
James Pengelly		Booker (Aboyne)	5.10.2007
Stephen Morgan		PNGC (Aboyne)	16.10.2007
David Shearer		Kent (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
Ken Robertson		SGU	14.9.2007
Simon Boyden		Kestrel (Aboyne)	17.10.2007
Louis Quartly		Booker (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
David Jesty		Dartmoor	24.10.2007
Richard Whitaker		Lasham (Aboyne)	16.10.2007
Timothy Lean		Lasham	7.10.2007
Alan Flintoft		PSGC (Aboyne)	11.10.2007
SILVER BADGE			
11804	Jay Myrdal	Vale of White Horse	9.8.2007
11805	Steve Hardy	London	30.7.2007
11806	Simon Foster	Bristol & Glos	6.8.2007
11807	Martin Brown	Oxford	11.8.2007
11808	Stuart Dobson	Derby & Lancs	9.8.2007
11809	Mick Ely	Gliding Centre	9.8.2007

British Gliding Association

THE 1000 CLUB MONTHLY LOTTERY

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

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

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

1st PRIZE – 50% of the prize money pool.

2 Runner Up Prizes of 25% each of the prize money pool.

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

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

Pete Stratten, Promoter

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

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

Name .....

Signed .....

Address .....

.....

.....

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
11810	Sally Hill	London	31.7.2007
11811	Martin Boulton	Wolds	2.8.2007
11812	Ryan Berry	London	15.9.2007
11813	George McKay	SGU	30.7.2007
11814	Alastair Bridges	Gliding Centre	6.8.2007
11815	Richard Lancaster	London	3.8.2007
11816	Daniel Chilcot	London	30.7.2007
11817	Matthew Davis	Bristol & Glos	30.7.2007
11818	Emily Todd	Booker	4.9.2007
11819	John Harter	Bowland Forest	31.7.2007
11820	Mike Hasluck	Southdown	29.5.2007
11821	Colin Field	Bath & Wilts	30.7.2007
11822	Simon Bawden	Bristol & Glos	11.7.2007
11823	Jonathan Coote	Bristol & Glos	31.7.2007
11824	Jonathan Gill	Staffordshire	9.8.2007
11825	Richard Logan	Ulster	19.8.2007
11826	Nick White	Peterboro & Spalding	8.7.2007
11827	Alex Rowlands	Needwood Forest	9.8.2007
11828	Ian Kennedy	Stratford on Avon	3.9.2007
11829	John Walker	Wolds	8.8.2007
11830	Jackie Sparrow	Cambridge	11.8.2007
11831	Nicholas Tarbox	Aquila	11.8.2007
11832	Ken Woods	London	3.6.2007
11833	Michael Procter	Wolds	9.8.2007
11834	Alastair Mutch	SGU	10.9.2007
11835	Kenneth Robertson	SGU	14.9.2007
11836	Neale Hays	Cambridge	12.9.2007
11837	Julia Dawson	Bristol & Glos	8.8.2007
11838	Emilie House	Cambridge	12.9.2007
11839	Philip Zelazoloski	Shenington	15.9.2007
11840	Peter Buchlovsky	Cambridge	11.9.2007
11841	Daryl O'Flanagan	Southdown	9.9.2007
11842	Michael Sheehan	Buckminster	11.9.2007
11843	Victor Leitch	SGU	1.9.2007
11844	Christopher Ward	Cambridge	3.9.2007
11845	Clive Bruce	Southdown	9.8.2007
11846	Daniel Carter	Wyvern	31.7.2007
11847	Mark Boyle	Deeside	4.9.2007
11848	James Francis	Norfolk	27.8.2007
11849	James Mattocks	SGU	17.10.2007
11850	Stefan Astley	London	4.9.2007
11851	Steven Brown	Booker	11.10.2007
11852	James Addison	Deeside	28.10.2007
11853	John Harrison	Darlton	8.8.2007
11854	Louis Quartly	Booker	11.10.2007
11855	David Jesty	Dartmoor	24.10.2007
11856	Peter Sharphouse	SGU	6.11.2007
11857	Philip Scott	Cambridge	9.8.2007
11858	Kudzanai Chikohora	Wolds	31.7.2007
11859	Gary Carr	Gliding Centre	18.9.2007
11860	Phil Cumming	Booker	31.7.2007
11861	Neil Harrison	Gliding Centre	8.7.2007

UK CROSS-COUNTRY DIPLOMA

1055	Peter Bellham	Buckminster	31.7.2007
1056	Andrew Whiteman	Mendip	31.7.2007
1057	Keith Morgan	SGU	15.5.2007
1058	Sally Hill	London	24.7.2007
1059	Martin Boulton	Wolds	2.8.2007
1060	John Harter	Bowland Forest	31.7.2007
1061	Simon Urry	Norfolk	31.7.2007
1062	Stuart Black	Buckminster	10.8.2007
1063	Chris. Shepperd	Nene Valley	11.8.2007
1064	Julia Dawson	Bristol & Glos	8.8.2004
1065	Stefan Zatorski	Burn	11.8.2007
1066	Paul McAuley	Stratford	4.9.2007
1067	John Kelk	Essex & Suffolk	1.8.2007
1068	John Kelk	Essex & Suffolk	8.8.2007
1069	Oliver Barter	East Sussex	8.7.2007
1070	James Francis	Norfolk	27.8.2007
1071	Neil Harrison	Gliding Centre	20.5.2007

AEROBATIC BADGES

Std Kwn	Matthew Plumridge	Lasham	25.11.2007
Std Kwn	Annabel Marriott	Lasham	20.10.2007

Accident/incident summaries by Douglas Every

Ref	AIRCRAFT Type	REGISTRATION	Damage	DATE Time	Place	PILOT(S) Age	Injury	P1 Hours

125 ASK13 Substantial 09-Sep-07 Incident Rpt

The K-13 had landed near to the winch cables on the ground. An aerotow was preparing to launch so the launch point controller, believing the cables were clear of the K-13, asked the winch driver to draw them in in preparation for the aerotow. The cables were drawn in rapidly and struck the K-13, breaking the canopy and narrowly avoiding injury to the three people standing near the glider.

126 Jantar 1 15-Sep-07 Incident Rpt None

The Jantar pilot had completed his WULF checks and had commenced a lefthand circuit for runway 25. He was a little high and used the airbrakes to reduce height on the down wind leg. When the pilot turned onto the base leg he saw a Lunak coming directly towards him. The Jantar pilot assumed, wrongly as it turned out, that the Lunak pilot had seen him. He therefore made a final turn to line up with the lefthand grass runway and made his approach. At this point the Lunak, which was directly overhead, made a climbing turn to line up with the adjacent concrete runway, narrowly avoiding a collision with the Jantar.

(BGA year starts on October 1)

1 ASW15B Minor 01-Oct-07 Incident Rpt None

The pilot neglected to lower the undercarriage for landing and caused some damage to the gel coat and fibreglass on the glider's fuselage.

2 SZD Junior None 04-Oct-07 Incident Rpt None

The pilot was wearing a fleece jacket, which may have caught under the edge of the canopy when it was shut. At about the three-quarter point of the launch the canopy started to fly open but the pilot managed to catch the canopy lock lever and restrain it from any further movement. After some fruitless attempts to secure the canopy properly whilst in flight, the pilot managed to land the glider safely without any damage to the glider or injury to himself.

3 Ka 7 Minor 11-Oct-07 Incident Rpt None None

On turning finals P1 heard a loud crack as the right hand rudder was depressed. The landing proceeded uneventfully. After landing it was determined that both the brackets securing the rudder footplate had broken and that the rudder pedal was detached.

4 SZD Puchacz 3906 None 02-Nov-07 16:00 Nr Kirton-in-Lindsey 72 47 None None

P2, a basic instructor, was undergoing an annual aerotow check flight and had just finished boxing the tow. P2 had cracked the airbrakes to help keep position behind the tug and was trying to lock them in the closed position when it became apparent that the glider was descending rapidly through the wake of the tug. Looking along the wings, P1 established that the brakes were fully extended and were not responding to the air brake lever. He took control and released from the tow breaking back towards the airfield, which they had no hope of reaching. Trying the air brake lever again it became apparent that it had become completely detached. A suitable field was selected for outlanding and a smooth landing was accomplished.

5 09-Oct-07 10:00 Kingsfield airfield

The winch cable retrieve driver had attached the cable to the tractor and stowed the parachute in its stowage bin. Instead of moving out to one side and climbing onto the tractor he stood on top of the cable – an action that the local brief, which he had received, specifically points out not to do and to treat the cables as live at all times. In the winch was a trainee winch driver being shadowed by an instructor. After the cable was attached to the tractor, the winch driver's next action was to release the drum brake, as the winch has a fluid fly wheel clutch the small amount of residual torque would normally take up the slack in a controlled slow manner. However the winch clutch was still engaged and only being held back by the brake. When the brake was released the cable tightened very quickly and threw the retrieve driver into the air, causing him to land on his head. After a visit to the local medical centre he was taken into hospital for more tests and overnight observation.

6 Ventus 2CT 4505 Minor 31-Aug-07 Aston Down None

The pilot reported finding a bent flap control rod, the damage being consistent with a heavy landing or a lumpy ground run at some unspecified time.

7 K 8B 2434 Substantial 03-Nov-07 17:00 Brentor airfield None

Flying had finished for the day and the gliders had been packed away. A club member was parking the quad bike in the hanger and, as he was slowly manoeuvering into the parking place, he accidentally opened the throttle. The bike leapt forward into the starboard wing trailing edge of a K8, causing considerable damage to the wing. It also pushed the K8 nose into the fuselage of a K13, causing minor damage to the K13.

8 SZD Junior 4594 Substantial 21-Oct-07 14:30 Upavon 46 None 29

The duty pilot had briefed the early solo pilot, who had completed three competent flights that day, to land at the far end of the airfield because of an impending change of ends. The solo pilot in the Junior was preceded on the winch launch by a K21, which subsequently set up a circuit to land in the opposite direction to take off at the far end of the field. However, the Junior pilot made his approach in the same direction as take off, with a developing tailwind, but also at the far end of the field. In consequence the two gliders were approaching each other from opposite directions during their landing approach. The K21 landed safely into wind. The pilot of the Junior had to take avoiding action to avoid a collision and in doing so found himself on a downward slope with a tailwind. With full airbrake and wheel brake applied the pilot was unable to stop the glider colliding with a three-strand barbed wire fence, causing substantial damage to the glider.

Accident/incident summaries *continued from overleaf*

AIRCRAFT		REGISTRATION		DATE		PILOT(S)		
Ref	**Type**		**Damage**	**Time**	**Place**	**Age**	**Injury**	**P1 Hours**
9	ASK13	1508	Write off	24-Nov-07 14:35	Sandhill Farm airfield		Minor Serious	

The glider undershot into the airfield boundary, causing minor injury to P1 and serious injury to P2 requiring air ambulance evacuation. The glider was destroyed apart from the tailplane.

10	Pilatus B4		Minor	11-Nov-07	Incident Rpt		None	

On returning from a wave flight of 33 minutes, the glider flew a normal circuit landing on the tarmac runway but with the main wheel up. The aircraft touched down on the release hook and tail wheel, causing the release hook cage to be worn away by the tarmac.

11	Astir CS77	2555	Minor	03-Dec-07 12:53	Sutton Bank	51	None	102

The pilot elected to fly an approach to land to the north, which was at variance with the briefed approach and landing area for the day's wind conditions. The approach flown was well out of wind at 90° to the runway in use, and the resultant drift was towards the clubhouse. The glider ballooned slightly during the round out, but a normal touchdown was achieved about 60 metres from the winch track, which was crossed at 15-20kts at a point where the track edges stand proud by 16-24cm about 40 metres from the clubhouse. On impact with the furthest (northerly) edge of the track, the undercarriage collapsed and the glider slid on its belly for a further 10-15 metres before coming to halt adjacent to the club viewing area. The glider's undercarriage struts and fuselage frame were fractured.

12	Alliance 34	4531	Substantial	11-Nov-07 14:15	Milfield	16	None	1.75

The pilot had completed his downwind checks and turned onto final descent when he noticed two gliders were partially blocking the left hand side of the landing area. The pilot adopted a course that would take him towards the right hand side of the airfield into a position slight right of the central windsock. The final approach was normal in all respects. A few seconds before touch down the pilot noticed the tug aircraft in position ready for take off. Not wishing to cause unnecessary delay to flying operations, he steered a left hand course to carry the glider clear of the launch site. After touchdown, the pilot turned left but made a critical error of judgment with the consequence that the glider impacted the windsock mounting post and then ground looped 180°. The glider sustained substantial to the port wing.

13	ASK21	3679	Minor	03-Dec-07 16:00	Bicester	24 53	None None	

The weak link broke during a winch launch, impacted the glider and caused some minor surface damage.

Classifieds

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NOMINATIONS SOUGHT – BGA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The BGA is governed by an Executive Committee of volunteer directors working on behalf of – and nominated and elected by – its member clubs.

The Executive Committee member role focuses on strategic decision making in the interests of BGA clubs and of glider pilots, and on ensuring the good governance of the Association. Formal business is conducted on a monthly basis – a commitment of approximately five midweek evening meetings and a further six or seven evening conference calls per year.

The BGA is as usual inviting member clubs to nominate for election self-motivated, high-calibre individuals with relevant skills and experience. The deadline for nominations to be received by the BGA is 8th February prior to the AGM on March 8.

To find out more about the BGA, visit www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/aboutthebga.htm
If you'd like your club to consider nominating you, please talk to your club chairman.

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S&G, Index to Volume 58

Please note that owing to exceptional circumstances this index, which would normally have been included in the February-March issue, will now be distributed with the April-May 2008 issue instead. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

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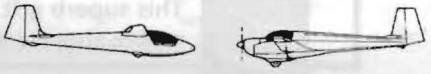
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