

SAILPLANE & GLIDING

VOL. 67 NO.1



**WINTER SOARING
FROM FLAT SITES**

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AND WHY YOU NEED IT
MORE THAN YOU THINK**

**MORE TOP TIPS ON HOW
TO FIND THE BEST LIFT**



CHAMPIONS!

**Team GB brings home a Gold and two
Bronze medals from the Junior Worlds**

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35

The BGA Shop



www.bgashop.co.uk

Spring is on the way...

The winter is retreating...skies are getting bluer...temperatures slowly rising...days are getting longer

Are you getting ready?

All you need to get ready for the new season is now available in the BGA Shop!



In-flight plumbing sorted?

With the soaring season now upon us, *don't run the risk of dehydration and disorientation!*

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Our new design wing stand at an excellent price is available in two sizes to suit any glider wing geometry. Made from light-weight steel tubing, with an under wing pad in tough high density foam which will form to any wing profile. The pad is



The BGA Shop - our goal

Our commitment is to supply a diverse range of items to meet the needs of clubs and pilots along with an excellent level of service. Meanwhile, check out and bookmark www.bgashop.co.uk as a website favourite, or simply click on the link on the BGA website at www.gliding.co.uk to keep up to date with our latest products and ideas.

www.bgashop.co.uk

finished in hard wearing PVC. Each stand will support up to 50kg, they are sturdy, light and easily stored. *Buy a pair and save £20.00!*



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Don't forget your FR 300

FR300 is a small personal flight recorder device that has built in antenna, rechargeable battery and a large memory, and is equipped with simple but powerful Logbook software - in 5 languages - that enables you to share flights and view them in Google Earth!

FR300 is registered in 5 countries for Silver and Gold FAI badge flights only. No calibration of the device is required.

FR300 has an integral battery with around 10 hours operation from one charge via a USB port.





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With many pilots enjoying high altitude flying in wave in the UK, **John McWilliam** looks at the use of oxygen and why you need it more than you think



MEMBER OF THE ROYAL AERO CLUB AND THE FEDERATION AERONAUTIQUE INTERNATIONALE



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COVER STORY
Air in turmoil: K-21 'GBV' (sniffer P1 – Mike Fox, P2 – Steve Ruffell) returning from an unsuccessful sortie during Pocklington's 30th annual two-seater comp, before the day's flying was scrubbed. Some local soaring in the background: the Pawnee 'G-AXED' is towing T-21 'DAR' (Des Ashton)

DEADLINES

April/May 16
Articles, Letters, Club News: 5 Feb
Display advertisements: 19 Feb
Classifieds: 7 Mar

June/July 16
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Classifieds: 5 May

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> Schempp-Hirth's Klaus Ohlmann and Tilo Holighaus made history flying an Arcus M on 7 December 2015 – the first sailplane flight over the skyline of Dubai. See videos at: www.fai.org/fai-slider-news/40807-dubaigliding

> Poland's Sebastian Kawa won the Gliding Match Racing at the 2015 FAI World Air Games, Dubai, in December. There are plans for Sebastian to visit the UK later this year. Watch this space!

> Trent Valley GC's John Williams is at the top of the BGA National Ladder for 2015. There were some epic flights last year in his Libelle and LS8 that saw him beat off the competition.

> The Guild of Aviation Artists' 46th Annual Summer Exhibition will be held at London's Mall Galleries from 19-23 July. www.gava.org.uk

> 2016 marks the 150th anniversary of the Royal Aeronautical Society. The formation of the RAeS is being celebrated with a look back 150 years and forward up to 50 years with a theme of 'innovative firsts' in aerospace. The Prince of Wales will act as Honorary President for the 150th anniversary year. See: <http://aerosociety.com/About-Us/history/RAeS150#sthash.nyJfbmGB.dpuf>

> The Royal Aero Club Trust awards bursaries annually to air sports youngsters. Last year, the numerous bursaries included Matt Davis and (now World Champion) Tom Arcsott. The closing date for applications is 31 March and, as S&G went to press, only two applications have been received from glider pilots. See www.royalaeroclubtrust.org

> Applications are also open for the 2016 Honourable Company of Air Pilots Scholarships. Gliding scholarships are being offered to people aged 16+ to fly on a one-week residential course at a BGA Junior Gliding Centre. The deadline for applications is 8 March. Full details at: www.airpilots.org/career-matters/scholarships

> Solo pilots aged 16-25 are invited to apply for Air League Gliding Scholarships, designed to help them to broaden their flying experience. Apply online by 19 February. See www.airleague.co.uk/scholarships/gliding-scholarships

Legion of Honour for Norfolk GC's war hero

NORFOLK GC's Jack Griffiths (Griff) has been awarded the status of Chevalier (Knight) by the French Government.

The Legion of Honour is France's highest national order and was awarded to Griff for his role as a glider pilot during WW2. In September 1944, he piloted a Horsa glider for a night landing in an attempt to force an allied crossing of the lower Rhine by capturing bridges around Arnhem. Met with fierce resistance, Griff was taken as a prisoner of war, escaped and made it back to American lines after many adventures. He flew flying coal tugs into Berlin during the airlift.

Griff was the first CFI at what went on to become Lasham; his late wife driving the winch as Griff taught the first trainees.

Norfolk GC chairman John Roche-Kelly says: "Griff is a truly interesting man, and a real hero. He still flies gliders, but no longer solo. We love him dearly at Tibenham."



Jack Griffiths is awarded the Legion of Honour

DATES

NATIONALS, REGIONALS AND OTHERS

Club Class Nationals	Pocklington	28/5-5/6/16
20m multi-seat Class Nationals	Aston Down	18-26/6/16
Standard Class Nationals	Aston Down	18-26/6/16
Competition Enterprise	Shobdon	2-10/7/16
Wenlock Olympian Gliding Games	Long Mynd	9-13/7/16
FAI Sailplane Grand Prix	Bicester	9-17/7/16
34th World Gliding Champs	Pociunai, Lithuania	30/7-13/8/16 (Club, Standard and 20m multi-seat Class)
Lasham Glide Pre-European	Lasham	30/7-7/8/16
15m Class Nationals	Lasham	30/7-7/8/16
Open Class Nationals	Lasham	30/7-7/8/16
18m Class Nationals	Tibenham	20-28/8/16
Junior Championship	Tibenham	20-28/8/16
Two-Seater Competition	Pocklington	21-28/8/16
UK Mountain Soaring Champs	Aboyne	4-10/9/16
34th World Gliding Champs	Benalla, Australia	8-21/1/17 (15m, 18m and Open Class)
Glider aerobatic competitions		
Dan Smith	Dunstable	2-3/4/16
Aerobatic nationals	Saltby	26-29/5/16
World Glider Aerobatic Champs	Matkopuzta, Hungary	20-30/7/16
Pocklington comp	Pocklington	28-29/7/16
Saltby Open	Saltby	26-28/8/16

LASHAM REGIONALS

28/5-5/6/16

NORTHERN REGIONALS

12-18/6/16

SHENINGTON REGIONALS

25/6-3/7/16

BOOKER REGIONALS

2-10/7/16

BIDFORD REGIONALS

9-17/7/16

DUNSTABLE REGIONALS

30/7-7/8/16

HUS BOS CHALLENGE CUP

30/7-7/8/16

BICESTER REGIONALS

13-21/8/16

INTER-SERVICES REGIONALS

TBC

■ **BGA Conference and AGM, 27 February, 2016, at the Belfry Hotel, Nottingham**



■ Highlands GC featured on the front cover of the U3A (University of the Third Age) winter issue of *Third Age Matters*. Club instructor Angela Veitch is pictured (back seat) with U3A member Rose Hales-Tooke before her first glider flight.

UK JUNIORS ARE ON TOP OF THE WORLD

TOM Arcsott (Lasham GS) is the new Club Class Junior World Champion. He brought home the Gold medal from the 2015 Junior World Gliding Championships held in Narromine, Australia, 1-12 December. Team-mate Sam Roddie (Wolds GC) received the Bronze medal. Incredible tactical awareness on the final day of the competition gave them the edge against the German team. The British Gliding Team, captained by Andy Davis, was also awarded the Team Bronze medal.

Tom is pictured (centre) with German pilot Philipp Schulz, who came second, and Sam (right).

■ See pp8-12 for Andy's report on the Junior Worlds from a team captain's perspective. Matt Davis and Tom also share their highlights of an incredible rollercoaster of a competition.



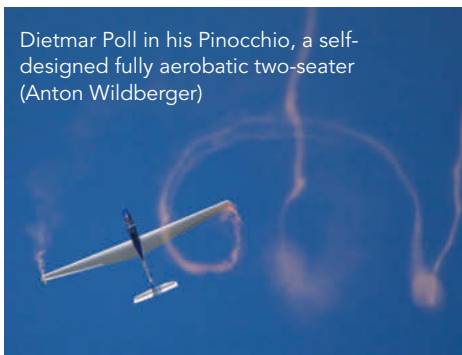
Aerobatic champ

AUSTRIAN pilot Dietmar Poll is the winner of the British Aerobatic Association's Glider Aerobatic Trophy for the second year running. Points are awarded to pilots from the accumulated percentage scores in each class from the four competitions held each season.

In second place for 2015 is Booker's Graham Saw, with Michael Corcoran from Derby & Lancs GC third.

Competition dates for this year are listed in the calendar on p4. Training is usually available from BGA aerobatic instructors leading up to each competition and anyone, no matter what previous gliding experience, is invited to give it a go. www.aerobatics.org.uk

Dietmar Poll in his Pinocchio, a self-designed fully aerobatic two-seater (Anton Wildberger)



An offer of protection

GLIDING clubs have been visited over the past year by Richard Cadwallader, who is keen to introduce pilots to a surface protection product from AGlaze. It has been used for almost two decades in the aviation and marine industries, protecting aircraft and yacht surfaces from UV, pollution and many other problems that can be harmful to appearance and performance.

AGlaze is approved to Boeing and Airbus standards for use on commercial aircraft, and currently approved by Gulfstream for use on their executive jets.

In 2012, AGlaze underwent wind tunnel testing at the Aircraft Research Association's transonic wind tunnel in Bedfordshire. Results indicated that the AGlaze treatment significantly reduced drag.

Exploring use of the treatment on gliders and trailers, Richard lists potential additional benefits as: reducing the build-up of insect residue on wings, easier to clean, preventing against cracking in the gelcoat, and protection against UV.

South Wales CFI Rod Weaver had a Discus and two trailers coated at the end of the year. He said: "They look beautiful

now and I will be interested to see how long it will last after a season of flying."

BGA Chief Technical Office Gordon MacDonald said that, until the product was tried and trusted in the gliding world, he would not be confident in recommending it for composite gliders, but has used similar products in recent years on trailers with good results.

www.aglaze.com/aviation

Glide for a living

LLEWENI Parc (Denbigh, North Wales) is offering a "scholarship" to a suitable candidate who wants to make his/her career, and living, in gliding.

Applicants will be self-sufficient, motivated, resourceful and with a good start in both gliding hours and qualifications. They will be aspiring to be a Full Cat instructor; probably with more than 300hrs/Silver C at this stage.

For more information, or if you are interested in this (self) employment opportunity, send a brief email setting out your situation and aspirations to Rodney.Witter@btinternet.com

Promoting gliding at FLYER Live show

THE BGA had a prominent presence at the FLYER Live exhibition (previously known as The Flying Show) at the end of November. Held at the International Centre, Telford, the show is the UK's largest indoor aviation event.

During the weekend, the public also had its first glimpse of Project Glow, now known as Glowfly. Designed by a UK glider pilot, Glowfly is a hybrid microlight/glider with electrically powered wheels for taxiing and take-off, and a jet turbine for climbing and cruising. www.proairsport.com



The BGA's promotions team at Telford (Liisi Laks)

EASA LICENSING UPDATE - OPTIONS DURING THE EXTENDED TRANSITION

AS THIS series of articles has previously detailed, we are currently exempt from the requirement to exercise the privileges of an EASA licence to fly an EASA glider, motor glider or tug until 8 April 2018, **writes BGA CEO Pete Stratten**. We do appreciate that ongoing developments around EASA licensing can be irksome.

The extended transition does provide us with helpful breathing space to press for change and engage, for example, with the recently-published EASA consultation on pilot training outside an ATO, on recently proposed helpful changes to the Basic Regulation that improves flexibility, and with a number of other developments aimed at reducing the regulatory burden.

This article considers options for licence holders during the period leading up to April 2018. It's a bit complicated, but in particular worth persevering with if you hold an SPL or LAPL(S) with instructor or examiner privileges.

There are a large number of glider pilots who, for a variety of reasons, now hold an EASA licence and medical certificate. A number of those EASA licenced glider pilots hold EASA Flight Instructor (Sailplanes) certificates and EASA Flight Examiner (Sailplanes) authorisations.

During the period of the transition (ie until April 2018), in the UK there is no need to exercise the privileges of an EASA licence and so we are, of course,

continuing to use the tried and tested BGA pilot certification, instructing and examining system.

If you hold an EASA licence and medical, and meet the rolling recency and any other requirements, of course you can choose to use licence privileges. If you hold a valid EASA sailplane instructor certificate, it is recognised as equivalent to a BGA instructor rating and that's all that's needed for your CFI to revalidate you as a BGA instructor. The same goes for examiners – a valid EASA examiner authorisation is recognised as the equivalent BGA examiner rating.

However, you may choose not to maintain the validity of your EASA licence, medical certificate, instructor certificate or examiner authorisation. In this case, you will need to comply with the usual BGA requirements, including instructor and examiner validity. If you subsequently (closer to 2018?) decide to renew your EASA licence privileges, EASA's renewal requirements are on the BGA website.

The following detail may be helpful to you during the transition period in making a decision about an existing EASA FI(S) certificate, or an EASA FE(S), or FIE(S) authorisation that you hold and which is soon due for revalidation.

If you hold an EASA FI(S) certificate, you can:

- Let it lapse and renew it in the future –

that will require a Refresher Seminar and Assessment of Competence (AofC), or

- Keep it valid – in which case you'll probably need a Refresher Seminar before too long as one of the revalidation options.

If you have started the process of becoming an EASA examiner, you can:

- Put that to one side and pick up the process later, or
- Keep it going and obtain an EASA examiner authorisation.

If you already hold an EASA FE(S) or FIE(S) authorisation, you can:

- Let it lapse and renew it in the future – this will require a Refresher Seminar and an AofC.
- Keep it valid – in which case you'll probably need a Refresher Seminar and AofC before too long.
- In either case, you'll need to pay the CAA a fee at the point of re-authorisation.

For more information, including FAQs about EASA licence conversion, please take a look at <https://members.gliding.co.uk/pilot-resources-flying-training/pilot-licence-conversion/>

The free of charge Refresher Seminars referred to above are described on the BGA website under 'Courses and Events'. We are pressing the CAA to modify their disproportionate published examiner fees.

Past, present and future of atmosphere we fly through

AFTER flying hang gliders and gliders for 35 years, I was inspired to study scientific information relating to global atmospheric structure and temperature stability.

Since in recent years the quantity and quality of this information has been significantly enhanced, I have been enabled to examine a wide range of quality data extending from geological times to the present and to assess the influence of changes in solar activity and oceanic effects on global temperature variability.

My studies have encompassed data relating to ice core analyses, atmospheric CO2 volumes and solar cycle extreme ultraviolet radiation levels.

I have concluded that any hypothesis attributing increased global temperatures to an increased volume of atmospheric CO2 is unproven and that oceanic effects and variability in solar cycle activity play a major role.

While the discharge into the earth's atmosphere of large volumes of CO2 arising from the burning of valuable resources is undesirable, it remains

unproven that this will result in any significant global temperature rise.

As a result of my studies, I propose that over the next 30 years the mean global temperature is likely to decrease by approximately 0.5°C.

Readers interested in more detail can access my complete paper online at: <https://2020globalsciencereviewuk.wordpress.com>

John Whitfield, Portmoak

Fast recall of a speedy task



Over the Cairngorms during the 2015 UKMSC (Charlie Jordan)

THE impressive speeds at the Mountain Soaring Championships (pp38-41, Dec/Jan 16) reminds me of an Open Class Nationals (I was wearing my weatherjack hat) some years ago. The day winner had just achieved 125km/h. I remarked to another pilot that it was possibly the fastest ever in a British competition.

"I once did 129 at Lasham," he quickly corrected.

"Well John, you must have been very good in THOSE days."

John's face was a picture. But so was his wife's as she spluttered her gin and tonic in a fit of giggles.

Jack Harrison, Nairn, Highlands

SAILPLANE & GLIDING



Andy Davis
Competition flying



Paul Whitehead
SLMG



Howard Torode
Airworthiness



Derren Francis
Tugging



Mike Fox
Instructing



Dr Peter Saundby
Medical



Andy Holmes
Winch operating



John Williams
Airspace



Alison Randle
Development



Bruce Stephenson
Vintage gliding

S&G is privileged to be able to call on the advice of some of gliding's leading experts. If you have a question for our experts on any of the subjects listed above, contact the editor (details p3).

EXPERT ADVISERS

Please send letters (marked 'for publication') to the editor at editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk or the address on p3, including your full contact details. The deadline for the next issue is 5 February

Flippin' eck!

I READ with interest the remarks from Seahawk Gliding Club in the Dec/Jan 16 club news.

It would indeed be a good soaring day if the local pilot was to fly all the way to God's own county, cos as anyone knows, that's up ere in Yorkshire.

Just so tha knows, there are three sorts of people in this world.

There are Yorkshire folks. There are those who wish they was Yorkshire folks, and there are those with absolutely no ambition at all.

Tony Flannery, Burn Gliding Club (up North)



A victorious British Gliding Team, with captain and crew, at the Junior Worlds in Narromine, Australia, in December 2015 (Jon Gatfield)

CHAMPIONS!

Andy Davis gives a team captain's perspective of the Junior Worlds that saw Team GB bring home a Gold and two Bronze medals



Andy Davis receives the Team Cup Bronze medal from Max Stevens (Matt Davis)

THE British Team pilots and crews arrived at Narromine on 20 November after the long drive inland from Sydney to be greeted by a sky full of mouth-watering looking cumulus. This was to be the last cumulus we would see for a considerable time as the next two weeks were resolutely blue. The following few days were spent tracking down our missing team container of gliders and equipment and completing the annual check and ARC on LS8 'M9', which Matt Davis would fly in the championships, whilst the other team pilots hurriedly hired local gliders to fly and familiarise themselves with Australian conditions pending the arrival of the container.

Eventually the team container arrived at Narromine five days before the start of the competition, thanks to an amazing effort to expedite it through customs formalities by our Australian shipping agents. Following the world's fastest recorded time for container unpacking and liberal bribery in the form of beer to extend the scrutineering deadline, the team's gliders passed their technical inspections in record time and the boys were then able to enjoy three days of official training in their own gliders before the evening opening ceremony on 30 November.

This was held in a park in town complete with Aboriginal dancing and what we were told was an impressive air display by the RAAF, performed beautifully out of sight on the other side of town.

The team consisted of pilots Tom Arscott and Sam Roddie, both flying Standard Cirrus in the Club Class, and Matt Davis and Mike Gatfield both flying LS8 in the Standard Class. Crewing for them were Guy Dutton, Benedict Smith, James Cox and Ben Hughes respectively, while Pami Davis filled in as "gofer".

My duties as team captain primarily involved communicating between the competition organisation and the British pilots and crews. This would start with distributing the daily grid order to the team before attending the daily team captains' briefing, held 30 minutes before the main task briefing. At this meeting, operational and safety matters were discussed, rules and their interpretation were clarified and teams' concerns were passed back to the competition director and his team, who were in the main part very receptive to feedback and suggestions from the team captains.

The British team were all staying at the Narromine Tourist Park Motel, conveniently

situated at the entrance to the airfield. It was here that we set up our team base, the motel's large communal dining table becoming our private briefing room.

The team base station radio was set up overlooking the airfield on a shady balcony outside the motel's dining room. A locally purchased sim card gave us 3G internet so that we could monitor weather and the competition tracking. Once launching started I made sure the radio was continually manned, passed start times to the organisation, monitored the boys' progress around their tasks, ensured that crews were ready on the airfield for their arrival back from task and coordinated the team effort when retrieves were required. At the pilots' request, my role also expanded to include that of at-competition coach providing daily tactical briefings, in-flight weather updates and tactical advice, post-flight debriefing and other guidance. Combining the two roles led to long days with daily post-flight debriefings followed by a website update completed just in time for a quick shower before a late dinner.

Contest flying took place from 1-12 December with one scrubbed day and one rest day. The conditions were generally blue with cumulus on just four days, varying from weak blue days with thermals topping out at 4,000ft above ground to some excellent cumulus days with 10 knot thermals and cloud base at 12,000+ ft. On the stronger days the winners in both classes posted some extraordinary speeds. It seemed to me that the weather forecasting was often rather optimistic and, with a tasksetter determined to use all of the available day, tasks were often long and challenging with pilots final gliding home from the last dying thermals of the day.

Tom and Sam were very successful in the blue conditions, pair-flew most of the tasks and, achieving a very high level of consistency, were clearly serious medal contenders in the Club Class from day one. At one point they were 1st and 2nd overall before a couple of poorer days dropped them back down the overall standings. My main priority as coach was mostly to refine what they were doing and make sure they stayed calm and didn't change too much.

In the Standard Class, Matt and Mike had a poor start on the first day, but recovered nicely with Matt winning a day and climbing steadily into 4th place overall and Mike into the top 10 before two days of variometer failures in Matt's LS8 pitched them both

out of the top 10. The cause of the failure was eventually tracked down to the tie down kit crushing the pneumatic tube to the variometer flask, which runs through the baggage area. After fixing it, their performances again improved. They both did well to stay focused and work their way back to 10th and 15th overall when it would have been easy to become demoralised and give up completely.

In the Club Class, the last contest day was a sheer delight. After the penultimate day, Tom and Sam were placed 2nd and 7th overall in the Club Class. With the final day's briefing forecasting a weak blue day and with an AAT task set for the Club Class, we discussed strategy for the day at our team pre-flight meeting and identified opportunities which might allow them to slip away from their German rivals and do something different to leapfrog themselves back into the top medal positions. The plan was brilliantly and bravely executed. Starting just behind the German pair, but from the opposite end of the start line, they converged on the gaggle containing the Germans halfway along the first leg. To simply follow the Germans around would not be enough and so, having got into their blind spot, they slipped away from the safety of the gaggle. Flying on their own in the blue they flew deep into the first sector to intersect with the Standard Class task and fly the second leg in the company of that class.

At the team base we were glued to the competition tracking website, which showed them flying further and consistently averaging 5km/h more than the German pair. Following a nerve-jangling low point on the final leg, they finally caught and passed over the top of the Germans approaching the final control point. Would it be enough? We hardly dared breathe but after downloading the flight files to scoring and another nail-biting wait there it was... 2nd and 3rd for the day, 1st and 3rd overall. You probably heard us shouting for joy back in the UK.

In the Standard Class Matt was sanguine about the outcome. He had fought hard to get back into the top 10 after the two difficult days without variometer and a resultant outlanding. But he had completed two tasks at over 150km/h, had a couple of top three placings, and won a day at a World Championships. 🏆

TOM AND SAM, ACHIEVING A VERY HIGH LEVEL OF CONSISTENCY, WERE CLEARLY SERIOUS MEDAL CONTENDERS IN THE CLUB CLASS FROM DAY ONE



World champion Tom Arscott poses with trophy in front of the Land Rover loaned to the team (Matt Davis)

JUNIOR WORLDS RESULTS, NARROMINE, 1-12/12/15

Club Class

- 1 Tom Arscott (GBR)
Std Cirrus
- 2 Philipp Schulz (DEU)
ASW 19B
- 3 Sam Roddie (GBR)
Std Cirrus

Standard Class

- 1 Matthew Scutter (AUS)
Discus 2a
- 2 Robin Smit (NED)
LS8
- 3 Sebastian Nagel (DEU)
Discus 2a
- 10 Matt Davis (GBR)
LS8
- 15 Mike Gatfield (GBR)
LS8

■ Congratulations to Team GB, awarded the Team Bronze medal and trophy

I WAS AS PROUD AS PUNCH AT THE CLOSING CEREMONY TO SEE THE BOYS COLLECT THEIR TROPHIES

✎ If he had just scored the same as teammate Mike on the first day without variometer he would have been placed in the top three overall. For Mike, it was his first international, a creditable performance, he enjoyed himself and learnt a lot.

We had a new British World Champion, Tom Arscott. Sam had flown into the Bronze medal position and as a bonus had done so in Matt's and my Standard Cirrus "DDA."

The British Team had secured the Team Cup Bronze. I was as happy as I had been for any of my own medals and we partied long and hard into the night. The next day I was as proud as punch at the closing ceremony to see the boys collect their trophies, to receive the Team Cup Bronze medal and to photobomb proceedings to stand with the entire team – pilots and crews – under the Union Flag for the photos.

HIGHS AND LOWS OF THE JUNIOR WORLDS

Matt Davis and Tom Arscott reveal their highlights of a rollercoaster of a competition



Matt Davis (right) in conversation with NZ coach Dane Dickinson (Katja Soikkeli)

AFTER a year in the making, our worst nightmare was playing out in front of us. Problems with the container meant we actually lost track of it for a while. Shipping companies were telling us different things and we had no idea if our container would actually turn up in Australia, let alone on time. There were visions of us parking industrial quantities of washing machines on the runway. In addition, M9 had been in Australia for nearly a year, and the Australian authorities wanted it out.

Not quite the ideal start to this year's Junior World Gliding Championships! So, after 320 hours and 26,000km flying, how did we come away with a new World Champion, a Bronze medallist, and Team Bronze?

Matt Davis:

SOME of the flying days we had were absolutely spectacular. From stubble fires to racing along streets at 12,000ft, we experienced some incredible flying. On one of the days, the winner did 630km at 158km/h in the Standard Class – the fastest speed around a task over 500km in Australia.

The first day that really stood out for me was a 610km task on Day 5, which we started at 13.30 and weren't sure we were going to make it round before the end of the day. Mike and I led the gaggle through the line and charged for the high ground, where it was absolutely cooking. We stopped and climbed three times on the first 210km leg. Running along some huge energy lines with 10-15 other gliders around was absolutely

spectacular, and I think we both spent most of the first leg giggling. On the way back up towards Narromine we diverted off track to the same convergence line, which also led us past a stubble fire. This detour caught us up with the leaders and we led the pack home. I only just squeaked into the top 10 at 152km/h! I'm not sure any of us could believe how quickly we'd just flown round that task.

The second day that I'll always remember had a bit of everything. The Club Class were struggling to stay airborne in 30kt winds and a front was approaching, with the associated high cloud lurking ominously close to the airfield. Eventually the conditions steadily improved and, before I knew it, I was climbing in a silky smooth thermal through 8,000ft. Shear wave! Pushing into wind got me up to 10,000ft, and myself and a couple of Poles flew through the line together. Into a 50kt headwind at altitude, we glid round the first turn and headed downwind. The climbs just got better and better, becoming 10kts+ to 12,000ft. I'd run some better lines and got myself ahead of the Poles as we turned back under the high cloud heading for home.

With 110km to go, I milked every last bit out of the last cumulus in the sky and set off on best glide. Amazingly I made it back, although annoyingly the Poles found a good climb behind me to come home faster and steal a day win away from me. We knew the other gliders were about 40km behind us so we waited to see how they'd fare getting back into the front, now producing rain all around the airfield, with only four home so far. We waited and the sky looked bleaker and bleaker. Just as we were giving up hope, a group of gliders emerged from the gloom and

■ <https://members.gliding.co.uk/junior-gliding>

■ facebook.com/ukjuniorgliding

■ <https://team.gliding.co.uk>



Junior World Champion Tom Arscott (Katja Soikkeli)

landed back. Mike was among them. They were two hours later than us! I'm amazed how they even managed to stay in the air that long, let alone make it into a 30kt headwind. Annoyingly the scoring system conspired against me and, despite beating the next pilot by 56km/h, I only got 60 more points! Apparently we had gone too fast, which made the scoring system treat our speeds as an anomaly and tighten the points up.

As well as those two highlights, I also won a day for the first time at international level. There really were some massive highs for us! Unfortunately, we also had our fair share of lows in the Standard Class.

The variometer saga (Day 6)

I'd worked hard since a poor first day to climb back up the rankings. I was now 4th, less than 100 points off the lead and starting to get into my groove. As I pulled into the first climb of the day, my altimeter was racking up height, yet my variometer was stubbornly telling me I was going down. I knew that this would make it difficult for me and decided to do damage limitation, sticking with other gliders wherever possible. Unfortunately, no one was in a rush, and Mike and I were forced to lead the gaggle on more occasions than I would have liked. Eventually the weather caught up on us and the day rapidly died. Devastatingly the gaggle split in two, with one group 1,000ft above in the last climb of the day being able to squeak home, and the rest of us landing short. I was absolutely gutted. I'd lost 350 points and had dropped right down the leader board.

Fortunately the next day was a rest day so we set about fixing my vario. After

spotting no obvious problems we swapped the instrument over to a new one which was doing its job perfectly. Or so we thought. The first climb of the day on Day 7 showed I had the same problem. With thunderstorms forecast we decided there was no time for me to land and troubleshoot further, so Mike and I set off on our two-hour AAT, again in a good position behind some quick gliders. It quickly became apparent that my instrument problems were a massive handicap. We couldn't find the good climbs in a frustrating sky, mixed up by the strong winds. A near last place result, but thankfully a devalued day so only just over 200 points dropped.

Finally we found our problem. The tie down gear which I neatly stowed down the back at the very beginning of the competition had dislodged and was pinching a tube. Such a small thing causing so much confusion left us all feeling totally stupid. We couldn't do much but laugh!

In the end I was 300 points off the podium in 10th place, which is the amount I lost by not finishing with Mike on my landout day. Mine was mainly a story of what could have been, but what an amazing experience it was.

Tom Arscott:

FOR me, the four weeks that we spent in Australia were certainly full of ups and downs. Things definitely didn't get off to a good start when we arrived for the start of unofficial practice, still unsure of the exact position of our gliders or whether they would arrive in time for the competition. Without GW, I jumped into Narromine Gliding Club's Libelle. As nice as the Libelle was to fly, I found ☺

WITH THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS



Towing out to the grid
(Katja Soikkeli)



I ACHIEVED FAR MORE THAN I EVER THOUGHT WAS POSSIBLE, INCLUDING MY FIRST 500KM FLIGHT, MY GOLD HEIGHT, THREE DAY PODIUMS, MY FIRST COMPETITION WIN, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY OF COURSE, THE TITLE OF WORLD CHAMPION



From stubble fires (below) to racing along streets at 12,000ft (above) Team GB experienced some incredible flying in the Junior Worlds at Narromine (Matt Davis)



✈ out pretty quickly that my legs didn't really fit, the variors had no compensation, my radio transmissions were unreadable, and I had only one navigation device, without which I would almost certainly become lost over the mostly featureless terrain. Fast forward a few days and the relief of seeing our gliders and all of our equipment arrive in one piece was unimaginable!

One of the first highlights of the competition for me had to be winning the first official practice day. It turned out to be a really tricky, low, blue day with the task set over the higher ground. Much of the flight was spent very low, sometimes looking up at the ridge lines I had just crossed, and at other times climbing away from 800ft over the singular tiny field in the middle of a vast expanse of forest. Whilst it was definitely not what I had envisaged flying in Australia to be like, it gave me great confidence that we could compete against the best junior pilots in the world, and was a really rewarding first flight back in my own glider. After a 2-3 finish on the last practice day, we went in to the start of the competition on a high.

The first half of the competition just kept on delivering for us in Club Class. Sam and I were flying well together and the practice we had put in over the course of the year was really paying off, particularly in the mostly blue conditions where we could generally fly just as a pair and still outpace the gaggles. After a string of very consistent points finishes, Day 4 got me my first podium with 2nd overall. Day 5 was also a highlight as we completed 450km at 125km/h actual in our dry, 1970s Standard Cirrus. Conditions were starting to live up to their reputation, with the oxygen remaining switched on for much of the flight whilst the vario needle got to stretch its legs a lot more than usual. By the end of Day 6, Sam and I were sitting in 2nd and 1st place respectively.

Lower points of the competition included Days 7 and 8. For the first time since the start of the competition, we had fantastic looking cumulus over the whole task area. However, the airmass was pretty moist and the clouds were large, which meant that a lot of searching had to be done to find the strongest lift. The conditions were very different to anything I had experienced before and our inexperience, combined with a bit of bad luck, definitely lost us our momentum. By the end

of Day 9, we had dropped to 2nd and 7th in the overalls and knew we had to find our form again going into the last day if we wanted to fend off the threat of an ever-strengthening German team.

The last day was truly a showdown. The pressure was immense. We discussed tactics at length during our pre-flight team briefing and recognised that we would have to do something different to make up the 80 point deficit to first place. With low, blue conditions forecast for the 2.5 hour AAT, we decided to stick to what we knew and do our own thing as a pair. We also had to make sure the Germans (sat in 1st, 3rd and 4th) didn't follow us through the start. So after an age spent hiding far away from the airfield, we crept back and made a start, relatively undetected. Although the Germans had started slightly before us, we quickly caught them on the first leg. We cunningly held back in the gaggle and made a break for it in a different direction. We pushed deep in to the first sector before running north and re-joining the same gaggle again. This time we knew that we might have done enough, and Andy advised us to stick with them for the rest of the flight. This was not so easy when we dropped off the bottom of the gaggle, got uncomfortably low and then lost sight of the Germans. It was a huge relief when we pulled into the last thermal on to glide above them. With the gliders off the field and everyone pacing nervously for the results, we waited... **WORLD CHAMPION!** – 2nd and 3rd on the day had put us 1st and 3rd overall. I can honestly say I've never felt so happy.

Overall, I left Australia having experienced some truly epic and challenging flying conditions. I achieved far more than I ever thought was possible, including my first 500km flight, my Gold Height, three day podiums, my first competition win, and most importantly of course, the title of World Champion! It would not have been possible without the many people who helped me along the way. Firstly, the sponsors, who all supported the team throughout the year in various ways. Andy Davis was both a fantastically organised team captain, and also a team coach second to none! Pami and the crews: Ben, Benedict, James and, in particular, my awesome crew Guy. And last, but by no means least, the best team-mate I could have hoped for, Sam Roddie. It was truly a team result and I couldn't have done it without him on my wing for every flight. We took on 33 of the best Junior pilots in the world and we came out on top!

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IMPACT OF WIND SHEAR ON LIFT

Tony Cronshaw asks top coach Kevin Atkinson to explain how streets behave in the presence of wind shear and inversions, and how to find the best lift

TONY Cronshaw talks with Kevin Atkinson about how to find the best lift when wind shear and inversions modify how streets behave.

TONY: *We talked last time [1] about the underlying physics that gives streets their classic structure, dynamics and momentum – and how to read this structure to find the best lift and avoid the worst of the sink. How does the presence of wind shear and inversions change this?*

KEVIN: Let's take a step back for a moment and remember that wind shear can occur for different reasons. Firstly, wind shear may manifest itself as a progressive increase in wind speed, and a progressive veering of wind direction, with increasing height

above the ground. However, sometimes the wind may veer less than expected or could even back in direction with increased height. So we need to keep an open mind on a particular day and try to work out what's actually happening within the context of the day's weather systems [2].

Secondly, wind shear will usually occur in a narrow height band around an inversion. Consider, for example, an inversion above the street with the wind blowing along the streets below the inversion, but a distinct crosswind above the inversion (usually strengthening and veering) compared to the street direction. Both types of wind shear are shown in the figure (below left).

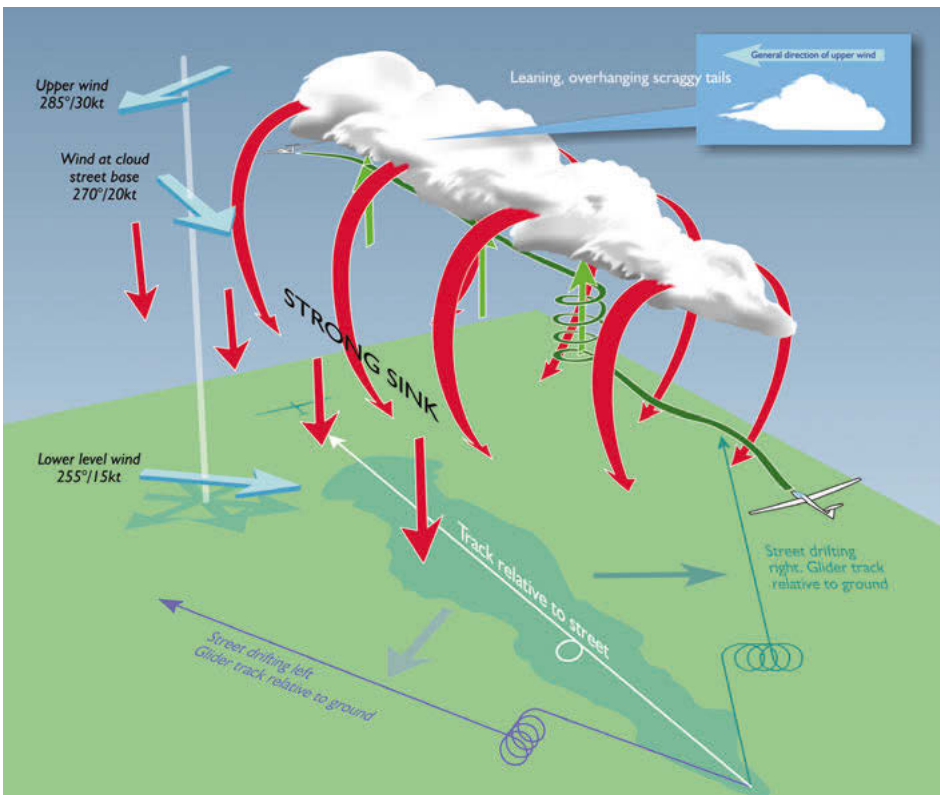
TONY: *What is the impact of the upper veered wind?*

KEVIN: It is likely that we'll see clouds building more towards one side of the street than the other, possibly with scraggy tails on the stronger downwind side as shown in the figure. Remember that moisture droplets are evaporating back into water vapour on the cloud surfaces, a process which consumes a lot of energy. This chilling effect produces an enormous amount of sinking air, which is blown preferentially towards the downwind side of the street. We must avoid the heavy sink found on this side and underneath the overhanging leaning clouds.

TONY: *Where are we likely to find the best lift?*

KEVIN: Often the best lift is produced as a consequence of the worst sink. The sinking air acts as a powerful force to under-cut the street and sweep up thermal bubbles under the street. This suggests searching either under the middle of the street or a bit nearer the side with the strong sink.

Cloud shapes may also indicate where the best lift is located: If it is possible to look ahead a few miles upwind or downwind, we may get the opportunity to see taller clouds with active-looking domes predominantly on



Typical streeting scenario with increasing wind speed and veer with height (Illustration by Steve Longland)



one side of the street. Or from underneath the street, do we see darker areas indicating stronger development of taller clouds on a particular side?

However, the position of best lift could be modified by many factors so we need to keep our eyes open and use any clues to help us decide where to search. As usual, we wander left and right under the street to find the best line of energy, and we use clouds, yaw string, and feel to help find the centre line. Once we have worked out where the best line is, it's likely that other streets will follow the same pattern.

TONY: *What happens when we have wind shear below the street, for example, if the wind is backed at lower altitudes compared with near cloudbase?*

KEVIN: This is where it's easy to become confused about what we mean by wind direction. In non-streeting conditions, our concept of wind direction usually means drift direction when circling. We can find this by simply pointing the nose at a ground feature that we circled over a few minutes earlier, or from our GPS flight computer (depending

on how the system is set up to measure and indicate the wind). However, when we are flying under streets, it's tempting to assume that the wind direction must be along the line of the street. But actually it's not that simple. It's true that we are flying directly into wind when flying under a street, but the entire system of streets may be drifting sideways. As shown in the figure, our ground track may not be the same as the street direction.

There are several reasons for drift, including strength/direction of the upper winds and lower winds – and the effects of the sun's movement casting shadows on different areas can cause streets to drift, or slowly rotate into a new direction. If this occurs when working a long street, the result will be a slow, but noticeable, continuous change of direction, usually clockwise.

TONY: *How can we detect that streets are drifting?*

KEVIN: When flying under a street we can detect sideways drift by picking a ground feature a few miles ahead on the line of the street, then a couple of minutes later ↗



Kevin Atkinson is the club coach lead for the BGA Aim Higher initiative (www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/aimhigher.htm). He started gliding at age 13 at Ouse GC (now York), flying his first solo on his 16th. Kevin has over 3,500 hours gliding, including competing in UK national and regional competitions. He also has more than 7,500 military jet hours (Tiger Moths to Typhoon)

■ *Gliding in Lift and G-SINK*, Kevin's recently published book, is available at www.bgashop.co.uk or direct from kratkinson@yahoo.com



Tony Cronshaw is an Ass Cat instructor at Cambridge Gliding Centre with over 1,000 hours gliding. His enthusiasm for helping the next generation of pilots includes running courses for visitors and members, and supporting CGC's recruitment and retention sub-committee



Flying a street into a south-westerly with promising cloud shadows revealing a small gap in the street left abeam of the Cardington hangars (danger area D206/6.0). With the street drifting to the right, a decision is needed whether to jump to the left, wait for the street to drift clear to the right, or follow procedures for crossing the danger area



With tempting looking streets, the Cambridge GC hangar is empty – only tugs and motorglider remain idle (Tony Cronshaw)

☞ checking again to see if this feature is still lined up with the street. If the feature is now displaced, then the street has drifted sideways.

Another way to assess sideways drift is to note the glider's drift direction when circling under the street, for example the wind vector from our GPS flight computer, and compare this with the street's direction. A discrepancy tells us that the street is drifting.

A further method is to compare the street direction (ie the compass heading) with our ground track direction from our GPS flight computer.

TONY: *This explains why a local out-and-return along a street doesn't always bring us back to the home airfield. The sum of the drift on both legs means we arrive back abeam of the starting point. Getting home then means flying a crosswind leg across a sink street, the task becoming a triangular task with a bit of a dash home on the third leg.*

KEVIN: That's true, but if you'd spotted the drift maybe you could have jumped streets earlier when a suitable gap presented itself.

Dealing with drift is also important when flying cross-country, for example, preferably avoiding a street that is drifting sideways towards restricted airspace. Or if we have a choice of two good looking streets ahead

(one to the left and one to the right of track) then preferably choosing the street on the upwind side so that we will drift back onto track.

We also need to consider street drift when approaching a turnpoint: It's generally better to use the street on the upwind side then route directly via the shortest line to the turnpoint. That way the gap between the street and the turnpoint is progressively narrowing. Of course we'll need a clear plan of where to go next, which sometimes might mean flying back immediately to the same street.

TONY: *Finally, how frequently are these effects present on a typical UK cross-country day?*

KEVIN: These effects are present on a surprising number of days – and not just days when there are obvious streets: It's well worth spotting drift when working a line of loosely linked clouds and making tactical decisions accordingly. And well worth avoiding the overhanging side of clouds unless you have plenty of height to burn.

[1] *Learn basics to exploit streets*, pp8-10, S&G Dec 15/Jan 16

[2] For explanations of wind backing/veering/shear and Coriolis effect in the northern hemisphere, see Bronze syllabus and books on weather systems.

■ **In the next Ask the Coach, Tony asks Kevin about "self-tasking" for up-and-coming cross-country pilots who are seeking to increase achievement and enjoyment.**



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SOAR IN WINTER FROM FLAT SITE

Colin Weyman explores how it is possible to find lift even on a relatively flat site in the middle of winter



One of Dorset GC's K-8s that was in use at Old Sarum in the 1980s, taken at Eyres Field by Jon Davies

**USED SENSIBLY
OUR 'MINI-
RIDGE' WAS A
LEGITIMATE
AND SAFE
MEANS OF
EXTENDING
YOUR WINTER
FLYING TIMES**

WE ALL like to soar. It is man against the elements – against gravity – against those hundred and one things that are trying to keep our feet firmly on the ground. If, as I do, you fly from a flat site, you will have experienced the frustration of winter flying.

Every now and again, there is a day when every possible weather criteria is right, ie wind strength and direction, enough members turn up and the duty instructor has enough foresight and vision to realise that flying in strong wind conditions can help everybody become better pilots. Pilots

who spend the whole of their time flying only in 'good' conditions are one day bound to inadvertently experience very rough conditions. Will they be able to cope?

In clubs that operate from ridge sites, pilots learn right from the word go how to cope with extreme flying conditions, such as curl over, strong wind gusts, extreme wind gradient and all kinds of unusual wind turbulence that pilots who only ever fly from a flat site cannot even begin to visualise!

So where were we? Oh yes.

We are back on our flat site, in the middle of winter, with just enough people to make it viable to fly.

So where do we start looking for the means to extend our flight times from the usual four-minute up and down dash?

Although many of you fly from flat sites, there are bound to be one or two topographical features near enough to your airfield, which given the right wind direction and strength could enable you to perhaps double or even treble your average flight time. (All you ridge site pilots out there, please bear with me – remember that there are thousands of glider pilots who do not have the 'luxury' of a soarable ridge and have little idea of what ridge soaring is all about.)

I will use my old home club site at Old Sarum, Wiltshire (where The Dorset Gliding Club was based until 1992), as an example of how it is possible to find lift even on a relatively flat site in the middle of winter.

There is a small hill rising to about 50-70ft above the level of the airfield, and running diagonally to it. It is about 800 metres long and running approximately SE to NW.

The steepest face of the hill faces NE and is approx 500 metres from our strip. Given a wind direction of approx NE and a wind strength of 20kts+, it is possible to 'soar' this ridge at a height of 500-900ft and, given the above criteria, we 'Old Sarum' flat site pundits have been known to keep a K-8 airborne for up to an hour or more!

Of course, the length of flight depends on a steady wind strength, as at that height a short lull only in the wind will mean that you will be rapidly back in the circuit.

There are a few of us at our club who made use of our 'mini ridge' and, as far as I am aware, there were no dangerous incidents. There will always be the occasional instructor at any club who regards the working of lift at a height of less than 600ft as irresponsible and dangerous, but I believe that used sensibly our 'mini ridge' was a legitimate and safe means of extending your winter flying times. (Being winter of course means that there are rarely more than two or three gliders airborne at any one time, so the likelihood of a 'gaggle' does not arise.)

The pilots at our club who bothered to persevere and fine-hone their flying skills on our 'mini ridge' invariably found a great advantage when visiting ridge sites. Because we learnt our ridge flying skills on such infinitesimal amounts of lift, we used to visit ridge sites and often managed to stay up, while the club pundits were scratching their heads and wondering why the hell we had even bothered to rig!

One other source of lift we could also use in the winter was Old Sarum 'castle' at the western end of the field. This is not



Colin Weyman pictured in 1988 in the Dorset GC Skylark he used to 'ridge soar' at Old Sarum

really a castle, but an ancient earthworks which rises to about 100ft above the valley floor. Reasonable lift can be found in a N-N/Westerly wind of 15-25kts.

Winch launching from the eastern end and pushing into wind, the lift at the upwind edge was usually workable down to about 700ft. The technique is to reduce speed as you fly through the small area of lift, and fly as accurately as possible slowly into wind. As soon as sink is indicated, turn to the left and do a 360° turn back over the 'castle' and into the lift again. This can be repeated ad infinitum and, given sufficient wind strength, the small height loss in turning should be regained flying back through the area of lift. The secret is accurate flying, with well co-ordinated turns and flying at such a speed that you spend the maximum time in lift and minimum time in sink.

The location of Old Sarum 'castle' was such that, at say 700ft, you could do your last turn as a 180° and join the circuit to the south of the field. (All glider circuits at Old Sarum were done to the south, irrespective of which end we were launching from). Joining the circuit was straightforward and there would be no gliders flying our 'mini ridge' as this works only with a N/Easterly wind direction.

I have illustrated just a couple of ways in which it is possible to extend your flight times given the right conditions in the

winter, and which can also enable you to 'polish' your flying skills so that when you do visit a club with a 'proper' ridge you should be more able to make the best use of it. It is a good feeling when you have had an extended flight and the ridge club pundits have not thought it worth launching because of the weak lift.

Remember also that these areas I have described can also be the best areas for 'kicking' off thermal lift in the summer. So don't give up flying in the winter months. Your club needs the revenue, and you may just discover that elusive area of lift that can make your flight even more worthwhile. There are certain areas near Eyres Field that give useable lift in the winter. Talk to the club 'pundits', who are always eager to divest themselves of their hard won knowledge.

Think about it! Happy flying.

■ Please note that this article expresses my own personal opinions and may or may not be what your instructors would advise! Before flying in 'adverse conditions', please seek advice from the duty instructor on the day.

I personally very much enjoy flying from Eyres Field, and think the scenery is second to none!

I hope the article may bring back some pleasant memories to those of you who used to fly at Old Sarum.

BGA TRAINING STANDARDS OFFICER MIKE FOX ADDS:

I LOVE Colin's article; we flatland pilots need something to look forward to during the dark days of winter. I wonder if the tiny ridge could have been enhancing some gentle wave from the Salisbury plain and Kingsclere area upwind? No matter - it's that curious state of mind, willing to propose and explore possibly implausible sources of lift, that makes gliding great. There are many things to be gained from flying in the winter. You only have to look on social media to see that sometimes innocuous skies or terrain lead to a lengthened or even epic flight and, if not, you have tried out your theoretical source of lift and honed your skills for another day. Life is short - take a launch!

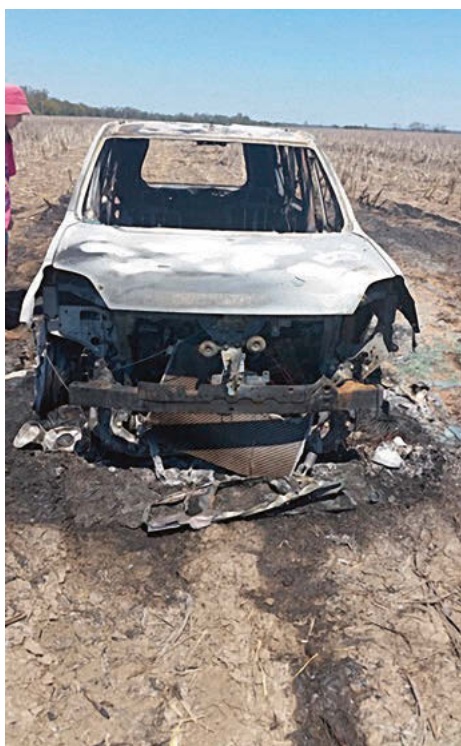


Colin Weyman started gliding in 1978, aged 41, at Dorset GC. While the club was based at Old Sarum, Colin gained his AEI rating and carried on doing it for 10 years. He joined a Skylark 4 syndicate and, later in 1989, started a Libelle syndicate, in which he has now been flying for 26 years and doesn't plan to stop any time soon. Colin still does around 30-40 hours in the Libelle every year. He has a total of 3,110 flights and 1,350 hours solo, 270 hours P1 in multi-seaters, and 43 hours P2 in multi-seaters



FIELD OF FIRE

When Mark Dalton volunteered to help with a retrieve from a sorghum stubble field, little did he know he would face a trial by fire



BRIAN Gilby and I were bent over the hitch uncoupling the glider trailer. It is amazing how quickly this task can be achieved when the car from which the trailer is being disconnected is on fire.

It was Day 1 of the 2015 Queensland state gliding competition, being held at my home club, Kingaroy. For family reasons, I was taking a lay day, so that meant I turned up at the club mid-afternoon to hear that one of the competitors had landed out in a sorghum stubble field on the Darling Downs (a huge area of completely flat farm land to the west of the Kingaroy valley).

Now, for those non-farmers amongst us (and that includes me), sorghum stubble is not like the corn stubble you find in England. For a start, it's about as thick as your thumb and tends to be a metre or so high. Not exactly ideal as a landout option, but better than some alternatives.

Having nothing better to do, I volunteered for the retrieve and hitched his trailer to his car (a two-year-old Nissan X-Trail, petrol engine 4WD) and set off. The trip was uneventful and I picked Brian up at the entrance to the paddock (field). We were driving across the paddock towards the waiting glider, when he noticed that we appeared to be leaving a trail of small spot fires in our wake. We stopped the car and put them out using the time-honoured method of stamping on them (my favourite gliding shoes have not been the same since).

On continuing our slow progress across the field, far from disappearing, the smell of burning appeared to be increasing, spot fires were again appearing behind us. To my

growing horror, smoke was slowly drifting up from around my feet. We stopped again and once more performed the 'sorghum stubble dance' to put out the spot fires behind us.

At this point, I think it is useful to learn a little more about sorghum. This is what the 'whole grains council' has to say about it:

'Sorghum, a cereal grain, is the fifth most important cereal crop in the world, because of its natural drought tolerance and versatility as food, feed and fuel. In Africa and parts of Asia, sorghum is primarily a human food product, while in Australia it is used mainly for livestock feed.'

And here are some interesting facts:

- Broomcorn is a variety of sorghum introduced to the US by Ben Franklin for – you guessed it – making brooms.
- Some starches used for adhesives and paper making are derived from sorghum.
- In Africa, leather is sometimes dyed red with the help of red varieties of sorghum.
- Maotai, the fiery Chinese liquor served at Chinese state banquets, is distilled from fermented sorghum.
- You can pop sorghum. It's just like popcorn, only slightly smaller.

And to this list, I can confidently add: it is very flammable when dry.

So, on with the story. As the last one or two smoldering stubble patches were stamped into submission I turned towards the car. A scene from *Jaws* flashed past my consciousness, where two of the main characters are out on their fishing vessel hunting a giant shark. For the first time, one of them sees the enormous creature and turns, stunned, to his companion.

"We're gonna need a bigger boat," he states.

Brian's car was now visibly on fire, with acrid smoke pouring from the engine compartment and flames rising a metre high.

"You're gonna need another car," I say, trying to inject some humour in to the situation. I don't think Brian was listening. He was running hell for leather toward this blazing inferno.

"Got to save the trailer," he shouts over his shoulder. I thought about this and, to be honest, I didn't really agree with him on this point. I started shuffling nervously backwards, but after watching him struggle with the trailer hitch for a second or two my conscience finally got the better of me and, against my better judgement, I reluctantly went to help.

By the time I arrived, he had more or less uncoupled the trailer. If you've never stood within a few feet of a raging fire, with nothing separating you from it but a half-full petrol tank, then perhaps you don't yet fully appreciate the feeling of an urgent need to be somewhere else.

As soon as the trailer came loose, we pushed as if our lives depended on it, which perhaps they did. The trailer was front-heavy, making it difficult to move and so, now moving in slow motion, I ran, with my trusty gliding shoes now turned to lead, to the back of the trailer to provide some balance by hanging off the back of it. As I ran down the side of the trailer, visions of being catapulted in to the air (again in slow motion, of course) silhouetted against a backdrop of an enormous fireball towards an admiring camera crew came to mind. This did not happen and eventually we were able to manhandle the trailer out of harm's way.

Panting for breath and soot-stained, we watched from a safe distance as the car disintegrated. The tyres exploded with large bangs, the alloy wheel rims melted to form small puddles of silvery material in the dirt and there was a short firework display of bright white fireballs (of unknown origin) arching in to the air.

There is a TV show in Australia (and, I believe, in the UK), called *Mythbusters*, where a group of unlikely looking guys take pleasure in, among other things, blowing stuff up. In one instalment, they were looking at whether the petrol tanks of cars really do explode when the car catches fire (if, for instance, it is driven off a cliff). Well I can categorically confirm that in this case, the petrol tank did, in fact, eventually

explode with a satisfactorily loud bang, but (rather disappointingly, I thought) not the associated fireball you get in films.

The plume of acrid, black smoke had alerted the cheerful young farmer, Rob, who turned up in his truck with wife Gillian and kids in tow, and who did not seem to think it was at all unusual to find a burning vehicle in his paddock. Gillian took the pictures on these pages with her phone, for which I am very grateful (both Brian's and my phones were already melted in the flames by then).

A little later, Rob's brother turned up with a water truck and put out the last of the flames. They both stood around holding the hose, like a couple of friends at a BBQ, while at the same time discussing the relative merits of the two football sides playing in the big game the following weekend. I suppose that the life of an Australian farmer is so exciting and event-filled that the occasional vehicular conflagration does not merit too much comment. Or perhaps it's yet another example of the relaxed Australian attitude to life in general.

A little later, as we waited in the local pub for a second retrieve crew to turn up, we discussed the cause of the fire. There seemed to be two possibilities: firstly the catalytic converter caused it. This device is designed to reduce toxic emissions and is attached to the exhaust (and is therefore close to the ground) and gets very hot indeed. Some stalks of sorghum may have come in to contact with it and caught fire. I seem to remember a similar event happened in a stubble field in the UK many years ago, when a Volvo caught fire and that this was attributed to the catalytic converter.

Just as an aside, it seems that, according to Volkswagen, it is very difficult to measure the degree to which the catalytic converter actually works to reduce emissions. At least, I think that that was what they were saying before they recalled a huge proportion of their fleet globally, having cheated on their emission calculations.

The second theory was that a sorghum stalk had somehow ruptured a fuel line, which would account for the spot fires behind us.

Whatever the actual cause, the take-home message is clear:

Make absolutely sure that you use the other guy's car when going out on a retrieve.

WE STOPPED AGAIN AND ONCE MORE PERFORMED THE 'SORGHUM STUBBLE DANCE' TO PUT OUT THE SPOT FIRES BEHIND US



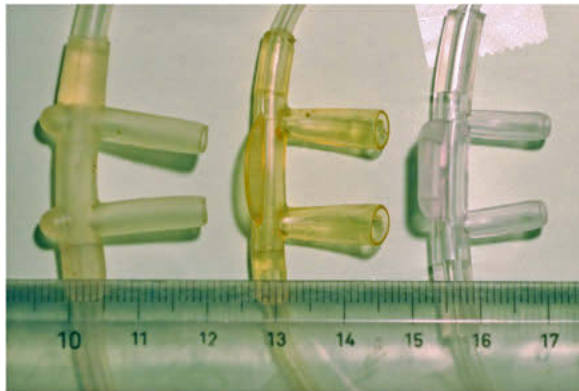
'There's nothing wrong with the car, except that it's on fire'
- Murray Walker OBE (Formula One commentator)



Mark Dalton is previously from London Gliding Club, but now in Oz (better conditions!) flying from Kingaroy Soaring Club, Queensland. He flies an ASW 20BL and has 2,000 hours, a Gold badge and two Diamonds

BREATHE EASILY AND FLY SAFELY

With many pilots enjoying high altitude flying in wave in the UK, John McWilliam looks at the use of oxygen and why you need it more than you think



A flared cannula (middle) reduces leakage from your nostrils

**YOU CANNOT
OVERESTIMATE
HOW MUCH WE
SIMPLY DON'T
NOTICE THE
EFFECTS UNTIL IT
IS TOO LATE – IF
WE EVER NOTICE
THEM AT ALL**

YEARS ago I flew a non-pressurised twin all over Europe, always above cloud to give my family a smooth ride. It entailed hours at 15,000ft and yet it didn't seem to affect us – or so I thought!

Taking that attitude to glide in Benalla, Australia, I didn't bring an oxygen set, but one day two friends there – medics Colin and Alexandra Collum – heard this and Alex gave me the sort of look only women can give. Obviously I was doing something wrong!

Colin produced a technical clothes peg which, when clipped to my finger, showed my blood's oxygen saturation level and heart rate. With this thing clipped on, I went flying and I saw acceptable oxygen readings until I got to 9,000ft. Then down it went and the readings at 11,000ft suggested I was definitely at risk – not fainting yet, but certainly not as bright a button as I thought I was.

To check I was on the ball I had been doing mental arithmetic sums – but then I remembered an RAF exercise where we were put in a chamber, pumped to altitude and told to write answers to a quiz. Totally unaware of it, our writing drifted into gibberish – and then we all fainted, quite unaware of it, even when we woke up!

You cannot overestimate how much we simply don't notice the effects until it is too late – if we ever notice them at all.

The same happens when driving while tired. Maybe our brain is wired to tell us that if we drive quicker, or keep driving even when nodding off, that we will get there quicker – and then we can sleep.

That is a dangerous deduction, but people do it nevertheless, that's how our brains are wired. It is the same principle with oxygen – we don't think we need it until it's too late.

You definitely cannot confirm by yourself that you are OK up there!

The finger oximeter showed also that my heart rate went up at height, trying to compensate for the reduced oxygen in the air. At about 9,000ft my heart was flat out and stayed that way above 9,000ft for most of the day. If I'd had oxygen and used it, I would have given my heart and body a much easier day.

You definitely will be more tired if you fly without oxygen.

I bought an oximeter in Lidl for a pittance and in 2014 used a Mountain High oxygen kit at Benalla on every flight. One bottle fill lasted all season, but maybe I wasn't using it right.

In August 2015, I was gliding at Sisteron, floating around for hours with the oxygen on, but not thinking much about it. That changed when we had an interesting lecture at briefing from Jean-Marie Clément, who takes his Nimbus 4 DM to the Andes every European winter.

There he blasts round from dawn till dusk, over high cloud, massive mountains and never-seen-again terrain.

After 11 years doing that, he is still alive. That fact, plus all his experience and research on high level flying, makes him probably the leading expert on the subject. And he holds six World and 27 French gliding records and has flown 2,182km at 178km/h average!

I sat up sharply and listened to Jean-Marie preaching oxygen use like a born-again Christian. He gave us the latest information based on his experience, on experiments done by himself and his friends, and on laboratory research.

He went to great pains to persuade us to use much more oxygen, especially those of us not in the first flush of youth – and that is all bar a handful of glider pilots, whatever your personal delusions!

Jean-Marie recently published an excellent book *Dancing with the Wind*, reviewed in S&G (p33, Aug/Sept 15). It is on offer from the BGA Shop. I have a copy

and it makes amazing reading, covering all aspects of gliding. The well-researched section about the proper use of oxygen is particularly pertinent to this article and I am indebted to Jean-Marie for letting me use some of it here.

Jean-Marie once had to revive an experienced P2, who collapsed at height, unable to do anything to help himself. *He knew he was in trouble, but he could not move.*

As a result of Jean-Marie's experiences, EASA has lowered the height where use of oxygen is mandatory from 13,000ft to 10,000ft in EASA-registered aircraft – that's us.

You need oxygen to stay fresh and awake, flying at height anywhere. It will help you on the better UK thermal days and certainly in the wave flying such as we see on the Ladder in Wales, Scotland and the North-East.

Jean-Marie says older pilots should use twice the oxygen supply recommended for fit young people. To achieve that he suggests the following:

Cannula

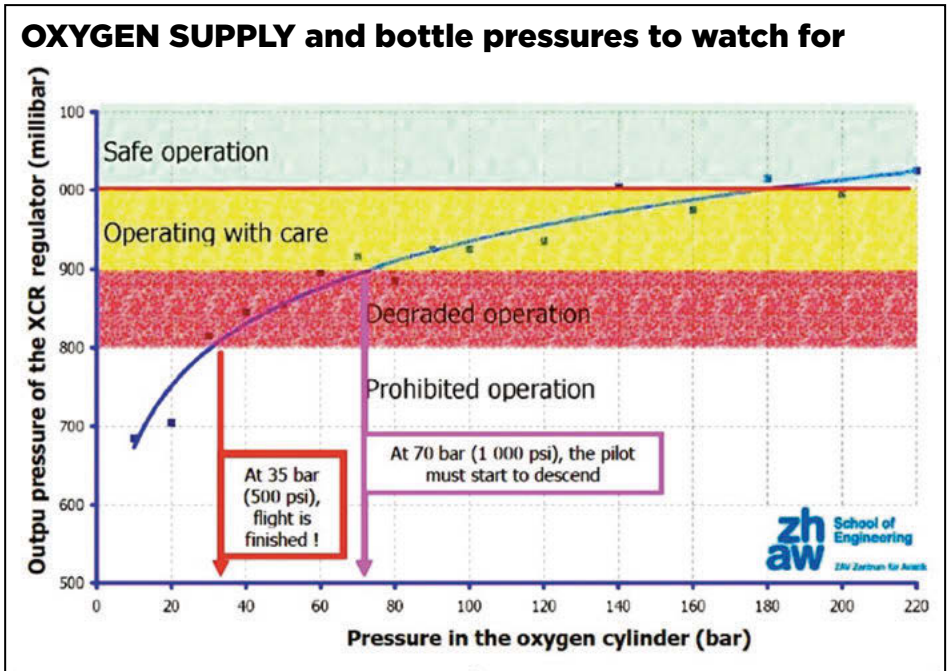
Use a flared nose cannula. Not a mask. Masks leak and retain too much old used breath, its oxygen used up.

The flared cannula (middle of picture on facing page) reduces leakage from your nostril.

Oxygen gauge readings

Ideally the gauge should be easily visible but if not, as buried in the back of the Duo Discus pictured below, use a phone camera to read and record it.

Oxygen bottles should be refilled if their pressure drops to 1,000psi (70bar)



Mountain High control boxes

To keep dust and insects out keep pipes on, or push short blanked-off pipes into the inlet and outlet.

Settings: Select by pressing black buttons either side of OFF (picture below):

During normal conditions:

- “N” From ground level
- “F10” At 10,000ft (3,000 metres)
- “F20” At 15,000ft (4,500 metres)

Before harder-working conditions:

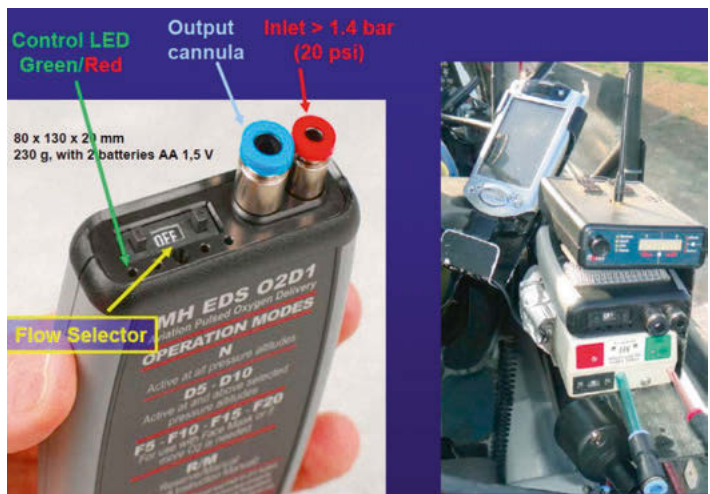
“R/M” Thermalling, or even peeing, can restrict or stop your breathing because of stress. Pre-oxygenate for two to three minutes by selecting “R/M”. Click right button



Illustrations in this article are from Jean-Marie Clément's book, *Dancing with the wind*, which is available from the BGA Shop for £37.50 www.bgashop.co.uk

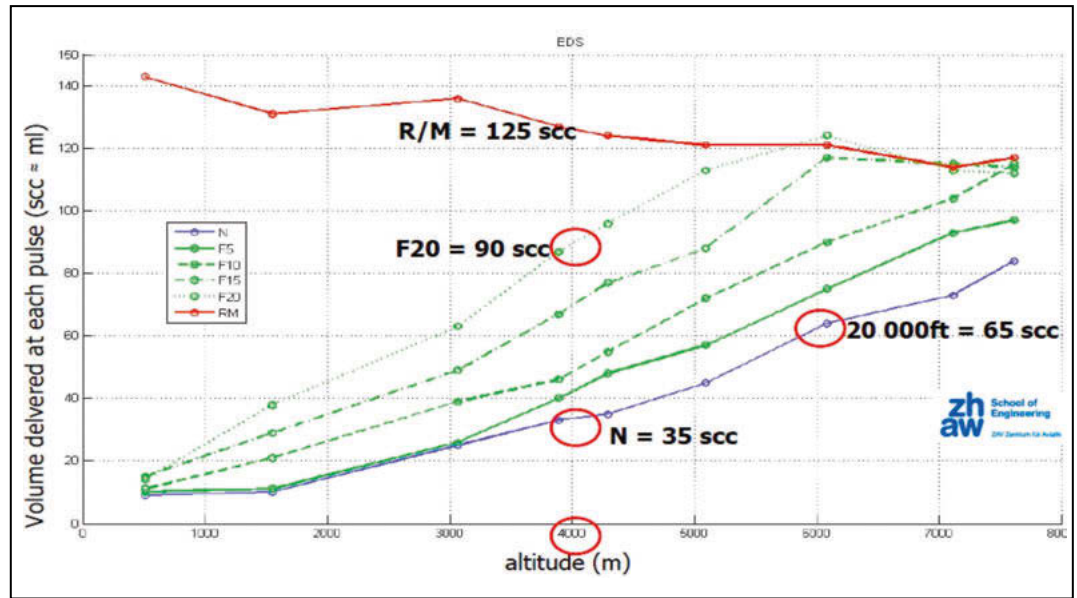


Oxygen gauge readings



Mountain High control boxes

MAKE A CONSCIOUS EFFORT TO BREATHE DEEPLY AND OFTEN, FEELING THE OXYGEN PULSE INTO YOUR NOSTRILS, PARTICULARLY BEFORE ANY TASK



■ Ask for help if you need more information about using oxygen



John McWilliam flew Chipmunks at University Air squadron, had a sniff at gliding and then joined the RAF flying Gnats, including aerobatic displays for the RAF, and later the F4 Phantom. He won a UK sailing Nationals and then started McWilliam Sailmakers in Ireland, flying all over Europe in the company's Piper Geronimo delivering sails and racing on his customers' yachts - a hard life, but someone had to do it! Retiring in 2006, he moved to England for better gliding - and now in winter to Oz, the best!

☞ on control box till it stops. (See graph above.)

Breathing issues

1. We breath less regularly, or even stop breathing, when at height. Make a conscious effort to breath deeply and often, feeling the oxygen pulse into your nostrils, particularly before any task.
2. Our chest and lungs are compressed in the normal gliding attitude. This further reduces

oxygen intake, so expand your chest and inhale right down into your stomach to get round this shortcoming.

Flight with no oxygen:

See graph of oxygen saturation level below left.

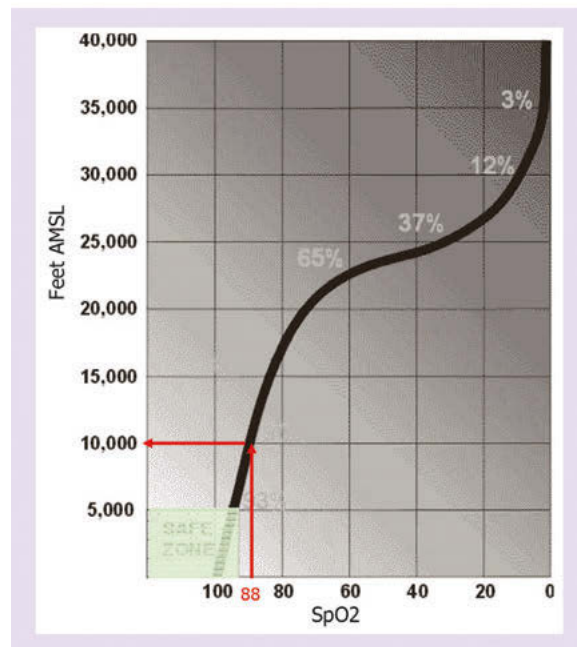
An overview

Lowest normal SpO2 is 93 per cent. At 10,000ft it falls down to 88 per cent.

DON'T ALLOW IT TO GO LOWER THAN

88 PER CENT! It takes only one to two minutes to raise blood SpO2 to 93 per cent, but your nervous system will take two to six hours to recover and your body will need 24 to 48 hours to completely recover. Avoid headaches, demotivation, flight fatigue, collisions and bad landings!

There is ZERO tolerance. Permanent damages from mild hypoxia lead to bad decisions. And it gets worse with age, medication, muscular activity (stress, shivering), respiratory inefficiency (breath holding, hyperventilation), etc.



Changes in oxygen saturation with altitude. Below 88 per cent, corresponding to 10,000ft, cognitive functions begin to degrade. This is the alarm threshold chosen for our pulse oximeters. Medics believe that the normal minimum of 93 per cent has already been reached at 5,000ft amsl (1,500m)

Conclusions about oxygen

- It keeps you more alert and less tired
- It might one day keep you alive
- It is cheap
- Get it
- Use it every flight above 5,000ft.



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This page from top:
Last flight of the day at Banbury GC
(Tim Sullivan)

Flying an Arcus from St Auban, with Pierre Lemaire. Mike Oliver says: "We launched into a cloudless blue sky and after topping the first ridge we could see the wave bars. Pierre told me if you can reach those bars, which are more than 100km away, we can get to the Matterhorn. We did! A round trip of just over 500km (Mike Oliver)

Sunset silhouette: late afternoon winch launch of club Astir at Sutton Bank on 23 December, 2015 (Adrian Melia)

Facing page, clockwise from top:
Ross Morriss landing the Skylark on runway 27 at Peterborough & Spalding GC (Tim Beasley)



Dramatic skies over Devon & Somerset GC (Mark Courtney)

Out over the snow fields on the Cairngorms on 27 December, 2015. It was a day of weak wave, but just enough to wander out over the snow fields in bright sunlight (Roy Wilson)

Water droplets on the wing of Seahawk's DG-505 as the sun sets in the background on a wet and windy flying day in Cornwall (Jake Matthews)

■ If you would like your previously-unpublished photographs to be considered for inclusion in Gliding Gallery, send them to: editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk or upload to: www.sailplaneandgliding.co.uk/dropbox







National and international comp pilot Matt Cook asks are comps for you? Some of the UK's top pilots reveal why they value competitions

WHY FLY COMPS?

REMEMBER every competition, either through notes or specific parts of flights which stick in my head. I have made the best friends through competition flying and ultimately found a career and family as a result! So I owe gliding competitions a lot.

Having joined the competitions committee I asked myself – what motivates those who fly competitions and how did they start?

For anybody who flies them, the answers seem obvious. Then I remember, that's in the main because I started gliding in a very supportive and focused environment where competition was not only commonplace, but positively encouraged. This may not be the case for you.

My path was fairly conventional: Inter-club League in my old Oly 2b, regionals, nationals and finally internationals in my beloved Ventus 2a – each step a small expansion of my previous experience that continues to this day.

Non-rated competitions, such as the Inter-club League or Competition Enterprise, are a great way to get started. The competition is all laid on – just rig, brief and fly. I started in Inter-club League novice class, where everybody is very new to it. I totally loved those years – they are the times when every improvement is a step change.

The fondest moments of these comps (beyond the parties) have to include my first completed 100km, then my first 100km triangle at 67km/h (a very big thing in an Oly 2b!), followed by my first 300km – at 97km/h in an Astir. Without exception, all were not just a result of good weather, but also that I was pushing myself and in an environment set to challenge me.

Above all, look to have fun! It sounds obvious, but do enter your first competition with realistic objectives. Always have the dream, but success is measured against objectives reached.

Before long – no matter what machine, borrowed or owned – a regional championship will call, and so begins the next stage in your comp career.

Again – rule 1 – have fun. Set realistic goals. These comps run over nine days and, as such, act as a huge catalyst to those looking for a marked improvement in personal performance. In these longer comps you will learn to think long term. It's a marathon, not a sprint and you will need to work on not making mistakes, as scores are aggregated over the period. Awesome social scenes, alongside a charged environment



where everybody is stretched will soon lead to discoveries in your flying. Some good, some bad, but I guarantee you will enjoy the challenge of beating the next guy up the ladder, or understanding why you didn't in the bar afterwards.

I remember my first regionals, having flown on many days I would never have rigged and being staggered at speeds and distances covered by the top guys. These were pre-logger days, so I often bribed pundits with a beer for a debrief. Eventually though, the gods become men – and soon, with work, you will be the guy at the bar getting bought the beer.

Nationals I regard to be turbo-charged regionals. Surrounded by my mates, now more experienced. The banter flows and the tasks are that much more challenging. After all, at this comp we are looking for the national champion and future GB team. In my nationals class in 2014, looking at the year's top 10 alone, I was competing against a current world champion, an ex-world champion and five ex-national champions and GB team pilots. Here it's very much all about the flying – and making sure you are flying to make zero mistakes and secure a place on the podium. (I do recall a couple of AM finishes in the bar that week!)

My challenge is the same as it always has been – to focus on improvement, who and what can I learn from, but above all to enjoy it. Results follow your work and come in time, and getting results at this stage is when you know you've earned your spurs.

With results come team placings, international competitions, wonderful

The photographs above and on the facing page were taken at the 30th annual two-seater competition at Pocklington in 2015 (Des Ashton)

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BOUGHT THE
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TOP TIPS FROM ANDY DAVIS

- Make sure you are in current cross-country practice before going to the comp. Putting rusty skills under pressure in a comp environment is a sure recipe for disappointment or disaster.
- Try to practise flying with other gliders in thermals before the comp.
- Practise with water ballast before the comp. Don't use it for the first time in the comp.
- Understand the competition rules or ask an experienced comp pilot to brief you about starting, TP sectors including the enhanced sector, finishing and AATs.
- Make sure you know how your glider works, particularly soaring instruments.
- Make sure you have a reliable flight recorder system and know how it works.
- Try to relax and enjoy the experience – your flying will benefit.
- Fly your own flight, try not to be influenced too much by others.
- Look forward to the challenges. Seek possibilities rather than problems.
- Don't be tempted to take risks just because you are in a comp. If you feel apprehensive about something, then you probably shouldn't be doing it.

Better still book onto one of my coaching weeks before your competition!

↳ landscapes and bigger challenges – everybody there is a national or world champion – and hence the challenge I relish facing today.

So, why fly comps? For the people, the challenge and for fun. For me though the question remains, just how good can I be?

Are you thinking about flying a comp this year? Don't be afraid to ask the guys at your club or your CFI for more info. And if you're really desperate, drop me a mail and I'll give you a steer.

Here are some thoughts and tips from others on how and why to fly a comp in 2016:

Andy Davis:

EVEN after all the comps I have flown, I look forward to competing and testing my skills against others with a real buzz of excitement and anticipation before each competition flight. Every flight is unique and it is a privilege to be able to fly with the other pilots and face the challenges that competition flights offer up. Take a look at my top tips (left).

Ed Johnston:

COMPS are for the competitive right? Those that just have to beat the next pilot, that don't care about landing out provided it is 5km further down the road.

Well no, competitions are for anyone who enjoys the challenges of cross-country flying, but would like to do it with friends; for those who prefer someone else to arrange the weather, tasks, launches, food, beer and mix in friends old and new for good measure.

Me, I am not a natural competition pilot. Strange to say for someone who has flown over 60 rated competitions, inter-club leagues, tasks weeks, national ladder and not to mention any opportunity to just race with my mates round a club task. But it is true; I am never happier than testing myself against

the weather with no other complications.

Yet it is in competitions that I get to measure how well I have actually done, and get to learn how to do it better – from friends and competitors, as well as from myself, by stretching further and faster than I would otherwise think was possible.

So why do we do it? Yes there are the highs, day wins and competition wins too – easy to love it then. I have also known the lows, setbacks, even disasters, but I come back for the challenge; that frustration when the slightly too big task is announced, the unexpected shower, the plain straight racing sky that you have to get through not just fast, but faster, and the impossible trawl home which ends with 'Good Finish'.

And, of course, for the beer!

Matt Davis:

MY FIRST competition was the 2008 Junior Championship. Launching into rain most days with cloudbase below 2000ft, it was certainly a baptism of fire and helped to teach me some important lessons about flying which I've carried through to today.

The first day was a real eye opener for me about what could actually be achieved on horrible looking days. From a delight, I set off into a murky sky, fully expecting to hit a field at the bottom of the valley within about 10km. After climbing up slowly, the sky ahead suddenly opened up and we raced round the next 100km in brilliant conditions. I was then taught my first lesson in persistence and flying back into sea breezes, eventually getting a bit gung-ho and landing 20km short of the finish.

Despite having to painfully learn these lessons again over the years, that first competition day taught me more than I ever expected – I came 3rd on my second day and still use those experiences while flying today. If you want to improve your flying massively, while having an awesome laugh, look no



Photo by Des Ashton

further than the Junior Championship. Check out UK Junior Gliding on Facebook for more details.

Charlie Jordan:

EVERYONE has their own reasons for competing – some want to see how they place against their peers, others want to push themselves to fly faster. Some simply enjoy having tasks and weather briefings done for them!

I have flown inter-club leagues, the juniors, regionals, nationals and a Junior World Championships. It doesn't matter which competition; each has left me with some incredible memories.

My satisfaction from competitions has changed through the years – initially I spent a lot of time landing out, and I enjoyed the varied experiences. Everything from a boggy cabbage field to a ski centre car park!

As my skills improved, I enjoyed completing the tasks and the banter afterwards. I usually try to avoid the gaggles, but you normally find a few lost ducklings and that pushes you on.

Nowadays I get the biggest kick from “wheel to wheel” racing with my mates, whether we are working as a team or not. Of course you aim to win, but the fun usually shines over any poor performances! The next day could be a completely different race...

I relate nearly all my favourite gliding memories to competitions, because the experience/locations/conditions are so varied and I have developed my skill from each one.

Pete Stratten:

AS A 22-year-old based in Germany in the early 1980s, with an insatiable gliding habit to feed, I jumped at the chance to fly in the International Military Gliding Championships run by the German military at Buckeburg. It was a great, if not steep, first comp learning experience sharing a Standard Cirrus with Barry Elliott over two weeks of task flying and socialising among military sport glider pilots. And somehow I won a day.

Lots of comp years later, flying at the same event in an LS8, the others in my class made enough mistakes to let me take top place. The greens had made an impact by then, so we were (very efficiently, of course) winch launched using two large grids arranged alongside each other. It focuses the mind, glancing across at a Duo Discus at the same 45 degree climb angle! Comps are a fantastic opportunity to improve your cross-country

skills, you meet some great people, you'll have fun and will probably experience something new! What's not to like?

Callum Lavender:

I WASN'T really sure what to do after I went solo, not being able to complete my Bronze (due to my age) I couldn't go cross-country.

One of my instructors suggested that I try aerobatics. And I got hooked (much to my dad's wallet's disapproval) I agreed to go along to the Dan Smith Memorial competition and discovered a welcoming community of like-minded pilots. Over the three-day comp, I picked up tons of invaluable tips and information just from talking to these guys. I decided to attend every other comp in the season. Along with learning a whole heap of about my chosen specialisation, from talking and flying with the other aerobatic pilots, I was also a scribe for the judges.

The most important thing I have gained from competing is having something to aim for, always trying to improve and get better than the new friends you make in this community. Always striving to get better than the guy that beat you last time. In the few aerobatic comps I have attended, I have improved my flying, met some great people, had tons of fun and added meaning into my flying.

Steve Poz:

THANKS to the help of the Hus Bos pundits and instructors I was steered into doing my first Junior Championship only two weeks after completing my Silver (the first task was a 300km and I completed it!) It was a big learning curve, but what an amazing week! Over the next year or so, I built my confidence through the inter-club league and various Junior championships and regionals. I was never a natural and the results took a while to become acceptable in my eyes. However, gradually things started coming together with a turning point being winning my first day at the inter-club league at Wittering in a borrowed glider, and a couple of finishes when the rest of the field landed out. By the end of 2015 – my 10th year of gliding – I had racked up 20 competitions. The feeling of smoking the finish after a satisfying competition cross-country is unbeatable.

COMPETITIONS ARE FOR ANYONE WHO ENJOYS THE CHALLENGES OF CROSS-COUNTRY FLYING, BUT WOULD LIKE TO DO IT WITH FRIENDS



Taking part in a competition is a fantastic way to improve your flying skills and make new friends

WHY NOT TRY?

- Inter-club league
- Competition Enterprise
- Regionals
- Nationals
- Aerobatics
- Set your sights on representing Great Britain in the Europeans and Worlds

■ See the competition calendar for 2016 on p4

A FAREWELL TO RAF WITTERING

...or wittering in more ways than one, as David Innes shares another insight into his professional and gliding past



The SF-26 about to launch (with rudder attached)

I AM QUITE HAPPILY ORBITING, ATTEMPTING TO THERMAL OVERHEAD, WHEN THERE IS THE MOST GOD-AWFUL ROAR CLOSE BY AND A DOT DISAPPEARING UPWIND

FIRST, a note on ironic punishment. I referred in a previous article to doing thousands of simulated Instrument Approaches into CID (Aug/Sept 15, *Days when all goes wrong*, pp64-65). Now the informed of you will know that that is the airport (and VOR) identifier for Cedar Rapids, Iowa. At the time of writing, not only am I back there, dragged screaming out of retirement to help with certification of a major avionics program, but again we are doing hundreds of simulated instrumented approaches into... aaarrggghhh!

I noted that RAF Wittering was finally removed as a gliding site in the most recent chart updates, with the Four Counties club having wound up the previous October. The airfield lost its Harriers a few years previously.

The logo of the airfield, viewable from the A1, said "RAF Wittering, Home of the Harrier", but while I was there three were lost in a four-week period; two in a mid-air collision over Wisbech, sadly with loss of life on the

ground. The other literally shot itself down – a 30mm Aden round ricocheted at Holbeach range and the spent shell went straight down the engine intake. A foot to the left and the pilot would have shot himself at very long range (3,000 feet round trip for the bullet).

Some was suggested that at the current rate of loss, "Home of A Harrier" might be more appropriate.

I noted with mild amusement that three 'Caterpillar Club' ties, sent by Martin Baker for those who have used their ejector seats (successfully), arrived simultaneously at the Mess mail box.

While organised by Aboyne, I was actually based at RAF Wittering when I attended my Ass Cat instructor's course at Sutton Bank. This was the first year of standardised patter and in those days the BGA issued a cassette (remember those?) with the patter

pre-recorded so we could practise in the car. I note we don't do that now, and that IMHO is a retrograde step. The course was led by Brian Spreckley (now vice president of the International Gliding Commission).

During my instructor acceptance at Wittering, I was heading up the wire with a club instructor behind me when I commented that I had never experienced a real cable... "BANG!" No, it was not God playing a joke, the K-7 had a hole in the floor in the rear cockpit and the instructor had kicked the top of the release mechanism with his left heel – apparently it was his standard technique, since the pupil was not "cued" by seeing the yellow handle moving.

Thermalling was the only soaring technique possible at Wittering (at least, in all my time there) and having Rutland Water damping convection close by did not help. Thermalling over Burghley House, especially during the three-day eventing, could be magnificent. We also had to work around aircraft movements, when Harriers would head off and do airshows before returning. We did not launch at that time.

One time there was a communications failure. I am quite happily orbiting, attempting to thermal overhead, when there is the most god-awful roar close by and a dot disappearing upwind. A Harrier was returning and turning crosswind to land. Landing immediately would probably lead to a conflict, so I just kept on turning. And here is the best bit – the Harrier landed and parked on the OCU (Operational Conversion Unit) Ramp, slightly upwind of where I was orbiting. I doubt the engine residual thrust and waste heat alone was enough to provide the thermal itself, but it certainly did trigger the last good thermal of the day and I could smell the burnt kerosene.

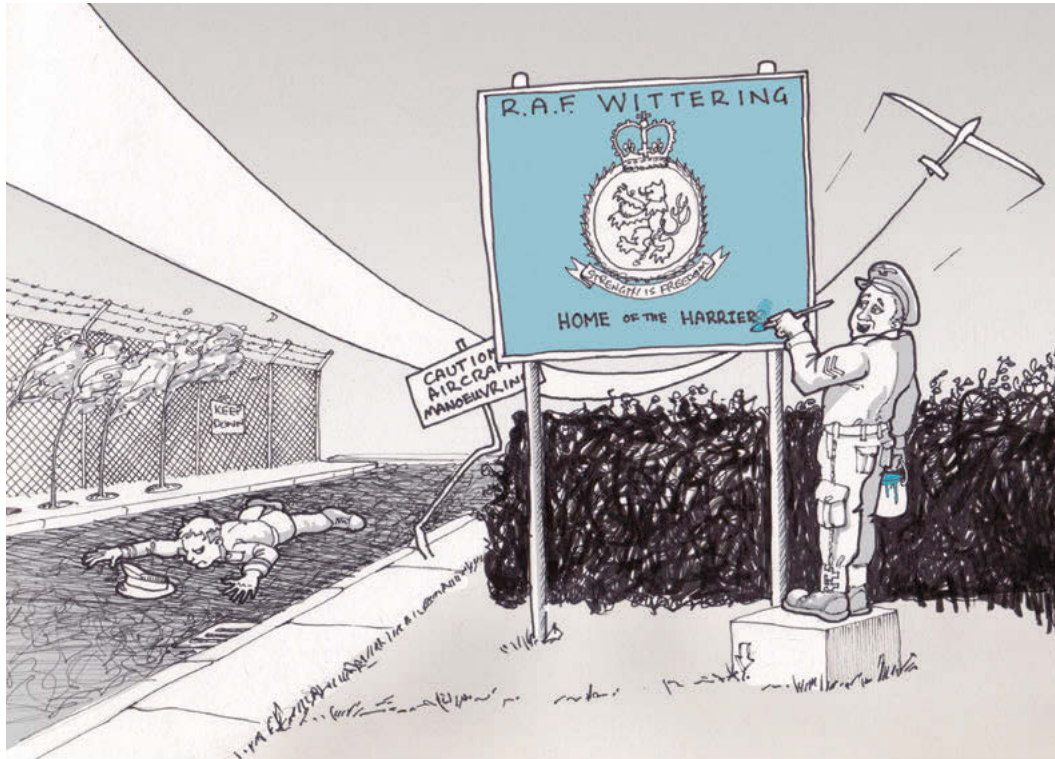
We had one major incident while I was there and, I must confess, I was part of the incident. The club had an SF-26 (see photo above left – there were never many in UK) and I did the DI. I do recall seeing quite a lot of fresh grease piled on the rudder hinges,

but movement was normal and I did not check further. When the SF-26 was going up the cable, something fell off and fluttered down. This, sadly, was the rudder. Had he signalled "too fast" a touch too vigorously, or perhaps when already too fast? Fortunately the pilot managed to fly the circuit and land safely, but lost directional control on the ground and the glider wing slid up a ground power unit just as it rolled to a stop. No one was hurt and, in my defence, while there was a small, but long-established crack in the base of the rudder mount evidenced by the corrosion and grease, the bulk of the damage was a clean break.

On my last flight at Wittering before moving on, the Sea Harrier was about to enter service and needed my ministrations. I had a small "celebration".

First you must understand the local topography. Wittering is on the first higher ground inland from the Wash, so you have low flat fields far to the east – the land does not rise significantly until the the Dutch-German border. The A1 is raised about six feet above the fields and skirts the eastern perimeter of the airfield. It was a good place to stand when a Harrier was doing a rolling vertical landing, and getting a blast of hot smelly air as they flew over at about 30 feet. One always needed a shower afterwards and all your clothes needed dry cleaning, with the burnt fuel and part-burnt oil permeating everywhere. And the noise from 20,000 pounds of thrust at 10 metres away... that's probably why I am a little deaf (and stupid).

The runway itself is another 12 feet above the A1, and that helped my plan for the last local flight. On downwind, I accelerated and could no longer be seen from the launch point. I flew a low, fast circuit, pulled up to cross the A1 at car height (doing my Green Cross Code beforehand, of course) at about 90kts, pitched up almost to vertical, popped into view, dropped the gear, landed on the 1 Squadron Ramp, and stopped before the



I can't be sure sir, but I caught a glimpse of a huge nose, baldy head and a red jacket!

hangar where the gliders lived during the week. I had the benefit of having walked that ramp many, many times so knew where the obstacles were. Not long before I joined Four Counties, someone had done something similar, but hit a sign – which if I recall was marked "Caution, Aircraft Manoeuvring"!

My own manoeuvre was not unnoticed, since the following morning, across the breakfast table someone commented: "I was driving north up the A1 last night, saw a glider crossing the A1, doing Mach 1 at nought feet, pilot had a red jacket, a *** huge nose and baldy head. I knew it was you, Innes."

Sadly, yet another part of my professional and gliding past is now consigned to history, and this time not by my forgetfulness.

**Cartoon by Matt Wright,
Devon & Somerset GC**



Four Counties' K-7 with Gordon Stephen in the cockpit and Ken, the instructor with the flexible left heel (for kicking the release)



David Innes is an Ass Cat instructor at Deeside Gliding Club. He has Silver C, got his Gold height in a Capstan, and Diamond height, in 1976, in a Swallow

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GLIDING IN LIFT & G-SINK

KEVIN Atkinson's book *Gliding in Lift & G-SINK* has developed from his significant work as the lead coach in the BGA's Aim Higher initiative. The scheme looks at encouraging clubs to recognise the need for greater emphasis on post-solo instruction in soaring and cross-country flying techniques. As such, Kevin has run several courses aimed at teaching these subjects at a variety of clubs, including smaller ones, which may not have as many experienced cross-country pilots or instructors.

These courses (a mixture of flying and lectures) look to encourage pilots to develop their skills and take their gliding to the next level, as well as helping to pass this knowledge on within their clubs. The enthusiastic feedback from students is testament to the tremendous value of Kevin's work and his evident passion for gliding. Kevin has created this book to encapsulate and expand in more detail the lecture material from these courses, as well as his associated *Ask the Coach* articles in *S&G* over the past few years.

Thermal soaring

The book itself is split into 16 chapters, covering both the physics and theories for successful cross-country flying. A substantial element is devoted to understanding what is going on within the thermic sky, looking to guide the reader towards an improved understanding of these dynamics. As such, the book focuses on thermal soaring, but also includes the interactions of the other forms of lift. It covers the formation, types and natures of thermals, as well as the other actions going on within a thermic sky, looking at debunking some commonly held theories along the way.

These chapters also look to provide guidance on how to recognise what is happening (reading the sky and interpreting the air), finding lift and avoiding sink, centring, and leaving a thermal.

The other chapters cover other important elements in cross-country flying. These include the process of making decisions on routing and deviations in the cruise, dolphin-flying versus block speed and other elements, such as strategies for rounding turning points and the final glide.

As well as these, Kevin has included in the book advice for how pilots can develop their skills with guidance on self-tasking and how to be better prepared for getting the most out of the soarable day.

Analytical approach

Throughout, Kevin uses an analytical approach and analogies to help explain why things are the way they are and why such techniques work. Experienced cross-country pilots will likely recognise many of the techniques covered; this book helps pilots understand why certain techniques work better than others.

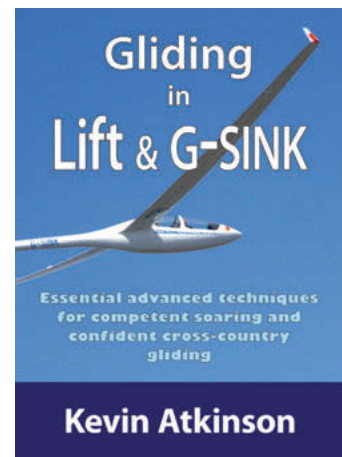
The book is illustrated throughout with simple diagrams and pictures to help explain the text. Although some pictures may be a little small, it was no doubt difficult to keep the book within a sensible size.

In summary, the book is perhaps one of the most comprehensive on the nature of thermals and their formulation, as well as in its analysis and explanation of the various techniques used in flying fast cross-countries. As such, it should appeal to anyone who has an interest in better understanding the dynamics of what drives the air and fast cross-country flying.

By its nature, it requires a basic knowledge of thermals and the atmosphere and, as such, is best aimed at those who are at Bronze C level and above. It will no doubt help those looking to avoid the often slow and costly approach of learning through trial and error, and very experienced pilots are also likely to gain additional insights.

Armed with the right knowledge, almost any glider pilot can achieve amazing things.

Dave Bromley, Cranwell GC



Gliding in Lift & G-SINK,
by Kevin Atkinson
Hardback; 200 pages
Published by KA Publications
Available for £39.95 from
www.bgashop.co.uk
or direct from Kevin at
kratkinson@yahoo.com

THE BOOK IS PERHAPS ONE OF THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE ON THE NATURE OF THERMALS AND THEIR FORMULATION, AS WELL AS IN ITS ANALYSIS AND EXPLANATION OF THE VARIOUS TECHNIQUES USED IN FLYING FAST CROSS-COUNTRIES

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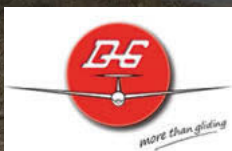
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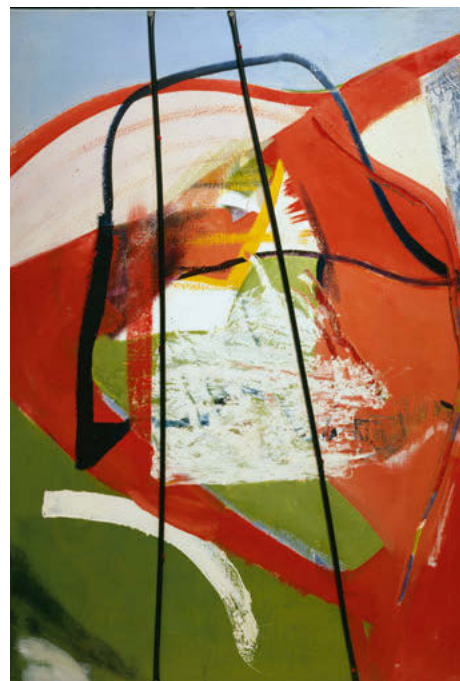
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Two of Peter Lanyon's gliding paintings: Solo Flight (left) and Glide Path (illustrations copyright of The estate of Peter Lanyon)

SOARING FLIGHT

Peter Lanyon's gliding paintings

AFTER being asked to review this book, I paid a visit to the exhibition of Peter Lanyon's gliding paintings at London's impressive Courtauld Gallery in order to try and appreciate his work in more depth and allow me to review the book objectively. As a glider pilot, engineer and aspiring gliding artist, I felt that it would help me appreciate the rather abstract form of Peter's art, which concentrates on all the aspects of gliding that inspire me to fly and paint... the beauty, the weather, the landscapes, the views, the serenity, the freedom.

The book itself is beautifully produced and Lanyon's passion for the wonderful sport comes across in waves of enthusiasm and love. It is certainly well worth reading, although at times the use of philosophical terms did leave me somewhat puzzled. Vivid autobiographical descriptions of his progression from pupil through early-solo flights are really detailed and certainly encouraged me to cast my thoughts back over many years to my own experiences as an early-solo glider pilot.

Where I do have some reservations about the book is with the language and emotions of some of the contributors, who do seem to have an expanded and flowery vocabulary when describing some aspects of the paintings. Phrases such as "Phenomenology co-exists with Existentialism from which it is not readily distinguishable except in the details of individual texts" left me scratching my head. But, bearing in mind that engineers are what they are, maybe that is just me!

Peter Lanyon is very highly regarded in the art world and has been described as possibly Britain's last great landscape artist and who am I to question this? Looking at length at many of his works as published in the book, as well as the very large originals in the Courtauld Gallery, I did struggle to identify with what I saw. Comparing his work to the views and experiences of my own over 40 years of gliding posed a real challenge to me. But maybe as I get older, who knows?

Robbie Robertson, Black Mountains Gliding Club and a member of the Guild of Aviation Artists



Soaring Flight: Peter Lanyon's gliding paintings

by Toby Treves and Barnaby Wright

Paperback; 144 pages

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Available for £25 from Amazon

■ *This catalogue accompanied a major exhibition of Peter Lanyon's work at London's Courtauld Gallery (15 October 2015 - 17 January 2016)*

GLIDING

Phil Sturley flies from a relaxed and efficient gliding site yet to be discovered by many British glider pilots

BRITISH pilots have for many years enjoyed the pleasures of gliding and soaring in the Southern French Alps, particularly from Sisteron and Serres, and I was delighted to be invited to sample another site at Puimoisson. The airfield is midway between St Auban and Fayence, and lies just north west of the beautiful Lac St Croix, sitting at 2,500ft amsl on the Plateau de Valensole, famous as the world's capital for beautiful lavender fields in bloom from June to mid-July.

The site is German owned, with Walther Regelsberger, former lawyer and aircraft engineer, and Alfred Spindelberger of Cobra trailers fame as the main players. It has main east-west hard runways for normal use, with parallel strips for launching and landing, and a full length asphalt taxi strip. There is also a shorter grass north-south strip for use on Mistral days.

The airfield operations are run with typical German efficiency, but with a very light touch and very straightforward procedures. The rule is "switch on your brain and use your common sense" and ☺

IN PRO

VENCE

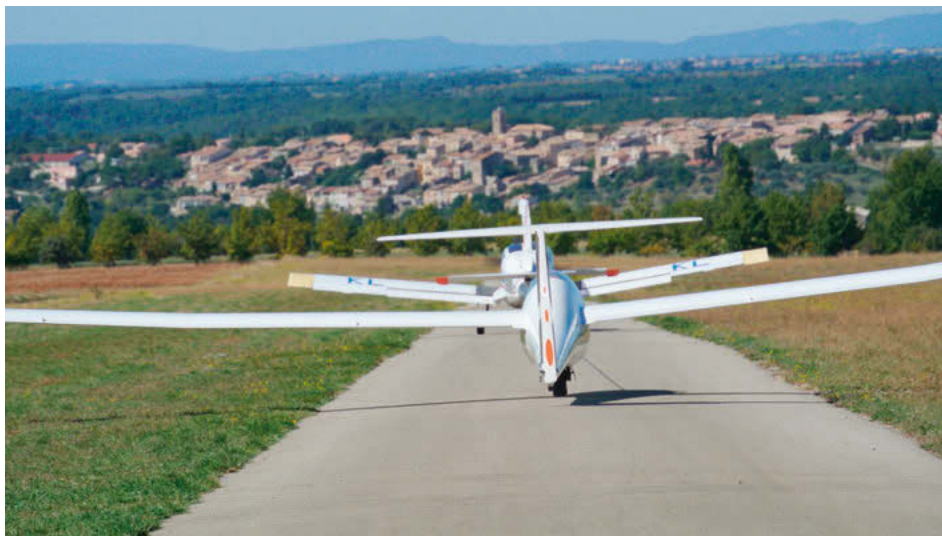
**IT IS A GEM,
YET TO BE
DISCOVERED
BY BRITISH
GLIDER PILOTS,
WHICH OFFERS
NEW GLIDING
OPPORTUNITIES
ON A RELAXED,
BUT VERY
EFFICIENT SITE
PLACED IN A
BEAUTIFUL PART
OF FRANCE**



Above: Lavender in bloom

Above centre: Moonlight over Serre Montdenier

Below: View from the grid



✎ the operating language is English for everyone, with a comprehensive briefing at 10:00 hours daily.

Take your own glider, as there are no aircraft for hire, and single-man handling is not a problem. Fuel and oxygen are readily available, and water and power are piped to all the glider parking slots. Self-launchers have their own grid, and two (plus one spare) tow planes dispatch the main glider grid very quickly.

There are no noise issues locally, as the site is remote from the village of Puimoisson, overflight of which is to be avoided. Tows are relatively short compared with Sisteron as there are regular hot spots en route east to the massive ridge of Serre de Montdenier,

which leads north to the Coupe and on to the Parcours towards the familiar play areas north of Lac du Serre-Poncon.

However, Puimoisson offers other exciting possibilities, and has something for everyone. In the morning the mountains out to the east towards Nice start early, and a very attractive run is to the south of Castellane, and hopping the ridges to the Montagne du Cheiron. There are extra outlanding fields in this area, which need to be specifically briefed. Nice approach are very helpful if flight above FL65 is needed and, for the more adventurous, there are excellent options to go east well into Italy above the coast at San Remo, before heading north either east or west of the Mercantour National Park, passing the Col De Larche or Col D'Allos to route past Barcelonnette up towards Mont Blanc.

In fact, I have discovered that from the area north of Nice, there is a choice of four Parcours routes heading north, each with its own fantastic mountain scenery. Returning from the north in the evening is made straightforward with a fast run down the Parcours from Dormillouse to Cheval Blanc, and along the Coupe to home. The easy-to-fly Serre de Montdenier allows beginners to get their first experience of mountain flying, and is high enough to provide a magnificent overview of the surrounding landscape. Another option from this site is to take advantage of the flatland flying out to the west across the wide Durance valley towards



Aix en Provence and beyond.

On the domestic side, the site is highly maintained and very well appointed. Comfortable one- and two-bedroom chalets (equipped with fridge, oven, dishwasher and microwave, bathroom, shower and terrace), or caravans can be rented. There is a well equipped camping area with modern shower facilities. WiFi is provided throughout, and very good value evening meals and bar are available in the clubhouse. Nights on the airfield are quiet, cool and very conducive to rest. They have even arranged a morning bread run, which avoids 25 cars tearing along the country lanes early each morning. There is a heated swimming pool, tennis court and boules court. The local area is also full of

interesting places to visit, from the Gorges de Verdon to cosy Provencale villages such as Moustiers, and even the Cote d'Azur.

In sum, you may have guessed that I am extremely impressed by Puimoisson and what it offers. It is a gem, yet to be discovered by British glider pilots, which offers new gliding opportunities on a relaxed, but very efficient site placed in a beautiful part of France. Full details are at www.puivolavoile.com and I recommend that you get your booking in early as the reservations fill up quickly on this very popular site. I understand also that newcomers will be offered half price chalet, caravan or camping if they book an early season slot before the beginning of June.

Clockwise from top left:
Puimoisson Airfield; Lake Ste
Croix; chalets and clubhouse

Below left: Moustiers

■ www.puivolavoile.com



Phil Sturley is a former RAF fast jet pilot with 2700 hours gliding and all 3 Diamonds. He is a Full Cat Instructor with the RAFGSA and Buckminster Gliding Club and enjoys mountain flying in the Alps and Andes every year

RETRIEVES: ANCIENT AND MODERN

Justin Wills reflects on retrieves and how landouts in 2015 provided moments just as interesting as those back in the 1950s



Philip and Kitty Wills under the wing of Weihe at White Waltham in 1950

SINCE THERE WERE VERY FEW TELEPHONES AND NO RADIOS, AFTER LAUNCHING THE PO-2S WOULD PATROL THE COURSE AND REPORT LANDOUTS TO THE GOAL AIRFIELD

IN THE early years of gliding, almost every cross-country flight ended in a field landing. Thus an aspiring pilot needed the support of a crew capable of coping with unreliable vehicles, home-made trailers, slow roads, and communications dependent on public telephone boxes, operators, coins in the slot and pushing buttons A or B.

Sometimes the accounts of the retrieves were more exciting than the flights themselves and, as the child of a gliding family, my parents' bedtime stories often consisted of retrieve adventures.

My earliest snapshot memory of a retrieve (around 1950) was the sight of a wheel with a metal stub like Boadicea's chariot overtaking our car and trailer. Moments later came the realisation that it was our own rear wheel: the Canadian-built Ford my father had purchased from war surplus (which we called the Rhino because it was battleship grey and large) was renowned for the failure of its rear half shafts every 3,000 miles.

My favourite bedtime story concerned the competition held in Yugoslavia in the early 1950s. Boris Cijan, the designer of the magnificent Meteor sailplane, had persuaded Marshal Tito (the Yugoslav leader) to sponsor a gliding contest for leading European pilots. The tasks were a series of goal races all round Yugoslavia and the organisation provided Weihe sailplanes for the pilots, a fleet of Polikarpov PO-2 biplanes built in the late 1920s for towing, and a number of army trucks with very basic, but rugged, trailers. Since there were very few telephones and no radios, after launching the PO-2s would patrol the course and report landouts to the goal airfield to which the entire contest organisation had moved using a Junkers 52 Trimotor. My mother travelled in this aircraft on the first day and was mildly surprised when, halfway to the goal, the side door was opened and two men leapt

out with parachutes: they were the turning point observers with instructions, after they had spotted the gliders, to hitch their way somehow to the goal.

The weather was uncooperative that day and all the gliders landed out. Eventually a PO-2 reported that my father was the nearest, but in a field too small for an aerotow. However, another glider was close by in a much better field, so a trailer was despatched with my mother to move my father's Weihe to the better field. The Yugoslavs had decided, very wisely in view of the appalling roads, to transport gliders in trailers as little as possible.

After some hours jolting over cart tracks with two Bosnian peasants in the truck, my mother triumphantly found my father in a tiny field, but with an intact Weihe, which was quickly derigged. However, the better field was on the other side of a large river, where the only crossing was via a railway bridge. As they drove onto the bridge approach, the PO-2 swooped overhead, which they took to be a sign of encouragement. The true reason became apparent as they reached the bridge's midpoint and met the Zagreb Express at full steam coming in the opposite direction. This caused appropriate consternation on



Switzerland's Pirat Gehriger with habitual pipe, pictured in 1947 (courtesy of FAI archives)



A fleet of Polikarpov PO-2 biplanes, built in the late 1920s, were used for towing at a competition in Yugoslavia in the early 50s (Darren Harbar Photography)

all sides and, in the confusion, the Bosnian driver stalled the truck whilst trying to engage reverse. Everything came to a screeching halt just inches apart in clouds of steam and the indignant cries of the engine drivers, who seemed to think they had right of way.

Following suitable disentanglement the other glider was reached, whose pilot, Pirat Gehriger from Switzerland, was waiting calmly smoking his habitual pipe. My father's Weihe was rigged, my mother scrambled into the rear cockpit of the PO-2, and the dual tow combination took off successfully. A few minutes later, my mother looked over her shoulder and was surprised to see Pirat's glider performing strange gyrations with a trail of smoke emerging from the side of the cockpit. Pirat had stowed his pipe in the map pocket, but had failed to extinguish it. He was now attempting with little success to suppress the resulting fire with his sandwiches. Fortunately the goal airfield appeared below, but not before Pirat had lost his favourite pipe overboard.

As I drifted off to sleep, I can still recall my mother's voice saying: "That really was quite an interesting day."

RETRIEVES MODERN

Nowadays, retrieves are a rarity and often regarded as a sign of failure. Crews have largely become redundant, replaced by rigging aids, towout gear, and turbos. Mobile phones, GPS, standardised trailer design, reliable vehicles and good roads have combined to reduce the potential for surprises when a

retrieve is necessary.

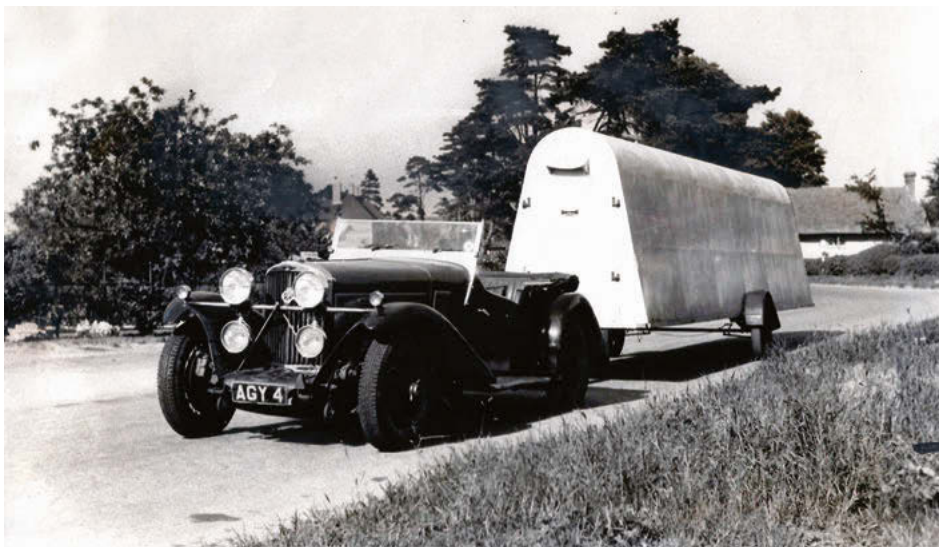
But retrieves can still provide interesting moments. During the summer of 2015, I managed to land out five times on (almost) successive flights. Various factors were involved, although my wife, Gillian, suspects the common one may be advancing senility. Two were special.

The first had a curiously suburban quality to it. In mid-June I landed at Cranfield whilst flying with Barry Walker in his Arcus T from Nympsfield. It had been a moderate day with three memorable moments:

● The first was a lovely low-level view of the Picasso-esque White Horse at Uffington. It is the oldest of all English hill carvings and 𐀀

MY MOTHER LOOKED OVER HER SHOULDER AND WAS SURPRISED TO SEE PIRAT'S GLIDER PERFORMING STRANGE GYRATIONS WITH A TRAIL OF SMOKE EMERGING

■ In 1935 my father, Philip Wills, commissioned the first British-built high performance sailplane, named the Hjordis. The design was very advanced for its time, but its handling qualities left a lot to be desired: when the ailerons were applied the wings could twist so much that the glider might bank the other way and it lacked any form of approach control. My mother always took a dustpan and brush on retrieves as the aircraft regularly had to be extracted from the upwind hedge (on one occasion upside down), and the pieces meticulously collected so that they could be glued back together in time for the following weekend.



The car and Hjordis trailer used by Kitty and Philip Wills on retrieves (The Wills Collection)

THIS CONFIRMED WILLS' LAW THAT THE SEVERITY OF AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL IS IN INVERSE PROPORTION TO THE VOLUME OF TRAFFIC



The Holy Island looks the perfect peaceful sanctuary that it is (Chris Davison)

✈ I wondered how its Bronze Age creators could have known it would look so exquisite from the air.

● The second, having entered the Cranfield ATZ following a lengthy radio routine, was Barry advising that the turbo would not erect. We double checked all the switches and fuses without avail and realised we would have to land.

● The third was the discovery, as we turned finals, that the airbrakes were jammed shut, despite concerted heaves on the lever. (There have since been a raft of A/Ds addressing this problem.)

This last caused slight excitement as the only other movement of the hour comprised an early solo helicopter hovering at 20 feet halfway down the runway and I suspected the student might be somewhat nonplussed by the sudden appearance of an Arcus floating past below.

The use of the word “expedite” worked wonders and, perhaps predictably, once we got below 50kts the airbrakes came out with a bang and we lost the last three feet very suddenly. At least we could taxi off the runway and avoid getting entangled with the lead-in lights.

The airfield manager arrived and informed us that airfield regulations did not permit aerotow retrieves even after hours. This confirmed Wills’ law that the severity of air traffic control is in inverse proportion to the volume of traffic, leaving us to telephone Gillian, ask her to cancel our evening restaurant bookings, find Barry’s trailer at Nympsfield, and drive it to Cranfield.

Barry and I spent the next two hours helping another unfortunate derig his LS4 after he had taken a taxi back to Dunstable to do his own retrieve. The airfield is owned by the Cranfield Institute of Technology, whose cafeteria we visited. We chatted to the students, most of whom were from the Middle East with some wives in full Burqhas. We noted none were learning to fly. We alerted the security gate of the arrival of our trailer (we were getting into the swing of the place) and finally walked 3km to the roundabout on the edge of the campus, where Gillian must arrive.

En route we noticed a column of smoke ahead, and Barry remarked it looked like a car on fire. Minutes later his mobile rang and Gillian announced that her road was blocked by a blazing car and she was surrounded by the emergency services, who said the road could be closed for two hours and that there was no sensible diversion.

Barry and I could only wait at the roundabout. Time passed and I remarked that the same three cars kept driving by. Barry agreed and added that he had been waving at them. Just then they appeared again and the middle one, an open Audi coupe, called out: “Hello, cheeky”. Clearly we had stumbled on the cruising capital of Bedfordshire.

Fortunately, moments later Gillian charged onto the roundabout and we were fairly relieved to see her. The subsequent derig was rather lengthy (the wingstands were still in Barry’s hangar at Nympsfield), we got to the cafeteria at 9.01pm (it closed at 9pm) and the pub took one and a half hours to serve us warm prawn cocktails (fresh from the microwave). We drove back on a motorway system entirely reduced to one lane after 11pm for maintenance; from landing 72 miles away, the retrieve took 10 hours.

Enterprising retrieve

A fortnight later we enjoyed a much more elemental retrieve after I landed my Antares at 6.05pm on Milfield, home of the Borders Gliding Club in Northumberland. It was the second day of Competition Enterprise at Sutton Bank and David Masson’s highly accurate forecast had included the arrival of an active trough around 6pm, by which time it was suggested gliders should be derigged and their trailers tied down. The task was an imaginative distance flight around two pilot-selected turning points, with bonuses for height gain over 12,000ft, flight out to sea, and landing back at Sutton Bank.

After a late start under a low cloudbase and an initial foray 55km to the south west, I climbed in an isolated towering cumulus near Dishforth to 7,500ft, which enabled me to reach the cloud build-ups over the central Pennines. Unfortunately, it also waterlogged my total energy system; henceforth I had to rely on feeling the lift and seeking confirmation from my digital altimeter. With cloudbase at 3,000ft, thermals weak and elusive, I could concentrate only on staying airborne whilst drifting north in the light south-west wind.

Approaching the Tyne Valley, I caught



Minimoa flying at Shuttleworth (Nick Blacow)

■ In spring 1938, my father bought a new Minimoa from Wolf Hirth for £350 and on 30 April flew from Heston (now London Heathrow) to St Austell in Cornwall to gain Britain's first Gold C, and number 3 in the world.

That evening the telephone rang at home, answered by my elder brother Stephen, who was then four years old. It was a *Daily Mail* reporter wanting a story. He asked Stephen what my father was wearing for this momentous flight. Stephen thought carefully, realising the importance of accuracy: "I am sure he was wearing socks, a vest and underpants...".

a glimpse of the main trough line running north east from the Lake District, but unfortunately it led directly over the Otterburn Military Ranges, which Newcastle ATC confirmed were active. Nevertheless, I did manage to contact an outlying buttress and climb to 14,500ft, emerging with a thick coating of ice and a glide angle of 11/1.

Turning due east to avoid cloud sitting on the Cheviot Hills, the ice finally departed with a loud crack and I found sea breeze-type lift on the edge of the coastal sunshine. I called up Gillian, who was already driving round Newcastle, and reported that I was heading for Milfield where I hoped to find friendly shelter.

However, five miles west of the site was a magnificent vault of cloud; its leading edge was flecked with pink turning to mauve as it arched down westwards through skeins of rain into indigo blue, swallowing up the hills below. Ahead of this backdrop lay a grey bolster of lower cloud at 2,500ft. No enterprising pilot could resist such an invitation. Curiously, the lift below the roll cloud was very gentle, but as I became absorbed by its tendrils I felt that Mother Nature herself was gathering me to her bosom and this was confirmed by an almighty upward surge and the altimeter numbers becoming a blur. Stratosphere here we come.

But now I faced Hamlet's dilemma: almost certainly I could climb to FL250 or even FL300, but would have to break off at FL195 as, sadly, this is now the UK legal limit. I would then have to maintain a steady north westerly track relying on my turn and slip

(my only cloud flying aid) whilst heavily iced up (hopefully my ASI would not follow the example of my TE system) and penetrating the heart of the storm above high terrain enveloped in cloud.

In the absence of weather radar and a current weather satellite picture (next year's gizmos) it all felt a bit heroic and, illogical though it is, the older I get the more risk averse I become. The prosaic reality was that I wanted tea, not eternal ambrosia.

Decision made, I straightened up on a north-easterly heading, but the cloud was reluctant to let me go and I was at 11,500ft when I burst out into a world of extraordinary contrast. To the east lay the Northumberland coastline bathed in sunshine running up to the Scottish Border at Berwick on Tweed. The dark blue North Sea lapped around the Farne Islands and Holy Island, looking the perfect peaceful sanctuaries they are. But to the west hung a gigantic black curtain stretching north seemingly for ever and exuding menace.

At 100kts, surprisingly ice free, I flew along the curtain to a point offshore beyond Berwick and then back towards Milfield. I cut it fairly fine and within seconds of scrunching to a stop on the hardstanding outside the clubhouse I was engulfed by torrential rain. Dave Masson's timing was spot on.

I now made three discoveries:

● The airfield was deserted. In view of the weather the members had very wisely



Justin and Gillian Wills
(Petra Schneuwly)

**TO THE
WEST HUNG
A GIGANTIC
BLACK
CURTAIN
STRETCHING
NORTH
SEEMINGLY
FOR EVER
AND EXUDING
MENACE**

AN HOUR LATER THE GLIDER WAS MAROONED IN THE MIDDLE OF A LAKE, THE RAIN CONTINUED UNABATED, AND THE INTERVAL BETWEEN THE LIGHTNING FLASH AND THE ACCOMPANYING THUNDER WAS STILL ONLY FOUR SECONDS



The elegant contemporary beauty of the Infinity Bridge across the River Tees (courtesy of Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council)

🔒 locked up and gone home.

- I was in an area of no mobile coverage.
- It was blowing and raining so hard that I must remain in the cockpit. I turned off the master switch and ignored thoughts about the conductivity of carbon fibre. It became remarkably dark.

An hour later the glider was marooned in the middle of a lake, the rain continued unabated, and the interval between the lightning flash and the accompanying thunder was still only four seconds. I was becoming concerned about Gillian driving along flooded roads, uncertain where I was, and presumably without mobile coverage (which was indeed the case). I also wondered if the contest organisers might become slightly curious as to my whereabouts, assuming they were experiencing similar weather (which they were).

I tried calling Newcastle traffic, but without success; I suspected the airport could be closed. So I composed a message, dialled up the distress frequency 121.5 and moments later was speaking to an easyJet captain. I heard him relay my details to the Emergency Services, followed by his confirmation that all was well. Then I started calling Gillian on 130.4 and learnt she was approaching the airfield gate, which was secured by a

combination lock. In desperation I suggested a code and it worked! Moments later we were together.

It was still raining so hard that we sat

10 feet apart for half an hour until a slight lull allowed me to detach the trailer and we drove into the village looking for an hostelry. The Red Lion in Milfield proved everything we could wish for; after a startled silence at our sudden bedraggled appearance we were adopted as orphans of the storm by the landlord and the other four patrons, speaking with wonderful Geordie accents as if auditioning for parts in the *George Gently* TV series.

After leaving, much cheered, we had to wait a further half hour before the rain finally ceased and we could dry the glider prior to derigging. We splashed our way southwards in a curious northern twilight. Rounding Newcastle Antony Gormley's Angel of the North with its 54-metre wingspan it glowed at us through scattered mist. Further on we trans-sected Middlesbrough on the A19. I had thought of this area as portrayed in the film *Get Carter* with its desolate scenes of coal buckets dumping slag (and a body) direct into a grey North Sea. In reality, Middlesbrough is a city of magnificent bridges, ranging from the extraordinary Tees Transporter Bridge to the elegant contemporary Infinity Foot Bridge. How is it that such unlikely surroundings can inspire such beautiful creations? Just 12 hours later I was able to ponder this further as I climbed in a weak thermal over the city centre on the next Enterprise task (which also resulted in another outlanding).

We got to bed at 2am and, as I drifted off to sleep, I heard an echo of my mother's voice: "That really was quite an interesting day."

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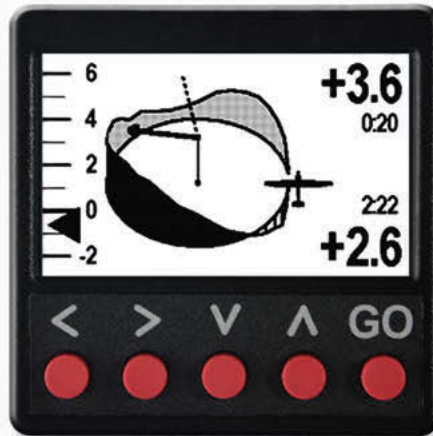
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- J. Mac McClellan, *EAA Sport Aviation*, July 2012

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- Stephen Pope, *Flying*, October 2012

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Above: BGA Chairman Pete Harvey opens the day and, below, Shalbourne CFI Phil Morgan relaxes with a copy of *S&G*

“ A GOOD informative conference which was well organised by the BGA development team. It’s also really good to have an event where club management can meet up, share their stories and learn from others to support the sport throughout the country.”

– Lisa Humphries, chairman, and Jill Harmer, secretary, Devon & Somerset GC



“ THE presentations were informative and timely from the perspective of some of the things we’re doing at our club right now, for example attracting new members and retaining existing ones. It was an opportunity to network with other clubs. The venue was good.”

– Richard Maksymowicz, chairman, Stratford on Avon GC

Left: BGA Vice-Chairman Andy Perkins and, below, sharing stories and advice over a coffee



FRESH

Delegates representing 42 gliding clubs gathered at the 2015 BGA Club Management Conference in Nottingham on 21 November for a day of positive and informative sessions. Dave Latimer reports

ATTENDED by 117 delegates from 42 clubs, the 2015 Club Management Conference provided an excellent opportunity to review the positive progress many clubs are making, as well as providing lots of news and opportunities for networking. For the first time, there was a club technical officers section, led by Gordon MacDonald, in addition to separate sections for club chairmen, treasurers and CFIs.

Pete Harvey opened the day, outlining new developments with other air sports to collaborate and to develop a much more strategic approach when dealing with regulatory bodies. This work is at an early stage and we hope will be well received by the CAA. It is hoped that by developing an ongoing dialogue with the CAA we can take a great part in setting out what we need rather than responding to proposals and trying to defend our environment.

Pete Stratten provided a short briefing on the latest BGA news. This included developments to support junior gliding, including the grants available to support young instructors. Pete also reported on the success of the Aim Higher scheme. Other items covered included the need to support club safety officers, the strengthening of the BGA Accident Investigation team, the ongoing interaction with EASA, developments on 8.33kHz radios and improvements to instructor development training and training for glider maintainers and inspectors. As ever, more details of all of these items are available on the BGA website. Generally, we are getting good feedback on the new website and there is always room for improvement. If you spot specific issues and problems please get in touch with the BGA Office, who will respond to issues.

George Metcalfe and Dave Latimer provided an interesting insight into membership trends and club growth. There had been a steady decline in member numbers from the late eighties, however recently this decline has been halted and numbers for the past three years have been steady. This is being achieved by recruiting around 250 new solo pilots a year from around 18,000 trial lessons. At just 1.4 per cent, this is a very low conversion rate, but some clubs are achieving dramatically different results. Mini case studies were presented

THINKING

CLUB MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE 2015

showing how several clubs are managing to grow with trial lesson conversion rates from 2.5 per cent to as high as 9.8 per cent. We hope that by sharing some of these good practices we have provided positive challenges to other clubs. Certainly the feedback from the day suggested that to be the case.

Next up, John Williams provided an update on airspace. Since March (when at the BGA Conference we felt forced to state that we had lost all faith in the CAA making proportionate and evidence-based airspace decisions) there had been some signs of listening by the regulator (reversal of changes to N560, improved access to R610 and a willingness to consider real data on transponder exemption areas above FL100). However, many decisions remained outstanding (including the all-important Farnborough one). Any disproportionate judgement here would require our immediate legal challenge and, in that event, members would likely be approached seeking financial contributions.

Andy Perkins and Charlie Jordan presented the real good news story of recent trends with Juniors. In 2011, they reached a low with just 11 entries for the Junior Championships. Using social media, mentoring schemes and some positive intervention by a group of Juniors showing very strong leadership this is now one of the most buoyant groups in our sport.

Mike Fox and Neil Goudie delivered an interesting presentation on the pressure for instructors to deliver ever more professional standards of teaching. Against that it is vital that our volunteer instructors, who form the backbone of our sport, still enjoy this rewarding aspect of the sport.

Interesting sessions followed, including the opportunities offered by the growing availability of light gliders and tow planes by Mike Thorne. Paul Ruskin provided an update on the booking system introduced at Cambridge some years ago. Mike Harris explained how an open day at Essex Gliding Club has dramatically improved their relationship with the local community. Alison Randle discussed how reliant our

clubs and sport are on volunteers. Being a volunteer is not always the easiest of tasks, fatigue is common and all too often succession is unplanned and only comes about in response to a crisis. Gordon MacDonald provided a comprehensive overview of the changing technical maintenance requirements and the impact of things such as glue failures on older gliders.

As ever, the day closed with an important message on safety, by Hugh Browning. Recently there have been worrying accidents and near-accidents on trial lessons. Stall and spinning accidents are also on the increase and we all need to be more careful with our approach control. Whilst the recent campaign on safe winch launching has been a success, we need to remain vigilant and a new leaflet on safe winching is now available. Tug upsets are also on the increase; please read the safe aerotowing leaflet on the BGA website. Pilots continue to launch in partially rigged gliders. It is really not acceptable to interrupt people as they rig or DI their gliders. After four collisions in 2014, fortunately there were none in 2015. A total of 13 pilots have made safe parachute descents after collisions in the past 16 years. But it is better to avoid a collision! Please read the updated safe thermal soaring protocol on the BGA website.

So, a busy conference full of good information, challenges for the future and lots of fresh thinking to reinvigorate the volunteers who so ably manage our sport.

A BIG THANK YOU

■ Pete Harvey and Dave Latimer, who chaired the day

■ Paul Jessop, who ran the Treasurers' Forum, Les Kaye, and Anthony Smith

■ Mike Fox and Neil Goudie, who ran the CFI Forum

■ Gordon MacDonald, who ran the CTO Forum

■ BGA office staff - Debbie Carr, Lizzie Pike and Sheila Weston

■ Development team - Diana King, Paul Jessop and Alison Randle (conference organiser)

■ Wider BGA team - Pete Stratten, Mike Fox, Keith Auchterlonie and Susan Newby

■ The presenters and others behind the scenes, who have contributed information. Many are already busy volunteers and, without them, the conference would not be possible

■ Conference photographer Paul Morrison

■ Finally - the delegates, who gave up their time and contributed to the day.

■ **TURN TO PAGE 50 FOR MORE CONFERENCE NEWS**

CLUBS REPRESENTED AT 2015 CONFERENCE

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| ■ Banbury | ■ Devon & Somerset | ■ Oxford |
| ■ Bath, Wilts & N Dorset | ■ Dorset | ■ Scottish Gliding Centre |
| ■ Bidford Gliding and Flying Club | ■ East Sussex | ■ Shalbourne Soaring Society |
| ■ Black Mountains | ■ Eden Soaring | ■ Sherington |
| ■ Booker | ■ Essex | ■ South Wales |
| ■ Bowland Forest | ■ Essex & Suffolk | ■ Southdown |
| ■ Bristol & Glos | ■ Herefordshire | ■ Stratford On Avon |
| ■ Buckminster | ■ Kent | ■ The Gliding Centre |
| ■ Burn | ■ Lasham | ■ The Upward Bound Trust |
| ■ Cambridge | ■ London | ■ Welland |
| ■ Cotswold | ■ Mendip | ■ Windrushers |
| ■ Darlton | ■ Midland | ■ Wrekin |
| ■ Deeside | ■ Nene Valley | ■ Yorkshire |
| ■ Derby & Lincs | ■ Norfolk | |
| | ■ Northumbria | |

CFI FORUM

THE CFI part of the conference kicked off with a discussion about the BGA instructor course and some open questions.

We moved on to discuss some questions that had been asked at the beginning of the forum dealing with some operational issues, as well as instructional techniques.

Dwelling further on instructional technique, we dealt with some suggestions about how the club-based module of the instructor course could best be trained for and some suggestion about the use of a simple flight simulator. I then went on to demonstrate the use of a sim running on my laptop with a simple joystick, focusing on the use to train some aspects of instruction.

The session rounded up with Andy Miller presenting the changing face of instruction he has given and received over a good few years of military, as well as civilian, powered and unpowered instruction.

As usual it was a productive and enjoyable session; Neil Goudie and myself would like to thank all the CFIs and senior instructors for enthusiastically taking part as usual.

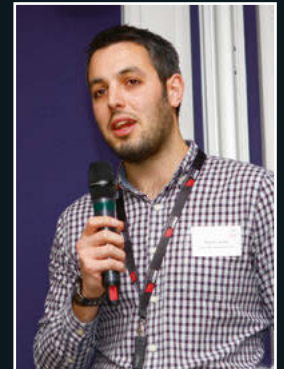
Mike Fox



Above: gathering in the main conference room and, below, presenters Pete Harvey (left) and Charlie Jordan

“IT IS all too easy when dealing with the day-to-day issues to forget about strategy. Some of the issues are perennial, but the conference serves as a useful prompt to start thinking afresh. For example, could a follow up of air-experience participants give us a better understanding of whether we can convert more to full flying members? To what extent is the increasing average age of our members merely caused by recruiting older members? In the treasurers’ stream, there is always a discussion about IT systems and much swapping of ideas. The metaphorical wheel has been re-invented several times, and so somehow a few systems have to emerge as the default choices whenever a club upgrades. Only then will there always be sufficient experts, whether professional or as open-source contributors, to enhance the facilities and reliably support the clubs.”

– John McCullagh, treasurer,
Lasham GS



“IT WAS very useful to get a bigger picture from the BGA on the national trends. Of even more interest was hearing from those clubs who have managed to reverse trends and grow. A presentation on SDR and small light gliders was both enlightening and disappointing in that EASA has not given us the flat Europe-wide regulatory playing field we expected. We were, however, heartened by the excellent presentation on Junior Gliding by Charlie Jordan; after the lull a few years ago, the group seem to have re-energised the junior scene to the benefit of all of us.”

– Neil Swinton, CFI, Oxford GC



Time for a chat over coffee

CLUB TREASURERS’ FORUM

TREASURERS discussed a range of issues, including two that are critical to any successful club: logging flying so it can be charged for, and making sure that club members pay for their flying.

Clubs use a variety of different systems for logging, ranging from off-the-shelf commercial packages to home-crafted systems using spreadsheets and database applications (and apparently a certain amount of sealing wax and string). Many clubs appear exposed to a single point of failure if the creator of the system becomes unavailable to maintain it in the future. Although some clubs use a laptop or tablet at the launch point, many still record on paper and transcribe to a computer system after the end of the day. Few are yet considering newer technologies based on web access, wireless networks and GPS, with many bemoaning poor network coverage on their airfields.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, clubs with a policy and culture of paying before you fly (or immediately afterwards) have less of a problem with debts than those that allow flying fees to build up. The treasurers of the former class of club were much in demand for a “how I done it” report, though none thought that a credit card swipe terminal in the instrument panel of the club two-seaters was yet justified!

Paul Jessop

“GREAT conference again. We came from Sutton Bank mob handed – Andy Parish (CFI), John Carter (flying director ops) and me – so split the formal sessions between us. As we’re currently short of a finance man, I took in some of the treasurers’ forum sessions as well as many of the plenary sessions that I could. Project planning and funding, developing a five-year plan and logging in club management systems were all particularly relevant and valuable to me. Of the rest of the sessions, trends, growth and the safety update were highlights for me.

On top of all that, great networking again. I spent some time “shooting the breeze” with some of the Philip Wills trustees (well they have helped us buy two EuroFOXs!) and next year’s Competition Enterprise hosts (Diana King from Shobdon) – we hosted this year so some lessons to pass on.

– *Chris Thirkell, chairman, Yorkshire GC*



Above and right: the opportunity to network with friends old and new is one of the highlights of the conference

“FOR my part (third conference) it was well worth the trip down from Aberdeenshire. In the treasurers’ forum, a memorable discussion was on software for flight logging, and the approaches taken by various clubs. This produced an agreement to try to set up a user group for Glidex, with the aims of contributing to its development, and assuring its continued support. The joint plenaries (despite the poor sound), particularly on safety, yielded some stimulating discussion and food for thought.”

– *Fred Pell, treasurer, Deeside GC*



CTO WORKSHOP

IF I could sum up what my message to club chairmen and technical officers on aircraft required maintenance improvements in one word, it would be “compliance”. To be exact, compliance with the Airworthiness Maintenance Procedures (AMP) documents found in the Airworthiness section of the BGA website. They can all be read in one evening and emphasise how gliders are to be managed and maintained in the BGA

Audits and support visits have shown gliders are usually well physically maintained. But compliance with the BGA AMP is somewhat more challenging. This could be huge issue in the event of an accident on whether the insurance company pays.

A glider requires annual maintenance in accordance with the BGA customised General Maintenance Program (GMP) to be current, a current Airworthiness Review Certificate (ARC) and current insurance. It is a good idea to have proof of all this in the cockpit, so if the management of the aircraft breaks down, the person it affects (the pilot) does not fly it. In practical terms, a small placard in the cockpit giving the end dates of the ARC, Annual and Insurance will do the job.

If ever in doubt about how to manage the maintenance of your glider, ask your inspector or contact me.

Gordon MacDonald

“MIKE Thorne gave food for thought reminding us that a range of new microlight gliders might free us from the ageing fleet of two-seaters, thirsty tugs and uncool motor gliders and provide an affordable, attractive way into our sport for the many young people who cannot afford the level of fees required to run the old kit. Combine those thoughts with Charlie Jordan’s enthusiastic detailing of the fantastic job that the Juniors have done in reinventing themselves as a community since 2011 and perhaps the future will be bright, light and social media driven. At my own home club, Bidford Gliding and Flying Club, we introduced a policy to attract new members – a much reduced membership fee of £100 for the first year – and it worked. In 2013 we got 14 new members and in 2014 23 new members with a 42 per cent and 70 per cent take-up to full membership costs in the second year.”

– *Dave Vale, CFI, Bidford GFC*

CONFERENCE PHOTOGRAPHY BY PAUL MORRISON



“HAVING not been to the BGA Club Management Conference before, I was a little unsure as to what to expect. As an inspector, my main focus was attending the Club Technical Officers’ Forum and I am very glad that I was able to. With the changes in legislation that have come about due to EASA, Gordon’s talk was invaluable in showing me how the responsibility for maintenance is going to alter and, of course, the paperwork that will be required – all useful information to take back to my club.

Overall, the conference was an excellent way to introduce the new legislation, compare ideas and learn from each other, as well as spending a day with friends!

– *Lucy Wootton, inspector, Sherington GC (pictured left)*



Clockwise from top left:
Storm Abigail touches the Long Mynd on 11 November 2015 (Geoff Catling)

Connor gives Gertrude, the Upward Bound Trust bus, a final polish (Chris Scutt)

Tim Beasley, new tug pilot and Ass Cat at Peterborough & Spalding

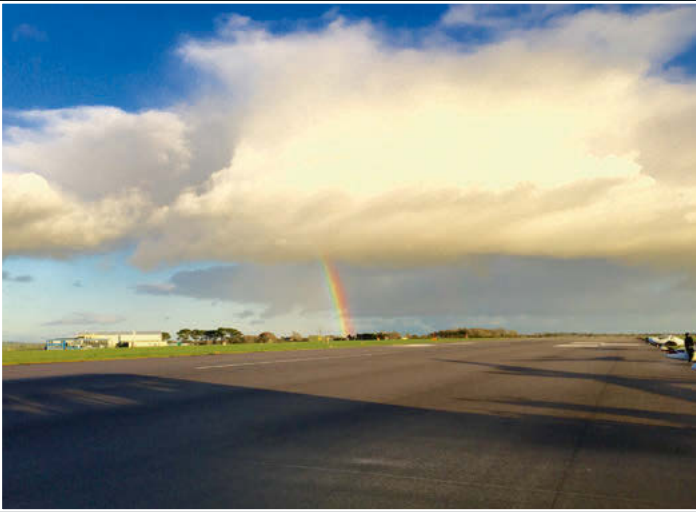
Cross-country flights flown from Stratford on Avon Gliding Club (Snitterfield) during 2015. All flights are recorded on the National Ladder (Dan Brown)

Snakes in the grass at Lincolnshire GC (Dick Skerry)

It's not all black & white. Wrekin instructor Dave Judd on aerotow with a visitor (Geoff Catling)

■ Our thanks to all the photographers and to our *Club News* contributors for sending these in. If you'd like to submit your previously-unpublished photographs for possible inclusion somewhere in *S&G*, please email them to:
editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk
or upload to: www.sailplaneandgliding.co.uk/dropbox





Top left: A dramatic Cornish winter sky with a rainbow over the village of Gweek (Jake Matthews)



Top right: Brothers Dave and Brian Crowhurst take the Puchacz for an hour at Peterborough & Spalding GC (Tim Beasley)



Right: The Heidkamp family try out the Upward Bound Trust's newly-refurbished K-13. L-R: Danni, Thomas, Christina and Oliver, plus Molly the dog (Chris Scutt)

Below right: Trophies are presented after the Devon & Somerset AGM (Robert Lee)

Below left: Devon & Somerset's Eagle BBB over the South Downs (Guy Westgate)



CLUB NEWS

BANBURY (HINTON IN THE HEDGES) **WWW.BANBURYGLIDING.COM** **5204355N 00118784W**

THE past couple of months have brought some bright days, ideal for our newer members' training. We congratulate Brian Morris on his Silver height. In November, a successful AGM was held with a lively debate on the future profile of the fleet, number of trial lessons we should have and objectives for growing the club next year. We also handed out the awards. Top of the cross-country ladder was John Giddins, with Brian Morris getting Clubman of the year. Best Ab-initio was awarded to Michal Siernicki, with most promising pilot to Clive Thompson. Congratulations to all.

David Sibthorpe

BANNERDOWN (RAF KEEVIL) **WWW.BANNERDOWN.CO.UK** **511858N 0020631W**

IT'S been a busy autumn at Bannerdown with lots of good news. Congratulations go to Sam Arnold and Matt Dews for their 5-hours, and to Sam Arnold and Charlotte Acton for completing their Bronze cross-country. We are happy to welcome back Ritchie Arnall with his renewed Full Cat and have to say 'well done' to Ali Arnold for all her hard work with Bronze ground exams for our juniors. We had an excellent bonfire event, with thanks to Aerosparx for a fantastic display.

Ian Harris

BIDFORD (BIDFORD) **WWW.BIDFORDGLIDINGANDFLYING** **CLUB.CO.UK 520803N 0015103W**

LAST year we increased our membership by 10 per cent and we are hoping to achieve a similar increase this year. With three 'introductory flight' pilots, we are well placed to cater for an anticipated increase in introductory flights. Our flapped Janus is ideal for flapped training for our members, or members from other clubs. A Shark glider has been ordered by Eric Dillon and is due to be delivered this spring.

Mike Pope

BLACK MOUNTAINS (TALGARTH) **WWW.BLACKMOUNTAINSGLIDING.CO.UK** **515848N 0031215W**

AFTER a great autumn, winter is here and affecting flying. Despite this, there was a good turnout for a working weekend in November, with many tasks completed in and around the clubhouse. Work has started

on the new maintenance facility, which should be ready in the spring. Martin Pingle continues to keep his weather eye wide open to spot midweek flying opportunities to get into that wonderful winter wave. Our backup tow plane is coming on very well and looks fantastic in its new yellow colour scheme, thanks to Keith Richards and a team of club members.

Robbie Robertson

BOOKER (WYCOMBE AIR PARK) **WWW.BOOKERGLIDING.CO.UK** **513642N 0004830W**

EFFORTS are concentrated on planning and expeditions are filling up, including one to Aboyne. Our original K-21, fully refurbished and with new panels, will be back from Poland and ready for service soon. The regionals are scheduled to start on 2 July, with the same format as 2015 and 50 per cent off for Juniors. There's a limit of 30 entrants, so enter soon. There's also an early autumn Vintage weekend, and the Easter Egg Aerobatics cup. This winter we are operating – weather permitting – seven-day operations, including motor glider training, as well as staying current.

Roger Neal

BORDERS (MILFIELD) **WWW.BORDERSGLIDING.CO.UK** **553514N 0020510W**

THE past few months have been a rollercoaster. We've had some great wave and ridge and congratulations go to Steve Rea (Gold height). Our autumn flying weeks ended well with wave. We owe a huge thanks to George Rizk for the loan of G-TUGY, while two of our tugs went U/S. Unfortunately, as some know, Bob Cassidy passed away after battling an illness. Bob was well known to not only Borders members but to many of our visitors, running various flying weeks as a tug pilot and instructor. He's a huge miss to all of us.

Rich Abercrombie

BRISTOL & GLOS (NYMPFIELD) **WWW.BGGC.CO.UK** **514251N 0021701W**

SOARING flights to the south coast were made in September, but it's been poor since. However, much instruction still took place with Bristol University students. A project started with the earthworks for a new workshop. Other projects included the redecoration of the 'gents', the modification of a new retrieve

and the installation of a satellite broadband link. The club's long-serving winch departed for its planned refurbishment. The lure of the southern hemisphere has been strong, with Jake Brattle off to New Zealand instructing and Andy Davis supporting the Juniors at the Worlds in Australia.

Greg O'Hagan

BUCKMINSTER (SALTBY) **WWW.BUCKMINSTERGC.CO.UK** **524912N 04228W**

THE club has had a busy few months with seven-day operating allowing us to maximise the good weather. There were two expeditions: one to Portmoak and the other to Milfield, both of which coincided with amazingly warm and still October conditions so not much wave was experienced. At our AGM, new members were elected to the committee. John Sentence is now chairman, Roger Keay is secretary and George Rizk is treasurer. Alan Odom takes over our IT systems. We have agreed an extension to our lease, both in time and space, for our future development.

Danny Lamb

BURN (BURN) **WWW.BURNGLIDINGCLUB.CO.UK** **534445N 0010504W**

WE held the annual fireworks and bonfire night on 7 November and it was a huge success. Thanks to the hard work of Ann Chafer and Heather Ellis, the excellent food was also much enjoyed. Sadly, during November, the much-loved and popular Cliff Robinson died at the age of 89 (see obit p70) and a number of members attended his funeral. The club's discussions regarding a lease with our new landlords, Selby District Council, are progressing and reaching the final stages.

Chris Cooper

CAIRNGORM (FESHIEBRIDGE) **WWW.GLIDING.ORG** **570613N 0035330W**

TREASURER Nick Norman has installed real-time FLARM plotting in the clubhouse, thanks to the donation of a screen by Alister Morrison (CFI). This has proved very popular. The airfield weather station is, thankfully, reliable once more and we hope to provide web links to other stations on nearby peaks in the near future. We note that 2016 is our Golden Jubilee year, the club having been founded in 1966. Details of celebrations

(Left to right): **Cambridge** pilot Robin Tye sent solo by Robert Theil (Robert Theil); solo for Simon Collier at **Cotswolds**; **Dartmoor Gliding Society's** Simon Collier looks pleased at having passed his Bronze C exam (Steve Lewis)



for this event will be announced shortly; meanwhile bookings for Mayfest (30 April for 16 days) and Octoberfest (1 October for nine days) are now invited.

Phil Hawkins

CAMBRIDGE (GRANDSEN LODGE)
WWW.CAMGLIDING.UK
521041N 0000653W

WE have been busy at Cambridge Gliding Centre preparing and planning for the next season. We are pleased to announce that we will be running a Cloud Rally competition in August, which is designed to cater for all levels of cross-country flying experience and to be a great social event. Congratulations to our winners of 2015 flying trophies: Phil Jeffery, Mark Lawrence-Jones, Peter Baker, Steve Wollcock, Andy Beatty, Peter Cunnison, Finn Sleigh, John Weeks, Mike Smith, Andrew Dowell and Robert Theil. Congratulations to Robin Tye, who was sent solo by Robert Theil in November.

Julia Rigby

CHILTERN & UCL (RAF HALTON)
WWW.RAFGSA.ORG/CGC/
514733N 0004416W

AT the AGM this year trophies were presented to: Roger Davies, Peter Mann, Ben Manning, Adrian Lake, Mick Boydon. Novice of the year went to Callum Harris, Club Member of the Year to Don Knight and the Chairman's Trophy to Bryan Harvey. This year has seen the second highest number of cross-country km and the best weekend ladder. This has also been the best for first solos with 10. Recently Josh Rees, Greg Weeks, Holly Coulson and Arturo Martinez have all soloed; Greg is the youngest pilot to have soloed at Chilterns GC.

Mick Boydon

COTSWOLD (ASTON DOWN)
WWW.COTSWOLDGLIDING.CO.UK
514228N 0020750W

OUR weekly courses, run by Don Puttock, were extended until mid-October with Brian Field and Simon Collier going solo. Lesley Waters and Tom Coles both now have their Bronze. Our autumn expedition to Portmoak proved very successful with members getting aerotow experience behind the EuroFOX. Caleb McKinstry flew for five hours on the ridge to complete his Silver. A few days before 5 November, an absolutely enormous bonfire "appeared" stocked by the neighbouring industrial units having a

huge clear-out of pallets. Thanks to Jackie and Helen, we had excellent festive food to accompany the fireworks.

Frank Birlison

CRANWELL (RAF CRANWELL)
WWW.CRANWELLGC.CO.UK
530231N 0002936W

THE club's AGM proved successful with a number of issues being raised by the CFI, who thanked members for their support and hard work. Jon Trueman has taken over from Bob Fox as the safety member (our thanks to him). Annual awards were made to Ray Walker, Josh Wood, Mick Hunton, Dan Ulyatt, Gaz Baker and Charlotte Weston, who went solo at 14, proposed a toast (with orange) to the club and closed the AGM. It is with great sadness we report the death of Ged McKnight, a long-standing and valued member, who passed away in December.

Zeb Zamo

DARLTON (DARLTON)
WWW.DARLTONGLIDINGCLUB.CO.UK
531444N 0005132W

CONGRATULATIONS to Andy Lucas on completing his modular instructor's course and his CFIs acceptance test; he is now enjoying life in the back seat of our two-seaters. Our landlord has extended our lease to 25 years. The club has acquired a Discus CS single-seater to replace our Sport Vega. Tim Sharp has been checking, servicing and modifying it to our requirements, skillfully supported by John Paskins. We would like to thank our sister club at Kirton in Lindsey for lending us their K-13, keeping training on schedule.

Barry Patterson

DARTMOOR (BRENTOR)
WWW.DARTMOORGLIDING.CO.UK
503517N 0040850W

REPORTING from the dark months of November and December, the majority of our time has been, quite literally, mending fences and repairing roadways. Prior to the onset of winter weather, new member Simon Collier soloed at Aston Down and subsequently passed the Bronze 'C' exam, whilst – re-joining after 20 years – Josef Nobbs resoloed in the K-13 before converting to the Zugvögel, as did Stéfi Guiu, after spending summer with her family in Romania. We hosted another two sets of local Scouts and Cub Scouts, and welcomed the arrival of Pete Harvey and Chris Owen's Std Cirrus.

Martin Cropper

DEESIDE (ABOYNE)
WWW.DEESIDEGLIDINGCLUB.CO.UK
570430N 0025005W

CONGRATULATIONS go to Derek Whatling (solo) and our annual Christmas Dinner awards winners: Roy Wilson, Best Cross-Country from any of the Scottish Highland Clubs and Club ladder; Roy Garden, Most meritorious flight with Jack Stephen (1006 km attempt); Kieran McGregor - CFI's award for progress and Colin Dewhurst memorial award; Ryan Littlejohn – CFI's award for progress. Istvan Toth will be returning as our resident instructor for 2016, and his son will be our tuggie, also named Istvan Toth! The 2016 UKMSC is full; but we will open a waiting list in the event of any cancellations.

Glen Douglas

DENBIGH (LLEWENI PARC)
WWW.DENBIGHGLIDING.CO.UK
531239N 0032312W

IT WILL be all change in 2016 as Kevin Hook moves on to pastures new. Spring Wavefest runs this year in two discrete weeks, 9-16 April and 23-30 April, with Edensoaring running the airfield at Denbigh for their annual pre-season refresher visit in the intervening week. Denbigh Gliding remains willing and able to receive self-sufficient expeditions throughout the year – please keep an eye on the website for up-to-date contact details. There is an up-and-coming opportunity for an ambitious, motivated pilot to be based at the Lleweni Parc airfield and establish themselves in their own business, to teach wave and cross country flying at this superb soaring site in a high performance self-launching two-seater glider.

Clare Witter Holland

DERBY & LANCS (CAMPHILL)
WWW.DLGC.ORG.UK
531818N 0014353W

CHAIRMAN Mike Downey, CFI Peter Gray, and *Camphill News* editor Rob Faulkner have retired with our thanks for their hard work. We welcome Keith Armitage as chairman, and John Klunder as CFI, and wish them well. The club fleet is having the annuals done in the new workshop. Congratulations to Mark Stokes (won the 2015 Blake Robertshaw Competition and the Camphill Ladder, and to David Jones on becoming a Bl. Visitors please check, as the road up from the hairpin is likely to remain closed for some time with subsidence, so access is only from Hathersage via Abney.

Dave Salmon



(Left to right): **Dartmoor's** Stefi Guiu converts to the club's Zugvögel (Steve Lewis); Chris Mew and Ray Dodd convert to K-13 at **North Hill** (Ray Dodd); John Castle congratulates Harry Caldwell, 14, on his first solo at **Edensoaring**; Will Burry after his solo with **Essex** instructor Dave Hertzberg



📍 **DEVON AND SOMERSET (NORTH HILL)**
WWW.DSGC.CO.UK
505107N 0031639W

EXPEDITIONS have enjoyed mixed weather and some great flying. At Denbigh there were five beats of the Prestatyn-Denbigh ridge flown by Matt Wright and Pete Startup. The group moved up to Portmoak and had a reasonable day on Benarty with added thermals. Finally, members gathered at Parham for some smoking of the Southdown hills. Thanks for all the great hospitality. The presentation of trophies took place after our AGM, with (amongst others) Pete Bennett receiving Les' Tankard for the best contribution by a Junior member, and Pete Harmer being voted Instructor of the Year.

Jill Harmer

DORSET (EYRES FIELD)
WWW.DORSETGLIDINGCLUB.CO.UK/DGC
504233N 0021310W

WE have kept up a good flow of trial flights, with new members to show for it. Much-needed repairs were done to our main workshop roof, ready for the rainy season. Thanks to all who helped. Our refurbished K-8 is now back online and looking very smart, thanks to the sterling work of Barry Thomas and helpers. And our third K-13 is well on the way. Nick Barnes obtained his Standard Aerobatic Rating, bought into and soloed the Super Falke. Thanks to all instructors and others who made 2015 a good year for us.

Colin Weyman

DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY (FALGUNZEON)
WWW.DUMFRIESGLIDING.110MB.COM
545638N 0034424W

I AM pleased to say our flying and runway are back to normal. We are pleased to welcome four new members, and also congratulate one of our youngest members, 14-year-old Harry Caldwell, who went solo at Skelling after a two-week gliding holiday. He was almost ready to go here. We all congratulate him and give him a big well done. We now need some good winter weather to go flying and a good New Year!

Wendy McIver

EDENSOARING (SKELLING FARM)
WWW.EDENSOARING.CO.UK
544152N 0023506W

WE finished the 2015 season with lots of wave and another solo. Harry Caldwell was sent solo the day after his 14th birthday at the end of 10 days' intensive training.

Several members have taken gliders to other northern clubs to keep current over Edensoaring's closed season. At least two are looking for gliders to purchase. Several clubs have already booked expeditions for 2016. We look forward very positively to May 2016 and thank visiting pilots and instructors for another good year at Skelling Farm. Book your 2016 visit by contacting us via the website.

John Castle

ESSEX (RIDGEWELL)
WWW.ESSEXGLIDING.COM
520253N 0003330E

AFTER enjoying some good flying in our two new club gliders, we have prepared the site for winter break and are looking forward to flying with our friends at Rattlesden over the winter. A big thank-you to them for allowing us to come and play. We are already thinking about improvements for the 2016 season with possible further changes to the fleet, a trip to the Mynd and another open day, and three 'task' weeks. Congratulations to Will Burry on his solo. The CFI thanks all the instructors, winch drivers and tug pilots for their dedication.

Cathy Dellar

ESSEX & SUFFOLK (WORMINGFORD)
WWW.ESGC.CO.UK
515630N 0004723E

CONGRATULATIONS to 14-year-old Kristoffer Ahlner on soloing in October, watched by father Staffan (yet to solo). Peter Darton has also resoloed after a long break. We welcome Vee Harrington and Henry Kandemir as new members. Trevor Smith and Dave Bolsden replace retiring safety officer Eddie Leach, who did such a good job it takes two to fill his shoes. We have an IS28 fuselage to convert into a simulator, with the intention of visiting schools and colleges with it to promote gliding. 2015 was a great year; we expect 2016 to be also, with the help of our members.

Paul Robinson

HEREFORDSHIRE (SHOBDON)
WWW.SHOBDONGLIDING.CO.UK
521429N 0025253W

CONGRATULATIONS to Max Williams on his first solo after only 20 launches, and also to Matt Cook and Steve Ward for first aerotow solos. At our AGM we heard from chairman Mike Hayes about positive developments and plans for next year. Tony Maitland made

a presentation about hosting Competition Enterprise 2016. The Kranich Trophy was presented to Iain Evans for a 227km ridge and thermal flight between Ironbridge and the Brecon Beacons. Other trophies went to Iain Evans, Max Williams and Peter Poole, with the David Corbett Trophy for service to the club presented to Dewi Edwards. Congratulations to all.

Diana King

HERON (RNAS YEOVILTON)
WWW.HERONGLIDINGCLUB.
MOONFRUIT.COM 51006N 002384W

IT has been a tough year here, with both of our Puchacz severely damaged in a weather incident last Easter. I'm glad to say that the first is back from repair with the second soon to follow. We have been able to maintain training with the loan of a Grob Twin 2 and the summer course was able to take place with the additional loan of a K-13. The Astir has also been well used. Congratulations to David Woodward for his Bronze, I expect Mike Austin will follow. Thanks to Tim Dews for loaning the Grob and to PNGC for the K-13.

Jim Hasker

HIGHLAND (EASTERTON)
WWW.HIGHGLIDE.CO.UK
573508N 0031841W

IN November the hills resounded with Slawomir Krajinski celebrating his first solo - and a great landing too. Congratulations also to Craig Allan for achieving Silver and Gold heights on the same day. Thanks to Robert and John Campbell, our webcams have been updated and you can now see what is happening via the website by following the webcams link. Fulmar's Duo Discus has had an avionics upgrade, thanks to Stuart and Carl. We have discovered a new electricity line is planned from Beauly to Keith that could have serious implications for safe returns on to the ridge from Ben Aigen.

John Thomson

KENT (CHALLOCK)
WWW.KENT-GLIDING-CLUB.CO.UK
51123N 0004950E

WELL done to all the winners at our annual awards dinner, and thanks to Karen, Julie and team for the excellent menu. Our toughest members have been flying throughout the winter and enjoying the warmth of their own thermals. Some of us have been sitting in front of a fire dreaming of sunny days, fluffy

(Left to right): Kristoffer Ahlner sent solo by **Essex & Suffolk** instructor George Green; **Herefordshire's** Max Williams and Mike Hayes with Eardisland Cup; **Lincolnshire** solo for Alistair Brown; Shrewsbury School cadets Thomas Brennan and Bryce Rutter solo at the **Mynd**



clouds, and Keira Knightley. We are pleased to be hosting the Vintage Glider Rally at Kent at the end of May, organised by Bob Lloyd. If you would like more information or would like to register your interest please email soaring@kent-glidering-club.co.uk

Mike Bowyer

LASHAM (LASHAM)
WWW.LASHAMGLIDING.CO.UK
511112N 0010155W

CONGRATULATIONS to Patrick Geraets for a Diamond height and to John Brooke, Clive Swain and Graham Stallard for Gold heights. Sadly, general manager Werner Stroud has decided to take some time out and will be a hard act to follow. We thank him for his immense contribution here. Our winter lectures season is now under way, with something every Saturday evening until Easter. All are most welcome, details on our website. We had a very successful sojourn from a snow plough company, who used our airfield for training. The old WW2 runways are lovely and smooth.

Mike Philpott

LINCOLNSHIRE (STRUBBY)
WWW.LINCSSLIDING.ORG.UK
531836N 0001034E

CONGRATULATIONS to Alistair Brown on his first solo and CFI Dick Skerry surviving 10,000 launches. Phil Trevethick has added another DG-300 to the private owners' fleet. Kev Briggs' restoration of the Swallow is nearing completion, so we will have two of those on site as well.

Dick Skerry

LONDON (DUNSTABLE)
WWW.LONDONGLIDINGCLUB.CO.UK
515200N 0003254W

CONGRATULATIONS to Nathan Hampson-Jones (solo). Despite the wintery conditions we have enjoyed some "sporty" ridge flying days and hints of wave. The winter programme continues with Bronze lectures and cross-country seminars led by Ed Johnston and Matt Cook. The quiz night was a great success, as was Trevor's superb Christmas lunch. There is a very full calendar of flying activities, starting with spring expeditions to Shobdon and to Cerdanya. We have planned a pilot development course, soaring course, task week and, as always, guest pilots are very welcome at the Dunstable Regionals. See website for details.

Andrew Sampson

MIDLAND (LONG MYND)
WWW.LONGMYND.COM
523108N 0025233W

RECENT weather may have restricted flying, but there has been plenty going on. A lot of effort by Denise Hughes and her team went into the successful Halloween party. Thanks to Alan Swan for the first of our winter talks, on his amazing experiences flying in Chile. We have now added a second K-13 to our fleet and two more cadets from Shrewsbury School have gone solo, congratulations to Thomas Brennan and Bryce Rutter. We had a small ceremony to unveil a plaque in memory of Peter Cope and Bob Rice, both former members and benefactors.

Steven Gunn-Russell

NENE VALLEY (UPWOOD)
WWW.NVGC.ORG.UK
522612N 0000836W

CONGRATULATIONS to Chris Barrott (cross-country endorsement) and Tim Ward (resolo after 20 years). We continue to welcome new members and offer training. Attention is turning to maintenance for equipment and aircraft and we thank our members for working hard. We operate from a well-drained grass airfield with a concrete track for cable retrieves. If your airfield is waterlogged, come and visit us. Our neighbours are installing two large solar farms. Will the dark panels generate thermals when the weather warms up? We will enjoy finding out.

Phil Tiller

NORTH WALES (LLANTYSILIO)
WWW.NWGC.ORG.UK
530239N 0031315W

OUR K-13 came through an in-depth glue inspection and recovering of the wings. We also saw a small increase in launches. Two of our members who were solo at other clubs (Ian Masson and Mike Dodd) are now solo at home, congratulations. Most of November was written off due to bad weather, but members have turned up to do essential work on equipment, including a new gearbox for our winch. At the time of writing, we are all looking forward to our annual Christmas dinner being held at a new venue this year.

Brian Williams

OXFORD (RAF WESTON ON THE GREEN)
WWW.OXFORD-GLIDING-CLUB.CO.UK
515249N 0011311W

CROWDED House may have sung about four seasons in one day, recently we went from

soaring in T-shirts to full windproof winter woolies in a week. We welcomed visitors from LGC and a good time was had by all. Congratulations to Claudia Hill, who EASA notwithstanding, has completed her Full Cat rating, meaning we now have a number of instructors who 'fly like a girl'. We held our 65th AGM and welcome Ben and Alex to the committee, whilst saying farewell to Keith and Mark, who've gone to doing some gliding. OGC members also helped the BGA promote gliding at the Flyer Show in Telford.

Norman G Nome

PETERBOROUGH & SPALDING (CROWLAND)
WWW.PSGC.CO.UK
524233N 0000834W

MOVING into the darker evenings has not dampened our enthusiasm for flying, with Mike Newton and Tony Claydon embarking on the BGA Instructor's course. Tim Beasley is a new tug pilot, and an Ass Cat. Opportunities to develop training in the circuit have proved fruitful, with a succession of pilots moving towards solo. We held a quiz/curry night in October and were delighted to welcome Nene Valley GC for brain teasing and merriment. With Christmas dinner in December, our flying diminishes for winter, but our social calendar remains fully engaged.

Tim Beasley

PORTSMOUTH NAVAL (LEE ON SOLENT)
WWW.PNGC.CO.UK
504855N 0011225W

OUR end of October expedition to Aboyne was incredible. Dave Hurst managed to gain his Gold height, while others also managed some great heights. We almost had one seat per pilot during the week, thanks to Deeside for allowing us the use of their club gliders. Winter has started positively as one of our older flying members, Michael Cormacy, was finally sent solo. We had a great turn out for the annual members' meeting, shedding light on the future of the club and 'who's done what' this year.

Zoe Mallam

RATTLEDEN (RATTLEDEN)
WWW.RATAIR.ORG.UK
521001N 0005216E

WE had a good summer with more time in the air than last year. The EuroFOX tow plane is kept pretty busy all year round and has been of great benefit to the club as a whole. Alas, the thermals have gone and the rainy



(Left to right): Tim Ward after his resolo at **Nene Valley**; Ross Morriss introduces Sherry Mae Zayas (Addenbrooke's nurse) to gliding at **Crowland**; **Shenington** junior Alex Phillips sent solo by Phil Marks; Steve Cuthew receives his trophy from **Gliding Centre** CFI Rob Barsby



☞ season has arrived. It makes our grass strip unusable, but thankfully we aren't dependent upon it. During the next few weeks we will be welcoming our friends from Ridgewell, who will join us for the next month or two until the weather improves. It will be good to see them again!

Liz Russell

SCOTTISH GLIDING CENTRE (PORTMOAK)
WWW.SCOTTISHGLIDINGCENTRE.CO.UK
561121N 0031945W

DESPITE record-breaking rainfall in October and November, there were a few days when we could fly, even at the weekend. Congratulations to: ET Pennington, Max Sherwood – solo: David Carus – Silver (both height and distance in very unfavourable conditions), and to Charlie Gray – cross-country endorsement. We have had short-term problems with the availability of K-21s, particularly due to long-term repairs and availability (and lead times) of spares, routine maintenance, etc; problems, like buses, come in threes (fours or fives). As usual we all pulled together and plan to put five K-21s and a DG-505 online for the spring.

Chris Robinson

SEAHAWK (RNAS CULDROSE)
WWW.SEAHAWKGLIDING.CO.UK
500509N 051520W

THE winter has set in, with minimal flying, but opportunities to get the job list completed. Thanks to Simon Minson for supporting, performing annual check flights. Thanks also to Portsmouth Naval GC for arranging an expedition to Aboyne attended by Junior Ass Cat Jordan Richards. With the end of Naval SAR operations set for 31 December, we are sad to see our fellow flyers, the SAR Sea King Mk5s of 771 Naval Air Squadron, stand down. We would like to thank the squadron for being so helpful over the years we have shared at weekends.

Jake Matthews

SHALBOURNE (RIVAR HILL)
WWW.SHALBOURNEGLIDING.CO.UK
512014N 0013239W

WE are making the most of every opportunity, including an "Indian Summer" weekend and some fantastic ridge days. We have extended a warm welcome to Southampton University Gliding Club (SUGC), which is looking for a new home. With no less than three ex-SUGC members flying here, we hope they feel right at

home. Congratulations to John Douglass for passing his Bronze exam, and to Andrew Peacock for completing his cross-country endorsement (with a bit of help from Shenington). As always, many thanks to the many people (too numerous to list) whose hard work helps keep our club running.

Claire Willson

SHENINGTON (EDGEHILL)
WWW.SHENINGTON-GLIDING.CO.UK
520507N 0012828W

CONGRATULATIONS to new solos: Alex Phillips, Danny Chapman, David Hounslow, Rob Felton and Phil Walsh (Dublin GC). We're sad that Kath Barnes - our ace winch driver of 17 years - has hung up her gloves. Many thanks for thousands of great launches. We're holding another Shenington Regionals in June. The site for entries opened in October, and we are now running a waiting list. Our annual dinner will be on 20 February in Banbury, other events will be advertised via the club website/blog. We have a (generally!) well-drained site and are happy to have guests over winter.

Tessa Whiting

SOUTHDOWN (PARHAM)
WWW.SOUTHDOWNGLIDING.CO.UK
505532N 0002828W

MID-October brought northerly winds in the southeast, and visitors from nine other clubs arrived to take full advantage. There were ridge runs galore, and only a few outlandings. The *Daily Telegraph* has reported CAA plans to divert flight paths away from the southeast, rerouting them to arrive over the east coast. This would include flights arriving over the Goodwood area, which is on our doorstep. Flights out of Stanstead are scheduled to be steeper, and one hopes, releasing more airspace to the south. If the plan is fully implemented it could be a huge gain for Southdown

Peter J Holloway

SOUTH WALES (USK)
WWW.USKGC.CO.UK
514306N 0025101W

THE coming of winter weather has not stopped us flying whenever possible (half price in club gliders during the winter) and we have even continued to attract new members. Social activities have included a farewell party for our young pilot and trainee oceanographer Sarah Reed before she departed for a spell at an Antarctic research

station, presumably with limited gliding opportunities. Planned winter maintenance jobs include reflooring the clubhouse, replacing much of the furniture and hanging some blackout curtains to improve the effectiveness of our projector.

Stuart Edinborough

STAFFORDSHIRE (SEIGHFORD)
WWW.STAFFORDSHIREGLIDING.CO.UK
524940N 0021212W

WHEN we do fly, autumn is a good time to safely practice all those routines that the weather can throw at us. Winter evening lectures have started with wave flying, courtesy of Al Gilson and Nick Peatfield, with others over the coming weeks. Warren Johnson organised visits to Liverpool and Birmingham Air Traffic Control in November, much appreciated by all. Alison Walton-Smith and Gordon Richardson have completed their Bronze, and next year should see several people completing their CCE. In the meantime, thanks to CFI Ian Carrick and all our instructors for a safe, enjoyable and successful year.

Malcolm Taylor

STRATFORD ON AVON (SNITTERFIELD)
WWW.STRAFORDGLIDING.CO.UK
521406N 0014310W

NOVEMBER saw our AGM take place, which provided a great opportunity to recap a successful year – eight solos with an average age of 25, 43 achievements from solo to Diamond, membership is up, profit is up, and days flown also up. We have invested in our fleet in 2015 by adding a LS4 and Astir CS77. Our Falke 2000 is now flying and proving extremely popular. A big thank-you to Barry K and Jeff G for carrying out fantastic maintenance on our club-owned and private fleet. Congratulations on Ian K for becoming a BI.

Daniel Brown

THE GLIDING CENTRE (HUS BOS)
WWW.THEGLIDINGCENTRE.CO.UK
522626N 0010238W

OVER 60 people attended the annual dinner and awards night. Presentations were made by CFI Rob Barsby. Meritorious awards went to the MT building team and a special one to Tim Treadaway for SierraSierra's rebuild. In all, 19 cups were presented, five to one pilot. Santa brought his presents to the Xmas party via his usual winged transport, much to the delight of members' children. We're taking

(Left to right): **Trent Valley's** Simon Leach with instructor Rick Malam after his first solo (Geoff Lloyd); **Welland CFI** Paul Cronk presents trophies to Connor Budworth (left) and Brian Dobson (Rebekah Hart); Jim Roberts was sent solo by Bob Kirbitson at **Wolds**



bookings for the 2016 comps. See S&G, our website or phone the office for dates. Please call us first us for cadet, ab-initio and pilot training.

Tony Lintott

TRENT VALLEY (KIRTON IN LINDSAY)
WWW.TVGC.ORG.UK
532745N 0003436W

2015 was an excellent year for us with growing membership and finances; we look forward to the same again this year. Our airfield took on a new look at the end of last year by having the areas around the runways ploughed up. These will be set to crop in the spring and will not affect our operation. Geoff Lloyd recently went solo in the motor glider and several other members are hoping to join him soon. Cloud flying and aerobatic courses are also planned. Simon Leach has gone solo.

Dave Bieniasz

UPWARD BOUND TRUST (HADDENHAM)
WWW.UBT.ORG.UK
514635N 0005630W

A WARM welcome to our new solo course students Zoe and Callum. Our second K-13 has returned after its refurbishment and the fuselage is now a striking red! Nigel and Gary have stepped down as group course secretary and solo course secretary. Their replacements are Thomas and Christina Dudley-Heidkamp. We also have a new addition of a launch point bus, christened "Gertrude" and paid for by donations from club members. Our thanks to Henry for finding the bus and his merry band of "bus refurbishers": Oliver, Connor, Tommy, Jacqui and Thomas.

Chris Scutt

VALE OF WHITE HORSE (SANDHILL FARM)
WWW.SWINDONGLIDING.CO.UK
513614N 0014030W

THERE hasn't been much flying due to the weather and a delay getting the tug airworthy following its annual. The days we did fly were well attended and we welcomed new member Peter Doyle. Our thanks to instructor Tim Clark of Wyvern GC, who helped us out with some sparse patches in the roster. We have reached an agreement to allow members of Swindon Model Aero Club to use our airfield, so now have 30 associate members, which is something of a record. We shall, of course, do our very best to convert them to proper flying.

Paul Kellett

WELLAND (LYVEDEN)
WWW.WELLANDGC.CO.UK
522758N 0003430W

AS winter sets in, members, former members and guests gathered to celebrate our 60th anniversary. Alan (The Legend) Bushnell commenced the black-tie affair with a toast to absent friends, most recently Chris Heaton, who we sadly lost this year. Focus then turned to achievements as CFI Paul Cronk announced the trophy winners. Congratulations to Andy Burton (cross-country ladder), Mark Rushton (100km or Further Speed Task), Brian Dobson (Longest Flight Pre-Silver), Dick Short (Best in Wood), Henry Gotch (Peter Heywood Trophy), Paul Cronk (Instructors Hog Trophy) and Connor Budworth (Best Ab Initio and CFI Shield).

Rebekah Hart

WOLDS (POCKLINGTON)
WWW.WOLDS-GLIDING.COM
535541N 0004751W

CONGRATULATIONS to Jim Roberts (solo). Advanced aerobatics instructors Paul Conran, Alex Harris and Charles Baker ran an aerobatics course in October. Joel Hallewell gained his Sports qualification and several others took their first instruction or improved their expertise. John Hunt has acquired a Pilatus B4 AF to extend the aerobatics capability here. Our new MT shed is taking shape. Members have been repainting and reflooring the workshop and a major refurbishment is under way of the clubhouse kitchen. The club is preparing a robust opposition to a planning application for a major housing development just beyond runway 18.

George Morris

WREKIN (RAF COSFORD)
WWW.WREKINGLIDINGCLUB.CO.UK
523824N 0021820W

THE late autumn evenings saw the cessation of Thursday evening flying. We are beginning to draw up our plans for 2016 and that includes celebrating our 50th Anniversary as an RAFGSA club, although gliding at Cosford can be traced back some 60 years (see p60). It's always nice to see visitors and we welcomed a visit from members of the RAF Sports Board in October. Several members attended an informative GASCo Safety Evening at RAF Cosford in November. Finally, congratulations to Colin Haynes on his Silver; Colin is now training for the BI rating.

Geoff Catling

WYVERN (UPAVON)
WWW.WYVERNGLIDINGCLUB.CO.UK
511712N 0014700W

AFTER a busy year, the pace here is decreasing as we enter the maintenance season, and without a hangar it continues to be a significant effort to keep it all online. Following a prop strike, we now have our Grob 109 returned to us with a new engine, after significant financial support from the Army Gliding Association. Along with field landing damage to our DG-1000, we have some lessons to learn and a higher insurance premium to pay. Negotiations with MoD and Local Authority over planning for a hangar continue. However, our vista will be considerably brightened by a Chelsea Pensioner flying with us, in full scarlet.

Paul Jessop

YORK (RUFFORTH)
WWW.YORKGLIDINGCENTRE.CO.UK
5357100N 00111332W

2015 was excellent, with perhaps our highest number of Bronze and Silver achievements and youth flying hours. We had our first 14-year-old solo (Owen Glew), with a number of others in training. The AGM was well attended and we were delighted to recognise Chris Brayne as a worthy winner of the Chairman's Shield for his outstanding service to the club over 25 years. We've ordered our EuroFOX tug, which should be operational by mid-year and are looking at other options to upgrade our fleet. All we need now is better weather to get everybody airborne again!

Andy Carden

YORKSHIRE (SUTTON BANK)
WWW.YGC.CO.UK
541338N 0011249W

WITH our seven-day operation, we fly at every opportunity. Failing that, our simulator gives us endless opportunity to practice gliding techniques. You are all welcome to come and try it. The John Williams evening was very well supported with over 70 members enjoying the 'how to do it' wave lecture. By the time you read this, Richard Cole will have unleashed our fuel-injected EuroFOX into the skies. Thank you to David Latimer for his outstanding firework display. Please look at our new Northerns format, the best entry-level competition, which you will enjoy.

John and Sarah Marsh

S&G's thanks as usual to Debb Evans for editing Club News – Susan Newby, editor



> CLUB FOCUS

WREKIN

AT A GLANCE

Membership:

Military: £108
Veteran: £134
Civilian: £168

Launch type:

Aerotow - £16 to 2,000ft
Winch - £5

Club fleet:

K-21, K-13, K-18, Astir,
Discus, Rotax TurboFalke

Instructors/Members:

11/51

Types of lift:

Thermal, wave

Operates:

Weekends on alternating
Saturdays and Sundays,
Thursday afternoons in the
summer

Contact:

07717 523487
www.wrekinglidingclub.co.uk

Long and Lat:

523824N 0021820W
Radio Frequency: 135.875
Call sign: Wrekin Base

THIS year Wrekin Gliding Club celebrates its 50th anniversary, although gliding at Cosford can be traced back over 60 years.

We are one of seven present day clubs that form the Royal Air Force Gliding and Soaring Association (RAFGSA). The RAFGSA offers service personnel the chance to experience gliding.

At Wrekin our aim is to encourage participation in gliding in order to foster airmanship amongst junior ranks/new entrants to the Service undergoing training at RAF Cosford and RAF Shawbury. They are able to take advantage of the Royal Air Force Charitable Trust bursary scheme to support their flying. We also provide opportunities to fly to other local military establishments.

The RAFGSA provides the fleet: a K-21 and K-13 for training, a K-18 for early solo pilots, and the Astir and Discus for those pushing on to Bronze and beyond. A TurboFalke sees extensive use, both as a tug and for motor gliding.

Flying takes place every weekend on alternate Saturday and Sundays. Trial

lessons are delivered by winch, aerotow and motor glider. During the summer, we fly on Thursday afternoons, a time that suits our student population. To provide experience in different conditions, the club mounts annual expeditions to other parts of the country. Reciprocal club arrangements with Midland Gliding Club allow members to experience ridge soaring on the Long Mynd.

The club operates from RAF Cosford in the shadow of the Royal Air Force Museum Cosford and the imposing hangar housing the National Cold War Exhibition. Built in 1937, the construction of the airfield was the first major contract of the newly-formed company of Sir Alfred McAlpine and Son Ltd, and was originally intended as an Aircraft Storage Unit (ASU). Those origins are evident today, as the club's aircraft are housed in one of the eight remaining Type E Lamella hangars originally designed to foil aerial reconnaissance.

A small core of military, ex-military and civilian members keep the club operating smoothly, supported by the staff of RAF Cosford and the RAFGSA.

Geoff Catling

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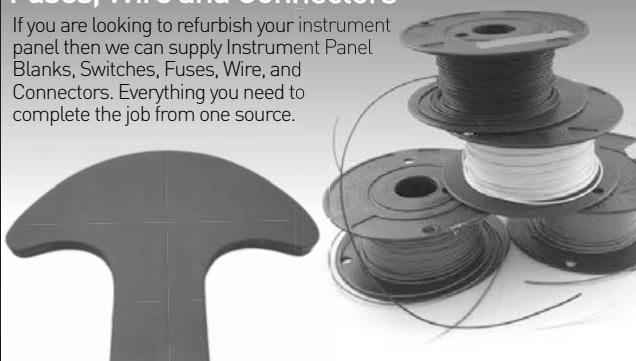


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VINTAGE USA

Bruce Stephenson describes an American gliding vacation with a difference and invites you to attend IVSM, 9-16 July

ARE you looking for something just that little different this year? How about a vacation combined with a gliding event like no other?

Every four years or so, the NSM (National Soaring Museum), Harris Hill Soaring Corporation and the VSA (Vintage Sailplane Association) host an intimate, but unique, event in the heart of one of Eastern America's most beautiful areas.

Attracting people from all over the USA, over the years numerous overseas visitors have been drawn to the event, many of whom now return on a regular basis. This year, the

organisers are pulling out all the stops to encourage more people from outside the USA to experience this event.

So what is it that makes the so-called IVSM (International Vintage Sailplane Meeting) so special? Along with the then VGC President, Nick Newton, I attended my first IVSM back in 2012 (the last one to be held by the way). Those of you that have attended VGC International meetings in the past may be able to picture the scene. But the IVSM is unlike our bigger VGC Internationals. Although you will recognise the common traits of any major Vintage Rally, the IVSM is somehow different.

Sure we were in America, sure they all drive on the wrong side of the road, sure they had a love affair with 'alomanum' (sic) gliders (sorry, sailplanes), but at half the size of our VGC Internationals, this Rally, or 'Meet' as they like to call it, has a strangely far more intimate feel than our hugely multi-cultural, multi-lingual affairs in Europe.

I can't quite put my finger on it, but for me visiting America conjures up images of *Happy Days*, jeans and sneaker clad kids, pumpkin pie, lumbering V8 cars and donuts. With all the above immediately apparent, the whole IVSM experience was made even more special in the ability

to be able to peruse a world-class 'sailplane' museum when I had quieter moments. In doing so, it reminds us just how much post-war American popular culture hit the world square between the eyes. By the end of the 1940s they were the emerging superpower with a difference and in every aspect, be it in politics, industry, or sport, American culture and influence has left its stamp of 'Proudly Made in America'.

Gliding, or should I say 'soaring', was no different. The more you look at US soaring history, the more you realise that it is far richer than one can first imagine. From the fledging days of America's hugely significant

role in establishing powered flight, through to what I deem as the golden age of American soaring, the 1960s, the journey is interlaced with fascinating sailplanes and facts.

During this time, one name dominated US soaring, Schweizer. When talking about 'tin ships' most people think about probably their most iconic design, the 1-26. Think American soaring here in Europe and the 1-26 is the overriding image that springs to mind. Even today, it still enjoys its own dedicated racing series and vibrant owners club.

Then there is the location itself. Harris Hill and the Elmira region is where the US National Glider Association – with Wolfgang Klemperer as a board member, along with other soaring pioneers – organised the first US soaring contest. With the hills and surrounding area reminiscent of the Wasserkuppe and the Rhön in Germany (blame Klemperer, no doubt!), the site became host to the first 13 National Soaring Contests held in America, firmly stamping its guarantee on the site's future stature and location (and still enjoys hosting national and regional competitions there).

Not only that, Elmira was to become home to the Schweizer family. With the three brothers building their first glider in 1930, the company wasn't officially incorporated until 1939. Establishing themselves just down the road from Harris Hill in the not so elegantly sounding town of 'Horse Heads', the company is most famous for their sailplanes. But there was more to the company than just sailplanes. With the contracted production of agricultural aircraft in the 1950s, the Grumman Ag Cat, another significant foray into powered production came in the 1980s when they produced the Hughes 300 helicopter. As the then oldest privately-owned aircraft company in the USA, the brothers sold out to Sikorsky in 2004. The plant finally closed its doors in 2012, marking the end of an era and much talked about point during my last visit to Elmira.

But possibly the site's almost hallowed status was cemented with the significant role that the NSM played in marking American soaring history. With a small museum being



Harris Hill 1940. Schweizer TG-2 with Stan Smith in the front seat and Howard Burr in the rear (Fred Loomis collection, NSM archive)

THE REGION OFFERS EXCELLENT THERMALING AND RIDGE SOARING OPPORTUNITIES

established at Harris Hill by the late Paul Schweizer in the 1960s, a major boost came in 1969 when the SSA (Soaring Society of America) earmarked the site as a future major National Soaring Museum. Today the museum boasts some of America's most iconic sailplanes, including a large selection of the Schweizer series sailplanes and charts the history of American soaring from the 1890s, through to the more modern era with sailplanes like the Marske Genesis 1.

I suppose another thing that struck me was the prolific homebuilt sailplane scene in the States in the 1950 and 60s with popular designs like the Woodstock and Cherokee (which continued into the 70s through designs like the Schreder HP). With a typically American 'can do' spirit, there was an alternative to high priced European production sailplanes of the era for those poor in cash, but rich in enthusiasm, helping to promote an independent free-thinking environment that obviously thrived in the USA like few other countries.

But back to the IVSM and the 2016 event itself. Set amongst the stunning location of the Finger Lakes, the 2016 itinerary is packed with ideas that will appeal to all. With the museum forming an intrinsic part of the Meet, there will be daily talks and tours of rare and unique sailplanes. This will include the National Soaring Museum's 'Culver Rigid Midget' sailplane on display, which will be backed up with Dan Rihn's ongoing project to create a new Rigid Midget (with plans to eventually supply Rigid Midgets as a kit!). Also featured will be the beautiful Slingsby Gull I and Petrel, with talks about their history. The Irv Prue-designed sailplanes, the Prue 215 and Super Standard, and the NSM's seldom-seen Prue IIa will be featured on another day.

The earliest classic fibreglass sailplanes, the Phönix, BS-1 and H-301 Libelle, will be flown during special history sessions. It is also hoped to display an original Mississippi State University research L-K sailplane and an elegantly restored L-K (TG-4A), along with speakers on their significance to US soaring history. The iconic Schweizer 1-26 will also be featured with beautifully restored examples. Members of the 1-26 Association will share the history and lighter moments of fun with this wonderful machine. Another planned event is four 'utility' class gliders being compared; a newly-built (and the only) Schultz MU-1 'Midwest', the only flying Briegleb BG-6, Bowlus Baby Albatross and a 'long-wing' Schweizer 1-20. Also not to be missed will be the VSA's second 'Aging Aircraft

Seminar', organised by Neal Pfeiffer.

The Glenn Curtiss Museum, a hit at previous IVSMs, will open its doors to participants to enjoy the aviation and local history of Hammondsport and Keuka Lake, in addition to a planned summer evening boat cruise and dinner on Seneca Lake. Continuing the legendary Schweizer family hospitality, K&L Soaring will be offering an after-flying buffet and tour at their sailplane repair and support facility in nearby Cayuta, NY, again an activity not to be missed. For those visiting from overseas, organisers plan to make transportation to these events simple and fun.

To make your American experience more authentic, and give you some deeper insight to American food culture beyond the archetypal hamburger, a National night is also planned. This will feature a wide variety of regional North American foods and beverages to bring together the wider culinary tastes that often reflected the various cultures that were often prominent in the settling of various states. Staying with my favourite topic, yet another evening activity being planned is some relaxed dining at a hilltop restaurant overlooking the Elmira valley (and its take-off sites from days long gone). Daily lunches will be available at the Harris Hill flight office, sold by the Harris Hill Junior Member organisation.

There will be specially marked indoor and outdoor meeting places for people to get together and relax. Here help will be on hand to arrange flights in the various two-seat gliders, with a special emphasis on completing the 'all-American' experience by taking a ride in an American-built two-seater, such as the Schweizer 2-33.

July is traditionally one of the best soaring months; the region offers excellent thermalling and ridge soaring opportunities from Harris Hill over the beautiful Chemung Valley. Volunteers are currently working with FAA licensing authorities, and organisers aim to maximise visiting pilots' opportunities to fly with minimal red tape.

With excellent flight opportunities from Europe to the US, special rates are being negotiated at several nearby hotels. Camping is also available at the Harris Hill Youth Park. At just \$10 a night, it is an easy walk from the Harris Hill runway; with camper vans in the local area also on hire (more information will be available on the National Soaring Museum or VSA websites).



Quintessentially American, a Schweizer 1-23 (Jim Short)



National Soaring Museum, Harris Hill (NSM archives)

■ If you're looking for something a little different for your 2016 vacation, why not join in on the fun and a hearty welcome with your North American vintage friends in July?

The author wishes to thank Jim Short and the organisers of the 2016 IVSM for their assistance in the writing of this article

■ www.vintagesailplane.org
■ www.soaringmuseum.org
■ www.vintagegliderclub.org

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EDUCATION KEY TO CUT AIRPROX

Chris Fox and Ed Downham look at themes emerging from Airprox involving gliders from 2014-2015 and what we can do to minimise the risk of having one

AFTER many years' excellent service from Hugh Woodsend, we have taken over the role of representing gliding on the UK Airprox Board. Thanks again to Hugh for his sterling work.

It's probably a good moment to briefly recap what the Board is and how it works.

The Board's sole purpose is to promote and increase air safety. It investigates all Airprox that occur in UK airspace, and it's made up of 14 people involved in aviation from almost every discipline: ground and air based, civil and military, professional and amateur, users and regulators. It's chaired by the Director of UKAB – currently Steve Forward, an ex-Harrier and occasional glider pilot.

An Airprox is any event where, in the opinion of a pilot or air traffic controller, the aircraft involved got close enough to cause concern. That's it. No minimum distances – but note it has to be a pilot or air trafficker who files the report, not a ground observer.

A report is made on form CA1094 – a slightly daunting bit of paperwork available on the website at www.airproxboard.org.uk, but actually not too onerous to complete.

Once accepted by the UKAB team based at Northolt, an Investigator is assigned and they will collect all the relevant data, including tracing all the involved aircraft, capturing radio transcripts and radar recordings etc. A report of the facts is prepared and submitted to the Board for appraisal.

The Board meets once a month to consider 20-25 Airprox, supported by advisers from the military, NATS, CAA and so forth. We decide what caused the Airprox (but definitely without assigning blame) and allocate a Risk Category from A – it was pure luck that a collision didn't occur – to E, a Sighting Report where there was never any actual risk of collision. The full details of every report are published on the Board's website at <http://bit.ly/1kX1gkC>, updated monthly. There's also an annual magazine

Table 1 (below) shows gliders involved in Airprox between 1 July 2014 and 30 June 2015

Airprox No	Risk	Aircraft 1	Aircraft 2	Location	Comment
2014133	A	FOURNIER RF3,4,5 PWRD GLIDER	CHEROKEE / WARRIOR / ARROW	Class G	Late sighting in very busy airspace close to Southend
2014141	C	CITATION 550, 551,560 (II - V)	GLIDER (UNSPECIFIED)	Overhead ATZ	Overhead Cambridge, glider not in contact with ATC
2014142	C	ATR42, -72	GLIDER (UNSPECIFIED)	ILS Feathers	Close to Cambridge, glider not in contact with ATC
2014143	E	PUMA SA 330	GLIDER (UNSPECIFIED)	MATZ	Close to Benson, many competition task gliders in the area
2014149	A	GLIDER (UNSPECIFIED)	DUCHESS 76	Close to Gliding Site	Routing close to active gliding site.
2014152	C	SEA KING, S-61 (MIL MODELS)	GLIDER (UNSPECIFIED)	Class G	Glider pilots may be more comfortable being in close proximity than other aviators
2014160	C	VENTUS GLIDER	C-208 CARAVAN	Class G	Lookout on a cross country flight
2014198	A	PARAGLIDER - UNSPECIFIED	UAV UNSPECIFIED	thermal, ridge, wave sub 10k	Drone filming a paraglider in flight
2014199	C	CHINOOK CH47	GLIDER (UNSPECIFIED)	MATZ	Final glide into Lasham. Transponder fitted to the glider but not turned on.
2014208	C	B777	PIRAT SZD-30C SAILPLANE	high wave	Glider drifted back into proximity with B777
2014211	A	ASK21 GLIDER	AGUSTA A109	Close to Gliding Site	Helicopter overflew active winch launch
2014230	B	EC135	GLIDER (UNSPECIFIED)	Close to Gliding Site	Helicopter overflew active winch launch
2015001	D	DHC-8 (DASH 8)	GLIDER (UNSPECIFIED)	Class G	Insufficient information to draw any useful conclusions
2015036	A	PARAGLIDER - UNSPECIFIED	CESSNA 120	Close to Gliding Site	Late sighting close to Camp Hill, busy with gliders and paragliders
2015053	E	DAUPHIN SA 365	GLIDER (UNSPECIFIED)	Class G	Lookout on a cross country flight
2015068	B	ROLLADEN SCHNEIDER LS4 GLIDER	CORSAIR (WWII)	Close to Gliding Site	Corsair conducting aerobatics close to Gransden Lodge
2015074	A	CIRRUS SAILPLANE	LIGHT AIRCRAFT CIVIL(PRESERVIN	Class G	Lookout on a cross country flight

available online at <http://bit.ly/1ljP27w>

The real value of the Board's work comes in the form of recommendations made to other bodies – eg the CAA or NATS – for systemic changes that can reduce the risk of future Airprox. This comes down to looking at overall trends and looking for common themes. And so...

Glider Airprox in 2014/15

From 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015, there were 17 Airprox involving gliders out of a total of 179. Two of these 17 involved paragliders, but are included here for completeness. See table 1 on facing page.

Themes emerging from these are:

- As glider pilots, we need to be better at telling others where we are and what we are doing. It's inevitable that we will all have to get used to using the radio in shared airspace.
- Other aviators often don't understand what we glider pilots can do, and may make unwarranted assumptions. We need to continue working on educating other airspace users.

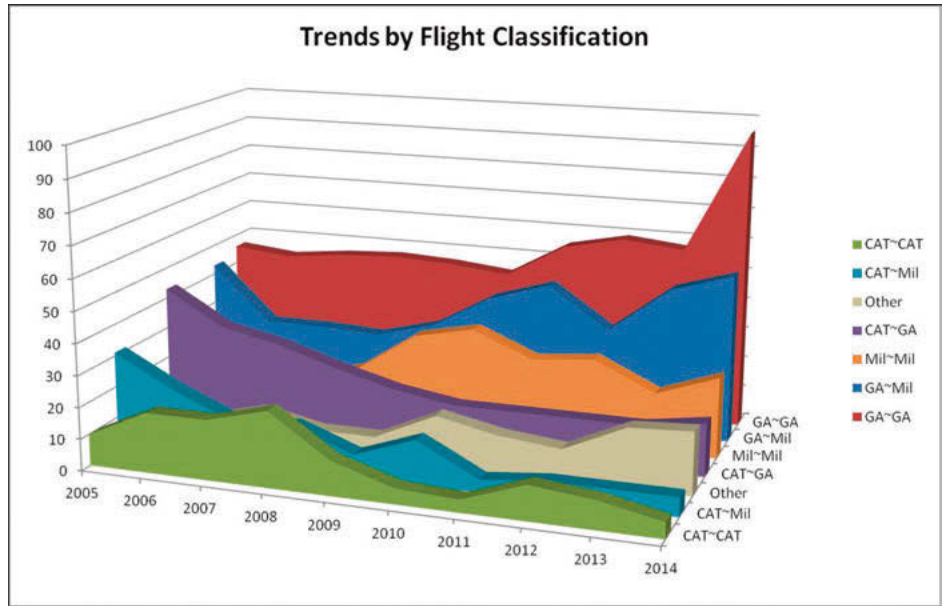
It's a frequent complaint from other aviators that gliders are very hard to spot, both visually and electronically. It's hard to change the former, but FLARM is helping with the latter. It's becoming increasingly difficult to justify glider pilots not using whatever electronic aids may be available to them.

In the wider context, total numbers of Airprox are increasing, particularly in the GA category. It's not clear why this might be – see table 2 above right.

Things we can and are doing to help

- We're focusing on better communication and understanding. One of the advantages for gliding of participating in UKAB is the rapport we build with other airspace users. We use this to:
- Help other airspace users understand what gliders can do – where we fly and how to spot us. Most are amazed at what we get up to!
 - Tell people what's going on in gliding, and in particular spreading the word about organised events like competitions.
 - Try to influence airspace design to minimise not only the direct detrimental effects but also the unintended consequences such as choke points.

We'd also encourage participation in local Airspace User Groups – usually run by the military. These can really help in mutual understanding.



What YOU can do to minimise the risk of having an Airprox

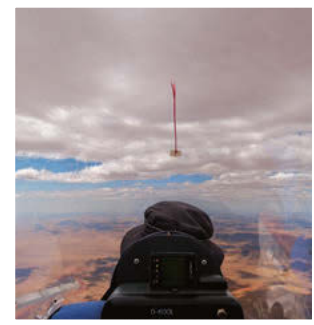
- **Airfields.** Call them up if you're nearby, especially if they're busy, military, or both. This doesn't mean having to ask for or accept a formal service – they'll be pleased just to know that you're in the area. We hear the comment 'why didn't they talk to someone?' all too often.
- **Choke points.** Be aware of any you're flying through. Flying in the moronosphere (the wispy bits just below cloudbase where the forward viz is much reduced) is especially unwise in these areas.
- Be cautious when passing overhead ground based nav aids like VORs and NDBs. Lots of instrument training takes place in Class G. If you pass overhead an airfield with an ILS approach (feathers on map) it's probable that there will be an Instrument holding pattern directly overhead and well above the ATZ.
- If you're lucky enough to have a transponder, turn it on. The battery life problems are now largely solvable.
- Check the NOTAMS. Twice. Understand where the powered aircraft activity hot spots for the day might be.
- If you haven't got an RT licence, go and do the course. You will be a better/safer pilot afterwards.
- If you do have an Airprox, file! Only if we understand where the issues are can we start to address systemic failings.

Overall, we have an excellent record in gliding of being good neighbours in the air. We do have to share nicely with many other users, and simple good airmanship will often be enough to avoid an Airprox or worse.

Table 2 illustrates Airprox trends



Chris Fox is a Full Cat instructor who flies a Duo Turbo, mostly in Wales and the north west. He also flies fixed wing and rotary aircraft



Ed Downham flies an EB28 in the UK and other parts of Europe. When it's not soarable, he takes a 777 round the rest of the world

BGA accident/incident summaries

AIRCRAFT

Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	Place	Age	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
94	Olympia 2	substantial	27/06/15, 14:20	Cotswold GC	54	none	200
Hard landing during pilot's first flight on type. The glider was seen to be slow on the approach before descending from about 10ft agl and landing heavily, breaking the fuselage behind the wing trailing edge. The pilot reports that he rounded out, but didn't have time to close the airbrakes.							
95	JS1	substantial	27/06/15, 11:45	Bicester GC	68	none	4302
Landing in crop field after low-level aerotow launch failure. The glider pilot had asked for "maximum speed" from the Pawnee tug pilot before taking off with a fully ballasted glider into a light wind. After passing the airfield boundary the tug started to turn to the right away from a noise sensitive area, but the glider pilot reports having insufficient aileron authority to follow the tug. As the two aircraft diverged, the glider's left wing dropped and the pilot was just able to recover from the stall before landing in a crop field. Analysis of the trace suggests that the tug cleared the 50ft high boundary trees by about 40ft at an airspeed above the glider manufacturer's recommended minimum aerotow speed of 65 knots, but below the recommended turbulent speed of 70kts. The glider pilot reports an airspeed of 60kts and "some aileron authority" before reaching the trees.							
96	DR 400	minor	24/06/15, 16:45	Lasham GS	22	none	not reported
Tow rope and aerotow rings struck parked car. The approach to the cross runway passed over boundary trees, trailers and parked cars and gliders. The tug's approach was flown too low to allow for the trailing aerotow rope, causing minor damage to a parked car.							
97	ASW 20	substantial	30/05/15, 16:40	Lasham GS	62	none	211
Undercarriage collapsed on landing. During his final glide, the pilot realised that he would not reach the airfield and made a late field selection. He lowered the undercarriage, but then used the undercarriage handle rather than the airbrake. Realising, he lowered the wheel again, but failed to lock it down and the fuselage and a wing were damaged when the wheel retracted on landing.							
98	Cirrus	minor	27/06/15, 14:00	Black Mountains GC	69	none	1383
Undercarriage retraction during take-off caused minor damage. It is thought that a parachute strap may have caught on the undercarriage handle and lifted it out of its locking detent at the end of the previous flight.							
99	K-21	minor	03/06/15, 17:50	Southdown GC	-	none/none	not reported
Wingtip caught in crop during a field landing; the glider groundlooped leaving a crack in one wingtip.							
101	DG-808	substantial	03/07/15, 14:30	Midlem airfield	67	none	300
Wingtip caught in grass on take-off. After visiting a farm strip, the pilot lined up for departure on the 25m wide grass runway. Just as the glider started to take off, one wingtip caught in the longer grass at the edge of the runway, turning the glider which then flew low over the long grass for 50m before landing in the grass and groundlooping, hitting a fence and hedge in the process. The fuselage broke, the canopy shattered, one wing was substantially damaged and the other had minor damage.							
102	Astir	substantial	04/07/15, 16:00	Cotswold GC	53	none	103
Glider hit airfield signs after landing. After touching down, the glider turned slightly out of wind and the port wing was damaged after hitting two signs on posts at the edge of the landing area.							
103	K-21	substantial	05/07/15, 14:00	Bicester GC	30	none	9
Field landing accident. The low-airtime pilot got lost while local soaring and landed heavily in a rough field. The fuselage snapped, the tailplane and nosewheel were damaged.							
105	K-13	destroyed	06/07/15, 18:15	Buckminster GC	55/13	none/minor	400
Crash landing at the end of a trial flight. As the glider was landing, one wing dropped and dragged on the ground, yawing the glider which then passed over a hedge before crashing nose down into the adjacent field. The air cadet P2 reported a twisted ankle.							
106	Duo Discus	minor	09/06/15, 15:30	La Motte du Caire	68/62	none/none	1500
Wheel-up landing.							
107	Discus	substantial	27/06/15, 14:10	Booker GC	40	none	380
Field landing in to a crop field. Preparing to land out at a gliding club, the pilot noticed another glider circling nearby and headed towards it. Unable to find lift, the pilot prepared to land in what appeared to be a stubble field, although he could see tractor wheelings. He made a couple of attempts to start the turbo on the downwind leg before concentrating on landing. On final approach, the pilot realised that the field contained mature, deep crop. He rounded out over the top of the crop, intending to touch down at the slowest possible speed. The glider fell through the crop and landed heavily, damaging the undercarriage. One wing was creased after being caught in the crop.							
108	ASW 20	minor	09/07/15, 13:30	Booker GC	71	none	759
Wheel-up landing. Flying cross-country, the pilot was looking for lift near another gliding club. Getting low, he made a hurried approach before landing on the airfield with the wheel up, causing minor damage to the underside. The pilot recalls releasing from the aerotow in lift and while concentrating on thermalling he omitted to raise the undercarriage, subsequently raising the wheel on approach to land.							
109	ASW 24	minor	11/07/15, 16:00	Cambridge GC	-	none	36
Undershoot approach. The pilot opened the airbrakes to maintain separation from another glider slightly above and ahead, but ended up landing in a crop field 20m short of the runway. A winglet was damaged in the ensuing groundloop.							
110	Discus	substantial	11/07/15, 14:15	Fenland GC	75	minor	213
Wheel-up landing. The pilot tried to lower the undercarriage before touching down, but landed heavily on the runway with the wheel still retracted. The glider had substantial internal and external damage, as well as damage to the tailwheel and a wingtip. The pilot suffered back pain.							

BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	Place	PILOT Age	Injury	P1 hours
112	K-18	substantial	16/07/15, 14:55	Stratford GC	71	none	54
Glider landed in trees. After getting low on base leg, the pilot was unable to reach the airfield flying into the 15-20kt wind.							
113	Jantar	substantial	17/09/14, 15:30	Dartmoor GC	72	none	1570
Glider ran through pothole on landing run. The pilot chose to land slightly across the airfield to compensate for the gusting crosswinds. This approach took the glider across a track down the centre of the airfield and, after hitting the pothole, the glider was tipped on to its nose. The pilot could not see any damage and the glider was flown again on another day. A partly delaminated and loose spar pin bushing was later discovered in one wing root.							
115	K-6	minor	18/07/15, -	Essex GC	79	none	not reported
Glider landed in crop field adjacent to the airfield. During the early stages of the winch launch, the glider's airbrakes came open and remained open for the rest of the flight. After releasing, the pilot noticed the high sink rate, but not that the airbrakes were open. The pilot returned to the airfield, but the circuit flown did not adequately allow for the high sink rate and the glider landed in a crop field, damaging the underside of the nose in the process.							
116	K-13	minor	18/07/15, pm	Norfolk GC	54/-	none/none	not reported
Airbrake bellcrank mounting bracket failed during flight. After a spin recovery demonstration, one airbrake was seen to be standing approx 1cm proud of the wing top surface. Fully opening and then closing the airbrakes cured this, but the airbrake was then sucked out again after flying at more than 60kts.							
117	Discus	minor	18/07/15, 11:30	Cambridge GC	59	none	not reported
Wheel retracted during winch ground run. Although the pilot released, the glider's momentum caused it to slide over a tarmac track, damaging the underside of the fuselage, the gear doors and the winch hook.							
118	Junior	substantial	19/07/15, 13:45	Devon & Somerset GC	-	minor	not reported
Hard impact as glider failed to round out. The pilot reports that the glider attitude and wind noise were consistent with the usual approach speed, but that he didn't check the ASI. Late in the approach, there was no response to elevator inputs and the glider landed heavily nose first, damaging the cockpit and canopy. The pilot suffered back pain and a cut to his face. The pilot's report suggests that the glider may have stalled in the wind gradient. The elevator was found to be disconnected after the accident although, as the elevator was effective during the flight, the pilot suspects it may have become disconnected during the impact.							
120	K-6	minor	19/07/15, 17:00	Bidford GC	34	none	123
Crop field landing damaged the tailplane. The pilot had selected a suitable landing field, but then elected to try to return to the airfield. Undershooting the final glide, the pilot made a late field selection and landed in crop near the airfield.							
Incidents							
93	Libelle	none	27/06/15,14:30	-	-	-	-
Wheel-up landing on grass runway.							
100	Junior	none	03/07/15, 17:00	-	-	-	-
After the take up slack signal was given, a passing pilot pointed out that the winch cable was attached to the aerotow hook.							
104	K-13	none	06/07/15, 14:30	-	-	minor	-
The instructor was sitting in the rear seat with his right hand resting on the top of the fuselage side when the wind blew the canopy shut, trapping his hand between the canopy and the fuselage.							
111	Puchacz	minor	12/07/15, 18:00	-	-	-	-
While the batteries were being removed, the glider canopy blew shut leaving a large crack in the canopy.							
114	Olympia 463	none	28/05/15, 15:25	-	-	-	-
Airbrakes came open during a bungee launch. Unable to gain airspeed, let alone soar, the glider descended to a safe field landing. The pilot was without his usual back cushion and, although he shut the airbrakes at the start of the launch, he inadvertently opened the airbrakes again after take-off.							
119	DG-505	none	12/07/15, 14:45	-	-	-	-
Glider took off on an aerotow with the airbrakes unlocked. While waiting for the tug the P2, on a familiarisation flight, opened and closed the airbrakes and verbally confirmed they were locked to the ground crew before accepting the tow rope. The slow climb rate seemed normal while being towed in the lee of a hill and there were no signals from the tug, but as they passed through 1,000ft the instructor gave the lever another push and it moved into the locked position.							
121	Grob Acro	none	25/07/15, 14:00	-	-	-	-
Winch cable fell across public road. The glider released the broken cable at 900ft and, as it drifted down under the parachute, the crosswind took it off the airfield. The runway in use was R26, the wind was 15-20kts from the NNW.							
122	LS3	none	23/07/15, 17:00	-	-	-	-
Wheel-up landing. After a long aerotow retrieve, the pilot spent 45 minutes local soaring before preparing to land. The undercarriage was mistakenly retracted during the pilot's pre-landing checks.							

■ **Apology: Accident reports 69 and 83 in the Dec/Jan 16 issue were incorrectly attributed to York GC. Both occurred at Yorkshire GC.**

In a recent S&G survey, you told us that you would like to see more in-depth coverage of accidents and incidents. Edward Lockhart is now providing a little extra detail, where available, in the listings on these pages. We would also like to publish (anonymously) your stories of particular flights that have taught you a valuable flying lesson. Please send details to editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk or by post to the address on p3.

BGA BADGES

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
Diamond Height			
3-1784	Patrick Geraets	Lasham (Aboyne)	23/10/2015
Gold Badge			
	David Hurst	Portsmouth	25/10/2015
	Clive Swain	Lasham	23/10/2015
Gold Distance			
	Robert Pye	Staffordshire (Bicester)	08/08/2015
Gold Height			
	Graham Stallard	Lasham (Aboyne)	23/10/2015
	John Brooke	Lasham (Aboyne)	23/10/2015
	David Hurst	Portsmouth Naval	25/10/2015
	Douglas Wilson	SGU	17/06/2015
	Clive Swain	Lasham (Aboyne)	23/10/2015
	Patrick Geraets	Lasham (Aboyne)	23/10/2015
	Craig Allan	Fulmar/Chiltern (Easterton)	01/11/2015
Silver Badge			
	Alan Morton	Ulster	28/08/2015
	Timothy Williamson	Cambridge	27/07/2015
	Caleb McKinstry	Cotswold	20/10/2015
	David Carus	SGU	21/10/2015
	Elliot Stark	Bristol & Glos	26/04/2015
Silver Distance			
	Alan Morton	Ulster (Fuentemilanos)	28/08/2015
	James Bridges	Lasham	16/08/2015
	Caleb McKinstry	Cotswold	30/05/2015
	David Carus	SGU	21/10/2015
	Peter Capron	Stratford On Avon	26/09/2015
	Elliot Stark	Bristol & Glos (Saltby)	26/04/2015

CLIFF ROBINSON (1926 - 2015)



CLIFF Robinson came to Burn Gliding club in 1991, aged 65. He became well-known within the club as a character and was always "good for a laugh".

After going solo, he achieved much more than one would have predicted from a man of his years. He studied for and gained his Bronze badge, qualified to fly cross-country, including passing the radio exam. He then gained his Silver badge, flying in his own glider, an ASW 19. He enjoyed each and every minute that he spent at Burn and, on one occasion at least when he joined me, flew in the Grampians from Aboyne; he simply loved flying.

After his retirement from flying, Cliff would regularly show up at the airfield under his own steam and then, when his disabilities got the better of him, he was brought there by friends. He would join in with the banter, which would be enlivened by his visits. Cliff accompanied some of

the club members when they made visits to Germany, which we know he enjoyed immensely.

Although initially, due to his own modesty, he insisted on confidentiality, he very recently removed this obligation from us. I can therefore now mention that Cliff donated a lot of his own money to the club in bursaries, mostly to encourage the younger members to achieve their potential, which they might otherwise not been able to do through their own finances. We called these bursaries the Cyril Barton Fund after the winner of the VC, who flew from Burn during WW2.

Apart from his flying, another of Cliff's passions was attending concerts by UK ukulele bands, and he was a very enthusiastic member of the George Formby Society.

Cliff died in November, aged 89, after a fall in his garden. He will be missed by all those whom he knew and who liked him so much.

**Tony Flannery, chairman,
Burn Gliding Club**

Silver Duration

Timothy Williamson	Cambridge (Upwood)	09/07/2015
Caleb McKinstry	Cotswold (Portmoak)	20/10/2015
Wai Wong	Cranwell (Halton)	31/07/2015
Oliver Dunnett	Cranwell	27/09/2015

Silver Height

Caleb McKinstry	Cotswold	30/05/2015
Paul Kavanagh	Lasham	07/06/2015
Graham Stallard	Lasham (Aboyne)	23/10/2015
David Carus	SGU	21/10/2015
Wai Wong	Cranwell (Halton)	31/07/2015
Elliot Stark	Bristol & Glos (Saltby)	26/04/2015

Lewis Halliday	Staffordshire	31/07/2015
Oliver Heidkamp	Upward Bound Trust	26/09/2015
Andrew Lomas	Derby & Lancs (Aboyne)	22/09/2015
Patrick Geraets	Lasham (Aboyne)	23/10/2015
Darren McKillop	Shalbourne	13/05/2015
Craig Allan	Fulmar/Chiltern (Easterton)	01/11/2015

100k Diploma p1

Beverley Atkins	London	07/06/2015
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Cross Country Endorsement

Andrew Peacock	Shalbourne	01/11/2015
Christopher Barrott	Nene Valley	25/10/2015
Wai Wong	Cranwell	10/10/2015
Michael Brown	Darlington	14/10/2015

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CAA SLMG Instructors and Examiners

The BGA has approved a number of CAA rated examiners and instructors under the management of the SLMG SRE to support SLMG activity. Contact details are at www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/instructors/motorgliding.htm

Regional Gliding Examiners

BGA gliding examiners are appointed on a regional basis and directed by Senior Regional Examiners. SREs are listed on the BGA web site at www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/instructors/contacts.htm

Regional Safety Officers

RSO club allocations are listed on the BGA web site at www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/safety/documents/rsolist.pdf

Airworthiness Inspectors

There are a number of BGA inspectors across the UK. A proportion of them are approved to issue an EASA ARC. The Regional Technical Officers and the ARC signatory 'Chief Engineers' are listed by BGA region at www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/technical/contacts.htm

Airworthiness Guidance

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Chris Heames, Peter Claiden

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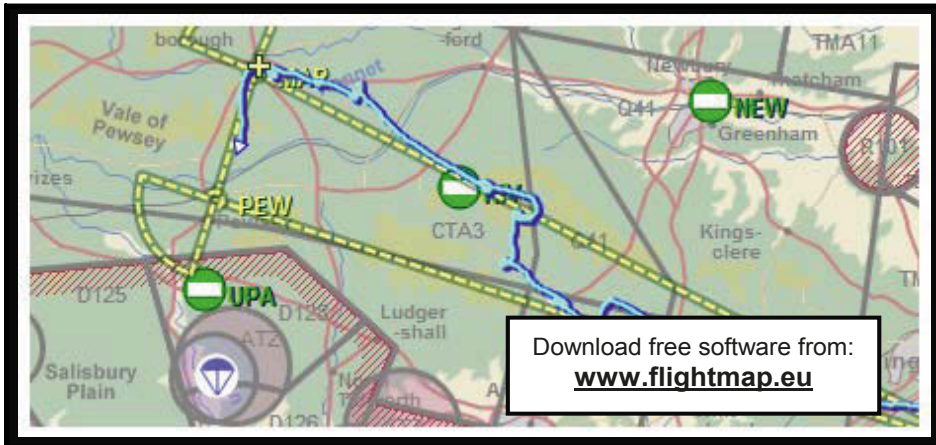
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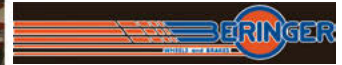
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ClearNav II is a no-compromise integrated navigation instrument and cockpit display providing full situational awareness for glider pilots.

ClearNav II offers:

- Upgraded Processor and VGA display
- A simple user interface
- A full-function remote keypad
- Flexible installation options
- Integral GPS & IGC-Approved flight recorder
- FLARM Interface and displays
- Sophisticated software functions
- Airspeed/wind input compatibility
- Near unlimited memory and easy data transfer
- Vibrant, bright display readable even in full sunlight
- Single screen and Glide-Amoeba for viewing alternate landing sites



CLEARNAV II

Usual price **£2,395**

WHILE STOCKS LAST, THE CLEARNAV II IS AVAILABLE IN THE UK AT JUST £1,795 - A SAVING OF £600!

* Special offer is only available while stocks last, prices include UK VAT at 20%

CLEARNAV II UPGRADE

OWNERS OF THE ORIGINAL CLEARNAV CAN UPGRADE THEIR UNIT TO FULL CLEARNAV II SPECIFICATION FOR JUST **£795.**

"Simply the best vario I have ever used, period" – Gee Dale

"The CNv is ASTOUNDINGLY WONDERFUL !!!!"

– Dave Ellis (Designer, Cambridge 302 vario)

Clearnav Variometer (CNv)



The CNv continues the ClearNav design philosophy of providing robust and configurable products which are simple to use and require a minimum of hands-down time in the cockpit.

The CNv is a high performance speed-to-fly variometer with wind display and Get Home navigation feature. The 'cross-country' pack adds a secure flight recorder and task declaration with navigation displays, task editing and serial data-out to drive third-party navigation equipment.

While every CNv ships with a complete package of hardware and software, upgrades are enabled via downloadable software modules, allowing pilots to select the exact performance package appropriate to their needs.

Clearnav Variometer (CNv) Cross Country Model
Usual price **£1,749**

WHILE STOCKS LAST, CNV CROSS COUNTRY MODEL IS AVAILABLE IN THE UK AT JUST £1,449 - A SAVING OF £300!

* Special offer is only available while stocks last, prices include UK VAT at 20%

UK CAA 2016 Charts



Is your chart up-to-date?

Chart	Current Edition	2016/17 Edition
1:500,000 Southern England & Wales	Ed41	Edition 42 04/02/2016
1:500,000 Northern England & Northern Ireland	Ed38	Edition 39 28/04/2016
1:500,000 Scotland	Ed30	Edition 31 23/06/2016
1:250,000 Sheet 1 Northern Scotland West	Ed8	Edition 9 18/08/2016
1:250,000 Sheet 2 Northern Scotland East	Ed8	Edition 9 21/07/2016
1:250,000 Sheet 3 Northern Ireland	Ed9	Edition 10 20/07/2017
1:250,000 Sheet 4 The Borders	Ed9	Edition 10 26/05/2016
1:250,000 Sheet 5 Central England & Wales	Ed11	Edition 12 22/06/2017
1:250,000 Sheet 6 England East	Ed12	Edition 13 25/05/2017
1:250,000 Sheet 7 The West & South Wales	Ed10	Edition 11 17/08/2017
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