

JUNE / JULY 2020

# SAILPLANE & GLIDING

VOL. 71 NO.3



**HOW TO CARE FOR  
YOUR PARACHUTE AND  
SURVIVE A BALE OUT**

**CONDOR COMBATTING  
COVID-19 LOCKDOWN**

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## CONTENTS

- 04** BGA NEWS
- 06** YOUR LETTERS
- 08** OPINION
- 10** A TASTE OF INDIA
- 20** THE TRIALS OF AN EARLY SOLO
- 26** GLIDING GALLERY
- 28** INSTRUCTOR TRAINING ONLINE
- 32** WAITING FOR A CHANCE TO FLY
- 34** BUTTERFLY EFFECT
- 37** LANDOUTS: FROM HEAVEN OR HELL
- 46** ATKINSON'S LAW
- 48** HOW TO GET A LAPL MEDICAL

## CLUB

- 30** JUNIOR GLIDING
- 50** DEVELOPMENT NEWS
- 51** BGA UPDATE
- 52** CLUB GALLERY
- 54** CLUB NEWS
- 60** CLUB FOCUS: STRATFORD ON AVON
- 61** VINTAGE GLIDING
- 62** BGA CLUB STATISTICS
- 64** ANALYSING ACCIDENTS
- 66** ACCIDENT/INCIDENT SUMMARIES
- 70** OBITUARIES
- 70** BGA BADGES
- 72** CLASSIFIEDS
- 74** INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

## FEATURES

### 13 SURVIVING YOUR BALE OUT

**Anthony 'Mac' McDermott** gives top tips on how to care for parachutes and how to use them correctly to save your life

### 22 MOST CHALLENGING FLIGHT

Terry Delore sets a world record with his 1,730km out-and-return flight in New Zealand, reports **Herrie ten Cate**

### 38 KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON SOARING

With gliders grounded, **Chris Booker** describes how Yorkshire GC is keeping members flying with a virtual soaring club

### 42 FEELS LIKE HEAVEN

**Katrin Senne** reports from the 2020 Helli Lasch Challenge, which is flown in South Africa by invited top glider pilots from all over the world



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FEDERATION AERONAUTIQUE INTERNATIONALE



 **THE MAGAZINE OF  
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ASSOCIATION**  
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**COVER STORY**  
Katrin Senne took this photograph from the ASG 32 of Laurens Goudriaan, with Maik Tiffin in the front seat. Uys Jonker is flying the JS3 Rapture '74' belonging to John Coutts, in South Africa during the 2020 Helli Lasch Challenge

## DEADLINES

Aug/Sept 20

Articles, Letters, Club News: 4 June  
Display advertisements: 22 June  
Classifieds: 7 July

Oct/Nov 20

Articles, Letters, Club News: 5 Aug  
Display advertisements: 21 Aug  
Classifieds: 8 Sept

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› The BGA online webinar facility has proved successful during lockdown, with a growing programme of events and interesting guest speakers. Repeats of the webinars are available on YouTube. See <https://members.gliding.co.uk/2020-online-learning>

› The recently-launched BGA online FRTOL (Flight Radio Telephony Operator's Licence) course has also been met with praise. It is aimed both at those training for a FRTOL or simply refreshing their knowledge. Many thanks for the hard work of Paul Ruskin and Andrew Watson. If you want to get involved, you will need to sign up. See [www.ruskin.me.uk/bga-frtol-course](http://www.ruskin.me.uk/bga-frtol-course)

› UK Junior Gliding replaced its Winter Series with the Condoravirus Championship. This online competition attracted 41 junior competitors. See report on page 30. The juniors have also been active with a series of webinars.

› Schempp-Hirth has test flown four new Ventus gliders in April and hopes that the new owners will be allowed to fly them soon. [www.schempp-hirth.com/en](http://www.schempp-hirth.com/en)

› HpH reports that production continues with Shark FES, Jet and self-launch options at various stages of construction. Its first TwinShark series is in full run and it is reported that gliders will soon be with customers. [www.hphuk.co.uk](http://www.hphuk.co.uk)

› Jonker Sailplanes is expanding its product range and plans to release a glider in the Standard Class – the JS4. The company is keen to hear from potential customers what configurations are important to them and what power plants should be designed in the structure. [www.jonkersailplanes.co.za](http://www.jonkersailplanes.co.za)

› The DG-1001e neo was planned to take off early this year. The current situation has slowed down its operation, but the prototype is now in final assembly and important load tests have been performed. Test flights took place in early May for the LS6-b neo and the LS7 neo, also the LS8-e neo for which DG is testing new hardware components of the drive. [www.dg-flugzeugbau.de](http://www.dg-flugzeugbau.de)

› Following the postponement of AERO 2020, a new date has been announced. The next AERO exhibition will take place in Friedrichshafen, Germany, from 21-24 April 2021.

› The Guild of Aviation Artists' 50th annual competition and summer exhibition have been cancelled in light of measures put in place by the UK Government to prevent the spread of Covid-19. [www.gava.org.uk](http://www.gava.org.uk)



Built in 1966, this is the only 17-metre Dart still flying in New Zealand

## Wooden it be nice?

IMAGINE if a Vintage Class sailplane beat all the glass wonders at a GNZ (Gliding New Zealand) sanctioned contest, **writes Roger Brown.**

Well, believe it or not, it did in fact happen at the Northern Region Gliding Championships held at Matamata (New Zealand) in late-November 2019.

Competing in the Racing Class Division, flying a Slingsby Dart 17R, Vintage Kiwi member Rae Kerr took out the competitors winning by some 719 points. Second place was a DG-300 Elan, and third place was a Schempp-Hirth Ventus bT. Rae has, in recent years, made a name for himself by flying the Vintage Kiwi syndicated K-8 to some very competitive results, giving the rest of the field a really good run for their money, as it were. So



Rae Kerr with trophy

it may have been only a matter of time before Rae was actually able to “nail one”. However, the handicap that was given to Rae was not overly helpful to his cause.

The Dart series was designed in 1963 and is of conventional all-wood construction.

The 17-metre Dart was developed in 1965, and ZKGEZ, built in 1966, is the only 17-metre Dart still flying in New Zealand.

Weather played a big part in this contest, with the first three days being cancelled as no one was able to stay up. Very hot stable conditions were not helpful. Then, starting on day four, it was all go and some very ingenious tasks were set to take advantage of the conditions that now prevailed.

Rae, completing every task and winning every day, did not want to lose this contest. He told me that he felt really “in the groove” and did not see himself as flying a Vintage Class wooden sailplane. The Dart was very good 50+ years ago and proved to be the same in this contest, easily out-sprinting the ‘glass’ field overall. It has been said before: “It’s not what you have got, but it’s where you point it.” And Rae did just that, creating a bit of New Zealand history in doing so. The tasks ranged between 180km to 270km, so the contest certainly had some substance.

Very well done, one has to say. I wonder what a Discus or ASW 20 might now be worth?

■ With thanks to *Bungee Cord*, the magazine of the Vintage Sailplane Association, for permission to reproduce this article. [www.vintagesailplane.org](http://www.vintagesailplane.org)



# SECURING CLUBS DURING LOCKDOWN

IN MID-MARCH, as realisation dawned that the Covid-19 situation was rapidly accelerating, it became clear that clubs required help to navigate the rapidly changing financial landscape that the impending closure would entail.

The subsequent speed of the cessation of operations was a shock for many, on several levels. The BGA Development Committee responded by researching and gathering information from a range of sources for clubs, as well as gathering information from clubs to gain an accurate picture about the implications of closure for gliding in the UK.

Of particular note is the diligent work of Diana King and David Howse, two volunteer members of the Development Committee, as part of the BGA Rates Team. They immediately set about identifying relevant support from Local Authorities, encouraged clubs to apply and supported clubs with appeals where required. At the time of writing, more

than 85 per cent of the relevant grants have been secured, helping clubs to survive lockdown. Correspondingly, there are many volunteers in clubs who have grappled with new processes to swiftly secure these emergency grants, whilst also safely managing their gliding clubs into lockdown, against a backdrop of rapidly developing information. Thank you to all involved.

■ An announcement by the Prime Minister made on 10 May describes unlimited exercise and the possibility of travelling to conduct sport. As more information emerges in the coming days, we anticipate that details, including any differences between countries within the UK, will become clearer. The BGA will continue to monitor the situation very closely and will provide an update as soon as we can. Our aim is to support the restart of sport gliding activity at clubs as soon as that becomes possible. **Turn to page 51 for the latest advice from the BGA.**

## BGA eLadder is introduced

WHILST we can't fly, many pilots have taken to the simulated skies using Condor and the like.

The BGA Ladder now has an electronic version, where you can share your experiences. Go to <https://eLadder.bgaladder.net> log in using your usual Ladder details, and share!

This is for fun – no trophies, no prizes. With that in mind, normal Ladder rules apply, but are not to be taken too seriously.

Any simulation software that produces a valid IGC file can be used. Glider types and handicaps are as for the normal Ladder.

## It's the end of an era for Bicester

BICESTER Gliding Centre and the site owner, Bicester Motion, have been unable to agree a way forward following a sudden termination of the club's lease by Bicester Motion with effect from 30 June 2020. As a result, Bicester Gliding Centre, which has operated at Bicester airfield since 2004, has announced that it will cease operations on that date. Although there are plans for the redevelopment of the airfield and surrounds as a motoring-themed leisure park, the new airfield operator, the Bicester Aerodrome Company, has indicated an intention to expand the aviation offering at the site.

## Tim's outstanding service rewarded

CONGRATULATIONS to Tim Scorer, long-serving aviation lawyer and currently a consultant at Kennedy's Law Firm, who is the recipient of this year's British Business Aviation Association (BBGA) Michael Wheatley Award for Outstanding Services to the general aviation industry. Tim received the award from BBGA Chair and fellow aviation lawyer, Aoife O'Sullivan, during the Association's annual conference at Luton Hoo.

## DATES

### NATIONALS, REGIONALS AND OTHERS

Club Class Nationals	Nympsfield	26/7-2/8/20
18m/20m Class Nationals	Lasham	8-16/8/20
15m Class Nationals	Hus Bos	22-30/8/20
Standard Class Nationals	Hus Bos	22-30/8/20
Open Class Nationals	Hus Bos	22-30/8/20
Junior Nationals	Aston Down	22-30/8/20
Two-seater comp	Pocklington	CANCELLED
UK Mountain Soaring Champs	Aboyne	6-12/9/20
Competition Enterprise	POSTPONED UNTIL 2021	
Worlds	Germany	July 2021
Open, 18m and 20m multi-seat Classes (Stendal-Borstel)		
Worlds	France	7-22/8/21
15m, Standard and Club Classes (Montluçon)		
10th World Sailplane Grand Prix	St Auban, France	9/21
<b>Glider aerobatic competitions</b>		
Saltby Open	Saltby	10-12/7/20
Worlds	Poland	22/7-2/8/20
Nationals	Saltby	3-6/9/20

\* Dates correct as we go to press. Please check club websites.

### BIDFORD REGIONALS

CANCELLED

### BOOKER REGIONALS

11-19/7/20

### BICESTER REGIONALS

CANCELLED

### HUS BOS CHALLENGE CUP

18-26/7/20

### YORKSHIRE REGIONALS

CANCELLED

### GRANDSDEN REGIONALS

8-16/8/20

### SHENINGTON REGIONALS

15-23/8/20

### INTER-SERVICES REGIONALS

22-30/8/20

### DUNSTABLE REGIONALS

22-30/8/20

### CAMBRIDGE CLOUD RALLY

22-30/8/20

### COTSWOLD REGIONALS

22-30/8/20

■ BGA Club Management Conference, Sunday 22 November 2020, venue to be confirmed

# SAILPLANE & GLIDING



**Andy Davis**  
Competition flying



**Paul Whitehead**  
SLMG



**Howard Torode**  
Airworthiness



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**Steve Noujaim**  
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

## Are gyroscopic forces to blame?

RECENTLY we were obliged to ground our self-launching sailplane to replace its cracked engine pylon – at eye-watering expense and inconvenience.

After much consideration, I am of the view that gyroscopic forces were a significant factor in the failure of the pylon.

When operating previously, our pilot habitually turned into thermals when climbing under engine to improve his climb rate. This is understandable and, I suspect, a common procedure for many pilots. In reality, the spinning propellor acts like a gyroscope and is reluctant to leave its plane of rotation, thus causing significant twisting forces on the pylon. The tighter the turn, the greater

those forces will be.

Many will know that it is standard procedure, on powered aircraft, to brake wheel rotation before undercarriage (u/c) retraction to avoid gyroscopic forces damaging the u/c legs. This is particularly significant on big heavy wheels and features in the flight manual of many large aircraft.

Our operating procedure now is to run the engine only when flying straight (or very modest turn rate) in the hope of avoiding a return of the demon gyroscope!

**Rodney Witter, Denbigh GC**

**The BGA comments:** *There are different opinions on whether this is significant or not. More research is required.*

## Medical costs for pilots are 'depressing'

I FOUND the recent article by Dr Frank Voeten (*Are you fit to fly?*, p51, April/May 20) somewhat depressing in that further costs are being forced on pilots regarding the need for medical certificates. It seems to me that this requirement has been forced onto pilots. What has changed from the situation where we could self-certify, assuming that there is nothing wrong with us and that our doctor did not raise objections? No mention was made in the article why this change in the requirements was made, possibly I had missed an earlier article.

**Peter Whitehead, Bowland Forest GC**

**BGA Chief Executive Pete Stratten**

**comments:** *Peter is correct in that the requirement is being forced upon us. He may have missed numerous articles in S&G and elsewhere describing the EASA pilot medical requirements that were originally expected to apply in 2012 and will now be mandatory for pilots of EASA sailplanes from April 2021 (with an expected extension to October 21). Whilst preparing for those changes, including publishing guidance such as that provided by Frank, the BGA is, of course, continuing to press government for ongoing use of pilot declared medicals for pilots of all recreational aircraft, including EASA sailplanes.*

## Bamboozled by acronyms

EARLY-solo pilots like myself are left mercifully unaware of the plethora of confusing, unexplained acronyms (CUA) that are shortly about to engulf them from all sides when they start to take this lark seriously.

In the last issue of S&G I counted no less than 300 (I am exaggerating) CUAs. It took me almost as long to look them up later as it did to read the magazine – excellent as always – which I always do in the bath, while trying to maintain adequate bath temperature with my big toe (I read all magazines, not just S&G, in the bath).

Might it be possible, for the likes of us early ignoramuses, either to explain each acronym as it pops up, or print a list in the back, which need only be updated when a new one is coined (every week as far as I can see).

Those aviators who speak solely in acronyms will scoff, but have much in common with financial or pension advisers for whom an acronym is surely just a means to bamboozle us.

**Adrian Morgan, Highland GC**

**The editor comments:** *Apologies, Adrian. I do aim to spell out acronyms, where relevant, and will bear your comments in mind for future articles.*



# SOLO IN A GRUNAU BABY

THE incident (reported in S&G) when a glider entered an incipient spin from a winch launch took me back almost 60 years.

I was an instructor at the Chilterns Gliding Club (RAFGSA) for military personnel. Training was in the side-by-side Slingsby T-21 Sedbergh. But – and it still amazes me to this day – the T-21 was considered far too “valuable” to risk a first-solo accident. So, when ready, students did their first solos in a single-seat Grunau Baby. Training standards were far less rigorous in those days, but was the accident rate any higher?

As a much respected (!?) officer in the Royal Air Force, junior ranks would often call me “Sir”. One young army private (let’s call him Jim Smith) carried this to extremes. The time came to send him off on his own – in the Grunau.

“Now, you will get a much higher launch than you have been used to,” I said.

“Yes, Sir.”

“The launch will be similar, but when

you come off the wire it might take a moment or two to settle into the correct attitude.”

“Yes, Sir. I understand that, Sir. How high might I get on the launch, Sir?”

“Maybe 1,400 or 1,500 feet. You will have plenty of time to do a few turns, but, when you are at the right height, fly the circuit as usual.”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Remember, this glider has airbrakes that are far more powerful than the spoilers you are used to. So I would suggest that you don’t use more than half brake. Don’t worry if you land a bit long – Benson is a big airfield.”

“Yes, Sir. Looking forward to it.”

Private Smith did indeed get a good launch and – as usual, being a first solo – was watched by assembled club members. He settled after release, but then began a turn. He went into a spin, but quickly recovered and flew a very respectable circuit. After landing, as casually as I could, I ambled across to the glider.

“So, how did that go, Jim?”

“Loved it, Sir.”

“What happened after you released?”

“I went into a spin, Sir.”

“And then?”

“Just as you taught me, Sir. Opposite rudder, stick forward, centralised controls, then eased out of the dive and resumed normal flight. What should I have done, Sir?”

“Do you want to do another solo?”

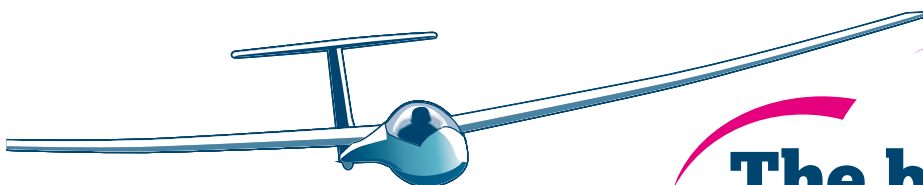
“Yes please, Sir.”

So I sent Private Jim Smith off to do two more solos.

Those were the days!

**Jack Harrison, Nairn, Scotland**

**Please send letters (marked ‘for publication’) to the editor at [editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk](mailto:editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk) or the address on p3, including your full contact details. The deadline for the next issue is 4 June**



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## UNITED AND VIBRANT CONNECTIONS

BGA Chairman **Andy Perkins** reflects on how, in these strange times, we are united in an exceptional challenge and gliding communities are drawn together through virtual soaring and other fantastic online resources...



C

LOUDBASE OF

5,000-5,500ft with gin clear visibility and just a light breeze at the surface. This cloud should have an average of at least 6kts I thought to myself, with the sunny side of the cloud showing a few small tendrils sucking up into the main cumulus with a ferocity much like the steam forming a little cloud when it comes out of a kettle.

This occurred as I tended to the garden for the third day on the trot, with that familiar swirling of air and the subtle change of pressure in your ear drums of a thermal taking off from the surface distracting me from the task in hand. As I looked up to see the cumulus above growing rapidly, it made me think of my predecessor, Pete Harvey, who often highlights that as glider



LS1 over Whitby during a Yorkshire Gliding Club Condor night

pilots we spend 90 per cent of our spare time dreaming about gliding, with 10 per cent of the time actually flying!

These unprecedented times mean that 10 per cent has been forced to change for the time being. Online webinars across the UK arranged by local club experts, as well as the national effort led by Matt Page, have been an awesome way to keep everyone engaged, talking about and learning about gliding. Long term, this will be a fantastic resource that can be referred to by generations of glider pilots to come. Condor racing has taken off and I am led to believe that races with literally hundreds of participants have already taken place. Above all of this, it's heartening to hear about the community spirit amongst glider pilots. Reaching out, calling and dropping in to ensure fellow glider pilots in isolation are well and have everything they need at this challenging time.

### Safe and sustainable return

I am sure as you read this everything will have moved on to a different phase and, whatever the end of the summer brings, it will be enjoyed in a different way to any summer we have had previously. There will be frustrations and huge restrictions across our communities and on our freedom of movement. What I do know is that together, whatever gliding is able to occur, all of us will assist in making sure we get flying again in a safe and sustainable way. I know that no one plans to go out and have an accident, but with a wet winter and then this enforced 'gardening leave' we will all need to take care and diligently check the rigging, tow-out gear, and make sure we are ready for full days of flying. The run of weather in Southern England was remarkable for the end of March into early April. Let's hope the weather for the end of summer 2020 is akin to that seen in summer 2018 to allow us to make up for lost time.

In the 90th year since the BGA was formed, we are united in an exceptional challenge and communities are drawn together. As we emerge from this period we need to embrace that spirit of community and ensure that, even when we get back flying, we involve those of our members that may still be in isolation. Please continue to support your club by keeping your membership active, and keep in touch with fellow glider pilots from your club.

The positive coming from all of this is the united and vibrant social connections we have through the love of gliding. Something I hope will continue as the backbone of our sport for the years ahead. Stay safe and thank you for all you are doing to support gliding.

**Andy Perkins**  
Chairman  
British Gliding Association  
May 2020



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## PHILIP WILLS MEMORIAL FUND

### SUPPORTING GLIDING IN THE UK

Cash assistance for clubs during the Coronavirus crisis  
by way of interest-free working capital loans

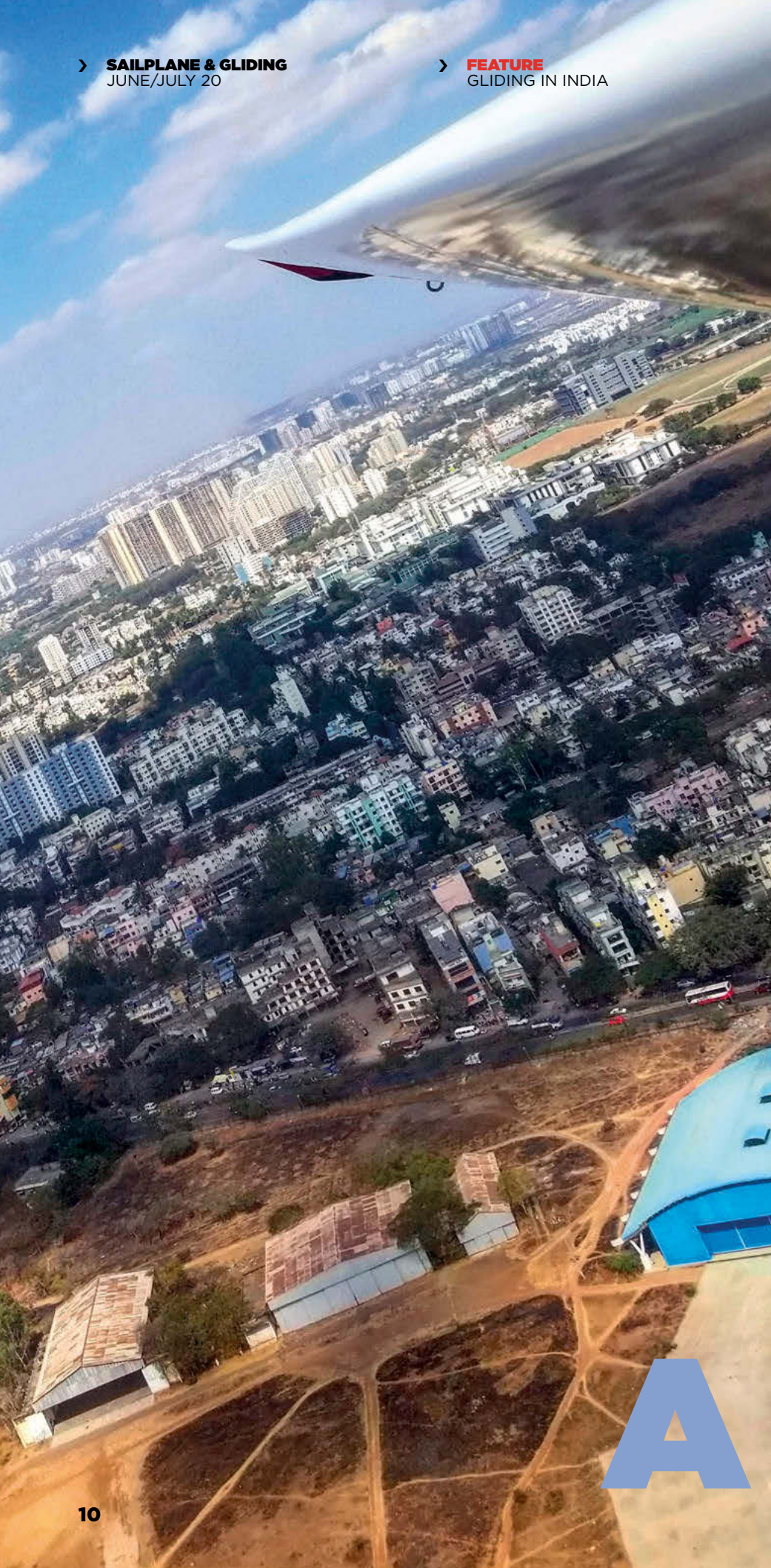
Unprecedented times that we live in, indeed!

The present situation is impacting on all gliding clubs with immediate effects of loss of revenue from trial lessons, instructional flights and associated income. The experts hope that this virus will be contained within months, and the trustees of the Philip Wills Memorial Fund ("PWWF") would like to offer a token level of immediate assistance to clubs in need. The Fund has a fixed pot of cash which will be offered on a first come first served basis, as follows:

- One application per club
- Loans available typically £5,000 unsecured, but up to maximum £10,000 with security at trustees' discretion.
- Interest-free - Repayable over 12 months, with first repayment 3 months after drawdown
- Please apply by email to [Stephen@srlynn.co.uk](mailto:Stephen@srlynn.co.uk) indicating the club's present financial position; what its unavoidable monthly overheads are; what government assistance is being applied for; present cash balances; evidence of anticipated cashflow difficulties; how any loan will be used; what security can be offered, if applicable.
- Loan approval to be at the absolute & unilateral discretion of the trustees, who will be guided by their ability to make a real & positive difference to some clubs .
- A decision will be made to each applicant club within one month of application, and funds available by cheque immediately following a positive decision
- Applications must be received before 30 June 2020

This is a temporary offering in response to the current crisis, and has no bearing on other loan facilities offered by the PWWF, either existing or proposed. We hope that we can offer you some help in these difficult times.





Jordan Bridge heads for warmer climes over the winter months and experiences what it's like to soar over an Indian city

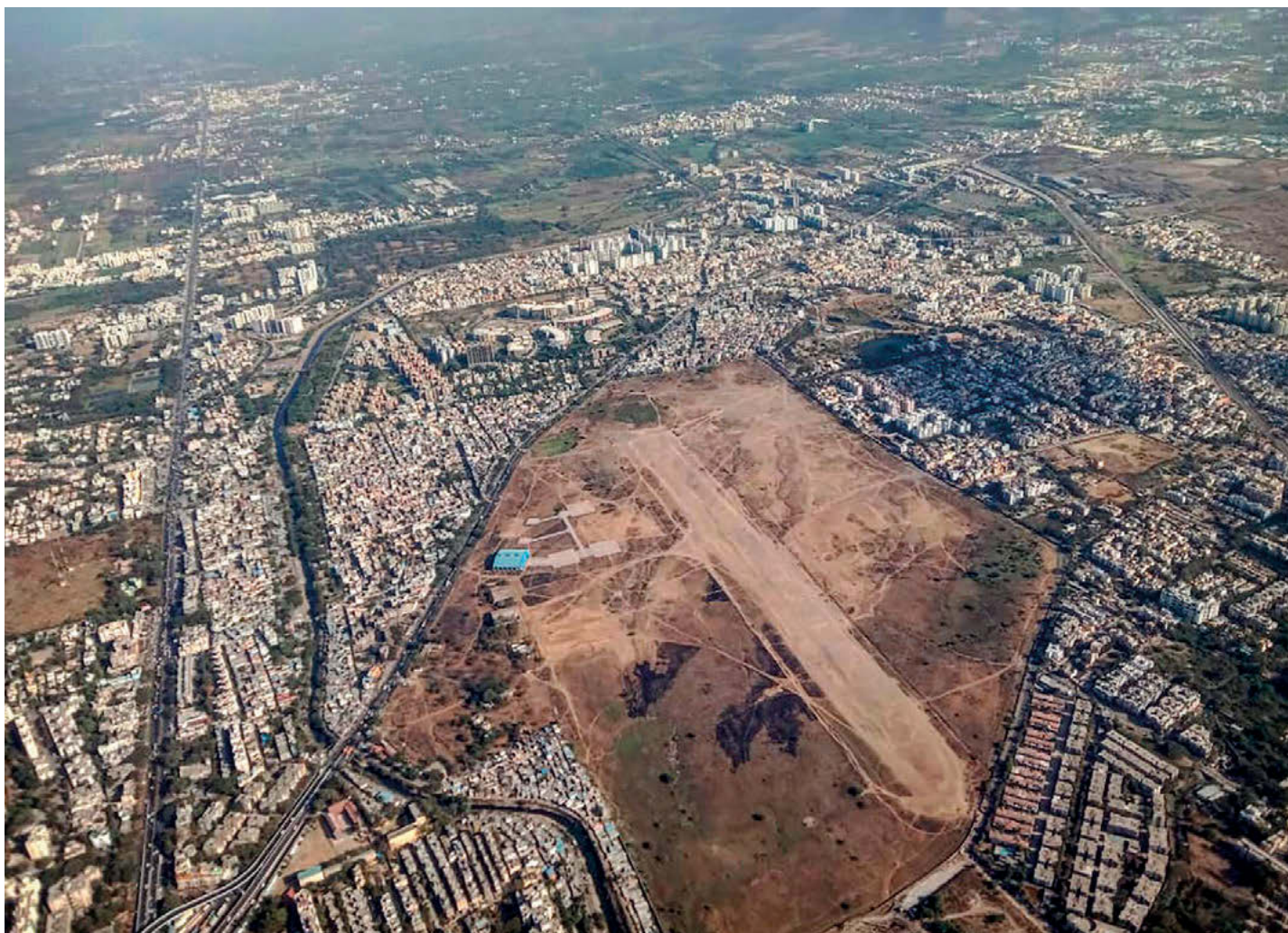
**A**FTER a busy first year as DCFI at Lasham, in the quieter winter period I headed southwards for a few weeks for warmer climes. I enjoyed a few days supporting the British Team at Lake Keepit during the Women's World Gliding Championships. This was a fantastic experience and my first visit to a World Championships; my congratulations to the whole team on their very strong result.

However, the main part of my trip was to visit India, where I had been invited by Sushil Bajpai. Sushil has been instrumental in reviving gliding within India and also remains the FAI gliding delegate for the country. Like any other traveller, I saw all the main famous Indian sights, but I have always been intrigued to see gliding in nations that are not well represented at national competitions. To this end Sushil made sure we would drop by the Hadapsar Gliding Centre in Pune, Maharashtra, although I had no expectation of flying with regulatory changes and changeable weather.

Gliding in India is organised rather differently from the UK, with much more state support. Hadapsar Gliding Centre, the most famous in India, was established and inaugurated by the first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, on 7 November 1950, just nine months after India became a sovereign republic. Nehru had the opportunity to fly and gliding was rolled out with government support in a number of cities, with some fairly respectable flights. Some flights were even in Indian-designed

**A TAS**





gliders, with Diamond distances sometimes done in straight line goals, and with some retrieves taking almost a week!

Up until early 2000, there were nearly 17 gliding clubs in India. However, with the government suddenly pulling out the subsidy, together with the explosion of airlines, India's Directorate General of Civil Aviation did not have any bandwidth to pay attention to gliding. The rules written for airlines were also applied to gliding in India. Under the twin burden, gliding in India collapsed, with only Hadapsar Gliding Centre managing to keep gliding going.

In India now, besides Hadapsar (Pune), gliding is carried out only at Jharkhand Gliding Club at Dumka, the Indian Institute

of Technology Gliding and Soaring Centre Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh, and Aryan Aviation at Aamby Valley, near Lonavla in Maharashtra. Three new sites are under development in Jharkhand. It's easy for a club to close down, but a majorly uphill task to revive it.

Today, with the growth in population and changes in society, gliding is much less present in India than it used to be. There are only a few gliding centres left in areas that are not so affected by the large pollution levels or the airspace restrictions which prevent gliding in the biggest cities. Nonetheless, Hadapsar Gliding Centre is well staffed with a professional team and equipped with two L23 Super Blanik ✈

Above and far left: The bustling population of Hadapsar, Pune, was clearly visible during a flight. The airfield is situated in the middle of a highly built-up area (Hadapsar Gliding Centre/Jordan Bridge)

**I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN INTRIGUED TO SEE GLIDING IN NATIONS THAT ARE NOT WELL REPRESENTED AT NATIONAL COMPETITIONS**

# TE OF INDIA





Above: Eric Menezes (front) and Jordan Bridge in Super Blanik

Left: being towed back to the launchpoint after landing (past the cricket games on the airfield!)

Right (l-r): Sushil Bajpai, CFI Shailesh Charbhe, Jordan Bridge and instructor Eric Menezes



## IT IS CLEAR THAT INDIA IS VERY KEEN ON GLIDING AND SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO DEVELOP



Jordan Bridge, 22, learnt to fly at Lasham in 2011, went solo at 15 and started instructing professionally in UK and Australia at 18. In late 2018 Jordan became Lasham's Deputy CFI. His most memorable flight to date was last year, taking three launches on the Slingsby Grasshopper, which he says is the closest thing to flying a broomstick!

✂ training gliders and a couple of private gliders.

Arriving on site, I was shown round the hangars and facilities. The weather was improving and I was taken to the launchpoint to see the operation. I was not expecting the welcoming party from the CFI, Shailesh Charbhe, and his staff! I was honoured to receive, on behalf of Lasham, some flowers and a T-shirt that I managed to squeeze into my already full luggage to bring home. I was invited to take a flight in the Super Blanik with one of their instructors.

The airfield is government-owned, but as much as it is purposed for gliding operations, the fact it is in the middle of a bustling city means that it serves as an unofficial local cricket ground and recreation park for the locals. That takes a bit of getting used to; just before launch a truck drives down to check that everything is clear and the cable is hooked on via the older style 'bridle' system with two winch hooks. I'm still not quite sure what the procedure is if one detaches mid-launch!

The winch wasn't the most powerful, but did the job getting me to around 300m (984ft). The view was like nothing else I've seen from a glider, even after my trip to Crystal Palace, South London, from Lasham last year. The bustling population of Pune was clearly visible and it was a privilege to share the flight with instructor Eric Menezes.

Soaring birds are commonplace in India in much bigger flocks than I've seen in Europe, but soaring is often rather limited. Nevertheless I did manage a short soaring flight with views over the city, managing to avoid the moving building site crane, and any locals playing cricket, on approach to land. Notably all the flying was done in Class D airspace with a box delegated to the gliding club, which shows that flexible airspace sharing is a concept that should work anywhere in the world!

I hope that the Aero Club of India, led by Anisha Singh and Hadapsar Gliding Centre, get the increased financial support they look for to improve their facilities and operation even further. Currently they offer probably the world's cheapest air experience flight at around £2 for a short circuit for the public.

It is clear that India is very keen on gliding and should be encouraged to develop to the point that they can enter international competitions again.

My thanks to Sushil Bajpai for introducing me to India and the whole team at Hadapsar for their time and welcome; also to Dig Vijay Singh Chauhan and Ravi Mahbubani, both glider pilots, who made me feel very welcome in their homes.

I hope to visit again in the not too distant future and experience more of what India and its gliding has to offer.



# SURVIVING YOUR BALE OUT

Anthony 'Mac' McDermott shares top tips on how to care for parachutes and to use them correctly to save your life

**W**HY do skydivers wear two parachutes – a main canopy and an emergency reserve? Answer: the main canopy occasionally fails, as I found out from personal experience – twice – during my parachuting days. For glider pilots, the glider is our main canopy and we all know that they can also fail occasionally – mid-air collisions, rigging mistakes, mother nature (bird strikes, lightning), etc.

G Dale's excellent article in the last issue (*Bale out*, pp10-12) explicitly implies that, while not probable, it is possible that YOU might have to bale out. BGA collision statistics 1987-2014 indicate that there were 22 fatalities and 16 successful parachute descents. So, while it is a rare occurrence, it does happen and pilots from ab initio to 'pundit' need to recognise that possibility and better prepare themselves. As William Blake remarked: "Knowledge is life with wings" – which seems appropriate for glider pilots.

## **Our flying culture**

Question? Given the bale-out potential, why is parachuting knowledge within our soaring community so poor – an opinion based on my presentations at a number of clubs? The UK gliding scene too often reflects the 'why jump out of a serviceable aircraft?' culture and this often translates into a reluctance to engage with the bale-out possibility, hence the absence of knowledge of how to do it or, even worse, an unwillingness to even contemplate it.

If glider pilots really thought about baling out, why do some:

- take poor care of their parachutes (especially club ones)

- treat them as backrests
- not seek to improve knowledge of their use
- fail to get them repacked in accordance with their manual; and, worst of all,
- sell and buy parachutes out of the manufacturer's finite canopy and pack 'life'?

Reserve (emergency) parachutes have saved tens of thousands of pilots over the years, either from bale outs of a stricken aircraft or by skydivers after a main canopy malfunction. If your choice is between a bale out or sticking with a damaged glider that may be so seriously compromised as to be unlandable, why would you not bale out? Hopefully, this article will dispel some myths and provide you with sufficient information (and confidence) to remove any doubts as to whether to bale out in that critical couple of seconds.

**EMERGENCY PARACHUTES WORK** – and this should be the mantra for all glider pilots.

No doubt after reading G's article, you are pondering how you would bale out and, hopefully, you will now be convinced that some parachuting knowledge is also better than none. Particularly if you are the unlucky one who has to bale out; is desperate to successfully open the parachute and want to survive the landing. As Benjamin Franklin once said: "By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail."

## **Basic information**

Ask a 'pundit' some questions about their parachute and you often get an embarrassed expression, or a blank stare, or the classic – "it's round isn't it?". So, what do you really need to know? Key questions are:

- What kind of canopy is it? Almost

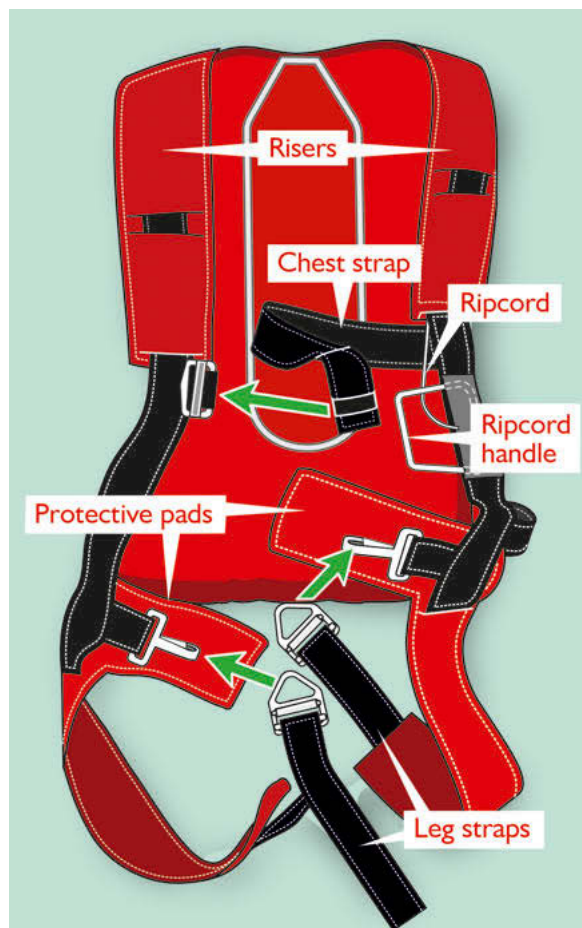


Look after your parachute and it could look after you

**IF YOUR CHOICE IS BETWEEN A BALE OUT OR STICKING WITH A DAMAGED GLIDER THAT MAY BE SO SERIOUSLY COMPROMISED AS TO BE UNLANDABLE, WHY WOULD YOU NOT BALE OUT?**

## WHY WOULD YOU QUIBBLE ABOUT A REPLACEMENT THAT MIGHT SAVE YOUR LIFE, YET ARE HAPPY TO SPEND TENS OF THOUSANDS ON A GLIDER, OR EVEN A FEW THOUSAND ON A NAVIGATION AID?

Key features of a gliding parachute  
(Illustration by Steve Longland)



✎ all reserve parachutes for GA and soaring pilots are round canopies, a proven design that has been around for over 100 years. If your parachute pack contains a high performance 'square' or ram air canopy, then you need to be an experienced and trained parachutist to use it. Analogy – think ab initio training in a K-21 and first solo in an ASG 29 or equivalent! Modified ram air reserves for glider pilots are coming onto the market, but it's too early to assess them.

● **What size is it?** Generally, they are between 24-28ft in diameter. Twenty-four foot canopies are usually old and past their 'life' dates. Twenty-six foot diameters are now the norm, but if you are heavy (220lb/100kilos+), then get a 28ft diameter if buying new – it's worth the extra £100.

● **What is the parachute system 'life'?** Most manufacturers give a finite service 'life' for a canopy and it varies for each manufacturer. See your user's manual. Some don't quote a service life, but recommend the canopy be returned to the factory for a complete check and update on a regular basis. Some (primarily American) pass that responsibility (or the buck) on to the riggers. Personally, I wouldn't jump using an out of 'life' canopy, but it's

your choice and your life! NB: parachute packs also deteriorate over time, particularly if exposed to too much sunlight, etc.

● **Has it been repacked within the manufacturer's timescale (see the manual) by a qualified emergency parachute rigger?** Skydivers look after their parachutes very carefully indeed and are experienced in spotting flaws (eg loose ripcord housing). You won't be that knowledgeable – so the repack allows a qualified rigger of emergency parachutes to discover any faults.

● **Does it have a 'drive' capability?** Many round emergency canopies have been designed to give a forward 'drive' (speed) normally between 5-7mph. This is essential for avoiding hazards and becomes critical for a safe into-wind landing, as will be explained later. In addition, a plain canopy without 'drive' may oscillate, which is disconcerting, especially if it's your first time under canopy.

● **How do you steer it?** Steering can be either loops or toggles,

with one on each side of the canopy on the risers. The risers are webbing straps extending from the pack to the suspension lines of the canopy. Some parachutes only cater for steering by pulling on the risers. Modern two-riser canopies will (should) be provided with steering toggles. Some four-riser canopies have steering toggles, others do not. Generally, four-riser canopies steer better using back riser input rather than the provided steering toggles. To steer, pull the right loop/toggle/riser and you turn right and vice versa to turn left. Don't pull both together.

Parachutes are relatively straightforward, durable, extremely reliable and effective, but are reasonably expensive to buy initially, which is a further incentive to look after them. IN REALITY, they are very CHEAP – say £2,000 over 20 years, amortised at £100 per year, maybe between two to three syndicate members. They will last you 20-25 years if both the canopy and pack are looked after carefully and will retain a value.

I have been frequently asked 'what if my parachute is out of 'life'? **Top tip** – replace it, of course! Why would you quibble about a replacement that might save your life, yet are happy to spend tens of thousands on a glider, or even a few thousand on a navigation aid? **Top tip** – take advice from someone with proper knowledge of parachutes when replacing a parachute, especially if you are buying a secondhand one. I would advise you NOT to buy one that is out of the manufacturer's 'life'.

Club packs need extra care, given the amount of use, and may need replacing before the 'life' has expired.

### Basic care instructions

- When not in use, always keep it in the parachute bag.
- Avoid contaminating it with oil or other liquids.
- Don't leave it in the sunlight. If left in a cockpit during a flying day, shield with the canopy cover or other material. This is especially important for club kit.
- Store in a warm, dry atmosphere when not in use. Do not leave in trailers or your boot for long periods, especially in winter.
- If wet, have it dried out and repacked by a rigger.
- Treat it as you would wish to be treated yourself.

You don't need to know the full details of your parachute, but a few key points are shown in the illustration (see left) of a common design of gliding parachute.



Irrespective of whether it is a 'pop top' or internal pilot (extractor) chute type, they are designed to allow a clean deployment of the pilot (extractor) chute which, in effect, drags the canopy out of the pack. **Top tip** – when you get yours repacked, take it to the rigger and observe it being repacked to better understand how it works, and the rigger may even give you some useful advice.

### Checks

Gliders are DI'd (daily inspection) before flying by a competent (authorised) person and are subject to the ABCD check before each flight at many clubs. You should adopt a similar regime for your parachute. Key points for the parachute DI are:

- Does the pack have any obvious damage or loose stitching?
- Are the canopy or suspension lines exposed?

● Do the leg and chest snap hooks work? Some snap hooks may be of the 'quick ejector' type and need careful examination to ensure they can be fully closed and locked. Some very old Eastern European parachutes were equipped with pinch clips.

● Ensure correct harness threading through the adjuster mechanisms of the snap hooks and that the turn back at the end of the webbing is in place and intact. The turn back stops the harness completely unthreading from the adjuster.

● Ensure that the elastic leg and chest strap retainers are present and effective.

● Is the ripcord housing securely attached to the pack? I have seen another parachutist's poorly maintained ripcord housing for the main canopy come loose in free fall, rendering it unusable.

● Is the ripcord frayed with loose wire strands? If yes, have it checked and/or replaced by a rigger.

● Is the small metal stop at the end of the ripcord itself firmly attached to prevent the ripcord handle coming off and preventing the parachute's deployment?

● Is the ripcord handle itself (commonly and wrongly referred to as the D-ring) secure in its pocket, with the wider side of the handle in first? (See illustration on page 14.)

● Are the rip cord pins firmly secured in the cord loops under the protective flap and remain serviceable? (See photo above right). This is where you should find the rigger's seal and red thread, albeit its absence does not always preclude the parachute being used – seek advice if this is the case. **Top tip** – some older parachutes use metal (usually

non-swivel) cones and pins, not cord loops. These are dangerous – so invest in a new parachute!

If you have any concerns seek advice and, if necessary, declare it non-serviceable until checked by a rigger or qualified parachutist.

During the flying day the parachute (especially a club one) should always be checked before you put it on, as others may have used it previously and you don't know what has happened to it since the morning DI. So, similarly to your pre-flight checks, ensure you complete the following quick checks:

- Does it look OK? If yes, it's probably fine.
- Any canopy or suspension lines exposed?
- Check that the ripcord handle is secure in its pocket, with the wider side of the handle in first, and that the housing is also secure.
- Check that the ripcord pins are firmly in the cord loops. If a loop is frayed it could prematurely open – so back to the rigger for repair. **Top tip** – ensure that the top pin is positioned so that it will slide easily into the ripcord housing without jamming if pulled (see photograph, right).

### Wearing the parachute

Some pilots complain that their parachutes are uncomfortable and that is largely down to not fitting and wearing it properly. When putting it on:


- Loosen the straps first, then put it high on your back and spread your legs.
- Bend over at the waist and keep your knees and legs straight.

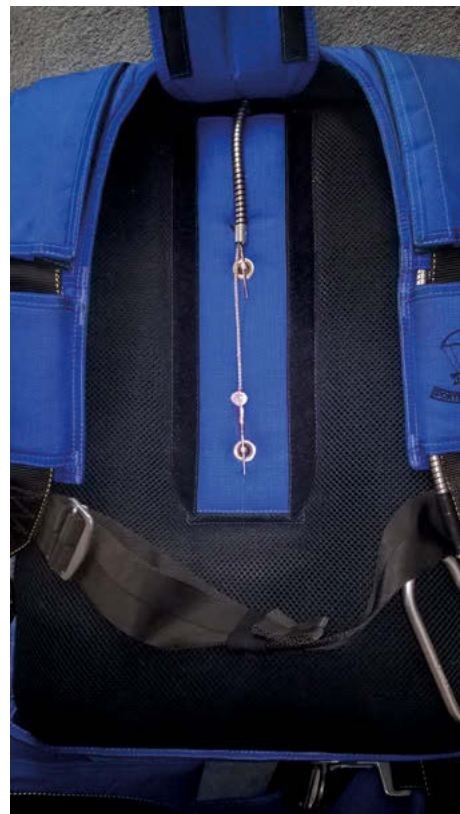
● Fasten the leg straps first so they are reasonably tight. Ensure the buckles are properly closed, especially the 'quick ejector' type.

● Stand up straight and fasten the chest strap. Make sure the strap goes through the locking bar. NB: It is always leg straps on first, then chest straps and vice versa when taking it off. You do not need to pull the chest strap so tight as to pull the side harness into the centre of your body.

● Most parachutes have side straps and/or lift web adjusters, which can be adjusted to provide a good fit.

● Ensure the ripcord handle is in an accessible position and not obstructed by clothing.

● Tidy all straps away, by using the elastic retainers or the strap pockets provided on the parachute. Loose straps can foul the controls or catch on the glider when you are exiting the glider. See the BGA Safety Directive on securing seat harness straps. 



Are the rip cord pins firmly secured in the cord loops under the protective flap and remain serviceable?

**WHEN YOU GET YOURS REPACKED, TAKE IT TO THE RIGGER AND OBSERVE IT BEING REPACKED TO BETTER UNDERSTAND HOW IT WORKS**

## IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE CHEST STRAP IS NOT LEFT FLAPPING, AS IT COULD KILL YOU IN A BALE-OUT SITUATION

✍ It is essential that the chest strap is not left flapping, as it could kill you in a bale-out situation. Trained parachutists have been found dead after clutching a loose strap and not the ripcord handle, because they grabbed it first in their heightened state of stress, not let go and failed to look for the handle. Secure the strap by the safety bar on the buckle and use the elastic retainer or wrap any dangling strap away.

If your parachute remains uncomfortable on a long flight, make sure the straps are not overtight (you won't fall out of the

harness) and that you have used the protective pads provided for the leg buckles. Some manufacturers/riggers can provide back cushions for additional comfort, but they must be of an approved design and fitted by a rigger. Avoid the DIY approach as poor fitting could inadvertently retard/prevent a clean deployment of the pilot chute (and canopy).

Having covered the parachute basics, we can now move onto the jump itself.

### Surviving under the canopy

I have frequently heard pilots say "I don't care what happens after I have baled out, as long as the chute opens." While the job of the emergency parachute is to save your life, you must take very seriously the need to survive the landing as best you can. Why? Because we often fly

in weather conditions that an experienced and trained skydiver, even equipped with very high-performance ram air main and ram air reserve canopies, would not be allowed to jump due to British Parachute Association rules. Think of those extremely windy days on the ridge or on wave days. I am not suggesting that you shouldn't fly on such days, but you do need to be mindful of the performance limitations of your emergency parachute and your own ability under canopy. Which is why I will later cover canopy 'drive' and landing speeds to better equip you for such an eventuality.

**When to pull the ripcord?** Given that most bale-out mishaps are going to be relatively close to the ground, the advice would be as quickly as possible, normally within three seconds and as soon as adequate clearance from the glider has been achieved.

FYI, a free-falling body accelerates at 32 feet per second<sup>2</sup> to reach terminal velocity of 122mph and, in doing so, takes 10 seconds to fall the first 1,000 feet.

**What is the lowest height I can jump from?** This is not a precise science, but if you are out of the glider by 500ft AGL, there is sufficient time for the canopy to deploy as reserve parachutes deploy very rapidly in one to two seconds. You will accelerate only to 400ft in the first five seconds. Most pilots should have a good idea of their height to make this judgement.

### How to pull the ripcord?

- **LOOK** for the ripcord handle. Don't just blindly grab for it. Remember a loose chest strap might feel like a handle in such a stressful situation!
- **LOCATE** left hand on the handle, thumb through the handle. Right hand on top of the left.
- **PULL** down in line with the ripcord housing (if over the left shoulder). NB: Some systems have the housing routed around the left waist. If so, the pull should therefore be 'out' and in line with the ripcord housing.
- If possible, try to **ARCH** your back and fling your arms out in a star shape.

Given the speed of the opening, it's unlikely that you will have time to do anything else before you are swinging beneath a lovely open canopy. Trust me, you will love that canopy afterwards!

So – **LOOK, LOCATE, PULL.**

Then, check canopy.

**Check canopy.** Malfunctioning canopies are very, very rare, but there are a few manageable possibilities to be aware of:

- **Twisted rigging lines** – they unravel themselves, but you can assist by pulling the left and right-side risers apart to encourage untwisting.
- Occasionally, you might have a line over the canopy, known as the 'Mae West' for its shape. Don't panic, this is still a landable parachute, but you might come down slightly faster and steering will be harder. Pulling on the appropriate riser may release the line.
- If your exit was difficult and you pulled when unstable, you could find a leg entangled in the risers or rigging lines. Stay calm and wriggle it free.

**Hazards and the landing area.** The good news is that the same hazards that are a danger for gliders are the same for a parachutist. So, you already know what they are and should take steps to avoid them by

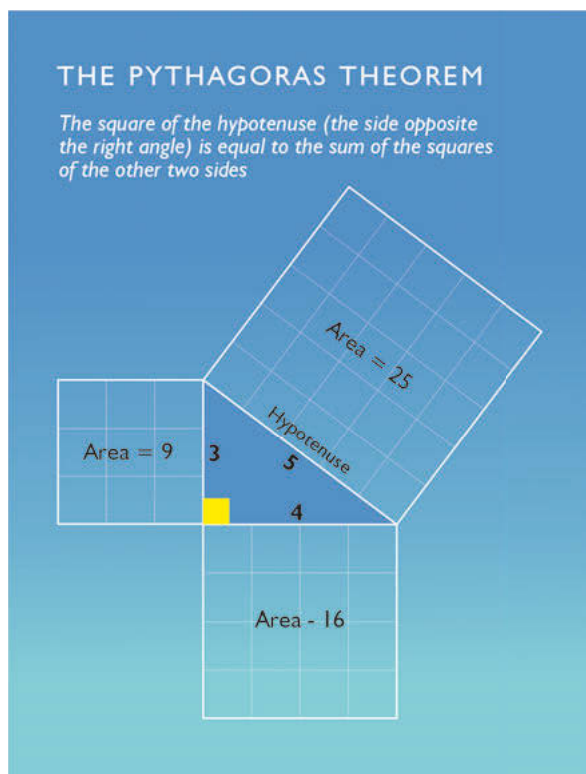


Illustration by Steve Longland

## WHILE THE JOB OF THE EMERGENCY PARACHUTE IS TO SAVE YOUR LIFE, YOU MUST TAKE VERY SERIOUSLY THE NEED TO SURVIVE THE LANDING AS BEST YOU CAN



steering away from them. NB: It is always best to take a forward landing away from a hazard than to land on it. However, if landing on a hazard is unavoidable, land backwards which helps to protect your face and thoracic organs. Avoid landing on water at all costs as you could end up entangled in a canopy under water. **Top tip** – don't get fixated on a hazard as they seem to attract inexperienced parachutists to them.

Similarly, the skills required for a successful glider circuit are akin to those required for a landing under a parachute. Assess your height, work out your drift, identify a likely landing area and use the 'drive' and steering to reach it. Given where we mainly fly, this hopefully will be a nice open field without too many trees.

### Canopy drive

As previously mentioned, most canopies will have a forward 'drive' of between 5-7mph and the correct use of this drive is essential to avoid hazards and keep your landing speed low to mitigate potential injury or worse.

Hopefully, you will all remember the Pythagoras theorem – the square of the hypotenuse (the side opposite the right angle) is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides (see illustration on page 16). In a parachute landing scenario:

- The descent side of our landing triangle is the vertical speed of the parachute, which for the purpose of this article will be 10mph, a reasonable rule of thumb for most canopy descent speeds.
- The horizontal side of our triangle is the

'drive' speed which remains constant and our ground speed, which is variable. Being conservative, I am going to assume 5mph for the 'drive' speed.

- The side opposite the right angle is your actual landing speed.
- Landing speed varies according to the actual wind speed on the day and YOUR use of the parachute.
- All landings, like a glider, should be INTO WIND to allow the 'drive' speed to mitigate the wind speed and thus reduce your landing speed.

NB: Whilst landing into wind sounds obvious, we have all probably witnessed a downwind landing in a glider and it also happens to trained parachutists.

### Landing speeds

Here are some examples of landing speeds to illustrate the possible landing impacts:

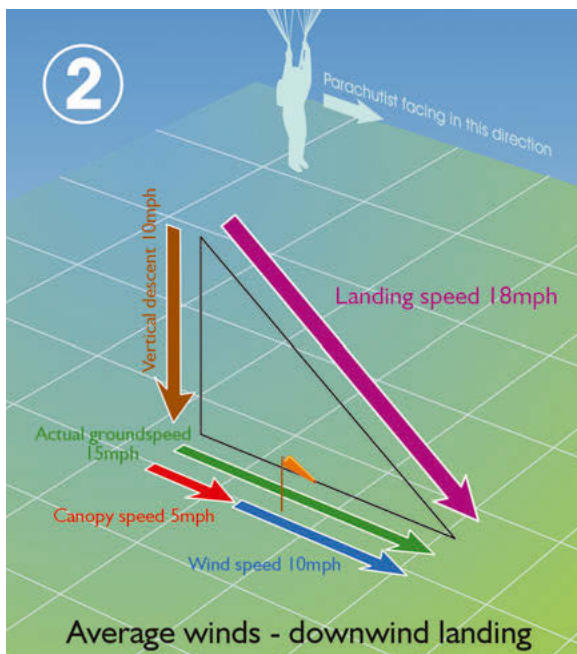
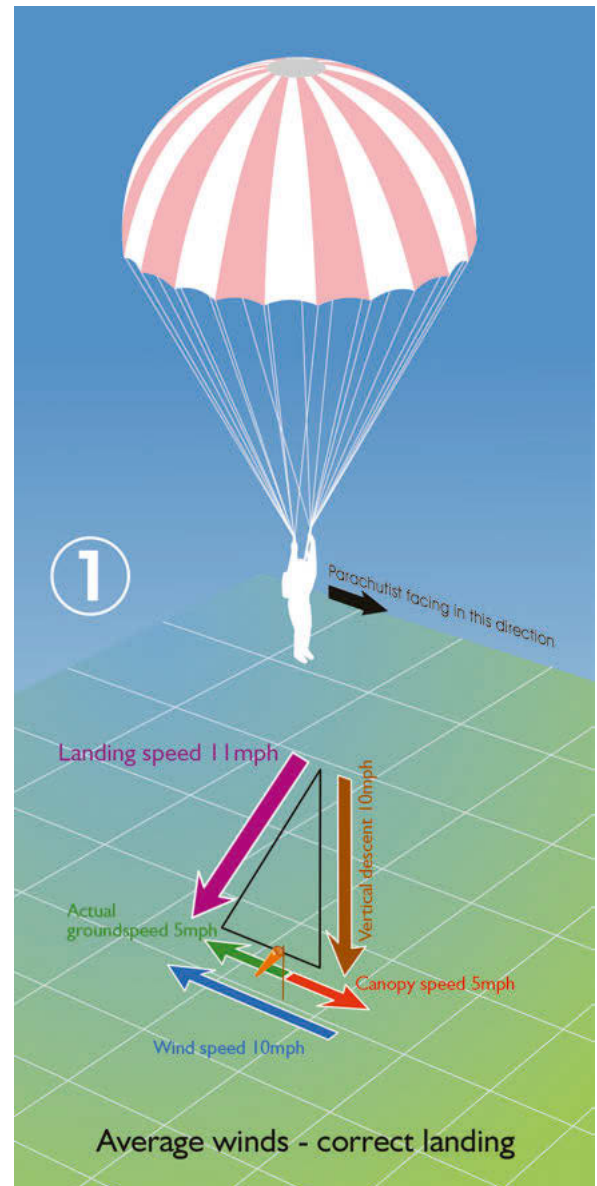
**Example 1 (right):** Wind speed 10mph but the parachutist is facing into wind, so the 'drive' reduces the landing speed to 11mph – equivalent to jumping to the floor after standing with your feet on a level with the ceiling of a normal room.

**Example 2 (below left):** Wind speed still 10mph but the

parachutist is facing downwind, so this increases the landing speed to 18mph – equivalent to jumping with your feet on a level with the mid-point of a first-floor room. This may mean a trip to A&E!

**Example 3 (see page 18):** Wind speed 15mph but the parachutist is facing into wind, so the 'drive' reduces the landing speed to 14mph – equivalent to jumping from a couple of feet into a first-floor room. It might hurt a bit.

**Example 4 (see page 18):** Wind speed still 15mph but the parachutist is facing downwind, so increases the landing speed to 22mph – equivalent to jumping after standing with your feet



**THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT THE SAME HAZARDS THAT ARE A DANGER FOR GLIDERS ARE THE SAME FOR A PARACHUTIST. SO, YOU ALREADY KNOW WHAT THEY ARE**

## THE MORE PREPARED YOU ARE BY REGULARLY MENTALLY REHEARSING IT, THE BETTER YOUR CHANCES OF SUCCESSFULLY SURVIVING THE EXPERIENCE

■ There is a new Army video clip on YouTube that is well worth watching for PLF tips – [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lu2fu928xk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lu2fu928xk)

Illustrations by Steve Longland

✍ on a level with the ceiling of a first-floor room. This probably means a trip to A&E!

**Example 5 (see page 19):** Wind speed 20mph but the parachutist is facing into wind, so the 'drive' reduces the landing speed to 18mph – equivalent to jumping with your feet on a level with the mid-point of a first-floor room. This may mean a trip to A&E!

**Example 6 (see page 19):** Wind speed still 20mph but the parachutist is facing downwind, so the 'drive' increases the landing speed to 27mph – imagine being hit by a car at this speed? This will mean a trip to A&E and possibly the ICU!

### The landing

Some of these impact speeds are daunting, but needs must if your glider is not landable. So, we now need to address the landing position itself. My initial parachute course was over two days and run by ex-Parachute Regiment NCOs. They spent four hours teaching us the Parachute Landing Fall (PLF) and it was 'hard core' and painful. But, we were all young and fit. I'm not going to attempt to teach you the PLF, but here are some basic tips:

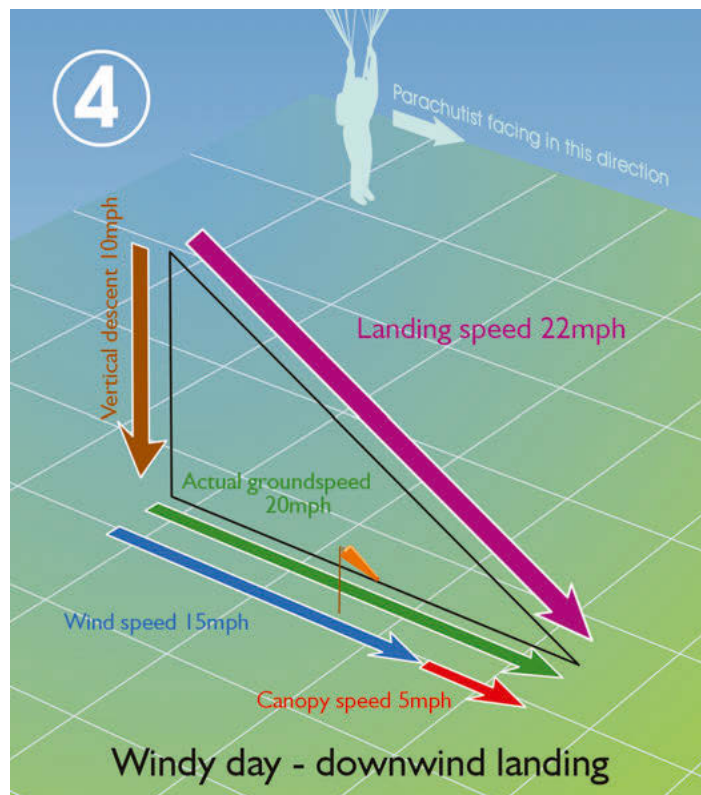
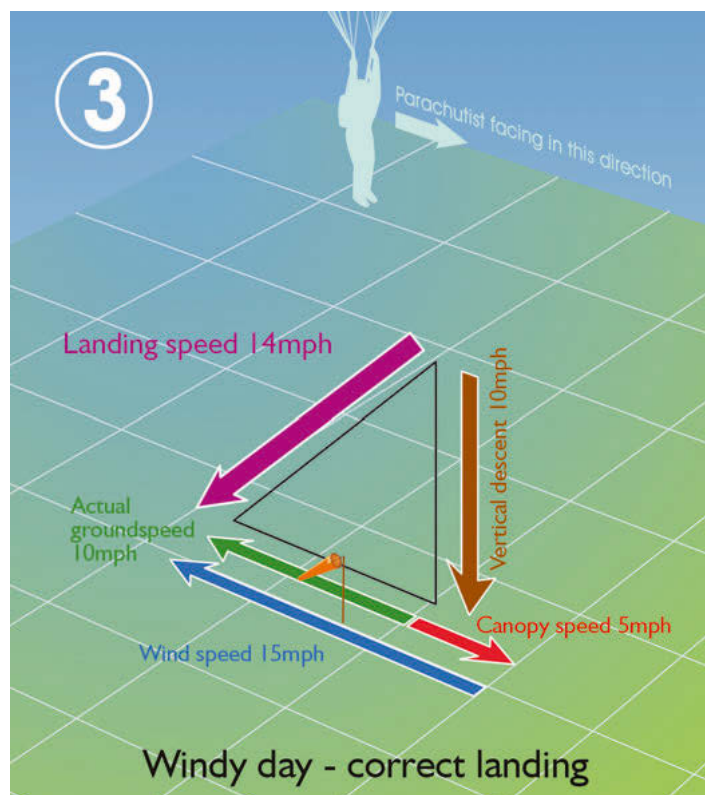
- At about 100ft, make sure you are facing into wind and accept it's too late to change your landing area.
- Feet and knees together with your knees slightly bent. Imagine that there is a £50

note held between your knees and you're not going to let it go!

- Hands on the risers (back) and elbows tucked in.
- Mouth and teeth closed to avoid biting your tongue. Chin on chest.
- Watch the ground and anticipate 'ground rush' – don't shy away from it by lifting your feet as you get close. Just accept that you are going to land come what may.
- Aim to roll once you hit the ground to dissipate the impact. So, decide which way you want to roll and slightly angle your feet in that direction.
- Having assumed your PLF position don't change it.
- When you touch down, roll in your chosen direction to spread the impact over your leg, backside and shoulders.

In most cases, you are likely to be landing backwards when facing into wind, which is preferable to a forward landing as it better facilitates a roll and avoids damage to your face.

If you are OK, with nothing broken, get up quickly and run around the canopy to deflate it, because on a windy day you may be in danger of being dragged by your still inflated canopy. This is not as funny as it looks and is potentially dangerous, as you could be dragged into the barbed wire fence at the edge of your chosen field. If you can't





get up, roll onto your back, grab a riser and start pulling it in together with its attached suspension lines. Then pull on a single suspension line. It's easier than you think and will deflate the canopy. But, don't let go to avoid canopy re-inflation, once deflated, get up and run upwind of the canopy.

NB: Your main danger of a premature opening is actually walking around the airfield, or getting in/out of the glider, due to unsecured ripcord handles which are easily dislodged. In a very strong windy day, you could potentially be dragged a long way, or into a parked glider or car, etc! If a premature opening does happen, just pick up the pilot chute.

### After landing

Call 999 and advise them of your condition and location, etc; the whereabouts of the wreckage and any possible consequences of its landing. Inform your club ASAP, so they can start the emergency procedures, including informing the AAIB (Department of Transport's Air Accident Investigation Branch) and the BGA. **Top tip** – ensure your mobile phone is on you and not in the side pocket of your glider. Look after your parachute, as it can be used again and is valuable. Think about and record key points for the AAIB/BGA enquiry.

Record your 'jump' in your logbook and, in due course, apply to the Caterpillar

Club, which is an informal association of people who have successfully used a parachute to bale out of a disabled aircraft. After authentication, applicants receive a membership certificate and a distinctive lapel pin. You can then bore everyone in the bar for years to come as your account gets even 'hairier' each time you tell it!

### Conclusion

Hopefully, you now realise that your reserve parachute is more than an expensive backrest and that you now have sufficient knowledge and confidence to actually use it in a bale-out situation. So, treat your parachute with care and get it professionally packed regularly. Replace it as necessary. Think about your bale out and being under the canopy.

**Remember – LOOK, LOCATE, PULL – check canopy – avoid hazards – LAND INTO WIND.**

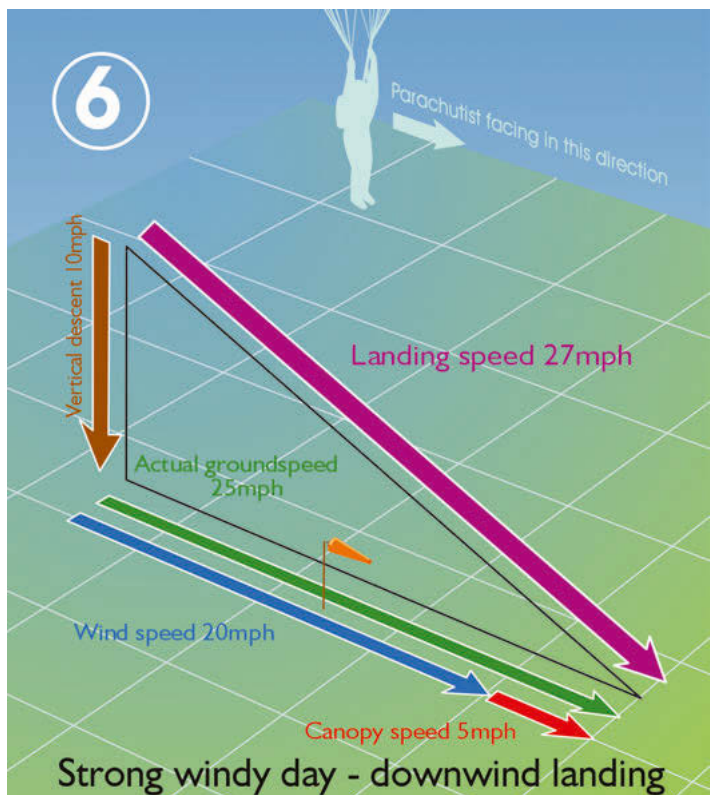
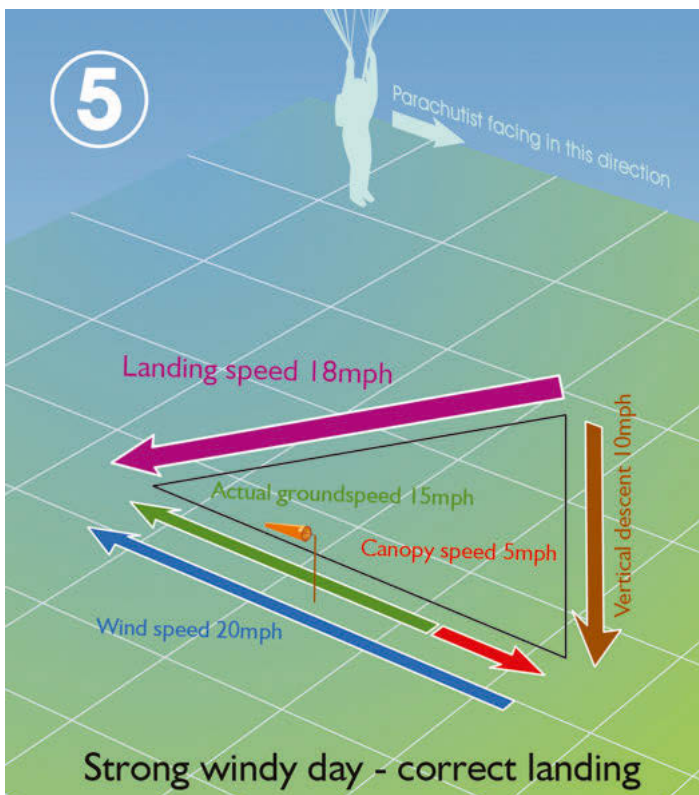
As G said in his article, the more prepared you are by regularly mentally rehearsing it, the better your chances of successfully surviving the experience.

Finally, if you think skydivers are all nuts, view this clip to see them enjoying themselves; who knows you might be encouraged to do a tandem jump. But don't try to land like them! See [www.youtube.com/watch?v=8auv2Mx6kzA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8auv2Mx6kzA)

Good luck if you ever have to do it.



Mac flies an ASW 20CL out of Burn Gliding Club in North Yorkshire and still wonders how he was 'volunteered' to be the club's safety officer and coordinator of the Regional Soaring Airspace Group. Back in the day, he was an FAI 'D' Licence skydiver with competition and display jumping experience. Mac has given a number of lectures to gliding clubs on the care and use of parachutes.



# THE TRIALS OF AN EARLY SOLO

Adrian Morgan reflects on a valuable lesson learnt when classic factors combined to overload him after a small mistake



Highland's EuroFOX



Adrian Morgan soloed last year at Highland Gliding Club. A keen sailor, he first experienced gliding 30 years ago as part of a journalistic assignment that resulted in a slim paperback book, *Gliding in 8 Days*.

‘I HAVE CONTROL’— three little words from the back seat; familiar to pilots embarking on this gliding lark, and not unknown to early-solo pilots on check flights, after a longish lapse, too many late nights, or simply the effects of a brain heading rapidly, and downwards, towards its seventh decade.

It was all going so well. The checks, ground run, aerotow – not the smoothest in a gusty south-westerly that had caused the new Easterton windsock (replacing the one lost in the previous week's gale) to flick and swivel like a Day-Glo sausage – was uneventful, and thence behind the little red EuroFOX to the Rothes Ridge. This was working, spasmodically, enhanced by weak, peripatetic thermals in which we flew tight figures of eight, with much prompting from Highland Gliding Club's thermal god John Thomson in the back.

Then one spectacularly horrendous turn, the yaw string not so much quivering to the left, but glued, right angles to the airflow, the K-21's ASI showing probably 12 knots (not that I had the presence of mind to look closely). It was embarrassing and the next five minutes I spent apologising, rather than flying. Meanwhile, height was imperceptibly dropping to the point that even I knew it was time to head for home.

There was no question of the kind of by the book circuit as we joined half way down the strip, at perhaps 500ft, heading west into wind. The downwind turn left us at 400ft close to the boundary and slow. I kid myself that my diagonal leg turn was just a split second away from John's three-word command. In reality my brain had faded, and events were overtaking an ability to be proactive.

On the ground, head in hands, still apologetic, John cut me short. Put your mistakes behind you, he said. They are gone, done with, you should have been concentrating on what you must do right

now, not what you just did wrong. But don't be disheartened. You are not the first, or last.

It had been an invaluable lesson. Next time, with luck, I thought, the brain will have kicked in long before that voice (this time in my head) whispered "I have control".

What John told me was reinforced by CFI Mike Black in a lengthy email, which not only accurately reflected the event, but showed to what lengths my club, and all clubs, go to reassuring, explaining and, at times, gently reprimanding those of us who think we are just a little bit better than we are. Pride can be hurt, but bones were not broken, and no carbon fibre was damaged in the making of this flight.

As a postscript, straight after the flight I went up again, and this time WULF (Water, Undercarriage, Loose articles, Flaps) calmly checked (albeit forgetting the "Easterton, downwind, left hand on 26 call"), all went well. "That's how you usually fly," was John's response, and those five little words helped enormously as I drove the 100 soul-searching miles home.

## Here is Mike Black's analysis in full:

John was in touch about your flight on Monday; as you are aware the instructors all share notes about students so that we are all equally briefed and up to speed on how you are getting on.

To my mind this is a classic situation where a combination of factors – lack of currency, lack of experience, weather and increasing pressure to make decisions – all conspire to overload you. In particular if you dwell on a 'mistake' and start to over-think it. This then leads to exactly the situation I think you found yourself in, where you just can't make sensible decisions, even fairly trivial ones.

You should put this down to a good learning experience as it's a classic situation for a glider pilot. Just imagine a future flight where you are soaring cross-country, you make a mistake, or several, in trying to find your next thermal and start to get





You are looking for somewhere to land and the hills around you are getting close... what is the wind doing?... is that a good field?... was that a bit of a thermal there?... can I just stay airborne or should I land?... (Steve Lynn)

low well away from base. You are looking for somewhere to land and the hills around you are getting close... what is the wind doing?... is that a good field?... was that a bit of a thermal there?... can I just stay airborne or should I land?... if so in what direction and what circuit should I use?... the tops of these hills are above me now... oh s\*\*t!!! what is that yaw string doing and what is my speed?... what should I do here?... I'm sure you can now appreciate the pressure building on you to make decisions in this scenario.

The situation you found yourself in on Monday was exactly the same feeling you will get when you head off cross-country and, perhaps, have to land out. It's therefore important that you go through that process, experience it and spend some time soul-searching on how you dealt with it and learning from that experience.

The most important aspect here is that you have learnt from it and when it happens again, as it will, you will be much more able to handle it. It's called experience and it cannot be bottled or given to you. You have to live it and learn from it, which is what you have done.

It was important that you flew with John again and had a better flight in order to regain your confidence. As an instructor we

will always let you get yourself into a tricky situation and then we are looking for you to dig yourself out of it by making the right decisions.

Obviously we take over when it gets too risky or you are not able to sort it out yourself. So we deliberately allow you to get outside your comfort zone in a controlled manner so that you can learn from it.

As you will appreciate this is a powerful learning experience for you. The key thing here is that you are learning really important lessons that can't be easily demonstrated or taught in a classroom.

Take it from me that this experience will make you a better pilot, so please don't be disheartened by it. Recognise that this is a really good learning experience and learn what you need to focus on when it happens again. The key things you need to remember when under severe pressure are as follows in strict priority order:

1. **Aviate** – fly the aircraft, check speed, yaw sting, trim, in other words – get the aircraft under control...
2. **Navigate** – where are we going and where do I want to be?...

Only and only if the above two items are well under control should you then if required

3. **Communicate** – radios, talk, etc...

**MIKE FOX, BGA TRAINING  
STANDARDS OFFICER,  
COMMENTS:**

THE teaching of human factors in gliding is probably sporadic. I was taught airmanship when I learnt to fly, but it was probably best described as 'by osmosis'. It's dead easy to sit in our armchairs at home reflecting on "how stupid" or perhaps "where was my airmanship?" after an episode like Adrian describes. We have all made a silly error which has raised our workload – me included (on a recent power flying checkout!). But how can we actually change the way we do things to try to make this sort of training less opportunistic and more structured?

The essence of a possible solution is to continually teach pilots to think ahead – before a flight and during. There are many tools in the crew resource management world, but my little brain can only deal with simple stuff, so I like the BA 'NUTA' tool. Notice – the wind is flicking the windsock around. Understand – that means it'll be turbulent and speed control will be difficult. Think Ahead – concentrate like mad on coordination and speed control when against the hill.

This is something we can use when briefing, and also during flying – ideally when we have a moment to think. *Notice* – we will be low when we get back to the airfield. *Understand* – that'll increase the workload and mean we have to do a modified circuit. *Think Ahead* – let's plan for as easy and lowest complication option circuit we can. Is joining on the base leg the best option, or even straight in? Are there any fields on the way that can provide a bolt hole if we get really low?

It sounds like Adrian learnt the lesson admirably, and his instructors are doing a great job making sure he learnt from his mistakes and keeping everyone safe. I wonder if we can prepare for these challenging flights (which are, of course, great fun) by thinking about the tough bits before they leap up and grab us!



Taking off at first light on  
3 February 2020 from  
Omarama in ASW 27-B

The Thermal Podcast's Herrie ten Cate talks to Terry Delore after an amazing 1,730km out-and-return flight in his ASW 27B, setting a new world record

**T**ERRY Delore is a world record holding, elite glider pilot from New Zealand. His flights are epic. And he's recently broken another world record flying his ASW 27-B. On 3 February, 2020, Terry completed a flight that started at Omarama on New Zealand's South Island, crossed over the Cook Strait and into the North Island before turning around.

By the time he was done, Terry had completed a 1,730km flight... setting a new Free Out-and-Return world record for 15-metre gliders.

Terry is also claiming the Declared Out-and-Return record of 1,730km and a 1,500km out-and-return speed record of 139.69km/h. However, these last two records are in doubt due to a starting gate error after a recent IGC rule change. All three records are still pending official verification.

I reached Terry at his home in Christchurch, New Zealand.

**HtC:** *You've broken all sorts of world records and describe this particular flight as the hardest, most challenging and satisfying one of your life. Why is that?*

**TD:** It's because on the day there was nothing left. You could not have gone one kilometre further north. And you definitely couldn't have gone one kilometre further south. We had a stalled front right on the start-line. I had to fly into the start on instruments; inside the cloud, in rain where the front was for the last couple of kilometres.

I managed to get the start in the quadrant and get out. I looked back five minutes later and it was just absolutely black and hosing down with rain. So, really good to get in and out of that point, the front stayed there all day long. It was a stalled front, and so I did the 900km trek north to the northern turn-points and ran out of wind. We had the smoke from the Australian bushfires 2,000km to the west of us. It was a layer of smoke at



about 14-15,000ft. Just in sort of an inversion level, on only one particular level. Apart from a featureless blue sky I was flying into the smoke, which marked where the wave was.

**HtC:** *I just want to pick up on something you said earlier; so in New Zealand you can legally fly in cloud?*

**TD:** Yes, you certainly can.

**HtC:** *And do you have to get any special training for that?*

**TD:** I did years of training myself followed by some big frights. Then I got some formal training and wish I'd done that years ago – I wouldn't look so old now! I got proper training by a friend, ex-Air Force. He put me through the ropes and so it made life a lot easier. But I don't do it often, just enough to remain current because for wave flying I think it's a necessity.

**HtC:** *Tell me how you prepared for this flight?*

**TD:** I've been trying to do this flight for well over a decade. I've had many tries, and many non-successes, failures if you want to call them that. I have landed up in the North Island. I have landed on the top of the South Island. I have managed to get back after doing well over 1,200km, but failing to get to the northern turn point. I haven't done a long flight... when I say a long flight, over 10 or 12 hours, for quite some time. I had previously been seasoned to doing long flights and spending 14 or 15 hours in the cockpit.

**HtC:** *Was there a particular weather window that you were looking for?*

**TD:** We're looking for north-westerly winds and a reasonably dry air mass. And it needs to be a large anti-cyclone or a very large cyclonic flow. More often than not, the winds turn northerly in the North Island, bringing moisture down from the tropical atmosphere and it becomes too weird. So, to find the right weather pattern with the right moisture levels and in atmosphere is very difficult.

I must have started to do the flight 25 times. And been shot down with weather. So, it was really cool to just push on, to be able to just trust what I knew and to trust the weather maps that we'd looked at. They still didn't really support the flight but if you're waiting for the perfect day, by the time it comes along, it's too late. So, you'll only know about the perfect day once it's been and gone. You've got to be up there for any day that might be OK.

**HtC:** *And were you using SkySight for this?*

**TD:** I had looked at SkySight the day before with a buddy, Nick Stevens, who was also doing a long flight. He was on a 1,500km for his FAI diploma that day, which he completed. We studied it pretty hard, but during the flight the weather pattern changed and the winds softened to the north.

We got a message, via my daughter Abbey, from SkySight's Matthew Scutter. He said, take the last climb as high as you can because there's nothing up ahead. The wave has stopped; the wind has stopped.

I had already left the last climb, but decided not to go back because time wasn't on my side, on a long flight like that. And, you know, enough daylight to be able to do it, especially in the weaker conditions that I was flying in. So I continued on and managed to get around the turn and back into lift. Just by the skin of my teeth. And the worry then is you've got 87km of water to cross into a headwind.

**HtC:** *You're talking about the Cook Straight?*

**TD:** Yeah, and the Cook Straight is not a friendly place in north-westerly winds. The winds on the surface on a wave day will typically blow anywhere from 45 to anything up to 80 knots; the surface winds in places on the day we crossed were up to 70 knots. And it's not survivable if you land in the drink.

**HtC:** *Sorry, what was the distance of the Cook Straight you just mentioned?*

**TD:** My flight path distance was just short of 90km.

**HtC:** *And you're at what altitude?*

**TD:** I left the North Island at 27,500ft and was lucky enough to find wave that went across Cook Straight. Upwind of Cook Straight there are no mountains, so that's a bit of guesswork why that wave was there. But, you know, intuition and just fly by the netto and weave around and fly very carefully with your fingertips and you can feel where the wave is. So, I managed to hit the South Island at 23,000ft, I think it was. A really comfortable altitude to be getting back to the South Island. It meant I could just fly straight back into the South Island Alps and pick up the wave again.



Above: 30km after starting in the lee of the Dunstan mountain range



Below: Heading for the North West arch from Mt Cook

**I'VE BEEN TRYING TO DO THIS FLIGHT FOR WELL OVER A DECADE. I'VE HAD MANY TRIES AND MANY NON-SUCCESSSES, FAILURES IF YOU WANT TO CALL THEM THAT**



Above left: Mid Canterbury, climbing along the North West arch at FL180

Above right: 60km away from finish, with a decaying wave structure



## THEY WERE SHIFTING HEAVIES AROUND US; 767s WERE DIVERTED AROUND ME AND A LOT OF OTHER TRAFFIC

Below: thumbs up for a double crossing completed. Now southbound for home



✈ **HtC:** *Now, for those of us who haven't flown in New Zealand, can you describe the geography of both the South Island and that bit of the North Island that you went to?*

**TD:** Well, we're down in the southern latitudes around 40-45 degree so we get the Roaring Forties winds. We've got two skinny islands basically running right angles, north-east to south-west. You've got the north-westerly flow coming across the Tasman from Australia and typically the winds soften as you go north, in other words reduce in strength, and increase substantially when you get to the southern area of New Zealand. You can go from winds up to 90 knots on a windy wave day, up to the North Island where you're lucky to get 10-15 knots. So, using the whole weather pattern, with this north-westerly flow, it hits the mountains. Average mountains are about 6,500-7,000ft. Some of the peaks are up to 12,000+ft, so you can get some high waves. On the day that I was flying, I was using the wave higher than I normally would – quite often 25,000ft, whereas normally I would only be going to 15,000ft. It was a particularly warm day, with very hot winds coming off Australia. And still very warm for us by the time they got to New Zealand.

**HtC:** *Did you have any airspace issues with commercial traffic there?*

**TD:** No. I notified the air traffic controllers what I was doing, and they took a real interest in it. They were shifting heavies around us; 767s were diverted around me and a lot of other traffic. When I crossed Cook Straight heading north I picked the time where there was no traffic, but I was a

little earlier than I expected. I had only one isolated patch of lift in the top of the South Island.

I climbed to 20,000ft to do my northern crossing of Cook Straight. For the best part of an hour, there was not one single piece of air traffic coming into Wellington. Wellington is an international airport, the capital of New Zealand, and so that's where the traffic is quite heavy at times. Just as I set out to cross Cook Straight, I hit the heavy traffic. There were up to six or seven aircraft on approach, wanting to fly exactly through my flight path to fly into Wellington. The controller asked me if I could divert and fly back to the west, into the sinking air that I'd just crossed. I said, look, unfortunately I can't... I'll only end up landing in the drink. He immediately started sending aircraft around me and none of the aircraft complained. They might have under their breath, but were very understanding.

When I didn't need clearances, I would call a controller back and tell air traffic control I didn't need clearance to a particular altitude, so they could free the airspace up. I went through about seven shifts of air traffic control during the day in the 14½ hours I was airborne. I thanked the last guy very much and had a good talk to him because there was no air traffic around. He said his colleagues at air traffic control had a real interest in my flight, and some of them were calling back from home.

**HtC:** *They're cheering for you.*

**TD:** Yeah, they were. A couple of days after I landed, I got the largest crystal jar I could find, filled it full of sweets, gift-wrapped it



and took it in to the air traffic controllers, with my glider registration, my name, squawk code – and a big thank you. So, a bit of bribery doesn't hurt.

**HtC:** *Back to the flight... at what point did you think you were actually going to make it?*

**TD:** When I crossed Omarama with 100km to go. Then, with about 30km to go the weather was closing in really rapidly. The front started to move. The southerly air mass came in, and I got into the turn about 10 minutes after the southerly had hit. Once again I flew into rain, cloud and turbulence on instruments, got to the finish point and scuttled out to the north. It was then only 100km or so back to Omarama.

Normally I do the trip in 20 minutes with a tailwind; it took me the better part of an hour to get back. The cloud was closing in and the weather was not in my favour at all. I was being really careful because I was fully aware that after 14½ hours it is so easy to make mistakes. Even though I was hanging out for a beer, I just thought I've got to take this very carefully. I took an unorthodox route home, even flying into the lee of some mountains that you wouldn't normally fly into, but I had to do that as a matter of precaution. That made the trip home a little slower, but safer in the long run.

**HtC:** *When you landed, were you more exhausted or ecstatic? What were your emotions at that point?*

**TD:** I was thrilled. Just really thrilled. I've done a lot of long flights now and this wasn't the longest by any stretch that I've done. But I couldn't have flown any further and I used every bit of the knowledge that I've gained over the years to complete the flight. And when you looked at the sky, you had to be pretty motivated to continue on to several of the places. I was motivated to do the flight and you have to push on with some of these record flights, even when you're looking down the barrel of a really long retrieve – a long, expensive retrieve.

**HtC:** *You almost had three records for this flight, but the FAI gliding rules have changed recently. Talk to me about this starting error?*

**TD:** I hadn't read the latest reprint of a sporting code. To the best of my knowledge, there were only three changes to the sporting code, so I was told. But I did not realise that the FAI had done away with quadrants for starts and put in that you must cross a

start line. So that has changed, because I've done out-and-return flights before and used quadrants and got world records. In fact, the guy who I've beaten on this out-and-return probably used a quadrant.

I cannot figure out why the powers-that-be continue to fiddle around with the rules, chop and change. And every time they reissue the sporting code, they make these subtle changes. So, this will be the fourth world record that I've missed out on because of changes to the sporting code. And fair warning to them; people are not trying these flights because these guys keep changing the rules and making things too complicated.

People don't want to even do badge flights half the time, because they can't keep up with the rules. It's all too complicated. The system must be made simpler for the sake of continuing to enable people to achieve things in sport. It is just far too difficult. And another level of thought... I've had three different GPS that have been outlawed and that you're not allowed to use for world records. Cambridge 302 is not allowed to be used for world record flying; there's not been a problem, so why come up with a rule to stop using them? If it's not broken, don't fix it. I wish they would stop messing about with changing the rules. As you can see, I'm grumpy about it.

**HtC:** *I would be too. And the thing is, you know you're in the middle of your flying season in the southern hemisphere. You would think if they're going to change the rules that much, they would give like a six-month lead before the changes come into effect.*

**TD:** Do you have to keep reading every single document that comes in? I mean some people love this stuff. I don't. I'm a pilot. I'm a practical person. I like the flying side of it. I'm not a technical whiz. On top of it, to claim this world record I've had to remove my ClearNav out of my instrument panel in the glider and send it off to the States to have it calibrated. There's no one in New Zealand that can calibrate an instrument that size. It's just ridiculous. And that's why people aren't trying it.

■ <http://thethermalpodcast.libsyn.com>

**HtC:** *Finally, I noticed on Facebook that you're hoping to complete another big flight this year with your daughter, Abbey... do you want to tell me about that?*

**TD:** It's not a record, it's just a flight of fancy if you like. It's something to make the New Zealand public go "well, you can fly a glider from one end of the country to the other". Nobody has tried it. We will take off from Omarama, try and fly to the south coast, which is a quite an epic flight in itself, and then head north to do the full length of the South Island, cross the Cook Strait and up the North Island as far as we can. Cross the main dividing mountains and try to thermal and ridge soar our way as far north as we possibly can. I doubt if it's possible to get all the way to the top of New Zealand in one flight, but I think it may be possible to at least get to Auckland, or maybe slightly north of Auckland.



Terry is met with a well-deserved beer after his 14½ hour flight



**I USED EVERY BIT OF THE KNOWLEDGE THAT I'VE GAINED OVER THE YEARS TO COMPLETE THE FLIGHT**



*This page, anti-clockwise from top:*  
Justin Craig's ASW 27 at Denbigh on 7 March 2020 (Chris Gill)

Stefan Zlot, chairman of Segelfluggruppe Bern, returns from a Wednesday afternoon sortie during 2019 from the Engadine back to Berne, showing Switzerland's Bietschhorn (Stefan Zlot)

Lochnagar taken by Geoff Palmer in his Kestrel 19 when returning to Aboyne from a soaring flight on 19 March – four days before the lockdown

Wrekin's Alan Swan takes his first solo launch following his return from a recent operational tour

*Facing page, clockwise from top:*

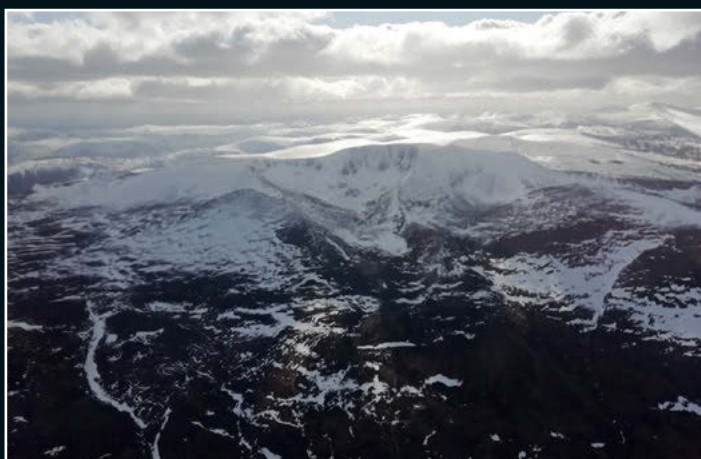
Returning back on to land after turning Farne island, looking towards Milfield, during a club expedition from Yorkshire Gliding Club (Fred Brown)

A winch with a view: ex-Thomas Cook Airbus A321 being prepared for its new owner at Lasham (Jordan Bridge)

Ridge flying at sunset in 42kt winds at The Park (Daniel Weston)

Turning final for 27 at Lasham (Jordan Bridge)

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







# CARRY ON INSTRUCTOR TRAINING

Deeside GC has progressed B Module learning while in lockdown, reports David Innes



Looking at the pupil's screen on David's PC, observing the outside world and the pupil's simulated hand operation

**I WANTED TO USE THIS ENFORCED BREAK TO ADVANCE AT LEAST THE 'MECHANICAL' ASPECTS OF THE B MODULE**

**F**ACED with a group of instructor candidates for whom flying training was suddenly stopped, I developed an online method of starting the B Module learning process.

Our club decided it was best to follow the spirit of the government guidelines, and suspend all flying operations. (For the previous week we had permitted solo flying and "mutuals", provided suitable precautions had been taken and all parties were consciously making the decision.)

As acting CFI – our CFI was in Portugal and is "trapped" at the time of writing – I wanted to keep our Assistant Category (AC) instructor candidates actively involved, and to use this enforced break to advance at least the "mechanical" aspects of the B module, specifically getting up to speed with patten, and the coordination of words to actions. I had intended to use our simulator, with myself and each candidate using precautions, etc.

But I had a scare, a real scare, since someone I had given a check flight to on a Sunday informed me two days later that, on the previous Friday, he had been in close contact with someone confirmed as having the virus. And there I was, sitting, for 25 minutes, in a narrow plastic tube with a rearwards airflow, thereby sharing all my pupil's exhalations. Both he and I are clear after the required 14 days. Dodged a bullet there. So, naturally, I became just a little reluctant to stay in close proximity to anyone, and government instructions have since backed that up.

#### **So how to exploit this enforced break?**

Simples, to coin a phrase. Video conferencing using computer desktop sharing and a flight simulation program.

The method is quite simple really. The pupil gets a PC with a suitable joystick,

ideally with rudder pedals, a headset, and a flight simulation program which shows the outside world AND control column (/rudder) movement – not all programs do. Both use a video conferencing (VC) software, plus "desktop sharing" so the instructor can see the actions and effects, hear the words in real time and coach accordingly. (Headsets are needed for PCs, to permit hands-free operation, but laptops usually are built-in.)

#### **Constraints**

- **Teaching:** I had discussed this with Colin Sword, who leads the BGA instructor committee, and he cautioned about doing too much of the B module without candidates doing the A.
- **Hardware:** Some candidates did not have joysticks, or had a joystick but with a wrist action rudder. So we decided to omit any training where dedicated use of the rudder was required, to avoid negative training. We encouraged pupils to at least pretend they were coordinating controls, while turning on the 'Autorudder' function in Condor.
- **Software:** I gave the game away when I mentioned Condor. Most simulator programs don't have suitable dynamics for gliders or, in the case of X-Plane, require so much computing power it is beyond the standard laptop, etc. And to further narrow the field, to make this task worthwhile, the instructor needs to see the controls being moved AND the outside world. So Condor 2 works nicely.

#### **So what exercises could we teach?**

We haven't found any specific limitations to date, but obviously control feel is missing, the instructor can't demonstrate remotely (yet) and the stalling characteristics of Condor do not help (no sounds other than a quieting airflow, just a visual shudder). Nor did the limited field of view help, even in my three-screen-wraps-around setup. It is also a compromise – I needed to see the controls, so a more downward cockpit view was needed,



but that further reduces the “visible sky” and getting the audio balance right, balancing the trainee’s voice versus Condor sound effects, took some work. (Turn the damned audio vario OFF!)

At the time of writing, we are still on a path of discovery, of both capabilities and limitations.

### **Reservations, advice and concerns (Idiot’s guide)**

**1)** Reduce the load on the PC running Condor by reducing number of screens, lower resolution scenery, turn off reflections (and/or screen resolution) and the open applications.

**2)** Unknown is bandwidth over internet, so I used a hard-wired network for the host PC running Condor, and wifi for the coach’s PC just showing the Condor screen. In Condor, if you use the “Hangar function” and watch the selected aircraft view rotate, from the instructor’s screen, that’s a good pointer to how good the display dynamics will be before you start to “fly”. Due to good download, but poor upload, speeds from darkest Aberdeenshire, I found that I could monitor someone else’s simulation activities, but not vice versa.

**3)** Don’t run extra tasks in the background, again to save your PC’s load.

**4)** As long as we do slow manoeuvres, the delays/screen updates were very acceptable, and the audio quality is marvellous. (I once had someone go into “Dalek mode” in audio on Zoom, but reconnection or just waiting fixed that.)

**5)** What we don’t know is how the delays via both trainee and coach’s ISP, and at the ZOOM servers, and any points in between, will vary; there may be times when this is impossible due to slow “frame rates”.

**6)** For initial setup, etc, we exchange phone numbers, so we can communicate independent of ZOOM, at least for setup. (But don’t send TXTs to my home phone!)

**7)** If you don’t have rudder pedals, turn on “Auto rudder” in Condor.

**8)** I didn’t try Condor 1, but there is no reason why it would not work.

**9)** If you lose the picture, or to switch between Zoom and Condor, hitting the Alt and Tab keys together a few times will let you cycle through the running applications. If things freeze, CTRL-ALT DEL to bring up Task manager, to kill errant “processes”; Condor can and does freeze.

**10)** When I turn on screen sharing, Zoom show a picture of the running applications, so just click the one you want to share, and then select “Share Screen”.



Some of these will be obvious to many, but I am covering all bases (except Apple).

### **Coda**

I contemplated using the same capability for all students, but realised that early on in their flying career there is a great need for realism. Control feel, lookout all need to be mastered early on. While it would be a great idea to retain pupil involvement, I suspect the level of “quality” teaching at that level would be minimal, so perfection of patter seems a realistic and achievable goal.

So we are limiting the scope of the task to our instructor candidates only, and limited what could be safely taught depending on their “equipment”.

My thanks to David Moore of Deeside GC for being the “victim” (sorry, trainee) and indulging my crazy ideas.

### **Development**

My biggest concern is that while one can observe and comment, one cannot demonstrate... so my next avenue will be to see if we can use the “Remote Desktop” capability built within Windows, to allow the instructor to remotely command the Condor program running on the trainee’s computer. The easiest way would be to use the ability of Condor to accept both joystick (at trainee PC) and mouse (for pitch and roll only, at coach PC) commands – one person controlling at a time. “Follow through” might be a real challenge, I admit. It’s a germ of an idea, more to follow.

David’s planned, but cancelled, holiday destination. Does anyone recognise where it is?

■ If you want to do a demonstration using a simulator on a PC, in Windows 10 you can record your screen – Windows button and letter G – take snapshots or video, talk over it and then edit/share with your target audience. It’s not as good as doing a live demo, but it gives you remote “instructing” capability during any lockdowns... and over the winter months, etc.



David Innes is Deputy CFI at Aboyne, a tuggy and chairman of the Scottish Gliding Association. He got his Diamond height in a Swallow in 1976, and “it’s been downhill ever since”.



The UKJG Condor 2 competition, held in early April, saw 41 juniors taking part



Preparing to start (Clement Allen)

# CONDORAVIRUS CHAMPIONSHIP

With the Winter Series postponed, juniors competed online. Danny Richmond reports

**F**OLLOWING the Covid-19 outbreak in the United Kingdom, UK Junior Gliding (UKJG) was disappointed to have to postpone our famous Winter Series Round 3 at Shenington. It got the junior development team thinking about how we could keep juniors occupied throughout this period. We came to the conclusion that a competition on the popular 'Condor 2: The Complete Soaring Simulator,' would be fun. Along with this, Condor 2 allowed us to run

a separate contest for 15 juniors, who did not already own Condor, to get a special deal for the software which was arranged prior to the competition.

The CondorVirus Championship 2020 registration and scoring was hosted on *Condor-Club.eu*, a popular site which runs Condor competitions all year round. A dedicated server was also set up for the competition to allow juniors to fly the competition in a multiplayer environment, permitting them to see other competitors and making this competition feel like a real one.

Three days after registration opened, 40+ competitors had already registered. We realised that one server would not be enough, so we increased the number of players who wished to connect on one server to 64 and added a second server, which could hold 32. Overall, 96 individual players could connect and fly the competition at one time!

We had 41 junior competitors in the UKJG CondorVirus Championship 2020, and a number of other participants, making the multiplayer grid launches and start sectors great fun. A Discord voice and text server was also open for all to join, allowing participants to talk while flying and share screenshots and tips to others.

UK Junior Gliding organised five



Ridge soaring around Snowdon, North Wales (Bradley Soanes)





Formation at Nympsfield (Clement Allen)



Close race in North Wales (Clement Allen)

competition days spread over nine days, allowing a day off in between tasks. Days 1 and 2 were both hosted in Slovenia (Condor's default landscape) at distances of 119km and 215km. Day 1 was challenging, as thermal strength was weak. However, the advantage of being in Slovenia is the large spans of ridges. Luckily, both days had a wind direction favouring the ridges. Day 2's weather picked up, with better thermal availability and strength, allowing juniors to stretch away from the ridges. Winning speeds for both of these days were well above 150km/h!

For the rest of the competition, we returned to the United Kingdom. Day 3 was a familiar task to people who watch Chris Gill's videos from Lleweni Parc (Denbigh Gliding). We launched from Caernarfon Airfield, which was impressive on its own, and proceeded on task along the north-western facing ridges along the Welsh coastline. The task ended with a 35km downwind dash to Lleweni Parc, where 64 gliders had to land. This was a challenge, knowing the thin width of the runway and limited space!

Day 4 was a much more familiar day for most competition junior pilots, as it was a replica of task 7 at the 2019 Junior Nationals. Only three people made it round on the real competition day, so we ramped the weather up a bit, allowing competitors to redeem themselves!

It was a 178km racing task from Bristol & Gloucestershire Gliding Club (Nympsfield) and we even included Brize Norton's (EGVN) airspace as a penalty zone on Condor for the extra challenge. I am pleased to say that all competitors, bar one, made it round that day, with a winning speed of 115.33km/h by 16-year-old Joshua Setford!

Day 5 was our final day, launching from Yorkshire Gliding Club (Sutton Bank) on a short 142km racing task to the north. Competitors for this task could choose any aircraft they liked in their Condor hangar; however, scores were FAI/ IGC handicapped to make it fair.

This sort of event has never been tried at this scale in UK Junior Gliding and we are glad to say it was a huge success! We currently have future Condor events in the planning stages to keep everyone entertained. In the end we had 91 registered competitors, and 41 scoring UKJG competitors in the CondoraVirus Competition.

#### **CONDORAVIRUS COMP RESULTS:**

**1st: Alex O'Keefe (2C)**

**2nd: Clement Allen (822)**

**3rd: Luke Dale (G)**

**Best under 26: Clement Allen (822) – 2nd**

**Best under 20: Joshua Setford (J1) – 13th**

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■ [www.facebook.com/ukjuniorgliding](https://www.facebook.com/ukjuniorgliding)

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Gaggle climbing for final glide at Sutton Bank (Danny Richmond)

# WAITING FOR A CHANCE TO FLY

Harriet Gamble is loaned a K-6 for a year, just as clubs closed. Undeterred, she is studying hard and flying Condor tasks



Jay handing over JAL at Lasham

**W**E ARE very lucky in gliding to have so many volunteers doing so much for the sport – and it's great that in these difficult times people are finding new ways to help other pilots, *writes Liz Sparrow*. WomenGlide UK has people – female and male – who give up their time to encourage, mentor and coach up-and-coming pilots, fly them in their two-seaters, run the website, share the fun on Facebook and, more recently, stage international Condor races, run a squad coaching programme and more.

Perhaps even more impressively we have people prepared to lend their gliders to pilots not fortunate enough to have their own

machine. For the past couple of years, Jay Stewart has lent his K-6 to be flown by a worthy pilot – for which huge thanks, Jay! You may have read of the fun Nora van Genugten had with K-6 JAL last year and the progress she made – culminating in buying her own glider. This year JAL is being flown – or, at the time of writing, loved but not actually flown – by Harriet Gamble. Here is her 'story so far'...

**“**FOR the 2020 soaring season, I had decided I wanted to fly my first competition and this year is my last chance to compete at the Junior Nationals. I just needed a glider to fly.

Over the past few years I've worked to get my Silver C and had the opportunity to take part in the two-seater training at the 2018 UK Junior Nationals. The chance to fly around big tasks with friends was a brilliant experience that I was keen to repeat. I saw that WomenGlide were advertising the year-long loan of a K-6E, JAL, and it seemed like the perfect opportunity to have a glider for the competition and have plenty of time to get used to her beforehand. Having sent in my application and crossed my fingers, I heard on 22 January that my application had been successful!

At that point, JAL was still at her previous

loan home at Sutton Bank. Despite many planned trips back to Lasham for a handover, the weather would not play ball with storm after storm hitting the UK. Early March the weather finally started to cooperate and on 14 March I got a chance to go and meet her owner, Jay, and collect JAL.

After a whistle-stop tour of paperwork, Jay introduced me to the beautiful JAL and offered some very useful tips for rigging and flying her. Given I live a 1.5 hour drive from my gliding club (Bath, Wilts & North Dorset) I opted to take JAL home for a week or two, so that I could do some minor fettling and get familiar with her. Sadly, in the meantime, the Coronavirus situation was ramping up worldwide and, just a week later, BWND had to make the decision to close the club until further notice. This means I now have a glider at home, but no way to know when I might get an opportunity to fly her.

## Recommended reading

While this is far from ideal, I decided I might as well see what I could do towards my cross-country goals with my feet firmly on the ground. Jake Brattle and Finn Sleight, of the British Gliding Team, gave an excellent online talk about how to 'Level Up in Lockdown', including recommended reading so I decided to get studying (the talk is available on YouTube). I have enjoyed reading through books such as *The Theory of Modern Cross Country* even if some of the advice is a little outdated, such as the use of manual glide calculators, the suggestion to only 'drink little' during long flights, or to call the police in the event of a field landing!

Having previously flown my Silver distance as an out-and-return totalling 120km, I knew I had to work on my speed before I tried flying any further as it had taken over 3.5 hours! MacCready theory and 'speed-to-fly' seemed like a great starting point for my research so I have been reading up on those, as well as running through some of the examples on how to calculate speeds for various MacCready settings.

**THIS MEANS I NOW HAVE A GLIDER AT HOME, BUT NO WAY TO KNOW WHEN I MIGHT GET AN OPPORTUNITY TO FLY HER**





Cross-country practice on Condor 2. Harriet also took part in the CondoraVirus Championships

One of the benefits of older books is that K-6s seem to be a popular example! I would really recommend a read through lots of the gliding books; some of them are available free of charge on the *Sailplane & Gliding* website and can be easily added to eReaders. I have also been taking part in the FRTOL (Flight Radio Telephony Operator's Licence) course online over the past few weeks; it is a great recap of some of the Bronze material and good radio use will certainly help for longer cross-country flights.

While studying is a great use of time, it doesn't do a very good job of replacing the fun of flying, so I have also taken to the gliding simulator Condor 2. I'd seen it used previously and had helped run the BGA simulator, but hadn't really tried it in anger. Having seen that UK Junior Gliding were running a CondoraVirus Championship, with five tasks over nine days, I decided I ought to give it a go. It was a strong start on day 1, placing 7th in a fast Slovenian Ridge task, with everyone flying two-seaters. Unfortunately on day 2 I lost a lot of points having got too low after a long glide and struggling to climb away; I did still manage to finish the task, however. Day 3 was set as 18m Class so brought a chance to try flying with flaps for the first time in the Ventus 3 along the Welsh coastal ridges. This flight was great fun and I was pleased to bounce back from the previous flight. Day 4 was a more realistic flight for me in an ASW 19B from Nympsfield, with a 178km flight at 100km/h. The final day was a 142km thermal

flight from Sutton Bank; the LS8 neo allowed me to race round at 138km/h to finish 11th, even if the finish was a bit squeaky!

Flying with lots of friends and getting to fly in new places has been great fun. I was very pleased to complete all the tasks and be placed 11th overall out of 41 competitors. I think it has been a good way to practise flight planning and speed to fly, and it has improved my forward thinking in flight. It also turns out I am much quicker on Condor, though comparing a Slovenian ridge task in a fully-laden LS8 to a K-6 thermal flight at home might be unwise!

Unfortunately, Condor doesn't offer a K-6 at the moment, so for some more life-like flying I have been doing some tasks from the Park (BWND) in a K-8. Over the winter months, I had drawn up a set of 20 tasks from the Park to try this year, which ranged from 20km to 300km (somewhat optimistic) and I have gradually been working through those on Condor. So far, I have managed the club 100km in the K-8 at 75km/h (unhandicapped!), so there is hope yet for a fast flight in JAL to get my 100km diploma.

I hope that the Coronavirus situation will improve soon, not only for the sake of gliding, but for everyone's safety and sanity. At that point, I look forward to putting my newfound cross-country skills into practice. My aims for the season are still to get quick enough to complete my 100km diploma, compete at the Junior Nationals, and maybe even try some longer tasks. I'll have to wait and see.

**I AM MUCH QUICKER ON CONDOR, THOUGH COMPARING A SLOVENIAN RIDGE TASK IN A FULLY-LADEN LS8 TO A K-6 THERMAL FLIGHT AT HOME MIGHT BE UNWISE!**

■ Harriet's article first appeared in the Bath, Wilts & North Dorset club newsletter *Glide Angle*



Harriet Gamble started gliding in 2013, having joined the University of Bath. She held many positions on the university gliding club committee, including chairperson. Harriet now has a graduate role at Airbus Defence and Space and continues to fly at the Park, where she is a co-opted committee member to help represent the junior and cadet members. Harriet holds Cross Country Endorsement and Silver C and hopes to instruct in the future.

# INSTIL A SENSE OF ADVENTURE

Colin Slade reflects how the butterfly effect took him from solo in a K-4 to captain of B777



A young Colin Slade at Fulmar Gliding Club, circa 1980-1983

“DON’T worry about what I’m doing, focus on your checks!” was the comment made from Pete ‘Rock’ from over my left shoulder.

I did as I was told – CB SIFT CB, as those of you that have indulged in the sport of gliding will know intimately. The pre-take-off checklist of many a glider pilot. Controls, Ballast (it’s fine, Pete remarked), Straps – secure and tight. “Your straps?” They are secure!

I was sat in the front of a K-4, a tandem two-seat fabric-covered basic trainer, more lovingly referred to as a flying brick as its performance meant it seemed to come down faster than it moved forward! Great training for future space shuttle pilots...

Two months or so earlier I was sat at home and my father pulled up in his RAF Police Land Rover. “Do you want to go flying?” came the question. I’m convinced I was sat in the Land Rover before my father had the chance to finish asking the question.

We drove through the base and across the airfield to a bright yellow bus, and he left me in the company of strangers. “I’ll pick

you up at 5pm,” he said as he climbed back into the vehicle.

The bright yellow bus was an old single-decker one, with no engine, that was converted and used as the launch point for Fulmar Gliding Club (Fulmar was, and still is, an RAF GSA – Gliding and Soaring Association club). The bus was also a much-needed kitchen for those cold windy days where you could easily fry up a sausage sandwich and cuppa!

I never looked back, at least not without a smile on my face.

Back to the checks... Instruments, Flaps, Trim... Canopy and (Air) Brakes to go – as Pete knelt down next to me. I’m confused! He had clearly stated that his straps were tight.

Pete then explained: “Right, I want you to do exactly the same as you’ve just done, but this time I won’t be sitting in the back.” It suddenly dawned on me... I was being sent solo. “Remember the glider will feel much lighter without me in the back, etc, etc,” as the briefing continued.

I launched on that day, flying a glider on my own... and I still wasn’t old enough for a driving licence.

It changed something in me that I’ll never perhaps fully realise, but will always appreciate.

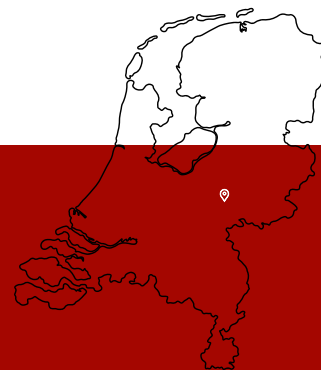
A second flight, perhaps just to make sure the first wasn’t a fluke, but to be honest the rest of the afternoon disappeared into a blur. The first solo, the first milestone for every



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pilot and one you always remember!

I stayed and helped that afternoon, on cloud nine, until it was time to put everything to bed and move “operations” to the clubhouse.

It was customary that when someone had gained a milestone, or notable flight, to ring the bell over the club bar, signifying the celebration of the achievement and a free round of drinks to all. Of course, the lucky pilot had to pay the bar bill! As I was still at school – a sweet, spotty-faced, innocent 16-year-old teenager – I was excused the normal expense, but still had the honour of ringing the bell... ‘Ding’.

Pete’s prized German beer tankard magically turned into a cup of plenty like Aegir, the ale brewer of the gods from Norse mythology, whose special beer was served in magical cups that refilled as soon as they were empty. Aegir must have been present that night! The club’s careful supervision continued throughout the evening, ensuring an incredibly ecstatic, proud, young man got home safely.

Next morning, feeling rather slow, I did go flying with Pete and then Ron and was introduced into the world of aerobatics. That sense of fuzzyhead and slowness disappeared as soon as I strapped into the glider. Loops and chandelles followed. I was still on cloud nine. Pete remarked something like “future world champion” and told me to let him know when I got to the world championships. It must have made an impact as it’s still written there for all to see in my logbook.

Fast forward several decades and I sit

in my office chair; today it’s at 33,000ft, watching another gorgeous sunrise ahead of us. We’re on a scheduled rotation from Dubai to Bali, then, after a short day layover, onward to Auckland. As captain on the B777 I’m responsible for making sure the 338 passengers we have onboard today reach their destination on time, comfortably and safely.

#### **Dreams do come true!**

I sit watching the sunrise in quiet reflection, with mixed emotions of sadness, pride, happiness, gratitude and thanks, much thanks.

You see I didn’t get there by the easy route, but that’s another story. Huge thanks to my father for giving me the opportunity, supporting and encouraging me. Thanks also to amazing people like Pete ‘Rock’, who instilled a sense of adventure, trust in my abilities and an ambition to go further.

There is a theory – the butterfly effect. Basically “a very small change in initial conditions can create a significantly different outcome”.

Go back in time, accidentally stand on a butterfly and kill it, and it can have huge ramifications on the present. It may have been the saving meal for a slightly larger predator that now dies because it couldn’t eat the butterfly. That larger predator now is no longer around to have an influence on the world. And so on...

So, in turn, I believe dedicated, passionate people can, by their enthusiasm and inspiration, drive small changes in people that can lead them down very

**Illustration by Ross Martin**

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PATHS**

■ Colin Slade went solo in August 1980. He flew at Fulmar Gliding Club, RAF Kinloss, from May 1980 until August 1983. The instructors he recalls include: Arnall, Clarke, Oscar Constable, Jeff Cowling, Dennis, Bob Fox, Gordon, Wally Grout, Ron Jackson, Ian Kilner, Bob Lloyd, Brian McDermitt, McDermott, Murphy, Ted Norman, Mick Orr, Partridge, Carol Simmonds, Mick Simmonds, Keith Sleigh, Pete Spevak, Pete Stratten, Al Thompson and all the rest of the motley crew – wives and family members, who flew or were an integral part of the social life enjoyed by many.

Below: Colin at 'work' in 2020



✍ different paths that have pronounced consequences and effects much later in the lives of others.

But why sadness? Well, several years ago I was attending a flight instructor seminar and bumped into Pete Stratten (BGA chief whip), who happened to be one of the other instructors I'd flown with from RAF Kinloss at the time. He was researching how FI (flight instructor) renewals were being done in the powered world of general aviation.

I discovered at some point that Pete 'Rock' had passed away several years earlier by committing suicide. I'm so sorry that I wasn't able to be there for him in some way, to show him how influential he had been and the effect his inspirational and enthusiastic manner had had on me, like the butterfly effect.

Quite often we have an impact on

people's lives and rarely do we ever get the chance to see for ourselves the end result. Not just as teachers or instructors, but as 'normal' people interacting with our fellows.

I don't know Pete 'Rock's' circumstances, family or friends. I don't need to know. What I do know is that sometimes we all of us feel alone and disconnected from the world, family, friends and question our worth on this earth. For some, they feel that the only solution left in their eyes is to take their own life.

I trust and hope that Pete's family don't mind this story, in fact I hope they see it for what it is and take some comfort in it. Pete was an amazing person and inspirational instructor to me.

As I look out of my 'office' window, flying towards another beautiful sunrise breaking the day, I hope Pete 'Rock' is looking down, in peace, with a smile on his face and aware 'yes my life did matter and my life did make a difference', as I say "This is your captain speaking". Pete, I never did make it to the world championships, but I followed and fulfilled my life's dream. Thank you. Rest in Peace.

So reach out and connect with someone. You do make a difference. It's just that you may never see it!

This is my long overdue opportunity to reach out and say "thank you" and hopefully give a few the rare glimpse of seeing the difference they made and perhaps in some small way inspire others.

There are so many that have helped me along the way, not just in my aviation career, but in life also. However, this is a special thanks to the many wonderful people from Fulmar Gliding Club, where it all began, for your acceptance, friendship, dedication, enthusiasm, inspiration and FUN times.

Dreams do come true and lives matter.



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# IT'S NOT WORTH GAMBLING ON IT

Dr Tony Segal discovers that his choice of field for a landout was not the best bet

**I** WAS flying cross-country in my Sports Vega glider when I ran out of lift. I chose a suitable, large, smooth-looking field in which to land. I held off nicely, landed smoothly, and settled gently onto one wingtip.

Before I had time to open the canopy, I saw an open Land Rover rushing and bumping over the field towards me. It was crewed by a young lady and her boyfriend partner. They were absolutely thrilled that a glider had landed in their field.

Having parked the glider safely, I was given a lift to their home. I was given tea, of course, and allowed to use their telephone. (This was well before the days of mobile phones). My wife, Liz, was quietly sitting knitting in the Lasham clubhouse, waiting to collect me if I landed out.

Meanwhile, I was informed that I had landed on a stud farm, where they had a wonderful horse being prepared for the Derby, which it was certain to win. The employees of the stud farm had staked all their money on this horse to win the race.

On returning home, I visited my mother-in-law, Regina, who was into horse racing. I gave her a £10 note, a lot of money in those days, to put on the horse "to win". She informed me I should put my money on "to win or place". I refused this advice. I told her that from where I had been flying in my glider, I could see hundreds of square miles of landable fields. The fact that I had chosen to land on this particular stud farm was a clear indication to bet on that particular horse to win the Derby.

"And sad the story now we tell."



Cartoon by Ross Martin

The poor beast broke its leg in training and had to be put down. By the rules of horse race betting, I lost my £10 investment. That was the first and the last time I bet on the horses.

This is an absolutely true story.

■ **Do you have a landout story – from heaven or hell – that S&G could include in this series of retrieve tales? Please send it to [editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk](mailto:editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk)**



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Photo: Alastair Mackenzie

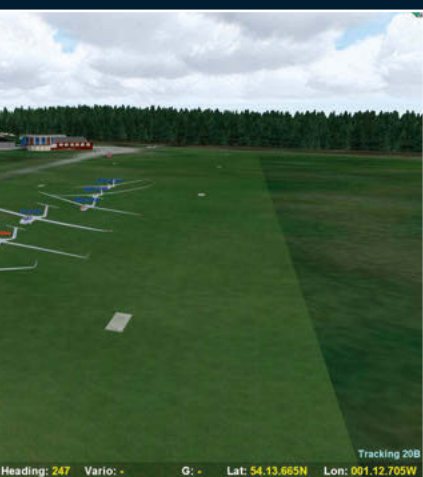
# KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON



Main pic: flying over Whitby and, above, gric



# N SOARING



Launch at Sutton Bank (Condor 2)

With gliders grounded, it is important to retain a 'club feeling'. Yorkshire GC is keeping members flying with a virtual soaring club

**B**ACK in December 2019, the mid-point of a normal winter which – like all winters for glider pilots – had already gone on for far too long, we started to think about ways in which we might be able to get back into the sky for longer than 20 minutes at a time, **writes Chris Booker**. The we, in this case, being a set of enthusiastic 30- and 40-somethings, who had all recently started out doing some cross-country flying and were either in the process of buying our own gliders, or had bought them in the not too distant past. Whilst our club offers superb opportunities for ridge and wave flying, there appears to have been a deal done with the devil to ensure these days never fall on weekends or bank holidays.

One of the first and most popular ideas amongst the group was to buy a JS3 and move to South Africa for the off-season, but, having checked our wallets, employment contracts and with our families and children, this idea failed to gain any real traction.

Fortunately, we also had another idea that was much more practical. We all owned computers and some of us even had virtual reality (VR) headsets – so we set up a WhatsApp group to coordinate ourselves, agreed a time slot to “meet” each week, and started racing each other online using the Condor 2 simulator; a real-time voice chat app called Discord took the place of 130.130, but with more swearing (it is the internet after all).

Our first races involved just four or five virtual Standard Cirrus (Cirri?). We were using a test version of a North of England landscape, which stretched from Milfield to the Humber and contained photo-realistic terrain, with trees and water where they should be and even a passable virtual Sutton Bank clubhouse model I’d somehow managed to construct using the most complicated piece of



Mountain flying in the Alps is impressive when flown with a VR headset – and something that perhaps many of us will not get to experience in real life



Chris Booker had his first taste of flight as an air cadet in the early 1990s, when they flew Chipmunks and Bulldogs from what was RAF Finningley. He completed his initial glider training in a Grob 109 at Syerston. Many years of not being able to afford to take up aviation led to Chris doing most of his flying in the virtual sense. He rediscovered gliding in late 2015 at Sutton Bank and joined the club the following spring. He now has over 150 P1 glider hours, a Silver C and 100km Diploma, and is in the process of becoming a BI. He owns and flies an LS1-f in which he has missed a Gold height by <1,000ft and a Diamond goal by 3km.

software I've ever encountered in a life spent working in IT.

By the time we were a few weeks in, we had settled into a bit of a groove. The entry count for one of our regular races, which run on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, was up to around 10 gliders. Pilots were a mix of the least experienced (pre-solo) to those who had been flying cross-country and instructing for years. Somewhere along the way we even found a paraglider pilot, who was intending to make the move into sailplanes.

Nobody offered any flying instruction though, Condor night was about socialising with gliding friends seldom seen over the dark season, keeping mentally prepared for the longer days to come and practising those essential skills of picking a good route through the energy and flying at the right speed. We exchanged tips on such things, but take-offs, landings and general flying skills were left as private business between a person and their computer – saving the odd snigger where it was warranted. A particular highlight was the time when an aerotow launch commenced when the pilot of the first glider was not at their machine!

As time and tasks wore on, it started to become apparent that what we had

done, inadvertently, was create a safe, non-judgemental space where the pre- or early-solo pilot (or even the established 'local soaring' pilot) could attempt to fly a cross-country task from their own home, cheered on by the early XC'ers, who would eagerly provide advice on thermal selection and "how to get round". In turn, they would receive advice from the more experienced about how to race at competition speeds.

It was almost like we'd created a new club where, because we could command the weather, have a completely open chat channel and not worry about retrieves, there was more time for people to get to know one another and pass on their knowledge and experience, resulting in an enthusiasm boost for all involved. We'd started to create a cross-country ethos amongst new pilots who might otherwise have fallen out of the system.

By this point we had worked with the landscape author, Andy Souter, to officially release the North UK scenery, which now had a number of airfields with accurate looking 3D models. The ability to fly as far south as North Wales meant you could, if you wanted, fly a realistic choice of out-and-return from Sutton Bank and cover 300km. We had also started doing regular mountain flying in the





Top: enjoying formation flying and, above, grid launch at Sutton Bank

Alps, which really is impressive when flown with a VR headset – and something that perhaps many of us will not get to experience in real life.

The original plan for Condor night was to socialise and practise over winter, and it was working well. We started to create more ‘realistic’ tasks to prepare for the new season: Club Class gliders and 3,000ft cloudbases, thermals averaging 3-4kts with the odd corker if you were lucky.

Then Coronavirus struck. Gliding clubs started to restrict their operations before eventually closing entirely. Yorkshire GC made the choice just a couple of days ahead of the government ‘lockdown’ and we faced the possibility of a whole summer season without a glider in the air – so the Virtual Soaring Club might be the only one we have.

We set up a Facebook group under the Yorkshire Gliding Club page and started to invite not just club members, but anyone from any club. Recent meets have been 20+ strong, with a number of UK and, more recently, French clubs represented. There are tasks running most evenings and occasionally throughout the day and there are opportunities for people to form small groups to conduct exercises such as lead and follow.

Simulator gliding might not be everyone’s cup of tea and, of course, it can never replace the real thing – but if you haven’t tried it, or haven’t used it for a while, take another look. Condor 2 is an improvement over the first version, offers an ever-increasing selection of accurately modelled gliders and a passable weather model with thermal, ridge and wave lift – and it never rains!

It scratches the itch, and some of the skills and knowledge will certainly be transferable. To do it in virtual reality, which offers the closest-to-real-life experience, should be significantly less than £1,000 to set up from nothing; probably money that you would have spent at your real-life gliding club anyway.

So, since we’re all stuck at home or have our movements restricted whilst the world fights the ongoing pandemic – why not check out the Virtual Soaring Club? It offers a socially responsible way for us all to keep flying this year, and the weather is always good enough to set off on task.

To get involved, search Facebook for the Yorkshire Gliding Club and find our group listed on the club’s page. Regular tasks run on Tuesday (Alps) and Thursday (UK) evenings, but you’ll often find willing participants on any day with a couple of hours’ notice.

## IT SCRATCHES THE ITCH, AND SOME OF THE SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE WILL CERTAINLY BE TRANSFERABLE

### HOW TO GET CONDOR 2:

- Go to <http://condorsoaring.com>
- You will need a Windows 7/8/10 PC with a dedicated graphics card, or a Mac running Bootcamp will run the software. A flight stick is highly recommended, rudder pedals are optional.
- For virtual reality, an Oculus Rift S (around £400) is the simplest way to get going if your machine is capable; other headsets are compatible with a little work.

### HOW TO GET INVOLVED:

- Go to <https://facebook.com/YorkshireGlidingClub>
- Under groups, find ‘Virtual Soaring Club’
- Look out for events being hosted (usually Tuesday/Thursday, but often other evenings too).

### THESE ARE THE GLIDERS YOU CAN FLY IN CONDOR 2:

The sim comes with several gliders ready to fly:

- Standard Cirrus
- Antares 18s
- Blanik L13
- Diana 2
- Duo Discus XL
- Genesis 2
- Granau Baby
- And a number that can be purchased additionally, with more being added often:
- ASW 19b
- Discus 2a
- LS4a
- K-8
- EB 29r
- DG-808c (15 & 18m)
- Libelle H201b
- Schweizer 1-26
- ASG 29
- K-21
- Ventus 3 (15 & 18m)
- JS1 (18 & 21m)
- SG 38 Primary
- LS8 Neo
- Swift S1

■ See also *Winter flying from your armchair* by Tony Lintott in the Dec 12/Jan 13 issue





World champion glider pilots enjoyed a week at Motse Lodge in Tswalu, South Africa

**H**EAVEN on earth! This is how every glider pilot would describe the Helli Lasch Challenge...

Located in the Kalahari in the northwestern part of South Africa, three hours' drive west of Vryburg and one hour's drive south of the Botswana border, Tswalu is the largest privately-owned nature reserve in South Africa, extending over 140,000 hectares.

Tswalu is a labour of love for the Oppenheimer family, who took responsibility for this remarkable reserve in 1998, continuing the vision of the late Stephen Boler, from Manchester in the United Kingdom, whose dream it was to return this previously farmed land to its natural state. Since then, their commitment to conservation has seen indigenous species reintroduced and real strides made towards the restoration of the Kalahari, undoing of years of neglect. In its new incarnation as a private nature reserve and conservation success story, Tswalu

is bringing the Oppenheims' ultimate ambition of "leaving the world better than we found it" a little closer each day.

This prestigious gliding challenge was introduced in 2001 by Carol Clifford and the Oppenheimer family as a living memorial to Helli Lasch, Nicky Oppenheimer's late father-in-law. The aim of the challenge is to promote international gliding relations, and South Africa as a glider destination, while developing the capabilities of the South African gliding team.

This year was the ninth time the Oppenheimer family has invited some of the best glider pilots in the world, with their partners, to this exclusive Kalahari lodge.

Well-known names, such as Andy Davis, Sebastian Kawa, Michael Sommer, Louis Boudierlique and Wolfgang Janowitsch, to name just a few of the very best, have been among the pilots previously invited to Tswalu to enjoy a luxurious nine-day glider pilot's



dream of a lifetime! The most exquisite food and five-star lodging is not the only item in this package. Travel expenses, cars, gliders, aerotows, helpers... everything is sponsored by the Oppenheimer family. The invited champions have the times of their lives, and unselfishly share their knowledge and experience in the form of daily lectures and workshops with the South African team and fellow pilots.

The first challenge was held in 2003, inspired by the 2001 World Gliding Championships held in Mmabatho, South Africa, and it has been held every two years since then.

But who was Helli Lasch? Helli was born in Germany, in 1912, to a family that had run a large and successful machine-tool business. He moved to South Africa in 1932 to gain some experience before taking over the family business. After getting to know Orcillia, getting married and facing war in Europe, he stayed and started his own business in Johannesburg. The two had three daughters. In 1968, the eldest daughter, Strilli, married Nicky Oppenheimer of the Anglo American mining company and former owner of De Beers. Nicky and Strilli had one son, Jonathan, who is following in the business footsteps of his father.

#### Aviation fanatics

Nicky and Jonathan are both aviation fanatics and exceptional pilots. Both fly their impressive Augusta AW139 helicopter, which they use for many private applications and even game counting at Tswalu. Jonathan also has a love for fast jets and spends almost half of his life as P1 in his personal Global 6000.

Helli started gliding in Bern, Switzerland, in 1947. On the fifth day of his entry-level course, he completed his first solo flight in a Grunau Baby. Sixteen days later he had completed his Silver C with a DFS Olympia Meise and a Spalinger S18. Highly inspired, he flew in the South African National Gliding Rallies in January 1948 and December 1948 and won the second event in a Minimoa. In 1950 he took part in the World Gliding Championships in Örebro, Sweden, with an Air100.

While he was on a business trip to Berlin, Helli took an opportunity to look at the SB6 of Akaflieg Braunschweig, where he met Björn Stender, the man behind the SB6. Helli and Björn spent a day sketching a radically new glider which Helli financed in full – a super high performance 18m glider with full span ailerons and flaps and sleek composite construction. It first flew in 1962, two years



Katrin Senne with Jonathan Oppenheimer (centre) and Uys Jonker

before the D-36 designed by the legendary team of Friess, Lemke, Waibel and Holighaus. While Helli revelled in flying his BS-1, he had to bale out following an unfortunate inflight wing failure in 1967. Orcillia ordered an H-301 Libelle to replace the BS-1 and, at Helli's request, Porsche supplied Glasflügel with the leather for the cockpit, so that it matched the latest in Helli's taste for sports cars. In 1982 Helli acquired a DG-400, in which he died on approach to land at Parys.

Helli preferred to fly long distances and liked to be the "lonely eagle". Instead of "goldfish bowl flying", he set goals that tested both man and machine. He was very successful in many things and did everything with a distinctive sense of humour and eccentric style. My father, Klaus Keim, worked for Helli as an engineer in South Africa for a few years, taking care of the "modification" of his gliders. Klaus became friends with Nicky, who had started dating Strilli, and took him for some glider flights – and this was the start of a life-long friendship. At this time Carol Clifford stayed with the Lasches during her visit to South Africa after completing school. Helli has been described as a modern hero who loved extreme things and is a true legend.

On 29 February this year, the international pilots invited to the 2020 Helli Lasch Challenge arrived in Johannesburg, where they were received by event organiser Carol Clifford, the "mother of South African gliding" and for many decades SA team captain. They included Lukasz Grabowski, runner-up in the 15m Class Worlds; Wolfgang Janowitsch, the reigning 18m Class world champion; Sjaak Selen, Standard Class world champion; Felipe Levin, runner-up

**ON THE FIFTH DAY OF HIS ENTRY-LEVEL COURSE, HE COMPLETED HIS FIRST SOLO FLIGHT IN A GRUNAU BABY. SIXTEEN DAYS LATER HE HAD COMPLETED HIS SILVER C**



Gliding legend Helli Lasch set gliding goals that tested both man and machine

## AN OUTLANDING WAS A REAL POSSIBILITY ON SOME DAYS, OVER TERRAIN WITH VERY FEW OPEN SPACES AND AIRFIELDS THAT WERE FAR, FAR APART



Unforgettable: a candle-lit dinner under the stars

**F**OR me, gliding is one of the most beautiful hobbies. At the age of 14, I joined the Sindelfingen Air Sports Association and acquired my aeronautical licence at the age of 17. Two things are what make gliding so attractive to me: on the one hand, exploring new landscapes and areas, and, on the other hand, flying beyond your own limits, that of the weather and that of the plane.

In 1991, I moved into Germany's women's national team for the first time. Most of my more than 3,000 hours of gliding (since 1986) have been done in competitions. The big leap was made in 2007: world champion of the 15m Class in Romorantin, France. I repeated this in 2017 in Zbraslavice, Czech Republic. I finished the WGC in Hosin, Czech Republic, in 8th place in the 18m Class after 9 WT in 2nd overall place. In 2020 I got 3rd place at the 18m WWGC in Lake Keepit, Australia.

In 1992 I achieved my first world records in a two-seater with the well-known Italian gliding hero Adele Orsi-Mzazuchelli. My latest world record was flown in 2018 in the 15m Class flying a JS3 over a 300km triangle in Potchefstroom, South Africa.

My whole family is enthusiastic about flying and helps with competitions. I like to fly with my father, Klaus, in our family two-seater ASG 32 Mi. Also with

in the Open Class Worlds; and myself, 2017 women's world champion.

The South African team included Laurens Goudriaan, Attie and Uys Jonker, Nico Le Roux and Dolf Pretorius. This year was very special for a few young upcoming pilots: Jason Adriaan, Michael Tiffin, Phillip and Tienie Jonker, Dicky Daly and Cameron Ireland, who were invited to join the senior pilots for the first four days of the event. Imagine being a junior with the opportunity to fly in two-seaters with the best glider pilots in the world! During the second half of the

week promising seniors, Riaan Denner, Hanno du Toit and Rob Tiffin, joined the training group and my daughter, Eva Senne, was there for the entire week.

Where in the world can you get daily gliding lectures by the top pilots in the world? Daily theory workshops – mental strength, by Wolfgang Janowitsch; AAT correct flying and planning, by Felipe Levin;

and team flying, by Lukasz Grabowski and myself – were presented and discussed.

my daughter, Eva, who also did her first solo flight at the age of 14. I don't just feel good in the 15m racing class – I also like to fly in the 18m Class with my new JS3 Rapture, or in the two-seater class.



■ Katrin Senne is a qualified engineer and Dipl. Betriebsw. She is married and has two sons and a daughter. Katrin has been a representative of Jonker Sailplanes in southern Germany since 2019.

Training facilitator and former world champion John Coutts gave deeper insight into storm flying, showing why South Africans call him "the storm guru".

There were a number of well-equipped gliders to choose from: a Nimbus 4D, Janus C, two Duo Discuses, two JS1s, two JS3s and an ASG 32 Mi. John Coutts set daily tasks of between 300-600km after a detailed weather briefing, sending young pilots in the two-seaters with experienced pilots.

We started around lunchtime and always did a regatta start, so that we could have a direct comparison of where, who and why some pilots were faster than the others. As a non-flight instructor and pure competition pilot who flies mostly single-seaters, it was astonishing to see the benefit of flying in a two-seater and to pass on knowledge to less experienced pilots. We usually make decisions, like selecting the left or right cloud street, just based on gut feel. If you have to explain this decision, you have to evaluate and analyse your gut feelings. It often becomes much clearer to yourself.

Pilots switched between single and two-seaters to allow students the opportunity to fly with as many different champions as possible. Discussions on board were about which is the next cloud to take, left or right cloud street, how to fly cloud streets efficiently, which speed to fly at, MC setting, which is the best way to fly into the turn point or AAT sector, thermal speeds and bank angle, final approach optimisation... and many other topics.

### Outlanding

Not all the gliders were equipped with sustainers and the weather was not always homogeneous. An outlanding was a real possibility on some days, over terrain with very few open spaces and airfields that were far, far apart! The cloudbases were not the typical South African standard, making flying very interesting – even too interesting on some days for most of the pilots' liking.

With the exception of the 4km tarred runway at Tswalu, finding an outlanding spot in the nature reserve seems impossible from the air. The area is covered with trees and bushes, with no visible open spaces. However, amazingly the crew of the Duo Discus managed an absolutely scratch-free outlanding, 8km from the airfield in the deep, red Kalahari sand. The game drivers helped "track the glider down" making light work of the retrieve. There was clearly a good reason that evening to celebrate!



All champions had the opportunity to fly a JS1 or JS3. Those who hadn't experienced these amazing South African gems before climbed out of the gliders with big grins on their faces. Even Ventus 3 pilot Wolfgang Janowitsch and EB29R pilot Felipe Levin were very excited about the handling and performance of the JS3. Felipe complained, laughingly, that "half of the wing was missing", but truly enjoyed the superb handling the JS3 has to offer.

Every day new culinary delights from the kitchen surprised the guests, presented at ever-changing locations. At times, there was a cosy meal around the pool, then in the "boma" (enclosure) around the open fire or under a large pergola on a long table. But the absolute highlight of the week was after a game drive till sunset; a dinner in the open air on a sand dune with candles and lamps under the most beautiful, sparkling starry sky that you can imagine. Pure romance! It doesn't get any better.

### Unique

"Tswalu – It's Heaven on Earth" will always be remembered by those privileged to experience it. A unique and eventful week – much too short in the end – packed with impressions that you won't be able to forget. Even the weight scales back home will not forget the week so quickly. Every pilot surely managed to increase his wing loading! And on the last evening some participants ended up in the pool fully clothed, wanted or unwanted. How else could we end such an event?

A big thank you is due to the helpers on the ground, Carol Clifford, Martin Lessle and the tow pilots, Rowan Hill, Riaan Denner and Laurens Goudriaan.

In times of Covid-19 and the worldwide shutdown, it is difficult to write about the



impressive and unique experiences we had at the Helli Lasch Challenge 2020. Since this amazing week, the world has tumbled upside-down and is in a state of shock – a bad dream that lies over all life. We can all work together and follow the world's best practices to slow down the spread of Covid-19. We can only hope that this danger can soon be contained and that everyone can return to normal life, in a new era of life "after Covid-19".

As the first cases of the Coronavirus reached South Africa, the Oppenheimer family donated R1 billion to assist businesses. We can only thank the Oppenheimer family for their contributions to the South African people and to the gliding community.

Let us be confident and pray and hope for the best for all our gliding friends and all people in the world.

Above: All champions experienced flight in the JS1 or JS3 (photographs by Katrin Senne)

■ [www.jonkersailplanes.co.za](http://www.jonkersailplanes.co.za)

Below left: Katrin, Uys, Felipe and Wolfgang after landing

Below right (l-r): Felipe Levin, John Coutts, Lukasz Grabowski, Laurens Goudriaan, Wolfgang Janowitsch, Nico Le Roux, Michael Tiffin, Jason Adriaan, Uys and Philip Jonker, Martin Lessle, Eva Senne, Dicky Daly, Carol Clifford, Cameron Ireland, Riaan Denner, Tienie Jonker, Katrin Senne, Dolf Pretorius, Attie Jonker



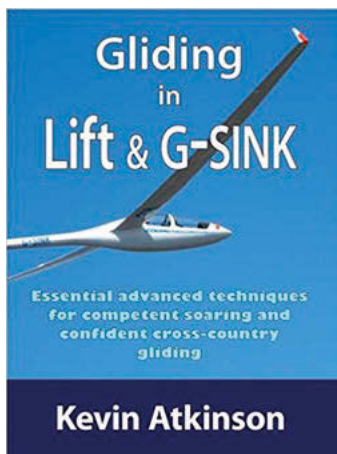


■ Aim Higher courses are held at clubs by arrangement, run either by Kevin or by club coaches briefed on the training materials and *S&G* articles developed by Kevin and Tony Cronshaw.

Please contact [kratkinson@yahoo.com](mailto:kratkinson@yahoo.com) if you, or your club, would like to participate in future Aim Higher courses.

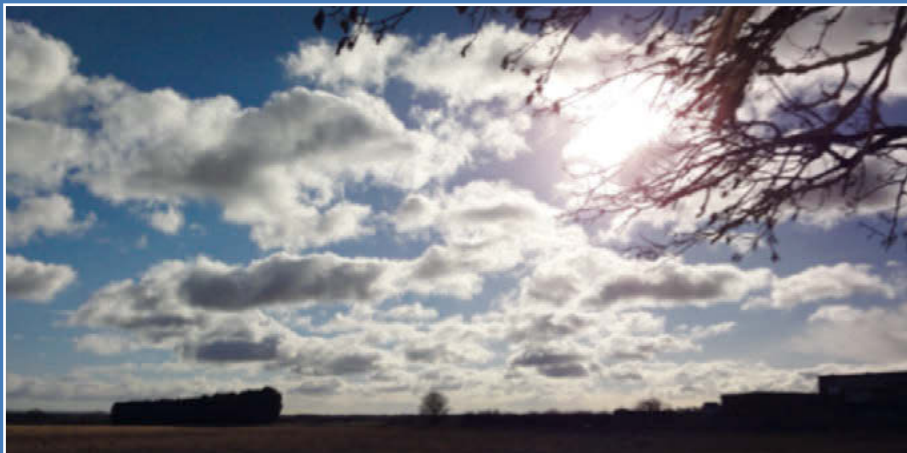


Kevin Atkinson is the club coach lead for the BGA Aim Higher initiative ([www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/aimhigher.htm](http://www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/aimhigher.htm)). With more than 7,500 military jet hours (Tiger Moths to Typhoon), Kevin started gliding at age 13 at Ouse GC (now York), flying his first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



■ Kevin's book *Gliding in Lift and G-SINK* is available at [www.bgashop.co.uk](http://www.bgashop.co.uk) or direct from [kratkinson@yahoo.com](mailto:kratkinson@yahoo.com)

## #1 ATKINSON'S LAW ON THE TRANSFER OF 'HEAT' AND ATMOSPHERIC INSTABILITY:



GMAD – Gliding Mathematics and Atmospheric Dynamics

‘Instability in the atmosphere is primarily driven by humidity and the changing states of water’

**T**HE sky pictured above might look promising, but it is 09:30 on 14 March 2019, temperature 6°C and the wind 40 gusting 50+. Not a lot of convection going on!

If we put flour in the oven we get bread! Oops, missed a key ingredient – like water.

We are surrounded by group thinking – that the sky is driven by convection! That the sun heats the ground, which heats the air and thermals (eddies or hot air bubbles) rise up, thus warming the atmosphere. We can read this extensively and exclusively in climate change books, meteorological books and even in the gliding section of the FAA handbook. It is a very easy concept to readily see in the real world and therefore acknowledge, or assume, as being entirely correct.

This simplistic understanding, however, makes it impossible for any glider pilot to understand the dynamic mechanism by which the sky really works. When this simple concept does not appear to fit, people likely then fall back and assume it is ‘too difficult’ and just call it chaos theory.

In reality, the primary mechanism for the transfer of heat into the atmosphere is through the evaporation of water and latent heat. Latent heat is the energy required to convert ice to water, and water to a gas, or is released when the opposite changes of state occur. In the same way that hot will always transfer to warm cooler adjacent matter, wet or humidity is always transferred to drier areas.

So the sun heats the ground, which

evaporates the water into the dry air. The change of state from liquid to gas (vapour) means that this thermal energy is contained as latent heat – which cannot be measured with a thermometer nor lost through conduction. This makes the air humid, which is now lighter than the drier air around it, giving buoyancy. The humid air will rise and cool adiabatically at 3°C/1,000ft and the heat held (currently hidden in suspension) is released only when the vapour returns to water, forming clouds.

Cloudbase contributes to an inversion at that height, which is why cloudbase over a large area (within that block of air within the lower layer) will be at the same height regardless of the initial surface temperature. So, on a cumulus day we climb in bubbles of humidity.

Clouds dissipate by evaporation. This takes a lot of heat out of the surrounding dry air, causing considerable local cooling on the edges of the clouds and generates a second downwards vertical motion of the air, what we know as sink.

Consider the following: The human body will regulate itself to 37°C by sweating and a body temperature of 40°C puts us close to death. The temperature during summer in Australia is regularly up to 40°C, so how come we can work outside in deserts in air temperatures that approach even 50°C? Such is the cooling effect of the evaporation of water.

**Kevin Atkinson, Aim Higher lead coach**



# The BGA Team and General Information



## Executive Committee

### Chairman

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### Vice Chairman

George Metcalfe

### Executive Members

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Peter Bennett, Rebecca Bryan,  
Bill Brittain and Richard Brickwood

### Treasurer

Anthony Smith

### Company Secretary

Anthony Smith

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### Development Officer

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### Aim Higher

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### Schools and Colleges Lead

Yvonne Elliott - via the BGA office

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### Airspace

Pete Stratten

### Instructing

Colin Sword

### Training Standards Manager

Mike Fox  
[mike@gliding.co.uk](mailto:mike@gliding.co.uk)

### SLMG

Paul Whitehead

### Technical

Howard Torode

### Flying Operations

Peter Moorehead

## CAA SLMG Instructors and Examiners

A number of CAA authorised SLMG examiners are appointed via the BGA to support SLMG activity under the management of the BGA SRE SLMG. Contact details are at <https://members.gliding.co.uk/examiners>

## Gliding Examiners

BGA gliding examiners are appointed regionally and directed by Senior Regional Examiners. Coaching and tests can be arranged via SRE's who are listed at <https://members.gliding.co.uk/pilot-resources-flying-training/examiners/>

## Safety Guidance

There is extensive safety guidance including a toolkit for club safety officers at <https://members.gliding.co.uk/safety>

## Airworthiness Inspectors

There are a number of BGA inspectors across the UK. A proportion of them are approved to issue an ARC and are listed by region at <https://members.gliding.co.uk/arc-signatories>. Regional Technical Officers can be contacted via the BGA office.

## Airworthiness Guidance

Extensive guidance for owners of non-EASA and EASA aircraft is at <https://members.gliding.co.uk/airworthiness>

## Other Information

### Courses and Seminars

BGA courses and seminars information is at <https://members.gliding.co.uk/courses/>

### Fees

BGA fees are detailed at <https://members.gliding.co.uk/fees-and-charges/>

## BGA Office Contact Details

8 Merus Court, Meridian Business Park, Leicester, LE19 1RJ  
tel: 0116 289 2956 email: [office@gliding.co.uk](mailto:office@gliding.co.uk)

# HOW TO GET A LAPL MEDICAL

BGA Medical Adviser Dr Frank Voeten takes a look at what is entailed in obtaining your LAPL medical

**P**ILOTS who fly EASA sailplanes using the privileges of an EASA licence are required to hold either a Class 2 medical certificate or a LAPL medical certificate.

The LAPL – or to use its full term, the Light Aircraft Pilot Licence – medical certificate was introduced by EASA in 2012. The LAPL medical certificate is valid within Europe, ie where EASA rules are utilised. Most non-European countries require a minimum of an EASA Class 2 medical, as a Class 2 medical is International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) compliant. The LAPL medical certificate has slightly lower requirements than those of a Class 2 medical certificate and the privileges it

confers are therefore also more limited. The good news is that, with few exceptions, the vast majority of pilots who currently fly on the strength of holding an ordinary driving licence will have no problem obtaining a LAPL medical certificate.

A LAPL medical certificate is usually a bit cheaper to obtain than a Class 2 Medical as fewer tests are required (no compulsory ECG) and is valid for five years if you're younger than 40, while over that age it's valid for two years.

In the UK, a registered GP may be able to issue a LAPL medical certificate for those who have no potentially serious medical conditions, either at present or in the past.

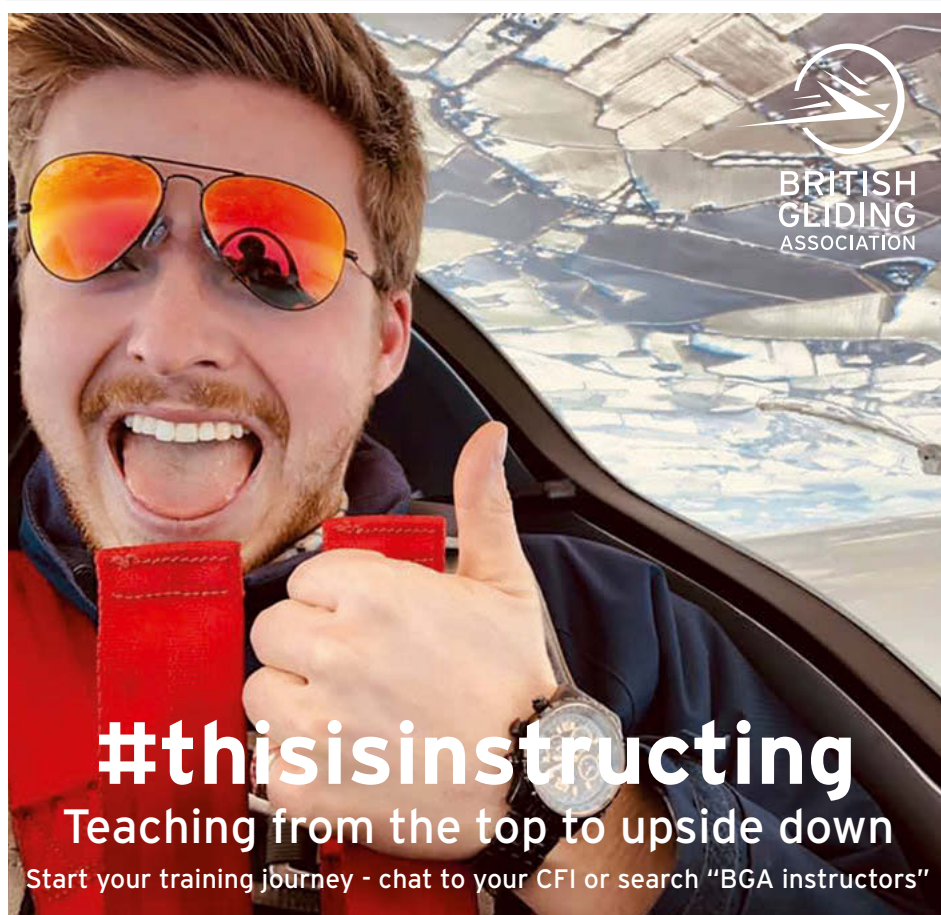
You can check which conditions would preclude your GP being able to issue a LAPL medical certificate on the CAA website. The current list includes: visual field defects, heart disease, hearing aids, neurological and psychiatric conditions (including antidepressant and sedative medication), diabetes requiring medication, chronic lung disease, organ transplant, alcohol and substance misuse, cancer, pneumothorax, epilepsy, personality disorder, and learning difficulties.

## Assessment

It'd be up to your GP to decide if and when they're able to carry out the assessment – it isn't an NHS service. The cost for a LAPL medical certificate via your GP is a matter between you and your GP. There are no admin costs for the GP to register, nor is any fee required to be paid to the CAA for the medical certificate.

If your GP isn't able or willing to do the LAPL medical assessment, you need to go to an Aero Medical Examiner (AME). Your GP may also have to refer you to an AME if an issue is identified during the assessment which precludes the issue of a LAPL medical certificate.

In order to have a LAPL medical certificate issued by an AME, you will need to make an appointment with one. Most AMEs will



**#thisis instructing**

Teaching from the top to upside down

Start your training journey - chat to your CFI or search "BGA instructors"



need a bit of a lead time, especially when the current Coronavirus crisis has finished as there is, of course, pent up demand for medicals from this period.

The medical itself consists of an application and examination. The application form (Form 160) can be found on the CAA website, if you want to have a look. You will need make a declaration about your current and past medical history.

The medical examination part is an eye test, a urine test to exclude the presence of protein (kidney disease), glucose (diabetes) and blood (stones or tumour), and a physical examination including listening to your heart and lungs. Unless anything particular in your medical history or examination suggests there is a problem, no additional tests such as an ECG, blood or lung function tests are required.

Most medications are acceptable if they are well tolerated and controlling the condition for which they are taken well.

In the context of this article, it is impossible to give in-depth advice on specific conditions and the influence they have on a pilot's ability to hold a medical. An AME can advise and point to the CAA

guidance where applicable.

All AMEs are current or past pilots and have an affinity with the aviation fraternity; they have rules to stick to, but will do their best to help their pilot customers. As they are regulated by the CAA and General Medical Council (GMC) they have certain requirements to stick to; work with them and you are most likely to have a positive experience.

#### **Be prepared**

Those with a more extended medical history are likely to need to provide copies of hospital letters and reports – be prepared and get as much as possible before you go for your appointment.

As things stand at the moment, it is estimated that some 4,000 pilots will need a LAPL medical by April 2021 (with an expected extension to October 2021). Once the Coronavirus crisis is over, during which there are no routine medicals, you would be well advised to tackle getting a LAPL medical sooner rather than later. There are only 200 AMEs in the UK, many of whom are full-time NHS clinicians.

Don't leave it too late or you may get caught short.

## **THEY HAVE CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS TO STICK TO; WORK WITH THEM AND YOU ARE MOST LIKELY TO HAVE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE**

■ At the time of publication, ie during the Covid-19 pandemic, the CAA is developing a number of exemptions, including those relating to EASA pilot licences and medical certificates.

■ The future of the LAPL medical under Brexit arrangements is not yet clear, but don't let that put you off if you are planning to arrange a LAPL medical.



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## VIRTUAL CLUB ACTIVITIES

HOW are you joining in with these new activities? Have you been able to take advantage of Condor gaggles, the virtual clubhouse or any of the interest groups that your club has organised? Perhaps you had an idea and volunteered to get it set up? Or perhaps your work involved responding to the Covid-19 situation, so you are yet to have time to join in. What are you looking forward to exploring from your club's new activities? Or perhaps you can see a gap and you are looking forward to filling it with an extra set of activities?



Dumfries' Skylarks tucked up in their nest, with the club K-13 and two more Skylarks still partially rigged behind them (Iain McIver)

**THERE WILL BE FRESH MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OPPORTUNITIES EMERGING THAT THE SMART CLUB WILL BE KEEN TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF**

■ **Alison Randle**  
BGA Development Officer  
[alison@gliding.co.uk](mailto:alison@gliding.co.uk)

# RESILIENCE AND OPPORTUNITIES

WELL that's the last thing that gliding clubs needed, a period of time spent living in interesting times. Or is it? The hamster wheel of club management stopped abruptly in March, providing some unique opportunities. As I write this in April, the fast pace of the situation seems to be easing a little, but who knows what might have occurred by the time you read this, or how many people will have been directly affected. I hope to have selected a useful development topic for discussion; something with a degree of relevance in the challenging times of the new now – club resilience.

Times of duress typically result in a mass invention of solutions and the virtual gliding club activities currently emerging are no exception. Clubs are focusing on the non-flying aspects of gliding and finding ways to create new ways of delivering gliding activities to club members. What new ways has your club found to communicate with you? What new activities are they offering? What have we (gliding) learned so far, and what are we still learning about? In what ways is your club stronger than before?

What do you like?

With the suspension of so many 'normal' activities, a question is increasingly being asked: how much of 'normal' will you be reintroducing to 'life' when all this is over? Which of these new gliding activities are you looking forward to continuing to do, even when you have access to flying once more and can spend happy days larking about at the club? It is the social glue which gives our clubs strength and resilience, making them the sort of place that people want to join. These new ways of delivering non-cockpit-based learning are modernising the offer that clubs have for members and will support them as they progress on their personal pilot development pathway. We do not have to discontinue this sort of support once this unique time in our history passes.

In various recent S&G articles, I and others have discussed the pilot development pathway, and how creating

resources to support pilots will improve confidence and satisfaction levels. Clearly, clubs need to be able to provide learning opportunities to help pilots to make progress with their current gliding interests. Cockpit-based training opportunities are finite and further limited by instructor availability, day length and weather. Providing alternative training, support and discussions for pilots will improve both introductory flight conversion rates and membership retention. For most clubs, just a slight increase (from reduced sink to plus half a knot) would have significant benefits for club health and resilience. Yet most club officials, the volunteers managing our clubs, are often so busy running the club and delivering flying activities, they simply don't have the capacity to look at ways of delivering gliding that could meet the needs of today's busy person.

Following on from my research last year, and from discussions at both BGA conferences this winter, we were aiming to get five clubs beginning to look at these sorts of delivery methods in 2020. This would have given a good basis for beginning wider progress in 2021, with increasing activity each year after that. Suddenly we have been thrust into a situation where the majority of clubs are already using new delivery methods, circumventing a couple of years' worth of steady, sustainable development processes. This is a shift in the way clubs deliver 'gliding', where more people understand and appreciate the full breadth of gliding activities and more people are involved in their provision. This accelerated shift could be just what our sport needs.

Bringing gliding into the home is just one way of creating more time for gliding. What shape might our future lives take? Will it involve more working from home? For many, dropping commuting could free up three hours per day, meaning more midweek relationship, family and domestic time and significantly fewer life chores to cram into the weekend. Could this translate into more time for gliding? There will be fresh membership recruitment and retention opportunities emerging that the smart club will be keen to take advantage of.



# LOCKDOWN AND BEYOND

An update from BGA CEO Pete Stratten

**A**T THE time of writing, the UK has been locked down under Covid-19 pandemic restrictions for many weeks and the Government has just announced a very limited easing of restrictions. Our deepest sympathy goes to anyone whose health has been affected and we offer our best wishes for a speedy and full recovery. Gliding will undoubtedly feel the impacts of the pandemic for some time. It's far too early to understand exactly how.

As a part of recreational aviation, the BGA is working with others, including at the highest levels of the CAA and Department for Transport, to ensure that our sport can move forward as soon as possible. A limited restart of recreational GA became possible on 15 May 2020. We will continue to press for a full UK restart of recreational GA, including flight training, as soon as that is a safe option.

A specific BGA webpage has been established to capture the Covid-19 relevant information in one place. At the time of writing, BGA guidance for restarting flying has been sent to clubs to either supplement existing plans or to form the basis of a club plan to restart limited gliding activity as and when that is possible and the club chooses to do so. All BGA Covid-19 information is published at <https://members.gliding.co.uk/covid19-restrictions-support-exemptions-and-restarting-gliding-information/>

Like many others, the BGA has discovered that online meetings are effective and are likely to become the new normal among BGA committees and working groups. Regional meetings with BGA chairmen have provided timely opportunities for the BGA Executive Committee to hear about key issues and for everyone involved to share experiences. Subject to club chairmen views, the format will be repeated in the future beyond the pandemic. We hope that when physical meetings again become possible,

organisations like the CAA and others who the BGA routinely engage with will continue to recognise the efficiencies and cost savings that result from online meetings.

It's been rewarding to see the range of online activity and creativity shown by clubs and individuals. The radio licence online course launched by a small team of volunteers is hugely popular. And BGA webinars have been very busy from day one. Hopefully appetites have been whetted by online simulated sailplane racing in some stunning sceneries around the globe. Good, too, that many pilots, young and old, have rediscovered via surprisingly accurate software settings why placard limits are so important!

As reported elsewhere, the BGA Development Committee has provided significant expert guidance during many long days to ensure clubs have received timely, accurate and focused guidance. Where necessary, the same Development Committee team has helped to unstick local support. We are so fortunate to have volunteers with such depth and breadth of talent contributing in all aspects of BGA activity. As we all help our clubs and our sport to fully recover as soon as possible, working together will be even more important than ever.

## PILOT LICENSING

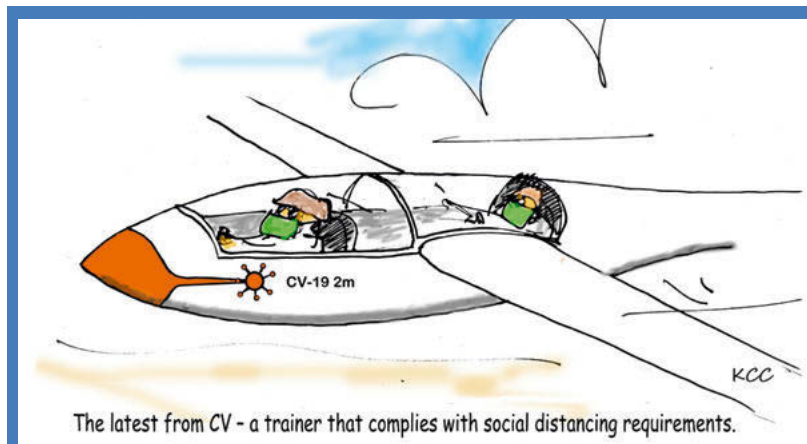
SAILPLANE Flight Crew Licensing (SFCL) is the EASA ruleset for sailplane pilot licensing. Under SFCL, there is a single Sailplane Pilot Licence. The LAPL(S) will no longer be available. Please note that any SPL or LAPL(S) that was issued prior to 8 April 2020 is now deemed to be an SFCL SPL and the privileges of the licence can be used with either a LAPL medical or a Class 2 medical.

Pilots of EASA sailplanes, including powered sailplanes, can carry on operating under BGA pilot certification and glider pilots of EASA self-launching sailplanes and TMGs can carry on using a national SLMG class rating until April 2021, with an expected extension of that date to October 2021.

All gliding instructing at BGA clubs continues under BGA requirements until April 2021 (with an expected extension to October 2021). Therefore, all gliding instructors must hold a valid BGA instructor rating.

With the UK planning to leave EASA at the end of 2020 and to 'cut and paste' EU regulation into UK law, the BGA is working with the CAA and

others to ensure that during 2021 the CAA pilot medical declaration can be an option for all licensed recreational pilots in the UK instead of requiring a Class 2 or LAPL medical certificate. You can learn more and stay up to date with all these issues at <https://members.gliding.co.uk/pilot-licensing/pilot-licence-conversion/>



■ This topical cartoon was sent in by Kevin Clark. It is from his recently-published book *Glidertoons*. Kevin flies at Wellington Gliding Club, New Zealand, and as an Ass Cat has cleared many visiting Brit instructors to instruct at the club.



*This page:*

❶ DSGC junior trailer washing day - Charlie Stuckey (junior team leader) leads the way on his 18th birthday

❷ Shalbourne Gliding Club celebrates winning the Challenge Trophy, awarded at the BGA conference

❸ Cambridge club members Pete Joslin (inset top), Bruce Porteous (pictured left with BGA Chairman Andy Perkins) and Richard Maskell are awarded a BGA Diploma in recognition of their construction of the club's Mintel simulator

❹ Seahawk's Ed Hillman qualifies for his glider pilot's Ilcence just before departing to join a flying course at Cranwell

❺ Wrekin's K-21 over RAF Cosford with Alan Swan and Terry Walsh

*Facing page:*

❶ A great sky photographed at Devon & Somerset Gliding Club on 11 March 2020 (Mark Layton)

■ 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](mailto:editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk) or upload to: [www.sailplaneandgliding.co.uk/dropbox](http://www.sailplaneandgliding.co.uk/dropbox)







1



2

2 Trevor Stiff doing his civil engineering magic



3

■ Work has continued on AGC Anglia's new clubhouse, which was delivered to site during February, as reported in S&G's April/May issue. Special mention must go to member Trevor Stiff, who has a background in civil engineering and is also MD of a major regional civil construction company. Trevor has project-managed and helped to fund the whole move and installation of our new clubhouse and this legacy will be enjoyed by AGC members and guests for many years to come. Members have been busy cleaning and making the clubhouse cabin structures watertight, ready for the utility contractors to connect up the services for us. However, with the current Covid-19 situation, all flying and clubhouse work has now stopped for the time being



4

following government and BGA advice. Indeed, as an operational army Apache helicopter airfield and with the vital work that our serving military personnel are doing to support the nation and the NHS, AGC members have gladly embraced measures to restrict club access to help minimise the risk of infection to military personnel on the base.



5

3 AGC clubhouse arriving

4 Clubhouse cabins one and two in place

5 Trevor Stiff and Steve Berry loitering with intent with the clubhouse steps

JUNE/JULY 20

\_VOL71 NO3

# CLUB NEWS

## **AGC ANGLIA (WATTISHAM)** **WWW.ANGLIAGLIDINGCLUB.ORG.UK** **520739N 0005722E**

FLYING has continued over the winter months at Wattisham airfield in Suffolk, home to both the Army Gliding Club (Anglia) and the British Army Apache Helicopter. This is largely because of the field's excellent drainage due to its relative elevation to the surrounding countryside, as well as the former bomber and fast jet mile-long and well-maintained Tarmac runway. Most of our pilots have remained current throughout the winter, mainly circuit-bashing, but with the odd launch failure thrown in for good measure to keep everyone on their toes! We also had one member (Gary Shepherd) re-solo in a K-21 after a 16-year gap and AGC continues to host welcome guests from Essex Gliding Club and Welland Gliding Club due to their soggy airfields being out of bounds. Given the poor and often very windy weather we've experienced recently, club members have also taken the opportunity to tackle long overdue maintenance and servicing to our ground and MT kit. We have sent our winch to SkyLaunch for a full refurbishment, including a change from steel cable to Dyneema. While it is away, we have the use of a loaned Dyneema-fitted winch, which has enabled us to learn a new winch operating technique as well as regular launches in excess of 2,000ft, which has been great fun. Work has also continued on our new clubhouse, which was delivered to site during February, as reported in S&G's April/May issue (see also page 53). Finally, while we are, and will continue to be, unable to fly for several weeks and probably months to come, club members are staying in touch via WhatsApp, text and email – sharing some great banter, as well as ensuring that our more mature members are safe and well.

**Simon Ginns**

## **AGC WYVERN (UPAVON)** **WWW.ARMYGLIDINGCLUBWYVERN.COM** **511712N 0014700W**

JUST as Wyvern was gearing up to deliver its first five-day basic course for the Army Adventure Training group – the whole world got shut down. The first quarter of 2020 has probably been the most frustrating winter for gliding in memory. We await the return of our veteran K-21 from its 12,000hr. The ground facilities building has been completed and much club member fettling has been

undertaken to get it operational. The building comprises admin, clubhouse, glider workshop and vehicle garage. This brings together a disparate set of facilities into a single unit and puts the club into a much better position to deliver gliding courses to Servicemen.

**Paul Jessop**

## **BANBURY (HINTON IN THE HEDGES)** **WWW.BANBURYGLIDING.COM** **520435N 00118784W**

BY THE time you read this, we all hope to be back in the air! Optimistic? Essential maintenance has continued to ensure the operation is ready to go and the WhatsApp group has applied its skills at finding some of the amusing online trivia, along with posing some serious Q&As to keep us engaged.

**Peter Fincham**

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

WE'RE still planning our competition in August, with a final decision being made in July; any entry fees will be returned if we cancel. The competition is planned for 23-30 August. There'll be launches available the week before at club rates. We managed to complete annuals on the two-seaters just before lockdown, so they're ready to fly as soon as we are. We've postponed the AGM and our club 60th birthday party, and will rearrange as soon as possible. During lockdown we're doing remote Bronze exams, thanks to Ian Harris, and some members are joining in Condor flights, thanks to Ken Reid for organising a club discount. Other activities are happening, mostly via our Facebook group.

**Alison Arnold**

## **BATH, WILTS & NORTH DORSET (THE PARK)** **WWW.BWND.CO.UK** **510742N 0021445W**

WHAT can I say? Dreadful winter for gliding, and now this! Of course, we are closed after valiant attempts to keep going despite the virus. First, we had advice, then strict instructions, then total closure. I presume it must be the same everywhere. Some people seem to be doing things virtually on Condor, where the CondorVirus Junior Gliding competition seems to be going on. Not tried it myself. I always crash! I've still got GlideAngle to run and will probably open a gardening column. I'm hoping to offer

retrospectives, future projects and anything else. A quiz is promised. Hey-ho.

**Chris Basham**

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

OUR presentation dinner was held at King's Coughton Hotel. The following awards were made: the fastest 300km – 109.6km/h, Frank Jaynes; the greatest distance – 548.5km, Jon Wand; Height Gain – 10,988ft, Richard Palmer; Club Ladder – 11,462 points, Frank Jaynes; The pilot most likely to, Paul Kaye; Junior member, Toby Johnson; Junior member most likely to, Oli Packman; CFI'S Cup, Florian Dobrila; Graham "Wright Stuff" Memorial, Stephen Lee; Member of the year, Chris Morris. The Covid-19 outbreak has resulted in a delay to the start of our gliding season and it remains to be seen if, and when, we can resume flying.

**Mike Pope**

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

FLYING was very limited in March due to poor weather and/or a saturated airfield. Although the operation is now closed, emails are monitored remotely. Courses and expeditions are currently cancelled up until June. Our WhatsApp group has featured discussions on numerous topics, including suggestions on which model glider kits to build during lockdown, and subsequent reminiscing on Keil Kraft models of old. We await a fly-in date, when members' craftsmanship and model flying skills can be fully assessed! A working weekend originally planned for March will be reconvened when possible; a great opportunity to get members back together and complete projects, including our dedicated tug hangar and a new storage building.

**Mike Codd**

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

WE MANAGED half of our fortnight's expedition to Llewenni Parc, Denbigh, before the national shutdown. We had some excellent weather and good flying, including a trip round Snowdon. We are now keeping ourselves amused with online entertainment. Dr Nils Wedi is providing a weekly weather



(Left to right): Gary Shepherd re-solos at **Wattisham** after a 16-year gap; **Army Gliding Club (Wyvern)**'s new ground facilities building at Upavon Airfield; Luca Macgregor is sent solo at **Buckminster** by the club's CFI Lyn Ferguson-Dalling



forecast after which members suggest suitable tasks; Nils awards a prize for the best. CFI Richard is offering courses, including FI(S) and how to fill in an EASA application form. He is also offering a pub quiz!

**Jane Moore**

#### **BRISTOL & GLOS (NYMPFIELD)**

**WWW.BGGC.CO.UK**

**514251N 0021701W**

DESPITE the poor winter and early spring we flew when able, often midweek. Four new cadets were inducted to start their ab-initio training. They managed one day before flying stopped. Ben Payne waited for his BI course and then... Hopefully he'll complete whilst the rating exists. The Old Flying Club Cafe re-opened, did well and then closed. The new Bristol University DG-1001S was retrieved from the factory as European borders were closing. When will it fly? Professional instructor Larry flew with us for one week. We look forward to seeing him again when we return to normality. The club will investigate providing online lectures to maintain members' interest. Keep safe everyone.

**Greg O'Hagan**

#### **BUCKMINSTER (SALTBY)**

**WWW.BUCKMINSTERGC.CO.UK**

**524912N 04228W**

WOW, what strange times. Operations ceased along with the government guidelines. There's been a Discord group set for the computer-literate to communicate. A rota's been established to cover security at our airfield as it's crisscrossed with footpaths that are now seeing more activity than ever. A number of webinar lectures have been arranged, from basic flying to advanced techniques. A Condor-based server is being created for local tasks and a bit of an online competition. Some good news; Luca Macgregor went solo just before we stopped operating, well done. We'd like to send our sincere thanks to all of those essential workers and NHS staff that are keeping the country going.

**Danny Lamb**

#### **CAIRNGORM (FESHIEBRIDGE)**

**WWW.GLIDING.ORG**

**570613N 0035330W**

ANNUALS were completed on our club Astir and Grob Twin, thanks to Dave Weekes, Nick Norman and Pete Thomson. Some steady flying was being had at Feshie. Nick Norman received the De Havilland trophy for height

at the BGA conference, congratulations! A successful committee meeting was also had. We are running video conferences for our upcoming instructors throughout the Covid-19 downtime period, and when our club restarts we hope to come back with a bang! Stay safe.

**Jordan Thomson**

#### **CAMBRIDGE (GRANDSDEN LODGE)**

**WWW.CAMGLIDING.UK**

**521041N 0000653W**

ALL on-site club activities ceased on 23 March to comply with the government's Covid-19 restrictions. To keep us sane, online courses, webinars and virtual soaring competitions are being organised. On a brighter note, members Richard Maskell, Bruce Porteous and Pete Joslin have been awarded a BGA Diploma in recognition of their construction of our Mintel simulator, and Chris Barrott received this year's Alex Ward Memorial award. The East Midlands ICL has been cancelled, but we're hopeful that the Gransden Regionals (8-16 August) and our Cloud Rally (22-30 August) will go ahead. With rest of the gliding movement, and whole of the country, we look forward to the end of these unprecedented times.

**Chris Davis**

#### **COTSWOLD (ASTON DOWN)**

**WWW.COTSWOLDGLIDING.CO.UK**

**514228N 0020750W**

AS WITH other clubs we are currently in Covid-19 lockdown. Fortunately, we've completed most of the maintenance required on the fleet so will be well prepared for when restrictions are lifted, although our planned "tidy up" weekend organised by John Docherty and Barry Key had to be postponed. Matt Page has facilitated a series of webinars featuring club members presenting topics of interest to the membership, allowing them to keep involved at home. The last report omitted to mention that Mike Randle was remaining club secretary. Some of the land on the airfield, not owned by us, has recently changed hands, but early indications are that this is unlikely to affect our operations.

**Frank Birlison**

#### **CRANWELL (RAF CRANWELL)**

**WWW.CRANWELLGC.CO.UK**

**530231N 0002936W**

NOTHING to report, unfortunately, due to the ongoing situation. We are, as no doubt

many clubs like us are, in lockdown until further notice. Club members as far as we understand are tending to communicate via email and the club Facebook, as well getting their flying fix through various computer-based flight simulators. No doubt they will be travelling great distances and gaining their 1,000km diplomas!

**Zeb Zamo**

#### **DEESIDE (ABOYNE)**

**WWW.DEESIDEGLIDINGCLUB.CO.UK**

**570430N 0025005W**

SOARING started on the first of January. Rather bumpy with strong winds, but Roy Wilson did a 280km flight. We proved our EuroFOX can soar, engine at idle and constrained by cloud to follow the wave bar home, it gained 600 feet until the cloud dissipated and it could turn in to the sink. We've hosted several visitors, including the University of Edinburgh GC. On their first visit, they had wave in the morning, thermals early afternoon and wave again that night. John Williams just missed out on a 300km while visiting in March. Members are firing up Condor and racing. Deeside is arranging to fly a virtual inter-club competition in April. Stay safe.

**Steve Kenyon-Roberts**

#### **DENBIGH (LLEWENI PARC)**

**WWW.DENBIGHGLIDING.CO.UK**

**531239N 0032312W**

WE HAD a great winter, lots of ridge and wave soaring, with some hints of the upcoming thermal season. Obviously, we're on pause at the moment, but we are in the process of improving our facilities, increasing hangarage, working on planning applications, etc, etc. It seems like we will have less of a season, so if you want to extend yours, book yourself in for our wave season in October. Booker GC left its Duo Discus hangared with us and it was very successful, being used frequently. If your club is interested in the same, please contact us; we have Tarmac, so you shouldn't get muddy!

**Chris Gill**

#### **DERBY & LANCS (CAMPHILL)**

**WWW.DLGC.ORG.UK**

**531818N 0014353W**

THE committee, left with little choice, has suspended all flying from 23 March until further notice. Congratulations to David Heimerdinger, who soloed on 4 March – the



(Left to right): David Heimerdinger is congratulated by **Derby & Lancashire's** Mike Armstrong on his first solo (Peter Gill); **Herefordshire's** Nick Robinson manages to gain his Silver height on a less than a perfect day; **Lasham's** K-13 off for a spring break in Kent (Jordan Bridge)



✈ first, but hopefully not the last, of 2020. A weekly online soaring task has been set up for members using Condor, and distance learning is being explored. We were saddened to hear of the death of Peter Roberts after battling cancer for many years. He had been a very active cross-country pilot and instructor until about 20 years ago, when he took up sailing, but kept in contact with many Camphill friends. We now look forward to the time we can resume flying once more.  
**Dave Salmon**

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

THE almost instant change from wet field, low cloud and howling winds to lockdown has caused great disappointment for members. Prior to the club stopping flying, there were a couple of pleasant days with some soaring. The juniors held a trailer washing day to support their planned junior expedition to Long Mynd in October. At time of writing, we look forward to a return to normality and, in the meantime, to enjoying the BGA webinars and practice with Condor.

**Jill Harmer**

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

ANDY Grant, Nick Barnes and Allan Powell went to the Long Mynd to attend the 7 March maintenance course for glider owners. The course was very well presented and highly informative. In the evening, Mike Fox gave an amusing account of his experiences in New Zealand and the USA. An expedition planned for Denbigh in April to experience ridge and wave soaring has been postponed due to the current restrictions. The club's EuroFOX is still for sale. If you would like to buy G-ODGC, please contact Nick Barnes, chairman, on tel: 07793-203838 for more information. Our club is now closed, but will resume operations the moment current Covid-19 restrictions are lifted.  
**Allan Powell**

**EAST SUSSEX (RINGMER)**  
**WWW.SUSSEXGLIDING.CO.UK**  
**505423N 0000618E**

EAST Sussex has nothing to report other than rain stopped play, followed by Covid-19. Following government advice, we are closing the club for the duration.

**Mike Jeater**

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

AFTER our winter break we are all desperately wanting to get back to flying from Skelling Farm, but Covid-19 means that we are mothballing the club, to be reviewed in late June. In the meantime, our WhatsApp group is keeping us entertained with 'social comment'. Idle minds! Best wishes to all in the gliding community in these difficult times.

**Keith Nattrass**

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

AT THE time of writing, as is the case for all clubs, we are feeling despondent, being under the government lockdown to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus, unable to even go to our airfield let alone fly. Not to be held back, we've discovered Zoom and have been busy partaking of video seminars, meetings and general banter from our homes. We are very grateful to our CFI Alex Harris for organising and preparing lectures and for being available most days for individual question and answer sessions. An intense programme for regaining currency has already been prepared ready for when the airfield opens, and we hope that by the time this is published we will all be in a much better place. We have the use of our impressive new simulator to help with currency and training, thanks to Allen Cherry and Dave Jones.

**Cathy Dellar**

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

OUR winter has been successful. The main runway flooded, but we are fortunate to have concrete pads at each end that allow us to launch, and a track alongside the runway that we can use for landings. We've put long cables on our winches and most members have achieved regular winch launches to 3,000ft. Despite the rain, we achieved a number of soaring flights during the winter. Along with others, we've closed operations and are now concentrating on carrying out essential maintenance so that we can reopen the club as soon as normal life restarts. Our thoughts go out to those who are in the frontline in battling this crisis.

**Eddie Smith**

**FENLAND (RAF MARHAM)**  
**WWW.FENLANDGDC.CO.UK**  
**523854N 0003302E**

IN LATE 2019, after a two-year break, winch launching recommenced at RAF Marham. We are lucky to have access to four launch runs. Up to 1,200m in length, these grass runs allow launch heights to 2,000ft+ in the right conditions. Plans are afoot to move the location of the clubhouse to a new more spacious location on camp. Membership and interest are starting to grow with a few new students on the books. However, with only two instructors, facilitating regular flying is the biggest challenge. If you're an Ass Cat or Full Cat and feel you can offer support to ensure the club can operate on a regular basis, please contact [enquiries@fenlandgdc.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@fenlandgdc.co.uk).

**Matthew Clements**

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

BEFORE Covid-19 stopped play, Herefordshire managed to get some flying in despite the ground being waterlogged; we were flying off Shobdon's Tarmac runway. Nick Robinson gained his Silver height on a less than a perfect day. Since the cessation of flying, we haven't been idle. Many of our pre-Bronze pilots are preparing for their papers, with congrats to Ian Orpe for being the first of this year's passes. Although Shobdon pilots are familiar with using the radio, the new BGA online pilot radio licence course being undertaken by several members and the recent BGA webinars are both educational and a surprisingly social event, prompting much internal chatter. WhatsApp continues to be some fun, at least owners will have the chance to get aircraft docs compliant in this new era.

**Bob Pye**

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

A QUIET start to 2020 with flying hampered by EuroFOX engine issues, wet weekend weather and Covid-19. Ground activities continue, with thanks to the workshop team for completing work on the club gliders and to Toni and John B for their work on repairing our roads. HGC is part of a new initiative by Scottish clubs to use a common accident/incident reporting system and to have a shared Google Drive for safety-related documents. This wouldn't be possible without



(Left to right): **Seahawk's** Ed Hillman just before departing to join his flying course at Cranwell; on task - the first **Shalbourne** Condor race via Cwmbran and Hay; from **Southdown** junior member to Scandinavian Airlines First Officer – congratulations to Charles Price



the skills of Wolf Rossman. March brought the start of the thermal soaring season with beautiful, gin-clear views of the snowy Cairngorms and thermals kicking off from the nearby Glenlossie and Mannochemore distilleries.

**John Thomson**

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

THE club WhatsApp group is keeping members connected and entertained with many comedy postings during the shutdown. Our AGM was postponed. Anne Ruglys joined the committee as secretary replacing Robbie Christie, who retired. Many thanks to Robbie for his excellent work and contribution. We've been working to make sure we can resume flying quickly when things improve, which hopefully they have by the time of publication. Before the lockdown, the excessive rainfall meant only limited flying and we all look forward to getting back in the air. The past few months have brought into focus the value of many things. The freedom of flight, normal club life and companionship and, especially, family and friends.

**Mike Bowyer**

**LAKES (WALNEY)**  
**WWW.LAKESGC.CO.UK**  
**570752N 0031549W**

WE SHUT down operations on Friday 20 February for the foreseeable future. Hopefully we will be back in the air soon after this pandemic ends. Peter Seddon, Roy Jones and John Burdett attended a glider maintenance course at Long Mynd. Club members completed the ARC on our K-21, inspected by G Bailey-Wood, the day before we suspended operations. On the bright side, Steve Wilkinson was the only member to fly in February. He did 450km in four hours with a maximum height of 20,000ft! He was at Omarama. They flew to Mt Cook and back. Club members keep in touch with each other through the Lakes GC WhatsApp and keep their interest in gliding.

**Peter Craven**

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

ALL opportunities were taken to fly in February, despite probably one of the wettest ends to winter in living memory.

Cross-country season did get under way in March, with some respectable distances for early in the year. One of our K-13s has gone to Kent GC for a spring break, which should help with their advanced training. Our Jaca expedition also started well, with the majority of days being flyable, including a number of challenging but very successful flights up to the top of the Pyrenees, in both wave and thermal. As we go to press, however, Covid-19 has interrupted the start of the season, but we will be ready again for when restrictions lift.

**Jordan Bridge**

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

LIKE every other club we are devastated by the Covid-19 situation, as a result of which our last flights were on 16 March. Our thoughts are with those who are suffering with the illness. Our efforts are concentrated on staying in touch with members during the lockdown and, apart from emails and Facebook, we have launched a series of 'Wonder Wednesday' online events ('wonder when we will be flying again'), which have been very well attended. Our Easter cross-country competition is going ahead, in the virtual airspace of Slovenia, thanks to Condor. At the time of writing, we remain hopeful that the Dunstable Regionals (22-30 August) will still be able to go ahead.

**Andrew Sampson**

**MENDIP (HALESLAND)**  
**WWW.MENDIPGLIDINGCLUB.CO.UK**  
**511544N 0024356W**

OUR annual dinner, organised by Eric Lacey, was very well attended. Awards went to: Best ab-initio progress, Max Hannabuss; Height gain, Mike Spalding; CFIs Red Ball, John Connor; Outstanding efforts, Lez Saker; Meritorious flight, Jeff Green and James Whitmore. In common with all gliding clubs we are closed, but member Dr Mathis Baumert has organised a virtual gliding operation using Condor 2. Tasks are set and members compete against each other with points going towards a club ladder. Ground school for Bronze badges will continue online, so we can be ready in due course. Members are keeping in touch using social media, and hope to beat this virus and start flying again soon.

**Barry Hogarth**

**MIDLAND (LONG MYND)**  
**WWW.MIDLANDGLIDING.CLUB**  
**523108N 0025233W**

WE MAY not be able to fly, but members are able to keep in touch via WhatsApp, the blog and with regular updates from the committee on the current state of play and how we intend to start flying again as soon as it is safe to do so. Course bookings and first flights will be rescheduled as soon as we reopen. The VGC National Rally has been provisionally rescheduled for September and the Wenlock Olympian Games – Gliding will take place next year, in line with the IOC decision to postpone this year's Olympics. The ongoing support and understanding by the members have been very much appreciated during this difficult time.

**Steven Gunn-Russell**

**NORFOLK (TIBENHAM)**  
**WWW.NORFOLKGLIDINGCLUB.COM**  
**522724N 0010915E**

WE WERE all ready and looking forward to the good season ahead. This year it could be a 750km, Diamonds, Golds, Silvers, the President's Triangle at record speeds, anything and everything was possible. Yet here we are, Covid-19, club shutdown, the skies empty of gliders – members reduced to assessing the weather and thoughts of what it could have been. Watching from their homes good flying conditions pass them by, but we must stay safe and look forward to better times. At least I'm keeping my enthusiasm going with Condor, but it's not the same.

**Adrian and Barbara Prime**

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

AS EVERYONE knows, North Wales is the Garden of Eden of the UK, with long, bright sunny days, rain for only one day a year, every four years, in a leap year. Oh, my wife's just snapped her fingers and I'm back in the room. We had lost several days of flying to rain and now we have Covid-19. I had assumed that because the children were immune to the virus, it wouldn't affect our gliding. As, at the end of the day, we are just big kids at heart. Imagine my surprise and horror, when I was told that it's your physical age that counts, not your mental age. Three of our members completed their Bronze Theory. Two members completed their maintenance course at Long Mynd. Lastly, most of our members flew on 14

(Left to right): **Kenley** airfield before landing out at Epsom! (Steve Codd); **Wrekin's** Geoff Matthews in the club's K-13 joins the Cosford circuit over Pattingham Park; **Wrekin's** Ben Wightman and Nigel Readman prepare for the first flight of the day



✂ March, to keep current. But when will we fly next? Although, with the atrocious weather over the past year, our airfield can have a rest and dry out.

**Ian Masson**

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

LIKE all clubs I'm wondering what to say given that we have, in accordance with the Government and BGA's advice, now stopped all operations. Prior to the current situation we repatriated the passengers left behind from our recent bus acquisition and a good time was had by those members who attended the excellent BGA Conference. We're keeping our members entertained and connected via WhatsApp, and an online lecture programme's being planned. On the positive side, the airfield is drying out nicely with just pestilence and locusts ahead! Our thoughts and sympathies are with all those who've lost loved ones and friends, and we look forward to the sunrise.

**Norman G Nome**

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

ANOTHER poor start with the airfield battered by two storms, and now under lockdown. We also lost a great member and ex-CFI to a long-term illness, please have a look at Dave Crowhurst's obituary (see p70). So, what's PSGC done to try and continue under the current circumstances? We've started a regular committee meeting via the marvels of technology and it worked quite well. The main outcome is to maintain membership we've offered 25 per cent off all subscriptions, kept flying fees and launches the same and are trying to keep everyone involved through WhatsApp. I never knew we had so many witty members! Finally, I wish all of my readers well.

**Roland Pitch**

**RATTLEDEN (RATTLEDEN)**  
**WWW.RATTLEDENGLIDING.COM**  
**521001N 0005216E**

AS I WRITE, we have been in lockdown for about two weeks. By the time you read this, I hope it will all be over. Just before all this kicked off, we managed another runway repair day, with a lovely meal together and a few drinks. Little did we know that that was

going to be our last social gathering for quite a while. We managed a few winter evening talks, which were all very well attended by the membership. Particular ones of note were Tony Haig-Thomas talking of his exploits of being an RAF pilot during the Cold War, and Darren Hatcher, who gave us a very informative talk on the intricacies of RASP.

Here's hoping my next instalment can report some flying being done; just hope you have all managed to stay safe.

**Gary Western**

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

THE LAA registration for our new EuroFOX tug is complete and G-OSGC began flying. The Junior's Series held at Long Mynd was a success and many of our cadets were able to fly. Which is more than could be said for us at Portmoak. The constant rain prevented us flying for six weeks, but as soon as the rain stopped the airfield began to dry out quickly (greatly due to the efforts of Bill Evans slitting the grass to improve drainage). We squeezed in two weeks of limited flying where many were able to maintain their currency; we temporarily closed the airfield to operate on a care and maintenance basis. There are several online projects (lectures, simulator flying), which should keep us busy until we are back flying for real. Onwards and upwards or better perhaps, *Per ardua ad astra*.

**Chris Robinson**

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

SINCE our last report the club has seen little flying, firstly due to storms and now Covid-19. However, we were fortunate to enjoy the first truly thermic day of the season the Sunday before the lockdown put paid to any further aviation. So, we are all ready to go, but stuck on the ground. All is not lost, Ed Hillman qualified for his glider pilot's licence just before departing to join his flying course at Cranwell. We wish him every success. Meanwhile George Kosak and his team of Thursday warriors have been progressing ARCs and updating the instrument fit of a couple of our gliders. Sadly, our annual expedition to Talgarth couldn't go ahead, but we hope that this is only a postponement. We need something to look forward too!

**Chris Bryning**

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

ALTHOUGH mother nature has thrown more than our fair share of wet and/or windy weather in our direction, we've happily squeezed in as much flying as possible. Then lockdown loomed, but alternative activities were quickly organised. Many a joystick (behave!) was dusted off and copies of Condor purchased. It's a chance to try tasks we may never have due to the amount of beer required for the retrieve crew or the size of the mortgage required for the glider in the first place. It's also been a great opportunity to chat while 'flying'. Thanks to Pete for organising some interesting club races. Congratulations to David Noble for winning the first race in his Ventus. In other news, before lockdown the well-attended AGM took place in the Plough. A motion to change the number of elected and appointed positions was passed. Colin B's huge contribution to the continued improvement of the club's infrastructure was recognised by awarding him life membership.

**Claire Willson**

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

JUST as the weather picks up, we are all confined to our houses. In the weeks before lockdown we had some good soaring days, and an enthusiastic turnout to fly and to work on building projects. Our juniors weekend in April has been cancelled, but we've just postponed this year's regionals to the third week of August in the hope that we will be able to fly by then. If we are back in operation by then, we can promise a great end of comp party to celebrate. We are in discussion with Bicester Gliding Club (whose lease has been terminated) about a possible merger of the clubs into a much bigger club based at Shenington. Initial talks are very positive so we hope to have more to report next time! We'd love to have visitors once life gets back to normal – you can email Carole in the office to put potential dates in the diary. Stay safe.

**Tess Whiting**

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

DECEMBER began so well with the return of hill soaring, and January too stirred up



(Left to right): A showery day at **Wyvern** on Sunday 8 March; followed by a rainbow over **Upavon Airfield** (Suzie Forbes); Marcin Rudnicki is chosen to pull the ripcord during a parachute lecture by Mac McDermott at **Yorkshire**



great expectations for things to come. Then the rains returned and our well-drained field, usually an attraction to other clubs in winter, finally became a water meadow. With the arrival of the Great Pandemic, and its implications for group activities, the future looked bleak. Prayers, usually reserved for low approaches, were offered up by some of our more spiritually minded. Salvation duly arrived in the form of glorious soarable wave on St Patrick's Day, 17 March! This event may have to sustain us for some time.

**Peter J Holloway**

#### **SOUTH WALES (USK)**

**WWW.USKGC.CO.UK**

**514306N 0025101W**

LIKE most gliding clubs, due to the spread of Covid-19, our airfield is closed at present except for security checks and (when possible) occasional grass cutting. With very little income for the past six months because of poor weather and now with this shutdown, the club is having to do everything it can to minimise expenses. Fortunately, we own our airfield, we have no debts and no paid staff and we can delay major expenses, such as a possible new hangar. Members are using the internet to stay in contact and enjoy various virtual gliding activities.

**Stuart Edinborough**

#### **STAFFORDSHIRE (SEIGHFORD)**

**WWW.STAFFORDSHIREGLIDING.CO.UK**

**524940N 0021212W**

DESPITE a very wet winter, we have been flying when we can and carrying on with training and check flights to keep people as current as possible. There's been a series of winter Bronze talks delivered by a willing band of knowledgeable instructors and we're in the season of club and private aircraft getting their annuals. Thanks, must go to Stuart Taylor and Richard Mitchel, who worked hard putting up a new mast for an improved webcam and new weather station. Some very funny pictures were taken of this for our WhatsApp group. We are now looking forward to the soaring season, despite the inevitable delay caused by Covid-19. However, it will pass and we will all be back in the air when the time is right, enjoying the delights of the Staffordshire countryside and hopefully many of the lovely counties around us.

**Graham Stanford**

#### **STRATFORD ON AVON (SNITTERFIELD)**

**WWW.STRATFORDGLIDING.CO.UK**

**521406N 0014310W**

IT'S finally stopped raining and the ground has dried out. The field has been rolled and mowed and is looking great. And now that we can't fly, it almost feels like the weather is mocking us with all the sun and the lovely Cu! All our plans for the summer are on hold; hopefully we will be able to salvage something out of the second half of the season. The phrase "all dressed up and no place to go" feels appropriate. Whilst we wait to fly again, many of the club members have been turning to Condor for their flying fix, and for honing their cross-country skills in the virtual world.

**Andy Balkwill**

#### **SURREY HILLS (KENLEY)**

**WWW.SURREYHILLSGLIDING.CO.UK**

**511820N 0000537W**

WELL where do we start – 2020 will be a year nobody will forget in a hurry. Like everyone else, we are very concerned about when we will get back to flying and the problems that will come with everyone having such a long lay-off. The week before we shut saw our ex-manager Steve Codd making what may very well be his last flight from Kenley before departing for pastures new at Portmoak. Steve went out with a bang – after taking some lovely shots of the airfield he managed to land out on a golf course near Epsom. We are using social media, email and video conferencing to keep the members interested – let's hope it works!

**Chris Leggett**

#### **WREKIN (RAF COSFORD)**

**WWW.WREKINGLIDINGCLUB.CO.UK**

**523824N 0021820W**

DESPITE the tug remaining off-line and the wet ground limiting the flying programme, we have made the most of some good soaring days at Cosford, with congratulations going to Will Dean for achieving the first hour off the winch in 2020. Unfortunately, Covid-19 has seen the postponement of our Easter Expedition to Llanbedr to later in the year and is also affecting our flying programme at Cosford. On the plus side, the preparation for the move to Shawbury continues. Monthly meetings with staff of RAF Shawbury have commenced and we now have a clear action plan for the move. Meanwhile a good clear-

out of surplus kit and equipment at Cosford has generated some welcome income for the club.

**Geoff Catling**

#### **YORK (RUFFORTH)**

**WWW.YORKGLIDINGCENTRE.CO.UK**

**5357100N 00111332W**

IT'S been a turbulent winter, with extensive flooding in the area and the impact of storms Ciara and Dennis to contend with. In between times there has been some excellent wave soaring and our concrete runway has made sure we have been able to operate when the grass was waterlogged. Our series of winter lectures has been well received. Following a successful landout in January, we have seen at first hand the benefit of using the 'What Three Words' app to locate a glider and we are encouraging all our members to adopt its use. We have now published our course dates for this year, but it remains to be seen what effect the wider national situation may have on our operation as the soaring season approaches.

**Andy Carden**

#### **YORKSHIRE (SUTTON BANK)**

**WWW.YGC.CO.UK**

**541338N 0011249W**

LOOKING back – we sent some spectacular aerial photos of the flooding of the river Ayr, which runs close to our airfield, to our local press. The photos were taken by Alastair Mackenzie and gave us some positive publicity. In the nick of time, Neil Bale completed his Bronze C and Paul Jackson passed the Bronze exam. Some managed annual checks too. We got our winter programme going. The parachute lecture by Mac McDermott was well received (see also pages 13-19) and lucky member Marcin Rudnicki pulled the ripcord! We have responded to the lockdown by setting up virtual pub nights and tutorials. Many members are taking the opportunity to hone up on theory and software skills. The BGA virtual lecture and webinar facility is timely and welcome: many thanks to all involved in setting this up. We have closed for flying activities – but we are optimistic!

**Neil Bale**

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



## > CLUB FOCUS

### STRATFORD ON AVON

#### AT A GLANCE

##### Membership:

Full: £440pa  
Junior: £79pa  
Cadet: £440pa (all flying fees included)

##### Launch type:

Winch: £9.95  
Motor-glider: £79ph

##### Club fleet:

2 x K-21, K-13, SZD Junior, Astir CS 77, LS4, SF25 motor-glider

##### Private gliders:

19

##### Instructors/Members:

24/90

##### Types of lift:

Thermal and occasional wave

##### Operates:

Weekends, Tuesdays and Thursdays in summer, plus four club flying/course weeks. Weekends and one weekday in winter

##### Contact:

Tel: 01789 731095  
Email: [chairman@stratfordgliding.co.uk](mailto:chairman@stratfordgliding.co.uk)  
[www.stratfordgliding.co.uk](http://www.stratfordgliding.co.uk)

##### Long and Lat:

520416N, 0014310W

##### Radio:

129.980MHz (visiting power by special arrangement only)



OUR friendly and welcoming club is situated just a couple of miles north of Shakespeare's Stratford on Avon at Snitterfield

Airfield. The club was formed at Long Marston in 1974 and moved to this ex-WW2 site in 1987. Our flat east-west oriented 100-acre site is ideal for winch launching and large enough for landing in any wind direction. We're a winch-only site, using a Skylaunch and a back-up winch equipped with Dyneema cable for optimum launch heights of up to 2,000ft.

Set in the heart of Warwickshire and near to the Cotswolds, we enjoy excellent thermal conditions and pilots are occasionally able to contact wave to the west of the site.

Our fleet has recently been enhanced by the addition of a second K-21 – replacing one of our K-13s – so we now have two K-21s, a K-13, a Junior, an Astir and an LS4. In addition, we own an SF25 Falke which is available for early pilot training,

cross-country endorsements and general flying by members. The gliders are all expertly maintained on site in our purpose-built workshop.

The single-seater fleet provides an ideal mix of gliders to satisfy the needs of the early-solo pilots, as well as for providing progression to cross-country flying. We actively encourage cross-country flying and last year we flew more than 12,000km from the site. Our members also compete in the Junior Nationals and regionals.

We have a large team of instructors with a range of interests, which ensures there is always someone available to help those learning or seeking assistance. They also run our one-day and five-day courses, and the club flying week every August. This year's week is running from 2 August if you would like to attend. So, we have a great fleet, and

instructors catering for all tastes in a friendly club atmosphere set in a lovely part of the country – come and visit us!

**Andy Balkwill**







If you have time on your hands, why not build an impressive card model of an SG-38 primary glider?

# POCKET MONEY VINTAGE GLIDER

**O**NE thing's certain – 2020 is not going to be a 'vintage' year for gliding, **writes VGC President Andrew Jarvis**. Everything has moved so fast except our gliders, which are staying firmly on the ground. Looking back at what I wrote in the last issue (*Join the club*, p61), I even feel a little guilty, having urged people to join the Vintage Glider Club, which can now offer you only cancelled rallies – at least for several months.

The UK National Rally at the Long Mynd is postponed and the new date is 12-18 September. The rallies at The Park and at Parham are cancelled, as listed in the adjacent text. We have recently learned that the 2020 International events in Germany – that is, the Rendezvous at Nordhorn-Lingen and the 48th International Rally at Achmer – have now been cancelled/postponed to 2021. The planned 2021 International Rally at Celje, Slovenia, will now happen in 2022.

With all this 'war' against the Coronavirus, one likes to be inspired by Winston Churchill, but I think the most appropriate quote from the great man is this: "everyone should have two or three hobbies – and they should be real ones!". Well, you must have at least one hobby, or else you wouldn't be reading S&G. But suddenly your

glider is grounded, you may be very short of money and you have hours of spare time. So I'm offering you the chance to create a real vintage glider on your table top, for real pocket money.

The photo (above) shows a beautiful card model of the historic SG-38 primary glider. Incidentally, while the name SG-38 suggests a jet fighter, the designation SG stands for Schneider, Grunau, and (19)38 was the year of its design. An estimated 10,000 were built by various factories during WW2.

The kit comprises a pack of card sheets to build a 40cm-wingspan model, using just sharp scissors and PVA glue. The German-made kit is offered to S&G readers by Marcle Models of Amersham, Bucks, at the very special price of £14 including UK postage. Their website address is [www.marcle.co.uk](http://www.marcle.co.uk) and phone number 01494 765910. Don't forget to mention S&G.

The Marcle range is incredible and includes a dozen gliders, many of which you've never heard of! I had a nice long chat with Chris Cooke, the man behind Marcle Models, and he confided that he did try gliding at Booker some years ago. He couldn't quite get the hang of it, but I really hope we can get him airborne again, maybe in the Booker T-21.

## EVENTS IN 2020

IT'S AWFUL conveying bad news, isn't it? I'm sure you'll all have been checking the VGC website and so you won't be surprised by anything I write here. What follows is the present situation regarding the UK rallies for 2020, mostly cancelled or under threat due to the Covid-19 pandemic:

■ **Park and Glide Rally at The Park (8-12 May) was CANCELLED.** This one is very sad, as Phil Drake and Geoff Pook had put lots of enthusiasm into planning this new event, but we will certainly relaunch it next year.

■ **The UK National Rally at the Long Mynd (23-30 May) is POSTPONED to 12-18 September.** If the virus is still causing mayhem in the preceding weeks, cancellation will be inevitable and then the next UK National Rally would be the long-awaited one at Bellarena, Northern Ireland, in May 2021.

■ **Southdown90 at Parham (8-12 June) is CANCELLED.**

■ **As I write, Mike Armstrong is still holding out in inspiring fashion and the 25th Camphill Vintage Rally, 10th Capstan Reunion (19-26 June) remains 'active'.** So is the Long Mynd Olympian week 13-17 July.

■ **The last of the early summer rallies, the new Wooden Wings Week (19-25 July) at Snitterfield, is still active – so far.** The organiser is Nick Jaffray.

■ **By late summer, we hope some normality will be re-established, and Graham Saw again invites you to his Whispering Wardrobes Rally (note the earlier-than-usual date of 28-29 August).**

■ **Last, but far from least, is the Slingsby Week (29 August-5 September) at Sutton Bank.** The organiser is now Jerry Henderson-Newton, with veteran Phil Lazenby taking a background role.

Please note that the VGC Board is agreed that the decision of go or no-go on each rally rests with the host club, not the VGC, so please check the relevant club's website.

We can only look forward to better times, when we can sing "happy days are here again!"

# BGA CLUB ANNUAL STATISTICS



1 OCTOBER 2018 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2019

	MEMBERSHIP					FLYING					NEW PILOTS			
	Full Flying Members	Under 21	Female Members	Affiliated Members	Temporary Members	Non-Flying Members	Total Launches	Winch Launches	Estimated Hours Flown	Solo	Bronze Endorsement	Cross-Country Endorsement		
Airways Airport	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Andreas	7	0	0	0	8	0	142	92	24	0	0	0	0	0
Anglia	35	9	6	0	5	0	1162	959	700	2	2	0	2	0
Banbury	59	8	2	0	97	0	1148	0	610	0	3	2	3	2
Bannernedown	70	16	9	4	86	7	2732	2415	1408	2	2	2	2	2
Bath, Wilts & North Dorset	104	14	5	30	139	35	3390	2947	1744	7	4	2	2	2
Bicester	132	31	8	91	798	37	8055	6977	3975	14	5	3	5	3
Bidford	82	10	6	0	270	13	1300	0	550	1	1	0	1	0
Black Mountains	75	5	5	0	299	4	1846	0	2191	2	2	0	2	0
Bognor Regis	3	0	0	0	15	1	75	0	65	0	0	0	0	0
Booker	126	20	7	0	437	13	3016	0	2791	3	0	1	3	1
Borders	104	14	5	0	125	18	1772	0	1569	1	1	1	1	1
Bowland Forest	114	22	11	0	191	22	2767	2767	1056	1	0	4	0	4
Bristol & Gloucestershire	119	24	13	50	343	38	3790	2608	3664	10	4	6	4	6
Buckminster	98	10	7	42	294	3	3333	1688	992	7	5	8	7	8
Burn	65	16	2	0	107	16	3643	3099	1029	4	0	3	4	3
Cairngorm	47	6	3	0	45	3	735	21	884	2	3	3	2	3
Cambridge	192	27	19	400	549	65	8824	7356	4900	23	7	3	23	3
Channel	23	4	0	0	161	1	830	775	114	0	1	0	0	0
Chilterns	63	8	4	19	39	0	2602	2547	937	4	3	3	4	3
Cotswold	143	7	6	79	414	24	6155	5311	2962	10	1	3	10	3
Cranwell	68	10	9	10	45	0	3738	3044	952	5	1	0	5	0
Darlington	61	5	1	22	207	3	2474	2280	603	1	1	0	1	0
Dartmoor	28	0	1	0	72	1	1624	1624	429	0	0	1	0	1
Deeside	77	20	5	6	300	4	2460	0	2679	1	0	2	1	2
Denbigh	11	0	0	0	0	0	614	144	1200	0	0	0	0	0
Derbyshire & Lancashire	138	19	7	0	259	32	4548	4547	1630	3	1	1	3	1
Devon & Somerset	159	29	10	0	258	64	5430	4844	1867	6	3	2	6	2
Dorset	47	5	1	0	147	24	1203	556	470	2	2	1	2	1
Dumfries & District	24	5	3	0	6	3	338	334	96	0	0	1	0	1
East Sussex	96	9	2	0	41	36	2872	2111	783	5	2	1	5	1
Edensoaring	31	6	2	0	87	0	1275	1275	585	3	0	0	3	0
Essex & Suffolk	120	27	8	0	238	11	5046	4946	1860	9	2	3	9	3
Essex	54	6	5	0	284	3	1599	1350	291	1	3	0	1	0
Fenlands	5	0	0	0	2	2	181	50	96	0	0	0	0	0
Gliding Centre	305	46	0	0	296	32	5441	2840	3000	9	1	0	9	0
Herefordshire	37	5	5	0	74	15	860	0	836	1	1	2	1	2
Heron	19	0	0	0	22	0	740	212	259	0	0	2	0	2
Highland/Fulmar	35	4	7	20	31	19	718	146	423	1	0	0	1	0



Kent	138	19	6	0	459	35	4794	3567	1428	17	8	6
Kestrel	69	21	7	5	115	5	1071	944	210	3	1	0
Lakes	23	3	2	0	26	9	315	0	185	0	0	1
Lasham	758	88	67	30	675	87	20378	12490	6700	27	20	19
Lincolnshire	21	0	4	0	118	2	1434	1434	206	1	0	0
London	241	27	16	0	674	29	8794	3728	5000	9	6	7
Mendip	45	5	3	0	200	0	2070	1931	472	4	3	1
Midland	88	7	6	10	337	11	4727	4652	2400	7	5	3
MotorGlide	7	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nene Valley	74	21	13	0	265	10	2380	2300	534	3	0	1
Norfolk	107	12	6	0	306	19	2721	2018	1270	1	1	0
North Devon	5	0	5	0	62	0	125	0	50	0	0	0
North Wales	34	3	2	0	192	4	1192	1192	168	0	1	0
Northumbria	60	13	3	0	90	5	1103	0	558	1	1	0
Oxford	68	5	5	0	338	25	3050	3050	700	5	3	3
Oxfordshire Sportflying	70	0	0	0	18	0	1762	0	780	0	0	0
Peterborough & Spalding	54	8	2	17	221	4	1124	0	748	0	0	1
Rattlesden	80	14	15	0	285	24	2795	2006	925	2	2	1
Sackville Vintage	1	0	0	0	0	0	60	0	30	0	0	0
Scottish	213	28	12	19	494	0	8519	6365	4959	19	9	5
Seahawk	31	3	0	0	57	1	1058	549	316	4	2	3
Shalbourne	54	3	0	25	214	0	2661	2661	845	3	3	6
Shenington	77	9	8	0	441	0	3331	2580	1459	5	0	2
Shropshire	5	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Wales	75	15	3	0	107	4	2033	1580	670	2	0	0
Southdown	211	46	16	60	256	50	3739	372	2830	1	1	3
Staffordshire	88	11	5	0	141	32	3486	2590	1058	3	3	4
Stratford	89	11	6	0	313	11	4207	4105	1294	2	4	1
Surrey Hills	45	9	1	0	170	0	2834	2834	557	3	3	1
Trent Valley	66	7	3	0	497	2	2712	1972	1224	3	0	0
Ulster	49	0	0	0	120	0	561	0	330	0	0	0
Vale of White Horse	21	0	0	0	25	0	406	76	500	0	0	0
Welland	35	0	0	0	9	0	990	817	332	3	0	0
Wolds	159	28	10	0	803	26	5625	4108	2064	2	1	1
Wrekin	18	0	2	0	53	0	927	662	433	1	0	0
Wyvern	59	8	5	0	232	2	3978	3616	1197	7	4	3
York	118	18	5	0	229	6	2385	223	1902	1	0	1
Yorkshire	224	48	22	27	778	36	4939	635	4172	0	1	1
<b>Totals 2019</b>	<b>6561</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>966</b>	<b>16113</b>	<b>988</b>	<b>212591</b>	<b>145095</b>	<b>98730</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>134</b>

Zero activity shown indicates no information supplied by the club

The British Gliding Association (established 1929) is the governing body for the sport in the UK, representing and furthering its interests in an increasingly competitive environment. Its mission statement is "to provide effective leadership and continuity of gliding and soaring in the UK". You can use the interactive map at [www.gliding.co.uk/findaclub/ukmap.htm](http://www.gliding.co.uk/findaclub/ukmap.htm) to locate the club you require. University gliding clubs are listed at [www.gliding.co.uk/findaclub/university.htm](http://www.gliding.co.uk/findaclub/university.htm)

# BACKROOM BOYS\*

## How the BGA safety team analyses gliding accidents

**W**E RECEIVE around 170 accident/incident reports each year. The BGA archives go back to 1974 and occupy nearly 10Gb of disk space. Together with a database of key details from over 7,000 reports, they form an invaluable resource that we consult almost every day. What we learn from past misfortunes can help make our sport safer in future.

### Accident and incident reporting

The BGA requires a report [1] of any accident causing injury or damage, and if the injury or damage is serious then the DfT's Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB) must be advised as well. We also encourage reports of any accident or incident with broader safety implications; if in doubt, please report it. Your club will welcome reports of more local consequence.

Accident/incident reports are collected by the BGA office and circulated each week (sooner if urgent) in confidence to the safety team. We read every one of them. The chief technical officer picks up airworthiness aspects, while implications for instruction, tugging, airspace, etc, are addressed by other relevant experts. We discuss any accidents that have broader implications, and they all



help us build a picture of what's happening. Details of each report are entered into our database, and a brief anonymised summary is written for publication in S&G. We don't distinguish between accidents and incidents: the difference between a close shave and a serious accident is often just down to luck.

### Accident investigation

Clubs do a great job of looking into the facts and causes of accidents, and we're grateful to club safety officers, CFIs and everyone else involved for their efforts. We can't respond individually to each report, but we're always grateful for this valuable work.

If an accident was, or could have been, especially serious, or was in a category that particularly concerns us (eg involving a third party or young person), or simply if we think it merits further examination, we ask one of

the BGA's accident investigators to look into it [2]. This generally involves visiting the site and interviewing those involved. The BGA also investigates many non-fatal accidents on behalf of the AAIB. The aim is always to establish what happened and, crucially, why – not to attribute blame.

Some investigation reports are published on the AAIB and BGA websites, and in S&G, though formalities sometimes cause lengthy delays.

### Accident database

Accident/incident and investigation reports identify the facts and origins in specific cases, and individual reports can also reveal snags of which we were unaware, such as new ways of mis-rigging aircraft. A recent AAIB investigation, for example, unearthed a series of unauthorised modifications that made automatic connections less foolproof [3].

More often, reports are the inspiration for more general analysis to help us set priorities and find common causes that, through changes to training, procedures or technology, we might be able to fix. Some suggestions for lines to investigate come from within the safety team; others from the broader gliding world; and clubs sometimes ask us to analyse their own safety histories.

The starting point is our database. Basic statistics allow a simple 'health check' – the number of winch launch accidents, for example, and how this year compares with previous years. Long-term statistics have also identified certain rigging vulnerabilities, as with ASW19/20, Pegase and PIK 20 elevators. However, as accidents are thankfully relatively rare, we often find that the data lacks statistical significance; and, while glaring differences should stand out, we rarely have the normalisation data to allow comparison of, say, rates per hour flown by different categories of pilot, aircraft or operation. As with all data, it's crucial to know the precision and uncertainty.

### Backroom analysis

Database categorisations can lose important subtleties, so we mainly use the database to give an initial selection of archived accident



■ This topical cartoon was sent in by Kevin Clark. It is from his recently-published book *Glidertoons*. Kevin flies at Wellington Gliding Club, New Zealand, and as an Ass Cat has cleared many visiting Brit instructors to instruct at the club.



reports, which is extended or refined until we have all that are relevant. It helps hugely that we label each accident in the database by its apparent immediate cause: aerotow upset, inadvertent spin, collision, etc.

We then read the reports in detail. This can take time if they run into the hundreds, but it lets us understand what happened and ensures any figures we extract are reliable.

Sometimes, we'll find some common features behind a number of accidents: wing drop leading to winch launch cartwheels, or distraction causing low-level aerotow upsets. This can involve deeper study, tests and calculations. Revised winch launch advice [4] required new calculations of forces during rotation and energy during recovery; and we learned a lot about aerotow upsets from some brave test flights a generation ago.

We can also examine individual accidents in more detail. Reports nowadays can be accompanied by video or logger recordings, which are sometimes invaluable in working out what happened and why. Video can show instrument readings, control movements and aircraft attitude and replay the pilot's mutterings, and logger traces can reveal not only the glider's path but in some cases its configuration.

At glider speeds it's crucial to correct GPS velocities for wind if a glide computer hasn't already done so: accident reports and meteorological records can supply the needed data. The absence of an engine, on the other hand, means that the total energy can be a useful measure as the airspeed changes: in one case, we could tell that the pilot had mistaken the flaps for the airbrakes.

Discrepancies between instruments can tell us about more than wind corrections. In one case, reports of Dutch-rolling (yaw rolling) on aerotow were supported (though not proved) by periodic differences between the GPS and barometric altitude, though the slow logging rate was unhelpful. Indeed, sparse data, incomplete reports and complex situations mean our analyses aren't always conclusive.

#### **Safer gliding**

If we're lucky, our analysis may then suggest ways to mitigate some accidents. It's said that there are no new accidents in gliding, but they can manifest themselves differently and there's always room for new solutions.

We try not to reinvent the wheel, so we look at solutions elsewhere in gliding, aviation and the wider world. We increasingly find ourselves up against

human factors and, while education, training and testing can help, we often need more imaginative ways to tackle human shortcomings. Changes of procedure or technology are easier.

It takes a while for small-number statistics to reveal changes, but we can be reasonably sure of two safety improvements. The 2005 Safe Winch Launch initiative [4] has been followed by a four-fold reduction in fatal or serious injuries from winch launch accidents, and approaching 10 lives have so far been saved. The adoption of FLARM over the same period has all but eliminated collisions between equipped aircraft, with no glider-glider collisions in the past five years.

#### **Other benefits**

Our accident data has other beneficial uses. Policy ideas, among both regulators and insurers, often stem from a hunch and our solid statistics can be very influential. One pilot avoided an aerobatics exclusion in his life insurance thanks to a BGA statement of the low historic risk; and we've headed off similar concerns by showing that clubs are managing the risk as pilots get older. We'll only provide aggregate statistics, though – nothing that could identify pilots or clubs, or bias insurance premiums. Confidential reporting is a crucial part of a 'just culture'.

The main purpose of accident analysis though is to make gliding safer. Your accident/incident reports make this possible. Please keep reporting – do include all the details, let us know about close shaves and, if in doubt, please report it. Feel free to set your loggers to record at 1s intervals too!

**Tim Freearge and the BGA safety team**

■ Clubs can obtain printed copies of Safety Briefings from the BGA Office.

■ For more information, see the Safety section of the BGA website [5], where you'll find the accident report form [6] and the latest annual accident review [7].

✱ We need backroom girls, too. Drop us a line if you're interested.

- [1] BGA Reporting an Accident, Incident or Occurrence <https://tinyurl.com/flyright2012>
- [2] BGA Post Accident/ Incident Process <https://tinyurl.com/flyright2013>
- [3] AAIB Investigation G-CKLR <https://tinyurl.com/flyright2014>
- [4] BGA Safe Winch Launching <https://tinyurl.com/flyright2015>
- [5] BGA Safety website <https://tinyurl.com/flyright2016>
- [6] BGA Accident Report form <https://tinyurl.com/flyright2017>
- [7] BGA 2019 Accident Review <https://tinyurl.com/flyright2018>

#### **PREVIOUS 'FLY RIGHT' ARTICLES**

- The Perils of Distraction* (Apr/May 19)
- Keeping Safe in Thermals* (June/July 19)
- Why It Is Good to Think Ahead* (Aug/Sep 19)
- The Effects of Wind Gradient* (Oct/Nov 19)
- A Fun but Safe Introduction* (Dec 19/Jan 20)
- Stop the drop* (Feb/March 20)
- Avoiding Upset* (Apr/May 20)

## **BGA Club Management Conference 2020**

Sunday 22nd November, venue to be confirmed

Chairmen's Conference

Treasurers' Forum

CFI Forum

Juniors' Conference

**Clubs sharing information and ideas**



# BGA accident/incident summaries

AIRCRAFT		Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
Ref	Type				
154	K-13	substantial	27/08/19, 16:25	none/none	771
Glider ran backwards into fence. After a successful recovery from a simulated launch failure the P2 started the circuit. The intention was to hangar land and a suitable reference point was nominated by the P2. However, the P2 turned onto base leg too close in and allowed the speed to increase to 70 knots. The P1 took over at 400ft agl and attempted to add sideslip to full airbrake to lose energy but, in the light wind, the glider landed long and the P1 chose to groundloop the glider before hitting the fence. One wing and the tailplane were damaged after hitting fence posts. The P1 reports that, in hindsight, turning away from the landing area would have been a better option. The CFI points out that taking over earlier would have given the P1 more time to assess the options.					
155	DG-300	substantial	05/09/19, 13:30	none	731
Undercarriage broke during landing. After a normal landing, about two-thirds through the ground run, the glider ran over a rough patch of ground, bending the undercarriage fork.					
156	DG-1000	substantial	07/09/19, 15:30	none/none	1989
Undercarriage collapsed during landing. The wheel retracted almost immediately on touching down and the glider slid for some 100 yards along a Tarmac runway. As the pilots got out, they noted that the undercarriage lever was still in the locked down position. The underside of the fuselage was severely abraded and internal damage to the undercarriage mechanism is assumed. The glider had a history of undercarriage issues and the pilots were thorough in checking that the wheel was locked down.					
159	ASW 20	substantial	01/09/19, 12:20	none	1068
Field landing damage. During a club expedition the pilot found himself low over unfamiliar territory. Although the best fields contained livestock, he was able to select a suitable field and set up a circuit. For reasons the pilot cannot recall, possibly related to the stress of landing out, the pilot rejected his chosen field and ended up landing downwind into a field which was too small. The pilot chose to groundloop the glider before rolling backwards into the boundary hedge. The tail boom broke and there was extensive damage to the fin and rudder.					
161	ASW 19	substantial	02/09/19, 13:20	none	1024
Hard landing. The pilot set up an approach onto the short landing area into wind on the ridge top airfield, but overshot the landing and flew back onto the ridge. A witness reports seeing neither the airbrakes nor the undercarriage during the approach. The pilot then set up an approach onto the longer landing run, parallel to the ridge and crosswind. The pilot believed that he was using full airbrake, but still overshooting; he also reports turbulence as he got lower and the glider landed heavily. It bounced a few times and groundlooped through 90° before coming to rest with a broken fuselage. The CFI's analysis of the flight trace shows the approach was flown at about 75 knots and the speed maintained until the glider hit the ground. The pilot points out that in his previous glider, an ASW 15, the airbrake and undercarriage levers were also on the left side of the cockpit, but that in the ASW 15, the relative positions were the reverse of the ASW 19.					
163	Skylark 4	substantial	18/09/19, 16:15	none	1906
Field landing accident. The skid sank into the soft earth on touchdown and then broke off, pulling the glider sideways. The right wing touched the ground and the glider groundlooped through 300°. The fuselage snapped, the skid broke into two pieces and the canopy was also broken.					
165	Grob Acro	substantial	21/09/19, 14:40	none	23
Heavy landing. The pilot had flown gliders solo before but, after a three-year break, he had flown several check flights on two separate days before being cleared to fly a solo flight. The glider was seen to make a normal approach using about two-thirds airbrake but, as he rounded out, the pilot experienced some PIO. He chose to close the airbrakes, but that made the PIO even worse. After a few oscillations the glider stalled at about 5ft agl and landed heavily, damaging the fuselage around the mainwheel area.					
<b>2020</b>					
2	LS3	substantial	02/10/19, 13:00	none	22
Field landing accident. While ridge soaring, the pilot pushed into wind to search for wave but found sink instead. After turning round to return to the ridge the sink worsened and he quickly found himself only 400ft agl. Selecting the only field without livestock or bales he landed uphill, but downwind. As he crested the slope he saw the field perimeter wall and tried to turn the glider. The glider slid sideways on the wet grass into the wall, damaging the leading edge and underside of the wing and scratching the fuselage. The CFI's report points out that flying the approach at 70 knots to allow for the round out onto an uphill slope may have contributed to landing longer than intended.					



# BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
<b>Incidents</b>					
157	K-13	none	08/09/19, 11:20	-	5585
After releasing from the cable, the student turned away from overhead the winch. As the wings rolled level the P1 saw another glider pass underneath, reasonably close, without triggering a FLARM warning. During a post-flight debrief the P1 was satisfied that there was no risk of collision as the other instructor had seen the glider and was keeping clear. However, the reporting P1 learnt that the other glider was flying with the FLARM switched off, despite having power available. The P1 had previously had a close encounter with another glider also flying with a switched off FLARM. He reported this latter incident to the club safety officer, who agreed that the club should encourage 100 per cent FLARM coverage in club gliders.					
158	Mini Nimbus	none	01/09/19, 12:50	-	1241
Uncommanded release during aerotow take-off. The launch helper seemed to have some trouble attaching the tow rope to the hook under the fuselage and in front of the mainwheel, but after the glider was pulled forward slightly during the 'on and secure' check the pilot was happy to proceed with the launch. The rope released from the glider at about 10-15ft agl; the pilot's hand was on the flap handle at the time. The pilot was able to land ahead. The launch helper reports that he had put the ring into the hook in an incorrect position.					
160	Grob 103	none	27/08/19, 11:45	-	1638
Wingtip touched the ground during a low-level turn. After recovering from a simulated low launch failure the P2 chose to land ahead. While holding off he felt that there was insufficient room to land straight ahead so started to bank the glider to turn towards an overshoot area. The P1 took control after the wingtip touched the ground and was able to land ahead. No damage was found during an engineering inspection and the glider was returned to service.					
162	ASW 20	minor	08/09/19, 10:30	-	-
While inspecting the fuselage following a heavy landing the previous day, the fuselage rolled over in the belly dolly, cracking the canopy. Both the canopy and frame need replacing.					
164	EuroFOX	none	20/09/19, 11:40	-	-
As the aerotow combination approached a rise in the airfield the tug pilot saw a TMG taxi out from a maintenance facility straight towards them. The tug pilot released the glider and was able to take off and overfly the taxiing aircraft. The TMG pilot had not received a briefing, but had seen the club's other tug parked at the fuel pumps and assumed that the club were not aerotowing at the time.					
166	Alliance	none	01/09/19, 12:30	none/none	316
Trial flight field landing. The instructor was monitoring the passenger's first attempts at flying the glider when he realised he had become disorientated and unsure of his position. Believing that he was upwind of the airfield, he followed some power lines downwind to the south. By the time the pilot realised that he was lost, the glider was getting low so the pilot made a safe landing in a field more than 10 miles from the club. The club safety officer points out that a single ground feature may not be enough to establish a location.					
167	Astir	minor	18/09/19, 10:00	-	-
A faulty tyre valve meant that the tyre was flat. Club members used a two-seat glider belly dolly to raise the fuselage, but the fuselage rotated slightly until the edge of the dolly caught under the partially open canopy on the hinge side. As the members continued to raise the dolly it pulled out the front hinge attachment screws, bending both the front and back hinges. The report recommends that club members seek the help of maintenance personnel whenever possible before working on club gliders.					
168	Grob 103	none	17/08/19, 15:00	none/none	-
	Grob 102	none		none	407
The 103 was circling near the airfield just above circuit height with a trial flight passenger. The 102 returned towards the airfield and passed close enough to the 103 that both pilots took avoiding action. The 102 then turned onto a downwind leg and again flew close enough to the 103 to necessitate avoiding action. Although both gliders were equipped with FLARM neither received a FLARM alert. It was later discovered that the club-owned 102 had a defective antenna plug. The report points out that the FLARM user's manual requires pilots to check that the power, GPS and send LEDs are continuously on before flight.					

**Continued on p68**

## BGA accident/incident summaries *continued*

### AIRCRAFT

Ref	Type	Damage	Date, time	PILOT Injury	P1 hours
169	DG-505	none	21/09/19, 10:40	none/none	1876
Tug upset. The pilot reports pulling the release at 3,000ft ato and climbing away, not noticing that the glider was still attached. He then pulled the release again and the glider detached from the towrope. The tug pilot reports being pinned to the side of the cockpit with the Pawnee in a vertical attitude and seeing the underside of the glider in the mirror. He was unable to reach the release knob, but was able to recover to normal flight once the glider released.					
170	not reported	none	10/09/19, 17:30	-	-
Trial flight tug upset. The glider P1 reports that the passenger asked him to pass across her camera, which had been stowed in the rear cockpit. Initially he refused, explaining that he needed to focus on the tug. When he relented, the distraction led to the glider getting out of position. Instead of releasing the pilot chose to recover to the normal position. The tug pilot reports being rapidly tipped into a nose down attitude at about 500ft agl. He was reaching for the release when the tug responded to control input and returned to the normal attitude so he continued the tow.					
<b>2020</b>					
1	PA 25	none	02/10/19, 11:05	-	475
Car crossed landing area. The wind was light and variable so for this first tow of the day the tug took off to the north-west, but landed to the east. Just after touching down he looked ahead and was surprised to see a car crossing the landing area just in front of him. He noticed it too late to go around and estimates that the wingtip missed the back end of the car by about 10ft. The car driver reports that the gate was already open so he scanned towards the launchpoint and the south-west runway, but not to the east, the direction the tug was approaching from.					
3	SF 25c	minor	09/10/19, 11:00	-	-
While opening the canopy, the pilot held on to the retaining strap to lower the canopy gently. The strap disconnected at the canopy end allowing the canopy to hit the cowling, leaving an 18" crack across the canopy.					

During BGA Club Safety Officer seminars it was proposed that, to further encourage reporting, it would be a good idea to remove site names from summaries. This has been reflected in the summaries on these pages. Edward Lockhart continues to provide a little extra detail, where available, in these listings. 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](mailto:editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk) or by post to the address on p3.

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## BGA BADGES

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
<b>Gold Badge</b>			
	Claudia Hill	Bicester	30/12/2019
<b>Gold Height</b>			
	Claudia Hill	Bicester	30/12/2019
	John Romanes	(Lake Keepit, Australia) Borders	15/12/2019
<b>Silver Duration</b>			
	Jeffrey Shen	Chilterns (Portmoak)	13/02/2020
<b>Cross Country Endorsement</b>			
	Tomasz Zawisza	Cambridge	08/12/2019
<b>Basic</b>			
	Paul Richer	London	03/10/2020

## RON COURTNEY (1928-2020)



RATTLESDEN Gliding Club is saddened to announce the untimely death of Ron Courtney, its oldest flying member, at the age of 92 due to complications arising from Coronavirus.

Ron recently returned to gliding, which he first tried in his youth, after the death of his wife. He was a keen member, clocking up over 200 flights in the five years of his membership. He participated fully in the life of the club, which he regularly attended as part of the Wednesday crowd despite the 90-mile return journey from his home in Docking in North West Norfolk. He enjoyed launches by both winch and aerotow, totalling over 50 hours of gliding flight.

He is pictured above in the club K-21 during the 2019 expedition to Portmoak. Ron last flew on 11 March 2020, enjoying three winch launches.

His instructor, and club chairman, Kevin Western said: "My last flight with Ron was enlivened by Ron deciding that some loops and chandelles would be fun and Ron flying them to a high standard. He was a truly remarkable character and will be hugely missed. Rattlesden Gliding Club would like to send the club's appreciation of his zest for life, and regret and sadness regarding his untimely death, to his family and friends."

**Grenville Croll, Rattlesden GC**

## DAVID CROWHURST (1944-2020)



IT'S WITH great sadness that I write this obituary to such a fine gentleman and good friend. Dave Crowhurst sadly passed away in February, peacefully after a long illness which he fought bravely for many years.

Born into a flying family, his father being a wartime pilot and instructor, it was obvious that his father's love of flying would rub off onto his three sons, who all learnt to fly from an early age. Dave loved flying, enjoying the freedom and exhilaration found in gliding and, despite living many miles from PSGC, he made this the club he would devote his life and energies to for the next 40 years. In the early days he owned several "hot ships" such as a Libelle, LS3 and, latterly, his "Gentlemen's Carriage" – a Skylark 4. He also owned a Tiger Moth, a Hawker Fury and a Mini Max, but regardless of type, age or performance, as long as he was airborne Dave was at his happiest.

His love for flying was infectious and as an instructor his enthusiasm was obvious, be it out on the airfield, in the classroom or in the cockpit. Dave was always approachable with an ability to settle the nervous, coax those unsure of their abilities and present a confident reassurance for everyone else. He delighted in seeing our junior members succeed and would often take them flying, generally at his own expense. Dave was also very proud of his sons, Simon and Jim, who both learnt to fly. Jim actually became "quite good" and, emigrating to Australia, represented Oz at international level.

As CFI, a position held for 10 years, he was instrumental in setting up many of the good practices we still follow today at PSGC. Dave loved the annual expeditions to Aboyne and Milfield where we enjoyed flying together, often great flights, some not so, but those will remain our secret. His other talent (supervised by his wife, Glenice) was cooking the most formidable roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, which was a treat to behold. When it wasn't flyable, Dave and I would spend hours in the local trout lakes catching our supper, which went especially well with a bottle of Loch Nagar whisky. I have fine memories of just sitting in front of the log fire talking rubbish for hours at the end of such days.

Dave leaves behind his wife, Glenice, and their three children, Simon, Jim and Ruth, and grandchildren he doted on, not to mention his faithful labrador Chester; we send you all our condolences. 10/4 rubber duck, and watch out for the Lesser Spotted Purple Breasted Swivel Beak; you will be missed my friend in so many ways by so many.

**Kev Fear, Peterborough & Spalding GC**

## CLAUDE WOODHOUSE (1925-2020)



CLAUDE joined the RAF and trained as a pilot, getting his wings in 1943. He served at the No1 Training School in Texas. After returning to the UK, he flew Lancasters and other aircraft before returning to civilian life.

He then studied to be a chartered surveyor and, as he was a local man born in Clipston, it was obvious that he wanted to fly locally. In 1965, Claude joined Coventry Gliding Club at Husbands Bosworth. He took to gliding like a duck to water, soon progressing to become an instructor, tug pilot, CFI, tugmaster and club secretary.

His passion, at which he soon excelled, was cross-country flying. He flew in many countries, including France, Germany and Switzerland.

Most people in the gliding movement will remember him for his competition work, either directing, task setting, Met forecasting, or just running the event. He ran regionals, nationals, internationals and the club task week.

Claude flew various gliders and in later years took to two-seater flying, which he enjoyed immensely as this allowed him to continue flying much longer than the rest of us. He gave up flying in 2018, some 75 years after getting his wings. Last year he was presented with a Bronze Award by the Royal Aero Club for services to gliding, of which he was justifiably proud.

Sadly, on 2 April 2020 he passed away in hospital after a short illness, at the age of 95 years.

He leaves a daughter Elaine, grandson Simon and long-term companion Mavis.

The gliding world will be poorer without him. Due to the current situation his funeral was attended by close family only, but a memorial service will be held at a later date.

**Ray Stevens, The Gliding Centre**



### **SAM ST PIERRE (1933-2019)**



IT IS our sad duty to report the death of Sam St Pierre. I first met Sam during the UK Mountain Soaring Competition (UKMSC) at Aboyne in 2003. My first entry to this competition was a steep learning curve. At the start of the week I watched in wonder as my fellow competitors charged through the most desperate parts of the Cairngorms with seemingly no regard for the lack of safe landing places.

I can still vividly remember looking down to see Sam, in his DG-200, dancing back along the ridges from Pitlochry when I never dared leave the safety of the fields near Braemar. Back at base I was despondent that I was truly outclassed and should perhaps go home. However, Sam was soon imparting pearls of wisdom as to where there were safe fields and escape routes. With his encouragement, by the end of the week I was there with the rest of them and managed to safely transit Glenshee below the mountain tops; and so began my love of the UKMSC.

In subsequent years Sam shared some of his tales, not in any boastful manner but in one of pure delight at what can or might be done and the joy in such adventures. They all provided useful gems as to what is possible. His pioneering wave flying from Yorkshire to Scotland, often above cloud with just dead reckoning, was truly an example of how we stand on the shoulders of our predecessors; an inspiration to all modern wave pilots.

In 2007 Sam still managed to give us a run for our money in the Northern Regionals at Sutton Bank, where he finished 4th. He also continued to win annual trophies at YGC, taking those for the fastest 100km triangle in 2009, 2010 and 2011.

Sam's most vivid – and possibly precious – memories were of the times he flew the flying boats around the Coral Sea Islands. That was after his Air Force days were over during which he flew some of the iconic early jets, including Javelins and Sabres.

Gliding was just another of Sam's life's adventures. We have a file of his notes on wave theories, which were the result of his diligent assessment of his own wave flying and examination of the synoptic charts when wave was present.

Sam kept up this fascination with the topic long after he stopped gliding, phoning us and asking why we weren't on our way to the borders, or whatever, after a synoptic and actual report had caught his eye.

Sam was extremely aware of, and fascinated by, the natural world around him – particularly bird life, which regularly took him to nature reserves in North Yorkshire, the East Coast and the Humber estuary. His ability to identify birds from a snatch of their song or a glimpse of their plumage was remarkable. More than that, he took an interest in most forms of animal, plant and insect life – a genuine nature lover if ever there was one.

He was a keen gardener of both flowers and vegetables. He also loved to cook. Sam also played the ukulele and banjo and sang along to his playing with a melodious voice. All of this carried him through his retirement, despite the loss of his dear wife Jenny just as they both retired.

Sam's autobiography book *It did sure beat working* was published in 2012. It is available from the Yorkshire Gliding Club office and proceeds from sales go to the Launch Point charity.

**David Latimer, Yorkshire GC**

### **KEITH NURCOMBE (1943-2020)**



KEITH JOHN NURCOMBE sadly passed away on 18 March 2020.

Aviator, inventor, craftsman – Keith demonstrated his passions from a young age, when as a keen aeromodeller he won first prize in *Aeromodeller Monthly* magazine for the original design of an engine.

Motorbikes soon replaced his passion for aeromodelling, but he was to return to flying after seeing an advert for Coventry Gliding Club, then flying from Baginton Airport.

The gliding bug bit him and he followed the club to Husbands Bosworth, where he was briefly CFI before heading to South Africa for work.

It was on a return holiday from SA that he met Diana at the gliding club. They travelled extensively through Africa and Central Asia before settling briefly in Mallorca, where their daughter Claire was born.

Returning to the UK with his family, Keith turned his inventiveness and craftsmanship to creating a fine joinery business. This project was to occupy the rest of his working life, with one-off, traditional designs vying with his patents for a mass-produced, innovative window system.

His passion for woodworking soon led him to vintage gliders and he was the proud owner of a T-31 Tutor in which he flew many ambitious tasks, deep into the Welsh mountains, or out to the East Coast. Later he owned an Olympia 3B, as well as having shares in a T-31 and Janus, both of which gave him great and companionable flying.

Never one to rest on his laurels, he late in life learnt how to fly power aircraft and had much fun in his Whitman Tailwind Zipy, flying it over to the Isle of Man for a TT reunion with some of his old friends from motorbiking days.

Keith never did things the easy way, but he was passionate about what he believed in. He will be missed.

**The Nurcombe family**



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### **INDEX TO DISPLAY ADVERTISERS**

AFE/RD Aviation	inside back cover
Aeropaint Service	72
Airborne Composites	74
Anthony Fidler	72
Bristol & Glos GC	69
BGA	IFC + 47 + 48 + 65
Centre National de Vol á Voile	69
East of England	74
Forbes Brokers	36
GASCo Flight Safety	72
Hayward Aviation	9
Hill Aviation	49
John McCullagh	73
Kennedys Law	73
Midland GC	73
Norfolk GC	73
North Yorkshire Sailplanes	74
Oxfordshire Sportflying	72
Philip Wills Trust	9
Service Centre Terlet	34
Soaring Oxford	74
Soaring Safaris	72
Southern Sailplanes	back cover
Stein Financial	73
Sydney Charles Aviation	7
Zulu Glasstek	69

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