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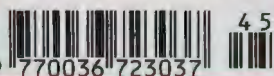
## On top of the world

plus: Keeping local but staying sharp

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One of the UK's youngest teams turned in what's thought to be our best performance at Worlds level. Pete Masson, became our youngest world champion – and he and team-mates Richard Hood (2nd) and Afandi Darlington (4th) soared away with the team prize (the white planes picture co.)



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# Good news and bad

David Roberts, the chairman of the BGA, welcomes the good news from the young British Club Class Worlds team – and considers the bad news from the UK



AS THE last issue of S&G flopped through your letterbox, we heard of the success of the British team in Australia – a World Champion in Pete Masson, followed closely by Richard Hood (2nd) and Afandi Darlington (4th). Congratulations to all involved: the pilots, their first-class crews, team manager Bob Bickers, coach Martyn Wells, sponsors and many others who made this superb achievement possible.

It literally was a winning combination and just shows how good we can be on the international gliding scene. The baton is being passed to a younger generation of pilots, and many of the "old hands" in the British Team Squad helped in coaching this young group of very talented pilots.

But what is evident is that, compared with many sports where the star players retire in their late 20s or early 30s, gliding provides a pathway to achievement for people from their early teens through to the late 60s and beyond. The older experienced pilots, though, are being given a good run for their money now. The British Junior team will be competing in the Junior World Championships in France later this summer and we have every prospect of similar success if they can get their act together as did the team that went to Australia for the Club Class Worlds.

The funding for international representation is limited, coming mostly from within the UK gliding community, so we must seek additional funding from external sources, be it lottery sports funding or sponsorship. This is one of the key platforms of our new Sports Development Plan.

Changing subject, as I write this at the end of February we are at the end of the first week of the foot-and-mouth disease

problem in this country. I haven't got a crystal ball to say how widespread this might become and how it might affect gliding this year. What I do know is that the last time farmers in the UK suffered the impact of this virus – in 1967 – it was devastating for the farming communities. As glider pilots we have always had generally good relationship with farmers, as their uninvited guests when we go "aux vaches" (as the French put it).

That relationship could be severely tested this year if we do not act responsibly. Flying cross-country, with the attendant risks of landing out, could result in real harm to our hosts, certainly the risk of bad publicity, and maybe even the risk to individual glider pilots of prosecution.

As a responsible sports governing body, the BGA issued a strong recommendation to its member clubs on February 23 to stop cross-country flying (on March 2, a ban). By the time you read this, the problem may be over and we are looking forward to the season. On the other hand, if the problem has become worse then we are likely to be faced with severe restrictions – voluntary or otherwise – on our activities. It will cause hardship to gliding clubs, but nothing like the hardship of the farmers, and many others dependent upon farming for their livelihood. So please act responsibly and follow the recommendations of the BGA as we update clubs in response to the situation.

Lastly, a few clubs like Lasham make a special effort to invite the farmers in whose fields we land each year, to a party at the end of the season. Does your club do that, and would it not be a good neighbourly thing to do in 2001? You need a system of recording the names and addresses of the farmers whose hospitality your members have enjoyed. Don't just think: "yes, that's a good idea," do something about it now.

**David Roberts**  
February 27, 2001  
[d.g.roberts@lineone.net](mailto:d.g.roberts@lineone.net)

## The first effects of foot-and-mouth on gliding clubs

AS WE went to press on March 5, it was clear that the outbreak was then having a big impact on Britain's gliding clubs.

Of the 65 clubs about which S&G had definite information, more than 20 closed temporarily on the weekend of March 3-4.

Of those clubs, the majority shut down voluntarily, either in deference to the concerns of landlords or neighbours, or because stock graze on their airfield.

At least two of them were inside officially-designated infected areas established around confirmed cases of the highly-infectious livestock disease.

There were also one or two instances of clubs trying to clarify access issues, where county council closure notices had been posted on rights of way on site.

Some open clubs reported precautionary measures such as: disinfectant traps at entrances; cancelling expeditions; allowing only club vehicles on site or telling visiting pilots not to travel to them.

Clubs known to have temporarily closed for the first weekend in March include: Andreas; Bannerdown; Bath, Wilts and North Dorset; Black Mountains; Borders; Bowland Forest; Buckminster; Cairngorm; Carlton Moor; Cranwell; Dartmoor; Devon & Somerset; Kent; Mendip; Midland; North Wales; Northumbria; Oxford; Shalbourne; Sherington; Staffordshire; Stratford on Avon; Ulster; Vale of White Horse; and Yorkshire. On Monday, March 5, Needwood Forest also suspended operations. Some clubs were closed "until further notice"; others planned to review their situation after the weekend.

By March 5, 74 cases of foot-and-mouth had been confirmed and thousands of animals slaughtered in the UK. Large tracts of countryside were closed to casual visitors (often backed by the threat of fines).

It was not clear how the crisis would affect pilots travelling abroad.

Many destinations, including Poland, Spain and Australia, were taking precautions against introducing the disease from the United Kingdom – banning personal imports of meat/dairy products, and disinfecting vehicles and even shoes. Australian officials said: "We're looking for food products, obviously, but particularly for soil or straw on shoes or equipment that can transmit the disease. If any is found we will clean the item and if necessary disinfect it."

• The one certain thing about the foot-and-mouth situation is that things are changing very quickly.

Matters could well be very different by the time you read this.

We suggest checking your club's website or contacting them if you are unsure of the latest situation

From left: Bob Bickers, Pete Masson, Richard Hood and Afandi Darlington (Hilton Craven)





# BGA bans cross-country flying

ON FEBRUARY 23, the BGA issued a strong recommendation to all members that cross-country flying in gliders should cease temporarily in order to prevent the possibility of an outlanding in fields.

## **This is now a ban.**

The situation is not yet under control and this virulent disease can be transmitted not only through the airmass, but also very easily by the dirt in wheel treads, on shoes and boots or by other animals. It would be foolish in the extreme to risk landings away from site as such selfish action would endanger our relationship with the whole farming community.

Further, it could severely damage the health of your glider, as it might be impounded at its landing site for a long time.

We are in daily contact with the National Farmers Union, the Civil Aviation Authority and the Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries & Food. They are aware of our action to date, which has been commended.

The CAA has issued numerous NOTAMS in the last week, specifying air exclusion zones around infected locations. These are published through the normal channels and can be seen on the [www.ais.org.uk](http://www.ais.org.uk) website, which is updated daily. Such exclusion zones are up to 1,500ft AGL and 2 nautical miles radius and include gliders. Any pilot/aircraft found in such exclusion zones can expect the full force of aviation laws to bear down on him/her.

We are aware of several clubs that have voluntarily ceased all gliding activity temporarily in response to this outbreak. Those clubs generally are either based on or nearby to farm land or the airfield is used for livestock grazing at certain times.

A few clubs and individual pilots have suggested that cross-country flying in good weather conditions and based on routes that



*The signs say it all: NO FLYING and PLEASE KEEP OUT. The Vale of White Horse GC and its farmer landlord agreed that members wouldn't fly at its Sandhill Farm site on the first weekend in March. When they went to put up their notices, they found county council prohibitions had already been posted. Updates on [www.vowhgc.8m.com](http://www.vowhgc.8m.com)*

keep them within gliding range of glider landable airfields should be acceptable. Unfortunately this does not preclude the possibility of an outlanding and the BGA has with immediate effect banned all cross-country flights including by turbos and self launching sailplanes. By such measures we hope to avoid having to ban flying all together.

Would each club please make sure that all their individual members are aware of the BGA ban on cross country flying and urge them to act responsibly in this time of crisis for the farming world.

We would suggest that all clubs make direct contact with their local NFU branch to register their concern at this time and to inform them of the ban on cross-country flying.

As a responsible sporting body, our relationships with government and in particular with the farming community have been built up successfully over many years. Generally

we have a good public relations image, because we are responsible people. At the current time any action which could be interpreted as irresponsible in this situation will do untold and lasting damage to our sport.

We shall continue to monitor the situation and report further but, in the meantime, all individual glider pilots must be made aware of the significance of this problem so that they act in a responsible manner.

**Barry Rolfe**

**BGA Secretary, March 2, 2001**

## Keep up-to-date

- The BGA will keep clubs appraised with advice as soon as the situation changes, both directly by email and post, and on [www.gliding.co.uk](http://www.gliding.co.uk). You can also link to your club website here

- Adrian Hatton, the farmer and pilot who wrote the crop selection article on page 26, has set up a website which, in happier times, will inform glider pilots about crop state for outlandings. Now it is being updated with his information about foot-and-mouth. The site is looking for sponsors. For details, see [www.field-landings.co.uk](http://www.field-landings.co.uk)

- Official news and useful guidance about foot-and-mouth can be found on the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food website – [www.maff.gov.uk](http://www.maff.gov.uk) – and its helpline number is 0845 050 4141

- The temporary airspace restrictions which have been imposed due to the outbreak are updated at [www.ais.co.uk](http://www.ais.co.uk)

- For general news, try [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) [www.itn.co.uk](http://www.itn.co.uk) or [www.channel4.com](http://www.channel4.com)

## About this issue of *Sailplane & Gliding*

THE April-May edition of S&G always looks forward to the season's flying, and this issue is no exception. Most of its contents were written and laid out before the outbreak happened.

We had no time to replace articles about searching the sky (p22) and landing in fields (p26) but these do not, of course, override recent BGA guidance.

However, we managed to add Simon Adlard's tips on sharpening your skills while staying local (p24) and Bernard Smyth's research into the 1967/8 outbreak of foot-and-mouth (p25). Our thanks go to both authors for working very hard at extremely short notice to produce these.

The first 2001 case was diagnosed a few

days before S&G went to print. We had hoped that by the time you saw this page, it would be history. But by now (March 5) this seems unlikely.

It isn't easy to predict how the crisis will develop, but in the next issue we'll try to give you an analysis of the situation, some excellent reading, and any practical advice we can offer our UK readers.

In the meantime, our thoughts are with frustrated pilots, members worried about their club's finances – and the farmers and rural communities upon whose goodwill we all rely.

Helen Evans

Editor

*Sailplane & Gliding*



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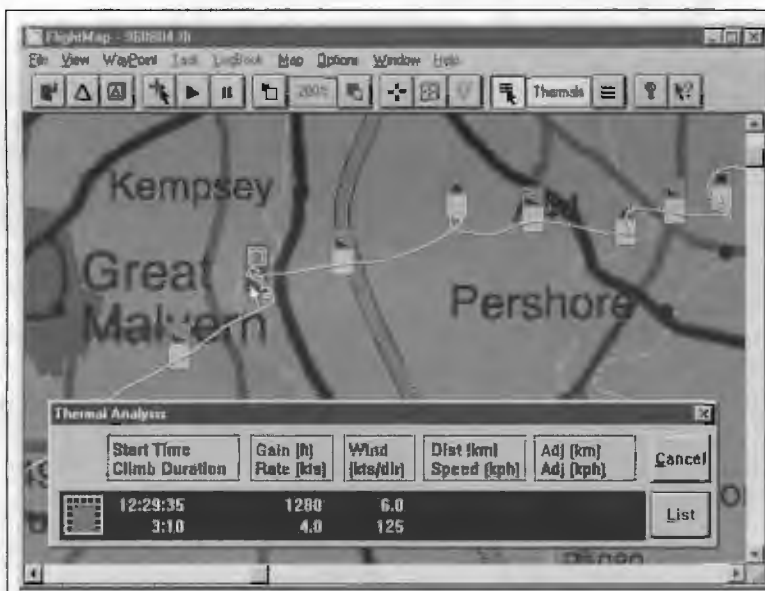
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## Save £5,000 a year on gliding

In his article in the last *S&G* (*Fools rush in*, February-March 2001, p38), Ian Dunkley stated that glider restoration will rarely make money. He is right, of course, but it will save huge amounts, which can then be spent on actual gliding. The logic goes:

- Restore vintage glider, say three years at 2hrs/night = 1,500hrs (weekends are for gliding);
- Deduct 1,500hrs from possible time spent in pub. Cost time in pub at £10/hr (adjust according to drinking habits);
- Therefore money saved by restoring vintage glider = £15,000.
- Deduct trifling amounts for wood, glue and fabric.

So, at the end of three years, you should have a glider with character – and enough money for at least part of a white plastic one as well.

This logic appears faultless to me, but so far I've failed to convince my wife (also a psychiatric nurse). Let me know how you get on, Ian.

David Weekes, WITNEY, Oxfordshire

## Glider conspicuity

The article on page 60 of the December 2000-January 2001 *S&G* (*Flashes don't show up well in flight test*) indicated that patches intended to assist in identifying a glider actually break up the outline and make it more difficult to spot.

This amazed and confounded the RAF team that had spent considerable time and energy trying out various ways of getting the white GRP gliders to show as black without reaching the recommended glass transition temperature. All this work stemmed from the findings and recommendations of a Royal Air Force Board of Enquiry into a fatal collision involving two similar white gliders during thermal soaring. We concluded that wide red-orange stripes over the leading edge and upper wing stood out clearly in most conditions and at most angles off.

Following discussion with the scientist who conducted the experimental work that *S&G* published in December, we have decided to try to involve his team in a new series of trials in an effort to find out why our subjective view is correct. If it is.

In the meantime, rest assured that, despite the precise and careful nature of the work done at Bicester and Cranfield, the RAF Air Cadet organisation has absolutely no intention of removing conspicuity stripes – notwithstanding the absence of a scientific basis about how they help.

Ewan Campbell, HPTO, for DG Equipment Support (Air)

Pete Stratten, chairman of the BGA Flight Safety Committee, adds: the recent "red nose" trials proved that applying dayglo patches did not improve the conspicuity of gliders as seen by another glider on a collision course. However, it is likely that coloured patches improve the conspicuity of white gliders flying along snow covered



Chris Ellis was prompted by correspondence on the albatross to send in this photo of an ocean-soaring bird, perhaps a Fulmar. See Soaring seabirds, below

mountains! Pilots who fly in mountain areas (the Alps are a good example) should consider applying suitable markings, but should of course carefully consider the airworthiness considerations of raising GRP structure surface temperatures. Most glider manufacturers can offer appropriate advice.

## Soaring seabirds

I have been following with interest the pieces by Alan Self and Chris Hughes on the soaring techniques of albatrosses (*Albatross flight*, February-March 2001, p9). I also remember Chris's original 1972 article as it stuck a chord with me at the time.

Back around 1957-8 when I was a not-so-ancient mariner and a very fledgling glider pilot I spent many a happy hour perched on the poop watching these beautiful birds.

Off the southern coast of Chile there is a continuous swell rather than breaking rollers. The very high aspect ratio black-backed albatrosses slope soared the waves at very low level and high speed moving effortlessly from one to the next.

I enclose a photo (above) of a smaller marque of about 2m span, possibly a large Fulmar, which had an interesting means of flapless travel. Our cargo vessels of around 7,000 tons had a cruising speed of 17-18kts. At this speed we must have set a lee wave in motion astern and it was normal to have one or more birds keeping formation with us, usually about 10ft above and up to 15 yards astern of the poop deck. They would often follow us for a hundred miles or more.

Further north, the Pacific can be as smooth as glass. While I saw no albatrosses

there is a much more prolific and far less beautiful bird, which has slightly different energy saving methods. Along the coast of Peru are many millions of guano birds. These are similar to cormorants and every morning they hop off their roosting cliffs and fly far out into the ocean to feed. They congregate in great flocks flying tip to tip and beak to backside half a wingspan above the placid surface both slipstreaming and using ground effect. I have sailed through a flying black river of them half a mile wide and stretching from horizon to horizon.

Chris Ellis, OSWESTRY, Shropshire

## From the incident reports

It is with some interest that I read the incident summaries in the February-March issue.

In report 150 (p63) the individual concerned appears to be an "experienced competition pilot" who does "fast, low circuits" and "steep winch launches." He/she can fly an LS8, and appears to be without a club.

Please could you inform the individual that I would be happy to propose her/him as a member? I do not represent my club, The Soaring Centre, in any official capacity but given the glowing cv I feel sure she/he would be made extremely welcome.

Should I at any time in the future apply to the individual's ex-club (whoever they are) would they kindly refuse me membership, because I feel it is certain the outcome would be the same.

Paul Crabb, WELFORD, Northants

Dave Wright, who compiles the accident and incident summaries on behalf of the BGA Flight Safety Committee, replies: I'm pleased Paul reads the summaries. From his sarcastic reply and, as I don't believe I've had the pleasure of writing a report on him, I'm glad that he can see the poor judgment this pilot exercised.

## Membership Numbers

Plat is right again! Some 99 per cent of people who have trial instructional flights are just having a ride at the fairground: they are never going to be dedicated glider pilots.

Along with many others, I do wonder if we are targeting the right people. Students would appear to be a potential source, and I wonder why we tend to send a two-seater at shows, when we want to enthuse people into doing their own thing.

I would have thought that a modern single-seater, preferably one which has flown at least a 500km and/or been over 20,000ft, would be a more enticing draw.

The Junior National Championships show that we have a nucleus of youngsters with exceptional skills, and the event seems to be over-booked each year but, no matter how keen they are, that 60 or so pilots is really a small number in the scene of things.

Is there a source of glider pilots amongst the power people? I notice that only the Midlands club has advertised in *Pilot* magazine, and even their advertisement ➤

Please send letters – marked "for publication" – to:

The Editor, Sailplane & Gliding, 6 Salop Close,  
Shrivenham, Swindon SN6 8EN, UK  
or to: helen@sandg.dircn.co.uk

Please include your telephone number and full postal address, and try to keep your letter concise.

The deadline for the next issue is April 17



# Your letters

➤ did not tempt a power pilot with the possibility of cheaper flying and flying which is more interesting and challenging than grinding around to maintain the currency of his PPL. You can get a lot of soaring for the cost of maintaining a PPL.

But, when you come right down to it, we don't want the type who wishes to turn up and fly at an appointed hour. We need to find those who must fly – or die!

**Bill Meyer, READING, Berkshire**

## United we recruit

There is an ongoing need to reduce the average age of glider pilots. Many clubs, of course, already do this with Cadet Schemes, but their success is not enough. In the bad old days the young came readily to gliding because it was exciting, affordable and fun.

Today the young are overwhelmed by publicity about video games, theme parks, fast cars and jet-skis.

There is no media interest in flying other than for package holidays, accidents and the occasional airshow, so fun flying seems out of reach. A few years ago, even the Sports Council decided that gliding was a mere minority sport.

If we want to do something about this I believe that we need to change our approach to publicity.

What is the use of trying to attract a youngster to gliding when s/he lives among hills where only paragliders fly, or change the mind of an engine-crazed youth who longs to fly microlights? We, all of us, should be encouraging the young to get into the air with any of our excellent airports.

Airports are not such separate entities – we have glider pilots competing in international championships who began their flying on hang-gliders and we have soaring pilots who have changed to motor flying. If we can bring ourselves to get together we will no longer be a “minority sport” of some 9,000 people but together with, say, the PFA, BHPA and BMAA a weighty 30,000-plus: big enough for the media to take notice because we could offer such a wide choice of flying opportunities with visual appeal.

Maybe PR enthusiasts could get together to work out how to fire up media interest in all the young who want to fly? Maybe the BGA as the “oldest” association could offer a congenial initiative to find a good way forward?

**Ann Welch, FARNHAM, Surrey**

## More on cockpit drills

I'd go one further than the ABC external check suggested by Roy Ferguson-Dalling (letters Feb/Mar 2001) by making it ABCD before climbing in. I was introduced in Australia to:

A: Airframe – count wings, etc

B: Ballast requirements

C: Controls – full, and free (subsequently re-checked in cockpit)

D: Dolly – removed.

**Mike Sesemann, BECKENHAM, Kent**

## If it's broke, fix it

As an active gliding instructor, flying in all weathers and even occasionally under a blazing sun (gliding in Cyprus is fun – give it a go!), I'm encouraged by the suggestion of changing the pre-flight mnemonic to CBSIFTBEC. I'm as guilty as the others who live with the problem and reshuffle CBE when needs must. If the current procedure doesn't work, we should change it.

**Pete Stratten, BRACKLEY, Northants**

## Is this a record?

At the age of 19, James Wilson, a member at Nympsfield since November 1999, has been elected to the committee for the year 2001/2002. From Ulverston, Cumbria, he is in his second year reading chemistry at Bristol University. He is the youngest full committee member in the club's history. Can any other club, with the exception of a university one, match this example of promoting gliding to a new generation? In addition, his personal area of responsibility is for the bar.

**Bernard Smyth, YATE, Bristol**

## Competition results in S&G

How disappointed I was to see the competition results for 2000 (December 2000-January 2001, pages 44-5 and 48-9) appear in such a truncated form: simply the pilot's name and the number of points – no mention of the number of days flown and, more importantly, there were no aircraft details. What sort of record is this for a nation which has proved so successful in this most exacting of sporting activities?

What a shame it is that statistics take up so much room and to the uninitiated, appear to be so dull, yet looked at another way, how wonderful it is, that so much information can be supplied in so small a space, allowing enthralling analyses. Why bother at all, if only pilot name and final points are considered adequate?

I realise that successive editors have been criticised for printing all the results from what is an ever-increasing number of contests, yet these results represent an important aspect of the history of our sport and surely S&G, as the official magazine of the BGA, should publish them.

Realising the space problem, why not include a complete set of results incorporating pilot, aircraft, Comp No. task distance, speed/distance, daily points, daily position and final points, for each national, regional and international event, alongside the index to each volume?

**Jane Randle, WITNEY, Oxfordshire**

*Thanks also to Richard Cawsey (who asked to see dates of competitions, glider types and registrations) and Pete Freeman (who wanted glider types included). In retrospect, I should have added types and comp dates but I have an open mind on what else should be there (especially since the advent of the internet). I know I'll regret asking this, but what do other S&G readers think? – Ed*

## Thanks to Dick Stratton

Dick Stratton has retired and I would like to thank him for the fantastic service he has given to gliding and private flying.

Dick was the man who went to the trouble to prove the safety of Mogas and then successfully persuaded the CAA to approve it. The minute I started to use Mogas my engines loved it, no more lead fouling failures. Dick, a busy man, was always prepared to provide sensible help when needed.

We are fortunate that the BGA and PFA has a self-regulatory system, fought for by people of the calibre and energy of Dick, but many of us are concerned by hints of an increase in regulation, for instance December's insistence on full CAA Modification paperwork to fit a GPS tray in an SLMG. Thankfully this was immediately rescinded, presumably some wise counsel spotted that it would discourage the safe and sensible fitting of any tray and leave the GPS as loose litter in many cockpits!

A ton of paperwork is not going to replace sound engineering sense. In 40 years military and civilian flying the most dangerous incidents I experienced were in highly regulated environments: a flameout at 500ft inverted, during an aerobatic display in an aircraft just out of a major scheduled RAF service (a fuel non-return valve was fouled); an RPM controller falling off and prop run-away immediately after an Annual Inspection (only the visible bolt had a nut on it); being offered my Piper Cub for Flight Test with all the engine mounting bolts loose and unlocked after waiting two months for an Aviation Authority Inspector to come and approve the work and sign off the paperwork – for an aircraft not much more complex than a wheelbarrow! All these incidents occurred where procedures and paperwork were covered to the officials' satisfaction but sound engineering and flight safety were given too little priority, and I count myself lucky to be alive to write this!

Our new technical leaders will surely find things to improve in BGA inspections and I thank them in advance for their hard work. In light of my experiences, I am hopeful that they will concentrate on the encouragement of sound engineering practice much more than fancy paperwork.

**John McWilliam, BGA Inspector**

## Words on the web

A tip inspired by an S&G article which gave internet addresses, with the comment that the sites were in German. The internet to the rescue! Visit [www.altavista.com](http://www.altavista.com) and click on Email and Tools. You will find “Translate”. Select German to English, enter the internet address where it says “website” and away you go! It's a little pidgeon in places, but better than my German. You do have to smile at some of the idioms, though... Other languages, including French, Italian and Spanish are available.

**Jonathan Mills, HOOK, Hampshire**



## The manly sport of Tutor racing

OVER ten years ago, in a flush of possibly misguided enthusiasm, I bought a Tutor: one of those pre-war wooden boxes with open cockpit and struts.

A fellow Hus Bos member, Norman James, had been having a disproportionate amount of fun in one, and as they were virtually free, it struck me as a Pretty Good Wheeze. Sure enough, over the next decade the two Tutors conveyed their astonished pilots variously to the Isle of Wight, Snowdonia, and the East Coast as well as completing scores of closed circuits and shorter goal flights. There were also epic failures (175km of a 208km triangle...) Our best O/R is 143km in 3hrs 47mins and the 100km has been done in 2hrs 15mins.

Apart from the fun, we both agree that flying these inefficient aeroplanes is very good for sharpening up the skills. You are allowed only one mistake. The second drops you firmly into a field very shortly afterwards (if you are trying really hard, about 30 seconds afterwards). So you learn to pay attention and to make fewer mistakes. This really does help when flying hot ships, and perhaps should be considered essential training for future aces.

Last year, in order to bring this manly sport to the attention of a wider audience, we declared a new comp – The National Tutor Racing Championships – kindly hosted by Camphill in June. For much of the week we had to go down the hill to check cloudbase. On the one cross-country day, I got halfway to Seighford before giving up (50km in all), while Tweety Pie – a T-31 from Saltby – won with a creditable 100km tour of the Derbyshire edges.

Now, we know that there are other Tutors (and T-31s) out there. Get them out, dust them off, and come and see just how much fun they've got left in them at this year's event during the Camphill Rally.

Keith Nurcombe



*Racing in Tutors improves your skills for competing in hotter ships, or so their devotees claim, anyway*

Ian Dunkley adds: "The Camphill 2000 Vintage and Classic Rally was probably the world's third largest that year. In fact, it would have been second had not the rally at Elmira, USA, beaten us by three or four aircraft. If that doesn't tell those of you who forgot to attend that you missed something, nothing will. Please try harder this year so I can make even more extravagant claims.

"The 2001 rally will be from June 23-30. Last year we had more than 32 gliders and an effective four days of flying, despite the weather. In a good year, 80 per cent of them so far, we have had wave, ridge and thermal, sometimes all in the same flight (try that at Lasham!). The social side is just as important, for bar profits if nothing else, and there is something for every evening and wet days. So what are you waiting for? Email me at the address in the box below."

## Dates for your diary

### UK and International competitions in 2001

<b>Aerobatics, Dan Smith</b>	<b>Dunstable</b>	<b>Mar 31-Apr 1</b>
Overseas Championships Spain		May 14-25
Regionals	Tibbenham	May 26-Jun 3
Glider Aerobatic Nationals	Saltby	May 31-Jun 3
Regionals (motorglider)	Bidford	Jun 9-17
Club Class Nationals	Hus Bos	Jun 18-24
18-Metre World Champs	Lillo, Spain	Jun 18-Jul 1
3rd World Class Worlds	Lillo, Spain	Jun 18-Jul 1
<b>Glider Aerobatic Worlds</b>	<b>Lillo, Spain</b>	<b>Jun 18-Jul 1</b>
15-Metre Nationals	Booker	Jun 30-Jul 8
18-Metre Nationals	Tibbenham	Jul 14-22
Enterprise	North Hill	Jul 21-28
Regionals	Hus Bos	Jul 28-Aug 5
Open Class Nationals	Lasham	Jul 28-Aug 5
Regionals	Lasham	Jul 28-Aug 5
Regionals	Sutton Bank	Jul 28-Aug 5
Women's Worlds	Lithuania	Jul 27-Aug 12
World Junior Champs	Iesoudun, France	Aug 5-19
Standard Class Nationals	Nympsfield	Aug 11-19
Inter-Services	Bicester	Aug 11-19
Regionals	Dunstable	Aug 18-26
Regionals	Gransden Lodge	Aug 18-26
Two-seater Comp	Pocklington	Aug 19-26
Junior Championships	Aston Down	Aug 25-Sep 2
Mountain Soaring Comp	Deeside	Sep 2-8
<b>Aerobatics, Saltby Open Saltby</b>		<b>Sep 8-9</b>
Worlds	Mafikeng, S Africa	Dec 18-31

**Bold text** shows additions/amendments from the last issue

**The Inter-University Task Week** (Aug 4-12) is being held at Saltby airfield and hosted by Nottingham University GC. The Director is Adrian Hatton and NUGC president Sarah Favell is organising it. Students who aren't members of a university club are welcome. Scoring depends on the pilot's previous experience and there will be briefings every morning. Tasks will vary from a beginner's 30km to normal competition size – weather permitting! For more information or if you can help sponsor the week, please email: [acyasat@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:acyasat@nottingham.ac.uk)

**A seminar on planning and related issues** in England and Wales, for aerodrome owners, operators and users, is to be held on May 4, 2001 at the Royal Aeronautical Society, 4 Hamilton Place, London W1V, 11.00-16.45. It is being organised by The General Aviation Awareness Council (GAAC). A buffet lunch is included in the £15/person cost for members of BGA clubs. You would also be welcome to attend the GAAC's AGM there, from 10.15. Send cheques, payable to GAAC, to the GAAC, 50a Cambridge Street, London SW1V 4QQ or tel 020 7834 5631 for information

The **AERO** aviation trade fair at Friedrichshafen, Germany, from April 26-29, 2001 is due to attract 440 exhibitors from 22 countries. It is open from 09.00hrs to 18.00hrs each day.

The **Coupe D'Europe**, the two-seater contest, will be held by the gliding section of the Aero-Club du Poitou from Jul 29-Aug 11, 2001. Paid entries, limited to 40, must be received by Jun 30. See [www.multimania.com/cepb](http://www.multimania.com/cepb) for more details. For details of the **23rd international gliding competition** at Hockenheim, Germany, see [www.sfo-hockenheim.de](http://www.sfo-hockenheim.de) – it runs from Apr 13-22 in Open, Std, 15m, 18m and Club Classes, with a practice weekend beforehand.

At the time of printing, there was no indication whether or not foot-and-mouth restrictions would affect any of the UK events

## Oldies but goldies: from Haddenham to Zbraslavice...

May 5-7	11th Kirby Kite Rally Haddenham	Peter Chamberlain, 01525 378901 or <a href="mailto:robindr220@cs.com">robindr220@cs.com</a>
May 26-June 3	VGC National & Slingsby Rally Sutton Bank	Phil Lazenby, 0113 284 2132 or <a href="mailto:lazenby@btinternet.com">lazenby@btinternet.com</a>
June 16-17	Whispering Wardrobes Rally Booker Airfield	Graham Saw, 01828 776173 or <a href="mailto:Graham@servotech.swinternet.co.uk">Graham@servotech.swinternet.co.uk</a>
June 23-30	Camphill Vintage & Classic Glider Rally	Ian Dunkley, <a href="mailto:ian_dunkley@pgen.net">ian_dunkley@pgen.net</a>
July 6-8	Popular Flying Association Rally Cranfield	<a href="http://www.pfa.org.uk">www.pfa.org.uk</a>
July 7-15	Oldies but Goldies Jami, Finland	Risto Pykala, <a href="mailto:rpykala@edu.lahti.fi">rpykala@edu.lahti.fi</a>
July 22-29	Rendezvous Meeting Aeroclub Zwickau	Jorg Ziller 089 95928229, <a href="mailto:Joerg.Ziller@t-online.de">Joerg.Ziller@t-online.de</a>
July 31- August 9	VGC International Rally Zbraslavice	Aeroklub Zbraslavice: tel + 420 327 92 12 86; fax + 420 602 95 44 7; <a href="mailto:info@zbraslavice.vztlak.cz">info@zbraslavice.vztlak.cz</a>
Late August	50th Anniversary Oxford GC Weston-on-the-Green	contact: David Weekes, <a href="mailto:David.Weekes@booker-tate.co.uk">David.Weekes@booker-tate.co.uk</a>



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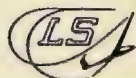
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This promotional video has been produced for FAI's Soaring organisation,  
the International Gliding Commission

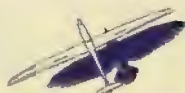
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As well as nurturing aspiring pilots such as recently solo Carmen Edwardes, Mendip GC looks after its site under the County Stewardship Scheme

Keith Simmons

## Planning success for gliding in North Wales

THE NORTH Wales GC's appeal against refusal of planning permission and a subsequent enforcement notice for its new site at Llantisilio has been allowed and the enforcement notice has been quashed.

As a result of the Public Inquiry held at Llangollen on December 19-20, 2000, the Planning Inspector ruled in favour of: "the use of agricultural land for the flying of non-motorised gliders through launch by winch, siting of caravan as clubhouse, associated storage containers, parking area, toilet facilities and windsock."

Planning permission is subject to conditions which are fully acceptable to the club. Launching is restricted to winch only and the use of all powered aircraft, including microlights and motor gliders, is banned.

Launches are limited to 60 in any one day and a landscaping scheme proposed by the club, which involves tree planting to screen some of the temporary structures, is to be carried out at the earliest opportunity.

The North Wales GC was represented at the Public Inquiry by David Altaras of Counsel and evidence was given by Louis Chicot, planning consultant, David Holt, CFI and Roger Coote for the British Gliding Association.

Landscape, environmental and safety issues were a major consideration but the Inspector ruled that the objectors failed to produce evidence of: "demonstrable harm". In his decision letter, the Inspector also stated: "In any event, I have determined the development application on its own merits and have not concluded that there would be harm to the countryside".

The BGA Planning and Environment Fund supported the North Wales GC in providing a share of the costs of the appeal and Public Inquiry.

We now look forward to a more stable future for the club after losing its former site at Bryn Gwyn Bach Farm, followed by a long period of uncertainty. We shall also look forward to flying again from Llantisilio and to experiencing some of the site's undoubted soaring potential.

See also Club News photograph, p56

## How green is your site?

IN RECENT years there have been strong political incentives towards protecting the environment, preserving fauna and flora and encouraging bio-diversity.

Government schemes, formerly run by the Countryside Commission and now by the Ministry of Agriculture (MAFF), have been promoted to compensate farmers for loss of income if they adopt management policies to encourage natural habitats. Both the Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) and the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Scheme (ESA) in England and the TIR GOFAL Scheme in Wales have grant structures, with annual payments of up to £70 per hectare to encourage farmers to reduce stocking rates, reduce or discontinue the use of pesticides and fertilisers and to manage the land in a less intensive manner that will encourage wild flowers and provide habitats for a wide variety of wildlife.

The General Aviation Awareness Council in its pamphlet *How Green is your Airfield?*, based on an actual private airfield, set out many ways in which sensitive management can encourage wildlife and bio-diversity.

### The environment and planning

The gliding movement is frequently faced with unfounded and unsubstantiated claims that gliders frighten away wildlife and destroy the local environment. Although it is sometimes inadvisable to fight emotion with facts, such claims are very difficult to challenge at a public inquiry without reliable information. Fortunately, some of the information that is now being collated through official schemes shows quite the reverse and indicates that a well-managed gliding site can have a profound effect upon improving the ecology of the area.

A recent claim at a public inquiry that gliders had driven away all the peewits (lapwings) was countered by evidence collected at Camphill that lapwing numbers had

increased since the establishment of the Countryside Stewardship Scheme which specifically set out to encourage habitats for ground-nesting birds.

Similarly, a claim that gliders were threatening a wildfowl reserve for the protection of goosanders was successfully settled using evidence from Nympsfield and The Severn Wildfowl Trust at Slimbridge, which showed that such fears, whilst plausible, were unfounded and that gliders and wildfowl can successfully co-exist in close proximity to one another.

### Cash opportunities and benefits

Several gliding clubs have succeeded in obtaining general and specific grants by entering into management agreements under official schemes. Midland GC operates an ESA scheme at the Long Mynd, Mendip GC and Derby & Lincs. GC have Countryside Stewardship schemes on their sites at Halesland and Camphill respectively. It is not necessary to own the site in order to enter into one of these schemes, although the ESAs are restricted to specified areas of the country. There may well be other clubs operating similar schemes and I shall be interested to know who they are.

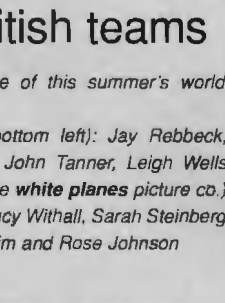
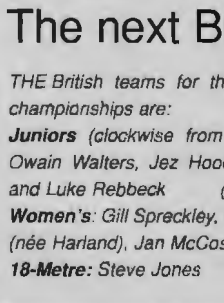
### Your club and the future

Since "green" issues are likely to assume ever-increasing importance, it is useful to keep records of any environmental improvements that result from more sensitive management and clearly, the results are best authenticated by an official scheme – to say nothing of the financial benefits.

Please contact your development officer on 01273 515373 if you would like to know more about environmental schemes or if you already have such a scheme and can provide further evidence of environmental benefits attributable to gliding.

**Roger Coote BGA Development Officer**





## The next British teams

THE British teams for three of this summer's world championships are:

**Juniors** (clockwise from bottom left): Jay Rebbeck, Owain Walters, Jez Hood, John Tanner, Leigh Wells and Luke Rebbeck (the white planes picture co.)

**Women's:** Gill Sprackley, Lucy Withall, Sarah Steinberg (née Harland), Jan McCoshim and Rose Johnson

**18-Metre:** Steve Jones

## Stirring video to help numbers take off

WORRIED about the falling numbers taking up our sport? John Roake, Chairman of the IGC Membership Committee, certainly is. Together with the main glider manufacturers and Gavin and Justin Wills, he has produced a video to raise awareness of our sport and introduce it to newcomers.

Called *Soaring, Your Sport for the Millennium*, the 15-minute film explains gliding basics from types of lift through to

how to learn and on to World Championships – all set to stunning flying sequences in the mountains of New Zealand and backed by stirring music.

Some footage might be familiar, having been spliced from the videos *Wind Borne* or *Lucy Learns to Fly* and *Champions of the Wave*, but it's all the better for it. It costs £5 inc p&p from the BGA. Every school, club and home should have one. **Nick Wall**

## On the Executive agenda

THE NEW Executive Committee of the BGA held the monthly meeting and its annual workshop on March 2-3. As well as acting on the foot-and-mouth crisis (see p5), they introduced new members to the association and discussed how to work most effectively to serve the interests of its member clubs. They also looked at the relationships between the Executive and BGA sub-committees as well as between the BGA and clubs, and will be considering detailed proposals in April for better contact with clubs.

## Lottery results

Winners of the January draw were:

**M Gee (first prize).** £56.75

**Runners-up:** M Cater, S Taylor, D Ratcliffe,

M Wilshire, C Waller (£11.35 each).

Winners of the February draw were:

**M King (first prize).** £56.00

**Runners-up:** E Smith, R Barrett, J Stanley, T Salter,

L Hood (£11.20 each)

Apologies to AB Stokes, wrongly identified in the last issue as the winner of the November draw, and to Robert Yarney, who did win it

## BGA list of waypoints

THE BGA List Of Waypoints And Sites Of BGA Member Clubs is the full title of what in the past has often been called the BGA Turning Point List. The *Sporting Code* now uses the term "waypoint" for start, turn and finish points, so that is now used in the title.

Access is through a link from the BGA website and the list is held at: [www.spsys.demon.co.uk/turningpoints.htm](http://www.spsys.demon.co.uk/turningpoints.htm) This reference is the only one to contain the definitive data, and includes terms of reference, notes on usage, latest updates, and any Stop Press items. Many people use the data to make their own variants, but these may not be up to date. In the year 2001 amendment, as we go to press there are 18 important changes, 20 minor changes, and six new points. The important changes are mainly the culling of airfields with ATZs that no longer have a BGA member club at the site. The word-processed tables are split into 1. Southern England, 2. Midlands, Wales and East Anglia, 3. Northern England, 4. Scotland, and 5. Points with airfield activities. The latter should not be used as turnpoints without checking first. Finally, the list co-ordinator welcomes any feedback, to [ian@ukiws.demon.co.uk](mailto:ian@ukiws.demon.co.uk)

## In brief

IT IS with great regret that we report the death in February 2001 of Lt Col Naomi Christy, who worked as BGA Development Officer then FAI Certificates Officer from the 1960s to the 1980s. An obituary will appear in the June-July S&G.

APOLOGIES to the British aerobatic glider pilots, Ian Tunstall, Guy Westgate, Jamie Allen, Paul Conran and Chris Cain who are, of course, also participating in the World Air Games at Lillo this summer but weren't mentioned in the last issue.

LAST year, a UK court held that a motorist whose Porsche had been stolen after he left the keys in the ignition whilst paying for petrol had not left the car "unattended" as it was still within his sight. His insurer thus had to pay out. The insurer has successfully appealed. The position now is that if you leave the keys in/on an unattended car your insurer will not pay out if it is then stolen.

THE invaluable and fascinating *Accidents to Gliders 2000* is available from the BGA office (0116 253 1051), £2.50 inc p&p.

MANY light aircraft will now be able to use unleaded petrol following a new safety approval granted by the UK CAA. The move follows the withdrawal of four star leaded petrol (Mogas) from the majority of the UK during 2000. The approvals are detailed in Airworthiness Notice 98C.

THE Faulkes Flying Foundation, which aims to introduce young people to gliding, is now operating at Dunstable and Lasham, with a second full-time instructor. It has two DG-505s and two DG-1000s on order, has bought a Rotax Falke and is thinking of buying another. It is applying for Lottery funding to expand to seven UK sites with a fleet of 13 aircraft and seven full-time instructors.

BOOKER GC tell us that Chiltern Park microlite strip is under threat of closure. Owner Dennis Pearson is asking for help. See [www.bookergliding.co.uk](http://www.bookergliding.co.uk)

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## In spring, a middle-aged man's thoughts lightly turn to – what?

APRIL WILL be almost upon us when you read this. Unless you have spent the recent months in New Zealand, Australia or other southern parts, you will probably be itching, after months of privation, to cast off the cobwebs. You will want to fling yourself boldly across the familiar, dreary old horizon in search of new and distant horizons: Wales at the very least. If you have spent the winter acquiring a new ship (in which I include any ratty old ship that is new to you) and preparing it for cross-country, then the itch much be almost unbearable. Any strong itch deserves a good scratch. And that is probably what you will do if you are not careful – a lot of scratching.

The Easter competition at Dunstable has provided me with some of the most – let me pick my words carefully – stimulating soaring I have ever experienced; partly, as I have mentioned, because my body was just out of hibernation – and my brain still firmly in hibernation – and partly because I often had some unfamiliar and challenging piece of kit to fly. Add to these the weather. Ah, the Easter weather! A rapid alternation of dazzling sunshine and vicious showers of rain, hail and snow driven by a howling wind, often from Siberia. Cloudbases of 5,000ft and 50-mile visibility, which are quite suddenly replaced by zero base and zero visibility.

Add Somme-quality mud underfoot; a trailer that has not been aired for months and is in no state to go to Wales and back or to do that worst of all retrieves – the one a mile down the road for which nobody was prepared; a parachute that feels as if a car-jack has been left in it; instruments that make you realise that you were not the only creature to be hibernating for the last three months. Its a miracle that so much excellent flying actually happens.

*(Platypus's syndicate partners in four separate gliders wish, through their respective lawyers, to make it clear that Plat is reminiscing over 42 winters and what he says in no way applies to the equipment which they kindly allow him to fly from time to time, for want of a legally*

*enforceable way of preventing him. Ed.)*

Some of my worst Easter adventures have already been graphically described in this column. The absolute worst was being towed straight into a massive blizzard – by an all-white Super Cub – on an aerotow retrieve from Booker to Dunstable in 1975 in my brand-new Kestrel 19. It took an hour of meandering to cover 20 miles, much of it between 100ft and 300ft above a dimly-visible winter landscape. We were not in radio contact. Only years later, after back-releasing in the ASH 25 on a long tow in Spain when the line went slack in rotor-turbulence, I realised that my life had been saved in 1975 by the use of the nose hook



*Any strong itch deserves a good scratch*

on the Kestrel. This wonderful, thrice-blessed hook was incapable of back-releasing, even though the line snaked way behind the glider when I found myself flying in formation with the tug, on the rare occasions when it was visible at all. The same weekend in 1975 a father and son flew a light aeroplane in a blizzard into Ivinghoe Beacon, which lies between Booker and Dunstable, and the son was killed. Snowstorms, aircraft and high ground are a bad mix.

I have also described in earlier S&Gs the two Easter retrieves within easy walking distance (if you had farmer's boots or snowshoes) of the site, each of which cost my friends approximately 40 heroic man-hours in rain, hail, sleet, howling winds, pitch darkness, etc. I shall say no more about those ordeals.

More recently I flew on an Easter task where one of the TPs was a famous club, where I failed to soar. I often fail to soar at this place. I suspect this happens because it is so attractive a site that I am drawn down to it more by psychology than gravity or meteorology. Anyway, I landed and was cordially greeted by some old friends. "Aerotow back to Dunstable? No problem." I handed over my credit card so that they could they calculate what I owed after the tug returned. It would be up to me, once I was up there, to decide at what point to release – say 5,000ft 30 miles out, or a bit nearer if the wind was adverse or rain threatening. This is an arrangement that works very well – much better than handing over the minimum amount of cash you think you can get away with, then releasing when the tuggie, having given you the height and distance you paid for, waggles his wings or, if you don't get the message, turns and starts towing you back to his home site. In those circumstances you just have to hope your stinginess has not proved to be your downfall.

However, on this occasion, when after take-off I called the tuggie and asked him to take me to a point approximately 30 miles from Dunstable, he point-blank refused. Two thousand feet was the ration and he would not give me an inch more. I should have pulled off immediately, landed back and asked the lady with my credit card slip to explain to this tuggie what the deal was, or find a more obliging tuggie, or more expensively phone for a tug from Dunstable to come and fetch me.

## Field landing practice is always good for you

But Fate stepped in. (That's a bit pretentious, since nothing very dramatic happened on this day.) While I was considering what to do I heard a radio message from a young female pilot, flying the same task, announcing "Dunstable, five minutes." As the Bible says right at the beginning, all men's problems can be blamed on the opposite sex. "The woman did tempt me."

So I thought: "She has seven metres less



than me so I should be able to do it." Apart from the fact that the weather she was flying in was a very long way off, she had something more going for her than seven extra metres of carbon-fibre, namely talent.

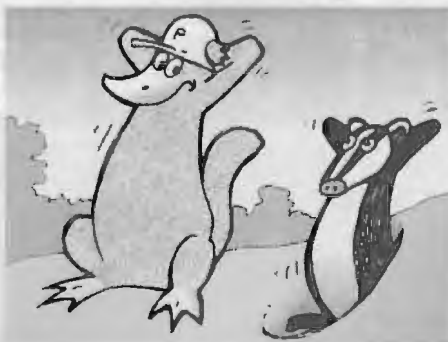
Muttering imprecations to myself about recalcitrant tuggies, and reflecting that not only glider pilots act like prematurely-woken badgers in early spring but tug-pilots too, and possibly entire clubs, I set off homewards under a dead sky. Inevitably, like a high-aspect-ratio concert grand piano, the ASW 22, encountering not a breath of lift or even that little burble of sink that makes one hope that what comes down must also go up, slid gracefully to a halt 15 miles from my take-off point. It was a nice dry field, into which I wafted down, safe but seething.

After that no difficulty. My mobile phone worked, friends came out with a car that worked and a trailer that worked, and they arrived and de-rigged in broad daylight. Apart from being humiliated by a slip of a girl one-third my age and having wasted a fair amount of money on a pointless aerotow, I could say that a bit of involuntary field-landing practice early in the season is never a complete waste of time.

Let me say that one advantage of Easter cross-country flying is there are plenty of fields to choose with little or no crop. Whether you will ever be able to get out of the field you have chosen is another matter. If there is one gate and one track that is frequently used by heavy farm machinery or cows, then the car and trailer will probably get bogged down, especially when the weight of the glider is added. But that is just too bad. Never in my gliding career have I selected a field from the point of view of anything but "Will the glider and I get down without damage?"

In the 1960s when almost every cross-country ended in some farm, I constantly heard the grander sort of person – I don't have to tell you what club they came from – saying "I always make sure there is an inhabited building with telephone line so I can easily call the club, that there is a convenient hard road leading to the main road, and an easily accessible gate". I used to gape at those types with ill-concealed loathing (or possibly envy – same thing). Were they geniuses or lunatics? My own tiny brain has always had to work flat out just coping with landing on something that is more or less horizontal without hitting anything that is more or less vertical. Being all picky about details is not for me. Incidentally, if your crew or partners ever gripe about the inconvenience of getting you out of a field in which you have landed without damage, get new crew or new partners. If they can't take a joke they shouldn't have joined. They clearly lack moral fibre. In my case they need all the moral fibre they can get. In turn I am amazingly tolerant of their adventures, which have been known to occur.

I am sorry I digressed, though I am sure

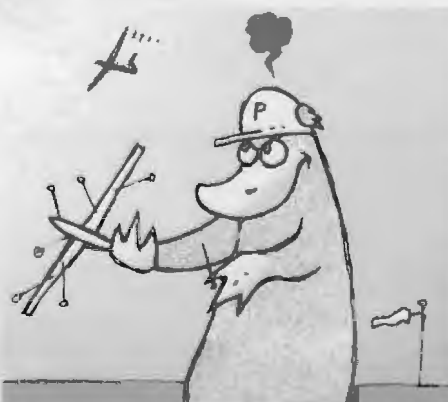


*Prematurely-woken badgers in early spring*

you will agree the digression was entirely worthwhile. One little incident on that Easter competition day was mildly amusing – but only because it happened to someone else. If it had happened to me, I would have given a good impression of King Kong when he was being shot up by those guys in biplanes on top of the Empire State Building.

A few minutes after I had landed in the same field, one of the enormously skilful Rebbeck brothers circled overhead for a while, then landed his little glider right alongside me. I liked that, because it is pleasant to have company while waiting for a retrieve. It is also very handy for a feeble old geezer to have serious help with the derigging of his own enormous glider, which he repays by a completely redundant show of help – more like interference really – in derigging the healthy young man's tiny glider. I also liked it because I had had quite enough humiliation from young aces for one afternoon. I don't think I actually willed him down onto the ground (I'm not a believer in the power of malevolent prayer; Lord knows I've tried it often enough to know it doesn't work) but an intact glider in a big field 400ft beneath one is a powerful magnet when there is no airfield in sight.

Fairly soon, somewhat to our surprise, a wonderful old member of Dunstable (well, just a year or so older than me) turned up with the Rebbeck trailer, but attached to his own four-wheel-drive Subaru, not the Rebbeck car. Wasn't that kind? Subjecting his own immaculate car to the expense and wear and tear of quite a longish round-trip



*I've tried it often enough*

rather than the young man's vehicle. There was a small snag. The Rebbeck trailer was locked – and the trailer keys were on the Rebbeck car keys, back at Dunstable. The senior member unhitched the trailer and drove back to Dunstable, saying what to himself I can't imagine. Eventually Rebbeck père turned up in his own car, with the right keys, and all was well, but with many hours and much petrol wasted. I managed to get home without catastrophe or further foul-ups, you may be disappointed to hear. A bit of an anti-climax, but I can't always be snatching disaster from the jaws of victory, not even to please you lot.

But about those keys. What self-discipline! If it had been me, I'd have ripped the doors off with any tool that came to hand and told my partners that the woodworm had been particularly hungry over the winter...

## **Flying wasn't the only hazard in those days...**

On the plane to Indianapolis to speak at the SSA Convention after writing the above piece, it dawned on me why the superior pilots of the 1960s – and quite a few of the inferior ones – were obsessed with landing in places easily accessible to the crew. It was the lunatic rule of the period that allowed three launches in a competition day, regardless of how far you might be from the airfield. This encouraged bad choice of landing spot, bad driving to the landed pilot, even worse driving back to the start, hasty rigging and skimmed cockpit preparation (did I say preparation? Hah!) so that it is a miracle nobody – to my knowledge, at any rate – died as a direct result. That tradition was still going strong in 1965: I remember vividly having to do two successive rigs and retrieves and de-rigs as solo crew without radio in a contest down in Devon. Two young men, however fit, have a hard time taking a Skylark 3 centre section off without smashing the canopy when the ground they are standing on is muddy and sloping at 20°. Not helped, either, by the pilot screaming "Hurry, hurry!" and insisting on taking the wheel of the retrieve car with our joint life savings snaking behind. I can't remember when this maniacal law was repealed but it could not come too soon for me. Nevertheless, I bet there was some reactionary muttering on that day when sanity finally prevailed. Does anybody know when the rule was changed so that relights were allowed only if you landed back on the contest site?

**mdbird@dircon.co.uk**

*The Platypus Papers: fifty years of pilotless pilotage* (hardback, 12"x8.5", 160 pages, 100 cartoons) costs £19.95 plus £3.50 p&p. See [www.hikokiwarplanes.co.uk](http://www.hikokiwarplanes.co.uk) tel 01964 624223 email [hikoki@dircon.co.uk](mailto:hikoki@dircon.co.uk) or buy from the BGA on 0116 253 1051 and securely on-line at [www.gliding.co.uk](http://www.gliding.co.uk)



# Glasflügel 304cz



The 304 is back – with 17.43m tips. Jochen Ewald describes the renaissance of an old friend

**I**N THE early 1980s, some 70 of the classic 15-metre Glasflügel 304czs were built in Germany as well as a handful in Yugoslavia, following the original factory's closure.

Three years ago, I reported on the type's resurrection in *S&G* (*Flying the Glasflügel 304cz*, October-November

1997, p277). On revisiting the makers, HPH at Kutna Hora in the Czech Republic, I was astonished. They have moved to bigger premises and have just taken production model number 31 out of the moulds. Even they, successful as they have been with their scale models of gliders and aircraft, had not

anticipated doing so well. Building on their success, they have continued to develop the model by giving the option of fitting it with new 17.43m wingtips. At nearby Zbraslavice airfield – which will also host the Vintage Glider Club 2001 International rally – I got to fly number 26, one of the first with the new





Left: 15m 304 OK-7304, flown by Lubomir Hodan, and 17.43m OK-9304, flown by Ríchen Jensen. Above: the latter, photographed from a Birgadyr tug at Zbraslavice

tips. These elegant wingtips with light dihedral are fitted instead of the winglets of the 15-metre version. They follow the easy-to-rig and safe "Hähnle" philosophy of automatic connections with a minimum of loose parts; they are secured by spring-loaded bolts. The outer ailerons are moved up by the inner ones, but remain in the neutral position if the aileron goes down. This, stopping increased drag, improves the aileron efficiency and hence the handling of the bigger glider. The comfortable, attractive cockpit is roomy, with adjustable back and head rests, and user-friendly wooden grips for airbrake and undercarriage handles and control column.

For take-off, setting the flaps to +1 is usually fine. Only in gusty, crosswind conditions would I suggest improving aileron efficiency by starting the ground run with -2, then switching to +1 for actually lifting off.

On aerotow and in free flight the new tipped 304 feels like a typical Hähnle design: well-harmonised, stable and easy to fly. It's a glider you can feel at home in. Even in rough air, at high speed, it's a comfortable ride.



Lubomir Hodan, third H of HPH and Zbraslavice's CFI, briefs Sandra Gillmeister on the 15m version's flaps

I found its stalling characteristics gentle. With a middle c of g position, flaps set at +1 and an indicated airspeed of 67km/h (36kts), there is slight buffeting. With the stick fully back, I could hold the glider in a straight stall. With the flaps set for landing (L position) I could reduce speed to 65km/h (35kts), irrespective of whether the trailing edge airbrakes were used or shut.

I measured roll rate ( $45^{\circ}$ - $45^{\circ}$ ) at 95km/h (51kts) in thermal flap (+2) as 4.3 secs. This is a good rate for a 17.5m glider and I was impressed by the control harmonisation in this configuration, which can expose a lack of rudder efficiency in other stretched types. The relationship between flap setting and speed is also good: trimmed to 85km/h (46kts) at +2, the speed increases to 90km/h (48.5kts) at +1, then 110km/h (59kts) at 0, 140km/h (75.5kts) at -1 and 170km/h (92kts) at -2. It goes back to 80km/h (43kts) with the flap lever fully back at L. In this configuration, deploying airbrake increases the speed to 85km/h (46kts). This all means that the pilot rarely needs to re-trim in flight.

Compared with the 15m version – itself one of the best of its class in the 1980s and still not far behind today's 15-metre ships – the 17.5m 304 has a clear advantage both in the climb and the glide. When I flew the 15m prototype some time ago, I was unhappy with the airbrake lever. It felt a bit "sticky" at times. That problem has been cured. Now, the upper part of the airbrakes opens first, and once the upper blade brings the lower one with it for full deployment, the forces on the lever increase within a comfortable range. This makes approach control easy.

The system has the added advantage of neither increasing nor spoiling lift, so that slow, steep finals with a low touchdown speed and short ground run are possible. This, together with the effective wheel-brake, means the risk of damaging the glider in a field landing is lower than with conventional airbrakes. For landing in calm



HPH's chief engineer, Richard Jensen, with the new 17.43m wingtip at Zbraslavice. The airfield will play host in 2001 to the Vintage GC's international rally

conditions I used the flap setting L and 85km/h (46kts); in turbulence or crosswinds, for even better control, I would use +1 and 90km/h (48.5kts).

I thought that HPH's craftsmanship was excellent – at least as good as on the gliders which came from the original Hähnle factory and are still in demand on the second-hand market. Although the HPH-Glasflügel 304cz has a lower performance than today's 15/18-metre gliders, it's a fine choice if you're looking for a new glider that's fun, easy and safe to fly. Assuming you're not out to win top contests, it offers one of the best pounds per performance point values you can get. At a basic price (excluding instruments and VAT) of DM64,500 plus DM6,145 for the 17.43m tips, it's reasonably affordable for a new ship, and offers better performance than today's Standard Class gliders. These are themselves often more expensive than the 304.

All in all, a nice option for individuals or clubs wanting to convert to flaps or to go hunting for Diamonds.

All photos: Jochen Ewald



The Glasflügel 304cz's new 17.43m tips are fitted to the wing where the 15m tips would otherwise go

### Technical Data: 304cz

Span	15 (49ft 3in) or 17.43m (57ft 2in)
Wing area	9.88m <sup>2</sup> (106ft <sup>2</sup> ) or 10.68m <sup>2</sup> (115ft <sup>2</sup> )
L/D	22.78 or 28.44
Wing profile	HQ 010-16.42
Length	6.45m (21ft 2in)
Empty weight	255kg or 260kg (562lb or 573lb)
Max weight	450kg (992lb)
Min wing loading	31 or 30.9kg/m <sup>2</sup> (6.35 or 6.33lb/ft <sup>2</sup> )
Max wing loading	44.5 or 42kg/m <sup>2</sup> (9.1 or 8.61lb/ft <sup>2</sup> )
Max waterballast	115 litres (25.3 Imperial gallons)
Max speed	250km/h (135kts)
Manoeuvring speed	200 or 180km/h (108 or 97kts)
Min sink	0.57m/s (1.8kts)
Best glide <sup>2</sup>	43

NB: Performance with 17.43m tips is not yet measured.  
1. at 77km/h, 310kg (41.5kts/684lb). 2. at 116km/h, 450kg.  
(63kts/992lb). All figures are from the manufacturers:  
HPH, Caslavská 126, PO Box 112, CZ-28401 Kutná Hora

[www.hph.cz](http://www.hph.cz)



# Overview of gliding's year

## Helen Evans reports on UK gliding's annual indoor event: the BGA AGM and conference

**A**BOUT 300 people attended the BGA AGM and Conference, at Eastwood Hall, near Nottingham, in February.

The morning began on a high note with a presentation by Afandi Darlington, Richard Hood and Peter Masson to account for their success in the Club Class World Championships (see also p30). The BGA, through members' contributions to its Team Fund, was their single largest backer. This was brought forward to replace a talk by Terry Slater, who recently resigned from chairing the instructors committee.

Later came information about the Ted Lysakowski Trust (see opposite, top), and presentations on what the BGA does for its members. These began with David Roberts, as acting chair of the Strategic Planning and Finance Sub-committee, followed by chairmen of most other sub-committees: Max Bacon (development); John Bradley (technical); Ron Bridges (competitions and awards); Ian Godfrey (marketing and communications); Pete Stratten (flight safety); and Carr Withall (airspace).

Exhibitors ranged from glider insurers to an on-line gliding shop. Gliders on display included the Camphill Vintage Group's colour-branded T-21 (not a marketing ploy, they just buy paint in large quantities); a Ventus 2CM, an ASW 27, an ASW 28 and the new DG-1000 two-seater demonstrator.

After lunch came the AGM. The minutes of the last meeting and annual report were



Below from right: David Bromley (21), Ewan Burnet and Lionel Moret (both 20), of Syerston, 'visited' the event by Beagle Pup 150. "It was beautiful, sunny weather: a lovely day for flying," said David. "Gliders on display showed up well." The airborne visitors orbited a few times then went for lunch at Hucknall



Ewan Burnet

accepted and the proposed budget passed almost unanimously after some searching questions. Following some discussion, the AGM approved a motion to temporarily suspend ratings of instructors after any accident (rather than the previous "serious" accidents, which is open to interpretation).

The meeting then considered a resolution submitted by Bath, Wilts and North Dorset GC: that any changes in BGA Operational Regulations and standards as defined in *Laws and Rules* must be approved by a majority of full member clubs. (At present, Operational Regulations have to be approved at an AGM.) This prompted a lively debate. Backers of the motion said their club was concerned that decisions, most originating from the Instructors committee, were being made by the BGA without sufficient consultation. Opponents said that the BGA Executive had to be able to do its job and, if the motion

were carried, it would be unable to do so. After discussion, the club agreed to withdraw the motion if the Executive considered its concerns and reported back to the next AGM.

Newly-elected members of the BGA Executive were then announced (see below) and the vice-presidents re-elected. The AGM agenda concluded with the award of a BGA Diploma to Dave Wright (see below, right).

Lembit Öpik entertained the audience in his usual inimitable style (see Twelve months in politics, opposite) before Klaus Ohlmann astounded them with his account of the world's longest glider flight, reported in the last S&G (*How I flew 2,463km*, February-March, p40). GPS altitude recording on the only logger he carried stopped after about 1.5hr into the 14.5hr flight (most GPS fixes being 2D instead of the expected 3D fixes which have better



New faces on the BGA Executive Committee include, shown clockwise from bottom left, Harry Middleton (The Soaring Centre); Paul Hepworth (York); Doug Lingafelter (London); Val Roberts (Needwood Forest) and Richard Yerburgh (Bath, Wilts & North Dorset). Dave Salmon (Derby & Lincs) and Ron Armitage (Channel) were re-elected. Leaving the Exec were John Glossop, Terry Slater and Lemmy Tanner. The other members are: Claire Emson (Oxford); vice chairman Mike Jordy (The Soaring Centre); treasurer Keith Mansell (Midland); chairman David Roberts (Cotswold); Barry Rolfe (BGA secretary, ex officio); and Malcolm Sanderson (Borders)







Ted Lysakowski Trust award winners included, this year, Alan Irving (centre) of Southdown GC and Kevin Hook (right) of Scottish GC, seen with the Trust's Krystyna Lysakowska. Alan will join Carl Peters (Bannerdown) on a week's gliding course at Rieti; Kevin will join Tim Charlesworth (Lasham) for two-seater comps experience at July's Lasham Regionals while a five-day cross-country course, also at Lasham, was won by Anthony Leech of Devon & Somerset GC

accuracy). It is hoped that the recorded data (which, being from an IGC-approved model, includes pressure altitude with each fix) will be sufficient for the authorities in Argentina, Germany and at the FAI to certify the distance flown as a record. Klaus took his audience through the flight, with logger data projected on to a moving map, and finished his show with a display of slides (see pages 34 and 38 of this issue).

Dinner for 248 people was followed by the presentation of annually-awarded trophies to: Jamie Allen (Wakefield); Mike Young (Furlong); Diana King (California In England); Jamie Allen (Volk); Hugh Kindell and Andy Aveling (Seager); Ray Hart (Frank Foster); Steve Jones (Manio); Anthony Brown (Rex Pilcher); Chris Skeate (De Havilland); Pete Masson (Goldsborough); Roy Woodhouse (John Hands); Mike Young (Enigma); Phil Jeffery (Firth Vickers); John Bridge (L DuGarde Peach); David Caunt (Slingsby); and Matt Cook (Spitfire).

The formal proceedings were concluded by a well-received after-dinner speech from Rod Dean, who is Head of the General Aviation Department at the Civil Aviation Authority Safety Regulation Group. He pointed out that if we stand together with other airports bodies we are likely to be even more effective.



A BGA Diploma for Dave Wright who, inter alia, does S&G's accident/incident summaries. "Dave's attention to detail," said the citation, "coupled with great breadth of knowledge and experience of safety issues in air transport, light aviation and gliding, continues to benefit all within the BGA." And thanks, too, from S&G's editor...

# Twelve months in politics

O: LDV + flights!

TA: Gliding buffs

TH: plan of action for year ahead

**MY GOAL** as your man on the green benches is to make politics work for gliding.

This means that, if I'm successful, gliding gets more financial and political support, and less stifling legislation to force us out of the sky.

We focused on six areas in the year 2000. S&G has reported on each of these as we've gone along, so let's look at them in the context of the year ahead.

Firstly, as you'll remember, I opposed the privatisation of the National Air Traffic Service (NATS). We've got the best run airways in the world, and it seems crazy to introduce a profit motive. I suspect even a majority of the Labour Party agree. But, under severe pressure of the Government heavy mob, their back bench buckled, and the privatisation went through.

But the silver lining is that we did get a meeting, an assurance, and a letter from Minister that gliding would be protected for the time being. The challenge for the next 12 months is to get a cast-iron guarantee that we're not going to be boxed in by cost savings, or simply by any suggestion that General Aviation must pay for the privilege of crossing controlled airspace.

Secondly, we made a good start in building our relationship with relevant Ministers. Sports Minister Kate Hoey MP is an Officially Very Nice Person. She's proved a sympathetic listener to the opportunities for national glory that gliding offers. The next 12 months are a time to ensure that she, or her successor after the election, makes a specific commitment to supporting the financial aspirations of gliding. The jackpot would be a wad from the Treasury. But it might be that the doors of the Lottery could be flung open to worthy proposals. See below.

This year, my work in Westminster on the Ministers will develop into a wider strategy to make politicians love us. I'm going to ask you to help win the hearts and minds of the local political community. You'll get draft letters to use to invite your local Council leaders and Councillors to your club. Impressing them with a friendly tour, much flattery and a safe NON-AEROBATIC flight will do you a power of good next time you want something from the Council. The idea here is to establish that gliding is peaceful, and low impact environmentally. If they regard you as the local bomb-touting B52 bomber squadron, you're less likely to win the planning application to extend your hangar.

Also, it's time for us to get serious about local MPs. They should be offered the same star treatment, with the added request that they write to Ministers to support our case



Lembit (right) is planning a future route which he hopes will include lots more time in the cockpit. He's seen with his club's vice chairman, Charles Carter

for money. All you have to do is smile at the MP, get them airborne... and use the final approach as a good time to get them to agree to send the damn letter to Whitehall.

I had a go at helping to get funding for the Club Class world team. So, I think I can justly claim that their massive global victory in Australia was entirely due to me.

Er, well, actually, I confess this is a triumph of political spin over reality. The sponsorship was raised primarily by the team itself. However, this year, we're trying to establish a strategic perspective on funding, and it could be that this will deliver greater dividends from the private sector. Work in progress, and we've already started on it with the Juniors. I'm taking my orders from the BGA fundraising gurus.

As I said above, Lottery and Government funding is the obvious target for significant cash. The specific goal here is to get the rules changed, so we can get real funding for teams and such like. It's too restrictive at the moment. And, given the level of success we're getting at the moment on thin air, a few quid to smooth the airflow will be a welcome boost.

And finally, there was one target I did a terrible job at last year. Going flying myself. As I shuffled about in the dusty halls of Parliament, you folk were scratching flights between the fog and the drizzle, on the two flyable days of 2000 AD. So, I'm going to try harder this year. (No reasonable offer refused, by the way.) Just call my Parliamentary office, and I'll be there faster than you can say CBSIFTCBE. Oh, and because it's election year, the weather's going to be better too. You'll see.

**Lembit Öpik**, MP for Montgomeryshire and a Liberal Democrat front bench, is the BGA's representative in Parliament



# Searching

# the sky

the white planes picture co.

## The third of Jay Rebbeck's four cross-country articles explains how to pick the racing line

**T**O FIND the best lift, we need to somehow judge what the invisible currents of air around us actually look like. We have to analyse the clues available in the sky and on the ground, integrate all these scraps of knowledge into one holistic picture in our mind, then decide where to point the glider.

The first part of this three-stage process – absorbing information – demands a real thirst for knowledge. Flying with Andy Davis for the first time, it rapidly became apparent that he devoted far more of his energies looking outside than I had ever thought necessary.

This attentiveness meant he was always the first to notice birds circling or tendrils being sucked into cloudbase.

An acute awareness of the wind direction is equally important. Try to assess the local wind direction using whatever indicators are available (see *Reading the sky ahead*, December 2000-January 2001, p26). Based on this, imagine the wind flowing like a fluid over the terrain below you. Then you can visualise what it is doing and create a mental picture of it squeezing through narrow valleys or spilling around ridges over which you may be flying.

Another thing to look for is the angle of



Jay, of London GC, has recently flown 400hrs as a cross-country instructor in Spain and South Africa. The Junior National Champion, he has almost 2,000hrs and will represent Britain at the next Junior Worlds, in August 2001

the sun to the ground. What might the effects be of the sun passing from east to west through the day and of its height at different times of year or in different latitudes? For example, have you ever experienced an inexplicable lull in thermals in the early afternoon, just as you get into the rhythm of a good flight? Justin Wills suggested at the Junior Nationals last year that when the sun is at its highest, the cooling shadow cast on the ground by your cloud falls directly upon the very area of hot buoyant air that is feeding the thermal. Later in the day, the angled sun is better able to provide energy directly under the cumulus to reinforce your thermal.

### Putting the picture together

Once you've gathered your information about the effects of the sun's heating and monitored the wind, you then have to process this information to build a mental picture of what's going on. In my December-January article, I discussed the interaction of sun and wind with ridges and wave, but what about their effects on

convergence and thunderstorms?

I remember reading in textbooks that convergence is the lift created when two opposing airmasses met. So a sea breeze convergence would be set up when sea air flowing inland met a different airmass. However, what I had always assumed was that these would have to meet each other in diametrically opposite directions.

Experience in Spain, though, has taught me that surprisingly good convergence lines can form even when two airmasses meet at quite shallow angles. So, noticing a change of wind direction of as little as 20° could be enough for you to exploit a developing convergence line.

When soaring the kind of electric storms you get out in South Africa, you need to think carefully about how the air is moving on a big scale. With wind speeds on the ground fluctuating by up to 50kts at a time, you need to cultivate the big picture of how storms work. These storms throw out violent orange dust fronts at ground level as the rich soil is kicked up off the ground. Dropping into such dust fronts yields only turbulence, but they often force the air in front up into the leading edge of the storm. This forms thick, dark, tendril-ridden lines of lift that you can ride for hundreds of kilometres. The best place to run is under the dark shelf, normally between one and five kilometres out. There are, however, risk-reward trade-offs to be made: how close would you fly to a wall of lightning to



get a line of 14kt lift? (Lightning strikes can hit gliders well clear of cloud – the report into the K-21 accident in 1999 near Dunstable calculated that strikes could occur up to 10km away from the charge centre – Ed.)

Isolated storms that track with the wind work quite differently from storms that are expanding but stationary. As the storm moves over the ground, the lift tends to be found on the upwind side, continuously supplied by the sun's heating. Meanwhile, a shadow is cast over the downwind edge, suppressing thermals. Stationary storms that expand in all directions tend to produce lift on three sides: the cirrus blow-off (created as the upper winds sweep the developing anvil downwind) dictate which side is blanketed from the sun.

So, once we've pieced our jigsaw together where do we actually point the glider?

## The comfort zone

Where we search for lift depends on our height. When we're cruising along in contact with cloudbase – what Brian Spreckley calls the comfort zone – our outlook is quite different to when we drop to lower levels.

But height is relative, so how do we define the height below which we are uncomfortable, and why is this important?

A really useful distinction is to imagine splitting in two the operating layer – the height band in which you plan to fly your glider – with the divide at half the height of cloudbase. This allows for the fact that how comfortable you are about your height depends on how close you are to cloudbase. While you can frequently push down to 2,000ft in the UK and be relatively confident of climbing away, attempting the same tactic on a storming South African day with an 18,000ft cloudbase will almost certainly end in tears. The thermal which is feeding that booming cloud might have left the ground as long as half an hour ago, and there's no guarantee it's still sucking down low...

Put simply, when we are cruising along in the top half of convection, we are nearer the clouds than the ground, and so should pay more attention to features we note at cloudbase. However, as we descend into the bottom half of convection, ground features become more relevant to our decision-making. So we search the sky differently at different heights.

## Searching at cloudbase

Use your time climbing to pick your route ahead. At cloudbase, the deterioration in horizontal visibility makes it difficult to choose the best direction. If, however, you are forced to make a decision at cloudbase, rely on the shadows cast on the ground ahead. This will show in which direction the clouds line up best.

When deciding which clouds will yield the best lift, it is more important to concentrate on what the bases look like

the white planes picture co.



When you're below half the height of cloudbase, you're more likely to get clues about lift from the ground than the clouds. Look for hotspots, such as small towns

than the tops. Search for the darkest flattest bases from the side, but when you arrive under cumulus look for the discontinuities in the base.

When picking your route, try and work out if the lift is located consistently relative to the cu on a given day. This will be more predictable on some days than others.

Even when you can reliably find lift, the effect of the sun moving from east to west may cause the thermals to shift.

Remember, too, that the picture looks completely different when you change directions. To avoid disorientation after rounding a turning point, spend time looking down the next leg before you turn.

When you've decided where you think the best lift is, what's the best way to search under the cloud? To maximise the number of thermals you sample, fly to the side of the cloud you think looks best, and then turn towards the middle. I often S-turn three or four times under a cloud before I decide either to press on or stop to climb.

## Getting low

Below half the height of convection, I start feeling low! I find I don't have the capacity for so much long-term planning, and am more occupied with the short-term problem of climbing again. It often pays to take larger deviations to get a climb out of trouble. When you get low, your options are more limited and a weak climb (with associated swearing) frequently ensues.

As you are now nearer the ground than cloudbase, it pays to study it more closely for thermal sources. The key factor to search for is differences in surface heating. Thermals are formed by bubbles of air, warmer than their surroundings, escaping from the ground, so anywhere that encourages good temperature differentials will facilitate thermal formation. Good examples include:

- Hot spots such as small towns in the UK on blue days, working power stations, motorway service stations, and so on.
- Edges between cloud shadows and sunlight, especially on the upwind side, as

the sun starts heating an area that was previously in shade.

- Borders between ground features of different heating capacity. For example, mountainous snow lines provide good trigger points for warm bubbles to break away from the mountainside.

- Ridges facing the wind obviously boost thermals, but lee ("wind shadow") thermals can also form on the downwind side of ridges in relatively light winds. Here the ridge itself provides shelter for warm bubbles to heat up, before they break away in the turbulent air behind the ridge.

As well as paying close attention to ground features, another key to getting out of low scrapes quickly is good preparation. Firstly, choose your landing options as early as safely possible, so that when you get really low you can concentrate fully on soaring. Secondly, prepare yourself, mentally and emotionally. When low, you often have to take a weaker thermal to climb out of survival mode. Whatever mistakes got you into this mess are history now. As you glide to a low point, combat the frustration by mentally rehearsing patiently climbing. Avoid the temptation to leave a weak climb sooner than is sensible because your rhythm has been broken.

## Work the energy

In order to get the most out of the sky when flying cross-country, you need to practise. The best way to do this is by racing against friends in similar gliders. I personally have learned how to choose routes through the sky by flying my own flight, but watching others around me. At competition level you will see relatively small differences in climb performance. However, in the glide, the good guys can pull out surprisingly big leads by working the energy efficiently. My advice to any pilot hoping to make the most of the weather is to race, compare, and learn.

Next issue: Jay concludes his series with advice on choosing the right speed-to-fly – whatever the conditions ✂

Searching the sky for the best lift is endlessly challenging. Decision-making is essentially a three-stage procedure. Firstly, continually analyse all relevant factors – the wind, sun, ground surface, and the shape and texture of the clouds – throughout the flight. Secondly, use all your experience – of ridges, convergence, wave, thunderstorms – to process this information. Then try to build a mental picture that helps you plot the movements of the ocean of currents ahead. Thirdly, where to search for lift depends ultimately on your height. When cruising in your comfort zone, pay more attention to activity at cloudbase. When descending into the bottom half of convection, focus on monitoring ground features.

# Staying

If foot-and-mouth or the British climate is keeping you close to home, it pays to stay current. The BGA's National Soaring Coach Simon Adlard offers tips

**T**HE SOARING season is already upon us, along with the dreams of tasks we want to fly this year. Unfortunately, at the time I write this, the spectre of foot-and-mouth disease is also with us.

Many pilots could well be tempted to soar locally without purpose or – even worse – not to fly at all until the situation becomes clearer. At best, this would mean that their cross-country and soaring skills will not be as sharp as they might like.

But there are things you can do to remain in practice without getting out of gliding range of your home airfield.

One of the questions I get asked most often on soaring courses is: *what can I do to improve my ability to soar?* Frequently, I have to reply: *learn how to fly the glider with a greater degree of accuracy.*

There are a number of exercises that can help you to do this, even on unsoarable days. They include:

**Turn reversals:** roll the glider to a 45° bank turn and maintain it for one full turn; then reverse the turn to 45° in the opposite direction, paying particular attention to keeping the yaw string straight.

**Rolling on a heading:** fly the glider towards a feature on the horizon and roll the glider alternately to 20° of bank, left and right, while remaining on your original heading.

**Flying on a heading:** fly towards a cloud within easy reach, maintaining a precise airspeed without deviating off track.

**Steep turns:** practise your turns at a minimum of 45° of bank while maintaining a constant airspeed. The yaw string should be central or slightly out of turn.

These exercises may seem simple enough. They will, however, rapidly develop the handling skills required for the efficient use of a thermal, especially for low hours pilots.

Remember, if you don't have to think about controlling the glider, you reduce your workload and can concentrate on other things such as centring or cloud selection – and, of course, maintaining an effective lookout.

On good, soarable days, you may be better off turning your attention to making the best use of thermals.

Rather than using your chosen thermals right up to cloudbase, try practising your initial thermal centring by climbing for a few hundred feet – then leaving the climb and flying back to it from a different

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# local but keeping sharp



*Getting airborne when you can, no matter what the frustrations, helps prepare you to achieve your gliding goals*

direction. See how long it takes you to re-centre the thermal.

Once you can centre rapidly, try using some of the techniques described by Jay Rebbeck in the last *S&G* (*How to thermal better*, February-March, p26) and see which one works for you.

On a cross-country flight, the fastest speeds are normally achieved by selecting only the strongest thermals.

You can simulate this while soaring locally by flying for a defined time (say,

two hours) and seeing what your total height gain is in that period. This can be turned into a competition with your friends by comparing your logger traces at the end of the day. In order to win, you will have to be selective about the climbs you use, how rapidly you centre them and when you decide to leave.

There are also other vital cross-country techniques that you can practise locally.

**Turning point photography:** choose four or five features local to the airfield

and practise flying into the sector and photographing them with a minimum loss of height.

**Following energy lines:** see how far you can glide following energy lines with the loss of say 1,000ft – making sure you stay in gliding range of the site.

**Final glides:** practise your final glides back to your home airfield with the aim of arriving back at 1,000ft so that you can climb back up for further attempts, varying the direction and speed of the glides back.

**Starts:** practise making starts for speed tasks so that you cross under the start line at high speed with a good line of energy down track. See how far you can get without turning before you have to final glide back as in the above exercise. A good start can often make the difference between winning and losing a competition.

**Learn how to use your electronic toys:** take the time to learn how to use any new electronic goodies that you may have got for Christmas by playing with them in the back of a two-seater. This way, somebody else can look out of the window while you press the buttons.

I hope this article will encourage you to take a launch to try out some of the above exercises. At worst, it will cost you a few quid for the launch; at best, will keep you current and improve the skills you need to fly cross-country.

*Simon, a member of Midland GC at The Long Mynd, is the national coach who runs the BGA's soaring courses*

## What happened to clubs in 1967?

AT LEAST eight gliding clubs reported being halted by foot-and-mouth during 1967-68, when more than 2,364 outbreaks were detected around Britain, leading to the slaughter of 442,000 animals. It cost the country an estimated £150 million in slaughter costs and lost sales. Compensation worth £27 million was paid out to farmers.

Midland GC suspended operations from 11 November to March 9. The blow was softened because, as Keith Mansell recalls, it had just written off a couple of two-seaters. The club also cancelled non-flying activities such as the Christmas dinner. Shropshire was among the worst-hit areas. But to demonstrate how localised the problem was, Lasham reported having 20 farmers at a thank-you party at around that time.

Scotland was affected: cross-countries were out and so were visiting groups from the South. But members made the most of the wave in December: nine club aircraft went above 9,000ft and there was a Diamond

height on Christmas Day.

Camphill was grounded too, just when they had got their gliders and winches in good fettle. Animals had to be destroyed within a mile of the site, and in sympathy with local farmers no-one went near the club. But members were helped out by Doncaster and District GC, which lent them a T-21 and a Swallow to fly there. So, with a K-13 that was offsite when the ban came into force, they carried on flying, getting in some aerotow practice.

The host club celebrated as their flying stats showed a useful boost to funds – as did the bar takings!

Blackpool and Fylde had just found a good hill soaring site near Preston when the ban struck and exploration of the new soaring possibilities had to wait.

Coventry was hit just when it was about to say 1967 must have been one of the best years ever. The site was closed in November because of the disease and the children's

party was called off. But the dinner-dance went ahead in Leamington. At least the outbreak didn't occur in the summer – if it had, "we'd have had something to cry about," its *S&G* correspondent wrote. Flying didn't begin again until February.

Southdown members couldn't fly for about eight weeks. When flying began again in mid-January, it was bogged down by the weather. Trent Valley voluntarily gave up flying during the outbreak.

Mark Wright, of Rattlesden, was not a pilot then, but he said: "I will never forget the sight of hundreds of cattle being bulldozed into huge piles and set alight, the awful smell which hung around for days, and the even worse sight of adults crying as they watched their lives literally go up in smoke."

"Having witnessed this, the sound of pilots bleating because they couldn't go cross-country raises the hackles somewhat."

*Bernard Smyth*

# Picking the right surface



the white planes picture co.



**Regional Examiner and farmer Adrian Hatton, who flies from Syerston and Saltby, explains what you might land on – and what to avoid**

**T**HIS ARTICLE (which was written before the foot-and mouth crisis) is aimed at all glider pilots. Once the ban is lifted, you never know when you might unexpectedly find yourself needing the services of a generous landowner.

I use the word “generous” advisedly: when we land in someone's field, we enter their workplace and their home uninvited. How would you feel to find a stranger wandering round your back garden? So, when you arrive in a field, contact the landowner before removing the aircraft, be suitably apologetic and try to regard it as a chance to meet someone new and maybe even pass on your enthusiasm for flying.

I strongly believe you should not take vehicles into a field without permission – so if you can't find the landowner before removing the glider, then carry it out. When you do reach him, apologise and explain we don't aim to end up in fields but that flight safety dictated your actions.

Above all, leave the landowner knowing in your own mind that, if you needed to, you could land there again next week.

So what, in the UK, should you select? I



*Oilseed rape being swathed in early July. Note that the cut crop behind the machine, at 1.5-2m (c 6ft) tall, is almost as high as the standing crop in the foreground*

shall identify features to help you choose good, not-so-good or bad surfaces to land on (or, if we get it wrong, crash into).

By far and away the majority of cereal crops south of the Scottish borders are winter wheat/barley. The crop is sown before winter, to make a good start growing when spring arrives. A smaller area is sown as the land dries out in February-March. All these crops are sown for harvest in July-August and from the air are initially brown fields that gradually turn an even green colour with tramlines (tractor tracks) visible at regular intervals across the field. These are useful for two reasons: the spacing between them – almost universally either

12m or 24m – can help you judge field size (if in doubt, assume it's 12m). They can also give an indication of the height of the crop; if you can see soil colour in the tramline then it is almost certainly short enough to avoid damaging your glider, even with low tailplane types. (Ensure that the wings are kept level with the surface on landing – not necessarily horizontal – as the crop may well be taller than your well-cut grass airfield.) You are also unlikely to damage the crop seriously. If tramlines look dark (see picture, above right), a shadow is being cast across them by the tall crop so it is best avoided if possible for the sake of your pride and joy – and the harvest.

At the risk of being wrong almost everywhere, I would say winter crops become unlandable from mid-April in the Midlands (earlier by seven days on the South Coast and later by up to 14 days in northern England/southern Scotland). Spring-sown crops may remain usable for another 4-5 weeks (until end of May in the Midlands).

**Oilseed rape** is grown in much the same way as cereals. The most marked difference is the amazing rapidity of growth in the spring, from cabbage-sized at the start of March to 2m tall within 10 weeks. It can grow at up to 8-10cm/day at its peak rate. Luckily, it has an unmistakable deterrent for glider drivers: in mid-April it turns brilliant yellow (and, allegedly, gives everyone hayfever so they don't want to fly).

It does, though, have a dirty trick up its sleeve. After the flowers have fallen off it





Tall wheat in early July showing dark tramlines (the shadow of the crop hides the soil). Top right is oilseed rape

reverts to a green colour which could catch the unwary glider (literally). The subtle giveaway is that it becomes very tangled and mottled in appearance, but usually with tramlines still visible. There are almost always some yellow flowers on immature plants in field edges and gateways.

Oilseed rape is cut and left to dry (we call it "swathed") for about 10 days before harvest. This usually happens around early to mid-July in the Midlands. This causes confusion every year amongst even the most experienced glider pilots who may mistake swathed oilseed rape for straw rows after harvested barley. The former is a glider eater; the latter is usually OK.

There is an easy way to tell whether a crop is swathed pre-harvest or is actually harvested. If you look closely at the row widths, swathed crop rows will occupy about two-thirds of the unit width (in other words, it will be two-thirds crop, one-third space between the row) whereas harvested straw rows will typically be the reverse (that is, one-third straw row, two-thirds gap between the rows).

**Peas and beans** are grown on reasonably large areas in the UK but to all intents and purposes can be treated as cereal crops for their suitability or otherwise for landing on.

**Set aside** is the one where, according to the popular press, I get paid lots for doing nothing. I wish! Very strict rules are applied to set aside ground and the net result is that some set aside is good for landing and some most definitely is NOT.

For example, land left after late-harvested root crop must be undisturbed until July the following year. It will be like a bomb site until then. Land set aside after a cereal crop will also be left alone and will probably be smooth enough to land on, but beware of tall weed growth from early summer until it is killed off by cultivation or weed-killer.

**Grass** ranges from rough pasture used for grazing to multi-cropped silage fields, where up to four harvests are taken per season. Grazed land is fraught with danger for gliders with possible obstructions such as fences (electric ones are the hardest to see), water troughs and, last but by no means least, large, mobile, four-legged ones. If by chance you find that some

young, excitable cattle have been beamed into your field between your selecting a stock-free site and climbing out of the cockpit after landing, stay with the aircraft. Do NOT chase the animals as they then will think this is to be a game of "run around the glider and jump on it". A calm, quiet approach towards the group is far more likely to succeed in persuading them to leave the area and resume grazing. Then use your phone, if you have one, to summon assistance whilst keeping the glider in view in case the animals return to check out the suitability of your total energy probe as a back-scratcher or your shiny paint finish for interesting flavours.

Intensively-farmed grassland will follow a reasonably rapid cycle of growth to around 50cm by around the beginning of May and will then be cut and carted away leaving a characteristic yellow/green colour for a short while until new grass growth masks this and the cycle repeats itself. These fields are usually fairly smooth. However, in wet seasons wheelmarks will be left by tractors and these should be avoided like the plague when landing. They will be worst near the entry/exit point in the field so always try to land so as not to run over any unusual marks. Always avoid having a wing hanging over any change in colour and/or texture, as occasionally a part of the field may have not been cut and still have long crop on it.

**Maize** is grown for harvest in November for animal feed. It is sown in May and the field will be brown until pale green plants emerge in June and grow steadily until

September when the crop will be 2m tall.

**Root crops** are, without exception, planted in the spring into finely-prepared seedbeds to suit the crop type. Potatoes, for example, go into ridges 30cm high and one metre apart. This does tend to shake out the fillings on the ground roll and so is best avoided. **Sugar beet**, by contrast, will be sown into a smooth level surface in April with virtually no visible marks until mid-May when pale thin crop rows 50cm apart will be seen. Sugar beet fields are actually quite good for landing in, but be aware that the crop is of a high value and you WILL be asked to pay for the damage.

Other root crops widely grown in some parts of the country include **carrots** and **onions**. These are grown on raised flat-topped ridges around 30cm high and with wheelways every 2m. Do not land here as you will break your glider and your wallet.

Most people know that farming is going through a bit of a tough time at present and a direct result of this is to change the system of preparing land for the next crop after harvest to reduce costs and labour. The modern approach to this is, as soon as possible after the combine has left, to rip up the stubble and leave it to allow weed seeds to germinate. This operation will leave the field potentially very rough with clods of soil up to 30cm diameter. So treat **all brown fields at harvest time as suspect**; a better option is a good stubble field. (The final cultivation to level and seed the field is not until just before the next crop).

I can't cover every type of crop here but have described some common types. The over-riding factor should be that if you are unsure of the exact nature of the surface, avoid it. **If there is any doubt, then there is no doubt.** The only way to be sure about your skill in field selection is, as in any flying discipline, to stay current – so get out to your club, grab an instructor and go look at some fields in the motorglider. I think this should be done at least annually – more often if you're unsure of your ability to recognise seasonal changes.

Laws & Rules, available from the BGA (0116 253 1051), gives the Code of Conduct for landing in fields. See also [www.field-landings.co.uk](http://www.field-landings.co.uk) – Adrian's new website – for updates. More details of it on page 5

the white planes picture co.



As some glider pilots have already found out, many vehicles are fitted with catalytic converters which, when parked heat up sufficiently to ignite stubble, straw or even dry grass. Take care when entering a field for a retrieve



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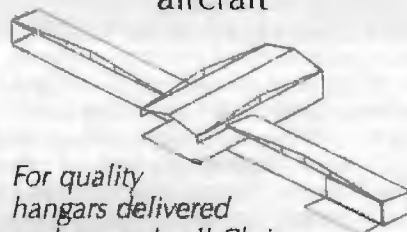
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# Why you should beware of wires

**Lots of things need attention when you're landing in a field. This pilot recalls how he got it wrong one day last year**

**T**HE DAY was forecast to be unusually good for a Saturday. My normally wet and cloudy syndicate day promised to be warm and dry. That rarity for me last year, a return flight, seemed possible. The only bad news was that the day would be largely blue.

In the first hour things went smoothly, although flying at around 2,000ft has never been my preference. After an hour, 80km was covered. Expecting conditions to improve, I was beginning to look forward to a longer task.

Unfortunately, during the second hour my speed dropped to an average 73km/h. The few cu had disappeared. Approaching the first turning point at Corby I found myself at 1,000ft for the second time that afternoon. After a struggle I got to 1,800ft, enough to round the TP back to my field. This time there was no hint of lift. (Nor were there any power stations on south-facing slopes!) Noticing a quarry in the sun I headed towards it and the comforting proximity of a nearby airfield. After 15 minutes at 1,000ft a thermal suddenly boomed: the best climb of the day.

Seven minutes later I was at 4,000ft and faced with a decision: continue or go home? The next leg to Newmarket shouldn't be too much trouble, but I was getting fed up with field landings, having enjoyed five of them already that year. Call me a wimp if you will, but I do like my pint of Guinness at the end of a flight.

As I headed home two more 4kt climbs to 4,000ft made me curse a little.

Twenty minutes later I was still looking for a climb and the air was completely dead. By now, at 1,200ft, three potential fields had been selected. After searching round all three, still no lift. *Size OK, Slope OK, Surface OK, Shape and orientation OK, Stock in one of the fields, Sticks and String (cables) across another.*

So option three, a ploughed field, it was. Small trees on the approach, a wood on



*How it all looked after the accident. That barely-visible white blob (circled), caught up by the wires, is the pilot's hat*

the right and power cables parallel and at right angles to my chosen field.

I flew a long final approach to land short near the gate. Just before crossing the hedge I became a little nervous about the power cables. On the left a 90° change of direction was clearly visible. The field I was landing in was the same width, but with no pole in the middle. It looked unusual, but I

**'Landing past the suspect pole would have resulted only in a slightly more difficult retrieve'**

couldn't see any cables crossing the field, so I carried on.

Crossing the hedge, I applied full positive flap and airbrake. A second later the canopy suddenly exploded outwards. I remember thinking "\*\*\*\*\* – cables!" and "Get down!" but in reality there was no time to react. The next thing I knew I was stationary on the ground. Fortunately, as it turned out, I kept very still because a few seconds later the 11,000V cables cracked, throwing smoke and sparks into the air. When everything had quietened down I climbed cautiously out and retired to a safe distance, apparently looking a little pale.

The first person on the scene was a glider pilot from another club who had seen me

in circuit. Instead of beer by the river he found himself offering me his mobile to call the electricity company. Not everyone realises that power cables reactivate themselves at 15-minute intervals. For the next 45 minutes the occasional onlooker was warned to keep away. Once the wires had been permanently disabled it was possible to approach the glider and the events of the accident soon became clear.

The steep approach had caused the cables to enter the canopy high up. They then skimmed the top of my head, took my hat with them and lodged in the middle of the headrest and under the right wing. At some point I had submarined about six inches under the tight straps of my four-point harness. After hitting the ground, the glider was pulled 20ft backwards under the tension in the cables. My hat was found buried in the top of the right wing.

So what can be learned from all this? I have 500 hours and more field landings to my credit than I care to admit. I carried out all the checks that I should have in a timely manner and the circuit wasn't hurried.

Clearly, cables are hard to see against the ground, but the poles usually aren't. I already knew that, but hadn't appreciated that it would be sensible to study the layout of insulators on poles more closely. They are quite confusing from the air, but familiarity with the components could have helped clarify what I failed to see. Some poles are also reinforced to enable irregular spans. What's more, the cables are harder to see against a ploughed field if you are wearing brown sunglasses.

Another mistake was to suppress my feelings of unease. My subconscious was telling me something, and landing beyond the suspect pole would have resulted in only a slightly more difficult retrieve.

I escaped with a few scratches. The glider wasn't so lucky.



*After landing, the glider was pulled back 20ft by the tension in the cables*

*Familiarity with the pattern of insulators on electricity poles could have helped prevent this accident*

*The pilot now wishes he hadn't suppressed that feeling of unease on his final approach*

# Flying like a dream

That's how one rival team described the Club Class Brits. Gold medallist Pete Masson reports on the UK's best-ever performance in a Worlds: 1, 2, 4

**O**UR JOURNEY to the site of the Club Class World Championships began inauspiciously. Collecting our gliders at Benalla, we ended up with only two trailers and had to borrow one to get to Gawler in South Australia.

We began the 825km trip at 07.15hrs on January 2, 2001. At 07:20, one of the trailers broke down (just 823km to go).

But ten minutes later, after a bit of hacking and sawing, we were on the road again.

One of the first teams to arrive, we worked on getting the gliders ready. We flew a few times during the practice period, finding out about the task area and working out the start points. For team flying to work well, we would need to start together, no mean feat with separate start points each day, up to 10km apart.

We also swapped accommodation. The campus we originally stayed on had proved to be less than ideal, so we found some chalets with air conditioning (very useful – some nights the temperature never dropped below 30°C).

The opening ceremony – in the evening in Gawler town centre – was pleasant, and the following day was the last practice day. The weather didn't look too great, although it was very hot, so we decided to keep ourselves fresh for the competition and not fly. We had some regrets when people were doing speeds of 125km/h and reporting 12,000ft cloudbases. And we had a few more regrets when the first three days of competition were scrubbed! Once, the temperature reached 42°C but still wasn't hot enough for thermal activity.

In the meantime, Channel 9 interviewed us for a national TV breakfast show – they were keen to contrast us with the US team. Their closing gambit was to favour the "experience of the ex-fighter pilot" (Karl Striedeck, 63) over the "youthful exuberance" of the Brits... Fortunately for Rich, they chose not to broadcast his comments about the effect of the heat on the Americans' pacemakers!

The first competition day was blur, with

Photos on this page:  
Neil Lawson/the white planes picture co.



*Left: Richard Hood, 25, of Four Counties GC, was 2nd at Gawler, winning a day. He says sorting out the practical problems in the week before the comp helped team spirit. Rich began gliding in 1991 and soloed on his 16th birthday. UK Club Class Champion for 1999 & 2000, he started in comps in 1997*

*Right: Afandi Darlington, 27, President of Imperial College GC and a Lasham pilot, came 4th. He began gliding in 1988, soloing at 16 with the ATC. He represented the UK at the 1997 Junior Europeans, coming 7th. Afandi won day six in Oz, temporarily giving the Brits first, second and third overall*







Well done to the team in Oz: (above from left) Pete, Afandi and Rich; manager Bob Bickers; and (far right) coach Martyn Wells and (right) crew Bob and Jean Fox; plus crew Joan Bickers and Hilton ("H") Craven. Sponsors for the event were: BGA Team Fund, £8,000; Crabb Computing, mounts/cables; Peter Heame, £50; David Innes for Joint Aviation, £500; Jordans Cereals, Fruesli bars; Lasham, £1,000; Nexus Management Inc, £1,500; Roy & Alix Pentecost, £200; Sierra

Skyware, WinPilot; 661 and 622 Air Cadet VGS, £100 each; Terry Slater, Pete's air fare; South Australian Government, £1,000; Southern Sailplanes, loan of ELTs; the **white planes** picture co, photography and digital camera

thermals to 6-7,000ft. It was a slightly odd day, but we felt we flew it well: we had experienced conditions like this on team training in Ontur. It pays to fly along the tops of the spine-back ridges to pick off the thermals. The result was good – Karl won the day, I was second, and Afandi and Rich weren't far behind.

The weather continued in similar vein, but after day three gradually got better. Rich was second on day two and I won day four, moving back up to second place, not far behind Dutchman Rob Looisen (who, two days later, landed out). On day five, the thermals were confused by wave, but we again flew consistently. Day six was a dream. We took all of the podium places, with speeds almost 10km/h faster than the fourth-placed pilot.

Afandi won the day, Rich was second and we had three podium places overall. The weather was fairly good, with 14,000ft cloudbases, but still seemed strangely English. With 7-8/8ths cloud and lots of spreadout, you had to glide sensibly and pick your climbs well. Final glide was also critical: we came in from "The Gums" about 100km away after climbing to 12,000ft in only 3-4kts.

Day seven was good: 14,000ft again. Choice of task was important, and Rich took a different route to win the day at an incredible speed of 117km/h (the fastest of the competition). Unfortunately, Afandi hit what had been a good area just as it started to turn bad, and dropped to 4th overall.

The next day, we launched into a dubious sky – thunderstorms were forecast, and cu were growing quickly. By the time we had launched, many start points were under showers. It was obviously going to be hard to make the day fair. It and the next were

cancelled, leaving just one flight to go...

The final day loomed, and didn't look good. With thunderstorms overnight and rain at briefing, it seemed as though the end of the contest was nigh. However, Met man Mike Hancy forecast that it would clear and, sure enough, within half an hour it did. The snifter launched, and reported that he was getting to 3,000ft, so we all launched. Before starting, some of us climbed to 5,000ft in shear wave, which ensured we had a good start. The day turned out to be fairly English, with cu to 4,000ft but blue later, and we managed another consistent day. It was good enough to hold on to 1st, 2nd and 4th, and to grab the team prize by a large margin.

So what were the difficult points of the competition? Well, on a team level, it was hard to get together at the start of the tasks. This was a deliberate move by the contest

organisers. Most teams tried to get around it: few managed, but our approach worked.

Heat was another problem – Adelaide had a record heat wave: 18 consecutive days above 35°C, and at least two days above 46°C! But we were well prepared: with the help of our crew we stayed in air conditioning until the last minute, then had plenty of shade from reflective umbrellas and made sure we had lots to drink.

I also discovered the difficulties of being in the lead. I've led competitions before, but being first on the second day was something of a surprise. I don't think it matters how much you have tried to prepare for it, it still comes as a shock. Probably the hardest mental test was being in first place on the last day. This was made even tougher by being kept awake much of the night before by thunderstorms, then ➤



Photos this page: H Craven



The Club Class grid. The team reports the comp was well-run, with good facilities, under Director Tarry Cubley

#### Club Class Worlds: top ten pilots

1	Peter Masson	GBR	DG-101	6972
2	Richard Hood	GBR	Std Cirrus	6879
3	Thomas Suchanek	CZE	Std Cirrus	6789
4	Afandi Darlington	GBR	LS1f	6531
5	Rob Looisen	HOL	LS4	6529
6	Ferdi Kuipers	HOL	LS4	6509
7	Hank Nixon	USA	LS1f	6240
8	Frank Hahn	GER	LS1d	6185
9	Mak Ichikawa	JPN	LS4a	6171
10	Dirk Reich	SUI	Hornet	6116

#### Grand Prix winner

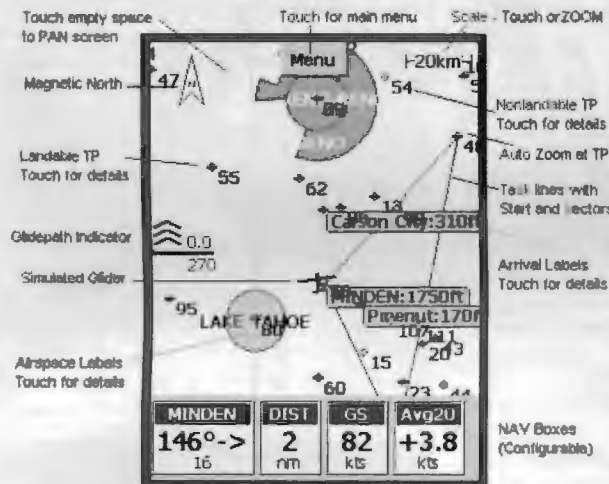
1	Jim Carpenter	CAN	Ventus B	49
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Goodonya! Brits took three podium places on day six. See [www.glidingteam.co.uk](http://www.glidingteam.co.uk) for a day-by-day account

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From left: Afandi, Pete and Rich the morning after the end-of-comps party. Crew "H" Craven says they made up for not drinking much during eight contest days (more than 25 flying hours on "assigned area" and "pilot speed" tasks) but perked up for prizegiving

➤ not really believing that we were going to fly. As we were briefed on the improving weather, my heart sank: I realised I had to prove I could do it one more time. It wasn't until climbing in wave before starting that I began concentrating. It was still probably the most nervous flight of my life, but such a feeling of relief when I got out of the glider on the airfield!

The ensuing party was great, with many phone calls from the UK, including one from Lembit Öpik MP, and an interview with my local radio station.

Our result was the probably the best ever by any team in a World Championships. Why did we do so well? We had a lot of enthusiasm all the way through from many helpers (too many to mention), which was a huge boost to our confidence. We were the only team apart from the Australians to have our own gliders and this certainly was an advantage. The team flying helped, too, and we are very grateful for the BGA-supported team training we received. We were also described as "the most organised

team". That was due in no small part to the rest of the team – Bob Bickers the manager, Martyn Wells as coach, and the crew: Bob and Jean Fox, and Hilton ("H") Craven. Indeed, the crew were so efficient that we only saw our gliders when we were flying them. Our sponsors were also very good to us. At £30,000, our costs were well over our sponsorship total, but we couldn't have done it without their support.

I think no small part of having such a successful young team is attributable to the rise of the Club Class. It is a huge benefit to compete in gliders we can afford to fly and practise in. For me, the Club Class is a much better way of achieving what the World Class set out to do: long may it continue! In 2002, I get to defend my title at Freudenstadt-Musbach in Germany.

Pete, 26 this April, flies from Lasham and is on the Surrey & Hants committee. Twice runner-up in the UK Club Class Nationals, he has won two Junior Nationals. He got two Golds down under: the medal... and his FAI badge! Next issue, the team's tips on getting your Gold Badge

## The hard work behind success

FOR RICH, Afandi, me and our volunteer helpers, writes Pete Masson, this contest started long before we got to Gawler. Any event in Australia is going to cost a lot; we knew that the British Gliding Association team fund couldn't cover everything. So we decided to venture into the world of sponsorship.

With the help of Helen Evans and the **white planes** picture co, we produced a brochure explaining what potential sponsors could gain. We sent with this a covering letter and a message of support from Lembit Öpik MP, to give us credibility. Marilyn Hood kindly offered to co-ordinate our efforts and did a wonderful job.

We knew that sponsors would want media exposure, so Helen gave us interview training to make the most of any interest. Marilyn and Helen secured coverage on the web; local TV, local and national radio, newspapers and magazines, while Max Fendt and Wendy Durham made sure results got into *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph*. The team created [www.glidingteam.co.uk](http://www.glidingteam.co.uk) to help sell ourselves, and make sure people could track our progress before, during and after the comp.

Of course, there was some flying involved in our preparation. Not much, but team selection was at the start of August and the competition was in January, so we were running out of time. We managed three weekends together

– two at Nympsfield (with help from Andy Davis) and one at Lasham.

At Nympsfield, we sat down and worked out how we could maximise our chances. We decided to fly our own gliders (DG-101 EKP, Cirrus 152 and LS1f L77). We knew what we were getting and that everything would work. They also perform similarly, which would aid our team flying. (Many thanks to Derek Westwood, for help in getting our gliders there, and organising cars/trailers.)

We also wanted a team coach: Australian conditions would be different from any we'd flown in before, and it would be beneficial in our daily briefings to have an outside view on the conditions and task. Martyn Wells offered his services, which were gratefully accepted.

I went flying with George Lee before joining Afandi for Christmas with Justin and Gillian Wills in New Zealand. We got some soaring in before meeting Rich at Melbourne airport on December 27. The next few days were spent at Benalla preparing gliders and trailers, with much help from Gav Goudie. On New Year's Eve we relaxed on St Kilda's beach. Two days later, we set off for Gawler – and the rest is history. But we couldn't have done it without the contributions and support of UK pilots; and your messages of support really boosted our morale. Thanks, everyone, for your help.

## What is Britain's youngest world champion like?

I FIRST flew with Pete six years ago in Imperial College's Twin Acro, writes Neil Lawson. The cramped scrawl in my logbook brought it back vividly. Most people would

have stayed indoors that day; Pete's view was: "It should be good for a 300". The impetuosity of youth! "Yeah, right," I said. Nearly always below 2,700ft and with a failed electric vario (I timed climbs with altimeter and watch) we managed 280km, ending with a 100km triangle in 1hr 09min. Astonishing. To me, it was four hours of field selection and a form of sky snooker, planning not just



"Good start" – at 9, Pete's off to fly in a Bergfalke 2A

your next move, but considering five or six ahead. This was Premier Division stuff.

Over the years, Pete has built a reputation for succeeding in conditions that really don't offer much hope of staying airborne. He once won a day in the Junior Nationals when everyone else got rained out of the sky. He was the only finisher. Many flights with him have taught me something of the subtleties of sky reading.

We shared a flat during his final year. Inevitably, there were evenings of alcohol consumption (one leading to the notorious "Bran Flakes in the tumble dryer" incident). I don't recall the exact phrasing, but I'm sure I remember the words "champion" and "world" cropping up. It seemed feasible. His is a patient, methodical approach: understanding and covering all the bases.

There are stories aplenty of implausible retrieves and unlikely landouts to prove that he really is only human and can get it wrong. But for someone his age to take his glider across the world, compete in unimaginable heat and make fewer mistakes than 43 other people all trying to do the same thing, is an inspiration to anyone in any sport.

**World Champion – few 26-year-olds have that on their CV.**

Lasham pilot Neil Lawson took our cover picture of Pete





# Exploring the Andes

Five pages of South American skies start with our second article on the OSTIV Mountain Wave Project. Overleaf, British travellers tell their tales

**S**PECTACULAR long-distance flights such as Klaus Ohlmann's 2,463km marathon are not the only aim of the OSTIV Mountain Wave Project (MWP). Inspired by the great pioneer of aviation meteorology, Walter Georgii, and his guiding principle "explore and fly", this team of scientists and pilots aims to push back the boundaries of

science... and promote gliding as they do so. "I think it's very important that the public is more aware of gliding," says Klaus. "Across the world membership is falling, yet it's such an interesting sport. If every tourist on an airliner thinks that glider pilots are doing something for them, it's good for gliding."

That something – the MWP's ambitious goal – is to classify and analyse mountain

waves and their associated rotors to help meteorology, soaring pilots and the public.

"For example," says Klaus, "Airline pilots say that in the region of Santiago, Chile, and Mendoza there is severe turbulence at high altitudes. I know that sometimes a 747 has lost 1,000m (3,281ft) or climbed 500m (1,640ft) on idle: it wasn't possible to hold altitude."

Whether such severe turbulence threatens actual risk or merely an uncomfortable ride, the MWP's tests of weather forecast models using the data it gathers could contribute to



*Main picture: Andes wave through a "window" of two cloud layers. All photos by Klaus Ohlmann*

*Left: No, not there! The wave may look sensational but Klaus says it's isolated, created by one peak, so it's no good for long distance flights*

*Right: wave marked by low stratocumulus and rotor. The pattern is typical of a system found near Esquel, south of the OSTIV Mountain Wave Project's base for 2000-2001 at San Martín airfield*





# ides wave

tackling the problem. "If we could forecast days when we have waves breaking we could, say, advise flying at certain altitudes to avoid turbulence," Klaus points out.

The benefits to glider pilots, as opposed to airliner passengers, are apparent: a better understanding of wave mechanics and increased potential for long-distance soaring. Mountain waves occur over topography that is precisely described, and can themselves be accurately defined by logger data. Add Klaus's belief that waves rely on wind speeds and directions which can now, thanks to loggers, also be recorded in detail. The

result: wave locations might be identifiable in given conditions. "I would like to map the wave," says Klaus. "Imagine, in the blue, having on your GPS not only a nearest waypoint, but a nearest wavepoint!"

The Mountain Wave Project's activities include: determining the atmospheric processes that create and influence wave; investigating the location/extent of rotor turbulence, and classifying it; measuring factors such as lift and sink, wind speed, and humidity; mapping rotor against the landscape where it occurs; testing/refining forecasting models; and applying the findings to pilot training and air traffic route planning.

The team members – all pilots – are: René Heise (weather forecast, model simulations); Wolf-Dietrich Herold (planning, instruments and data); Martin Just (technical preparation of the specially-adapted S10vT lent by Stemme) and Carsten Lindemann (meteorologist). Klaus's remit is exploratory flying to record data as well as epic flights to interest the media. But, he insists, his role has its downside: "It's terrible to stay with the motor on for four or five hours in very good lift, making measurements," he says.

Further details on [www.mountain-wave.de](http://www.mountain-wave.de)

More photographs by Klaus Ohlmann on p38



*Top right: Klaus (in embroidered Inca hat to protect his ears from draughts) and Felix Ammann in the Stemme. As shown, Klaus may transfer the cannula oxygen system to his mouth if his nose is temporarily blocked*

*Right: Five minutes before launch. Early morning rain at San Martín heralds good wave*

You can contact Quo Vadis, Klaus's gliding school based at Serres in the French Alps, via [QVOhlmann@aol.com](mailto:QVOhlmann@aol.com) or tel + 33 4 92 67 10 80





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# Vultures, varios and 20kts

**Harold Armitage travelled from South Wales to sample the delights and drawbacks of soaring in Venezuela**

**W**E HAD been travelling around in Venezuela for four weeks and just about every day looked like the best I'd ever seen. Before going, I had looked on the internet for gliding clubs in Venezuela, but found nothing. However, at the Yutajé Jungle Lodge a *fumigador* (crop dusting pilot) told me about a club at Altigracia de Orituco, a small town about 100km south-east of Caracas.

I decided this warranted serious research. No airport was marked on my maps.

We caught the bus to Altigracia from Puerto la Cruz, a scenic journey of about five hours. Next day, I questioned local taxi drivers and eventually found my way to the Planeadores Altigracia CA. It operates only on alternate Saturdays but, by a great stroke of luck, I arrived on a flying day. Club members – several English speakers among them – were astonished but pleased to have a visitor from the outside world and gave me a warm welcome.

The 20 members (12 active), all live in Caracas. They stand entirely alone, being unable to afford affiliation to any external organisation. They have a Schweizer 2-33A and a recently-purchased K-21, which is in need of major refurbishment. There are a couple of privately-owned gliders, including a Caproni Calif A-21s. They also have a Tost winch, which no one except the CFI has ever seen in use. They aerotow with a Cessna 182.

Maintenance is a big problem. They have an Italian airframe technician who visits once a year. However, if there were major damage to the Schweizer, the club would be finished: there is no such thing as insurance for gliders in Venezuela and no-one who could carry out a major repair.

They operate from a 900-metre tarmac airstrip, government-owned, having started near the town of Maracay (home base of the Venezuelan air force) in 1953 and



*Pilots at Venezuela's only gliding club, Planeadores Altigracia CA. From left: Juan Manuel Rodríguez, Hernando Vargas, CFI Jeromir Frolik, Mario Arque, Martha Rubesa and president Alberto Mangione. Martha is the country's only woman glider pilot. The club has 12 active members, so you are looking at half its real strength. Plus the dog, of course*

moved here in 1986. They have added a hangar and toilet facilities. The site is off Highway 11, towards Puerto la Cruz, and close to the Serannia del Interior, the northern extension of the Andes. In 1958 Venezuela had five gliding sites, but now, due to the recession, this is the only one.

The club's president, treasurer, secretary and second instructor is Alberto Mangione. The chief flying instructor, of 47 years' standing (the entire history of gliding in Venezuela) is Jeromir Frolik. He is 75 years

## 'Thermals are easy to spot: the local vultures mark them and don't move over when you join'

old and has been a glider pilot for 60 of them! His life story is remarkable. A Czech, he arrived in London as an Olympic swimmer, absconded to the West, was repatriated (twice), escaped by swimming across Lake Constance, was given a ticket to Venezuela and \$10 by the Venezuelan Embassy, met his wife-to-be on the boat to his new country, became a waiter in Caracas, met a Venezuelan Air Marshal and joined its air force.

His club's operations are carried out in a manner broadly similar to the UK. I flew with Jeromir: he's still on the ball! I found the Schweizer, although the same vintage as K-13s, vastly inferior in every respect – except that it's extremely tough and hard to break. Still, it was good to be in the air

again. The towplane could manage only 200ft/min. The poor old Schweizer is dragged through the air at least 15kts faster than it likes, so the controls are heavy on tow. The slow climb and the turbulent conditions mean the pilot needs muscle.

Thermals are easy to spot: the local *zamuro* (vultures) mark them well and will not move over when you join them. Indeed, they often close in to get a better look. Several times we orbited with a dozen or more. As they could out-perform the Schweizer in every respect there was no escape.

On a good day 15-20kt thermals are not unknown, with regular 10-knotters. In spite of the proximity of the Andes, wave is unknown: the air is far too unstable and the prevailing wind is easterly.

The main danger is enormous *cu-nims*, which can brew up very quickly. But cross-country flying has its own hazards. The tropical days are short compared with our summer days. There are no fields as we know them in Venezuela: landouts can only be made safely on highways and even then are hazardous. The surrounding terrain is pretty rugged. Away from roads the only access is likely to be on foot or on horseback, making retrieves difficult. There is also a chance of kidnap (for ransom), robbery or even murder. Few people, therefore, attempt cross-countries and, if they do, sometimes carry weapons. The long drive back to Caracas has to be done in daylight. No-one dares to travel at night.

Venezuela is popular with eco-tourists these days. For Europeans, it's very cheap and so is gliding here. Travel to Altigracia is easy and it's a pleasant town with several comfortable hotels. Club members could not have been more welcoming and courteous. They really were nice people with everything in Venezuela working against them. If you visit Venezuela there's no need to do without your flying fix: visit them and give them your support! Email the club on [mario-arque@cantv.net](mailto:mario-arque@cantv.net)

Overleaf, two visitors' views of Chile



*The Schweizer 2-33A at one end of Altigracia's 900m (2,952ft) runway. Launches are by aerotow with a Cessna 182, which achieves 200ft/min at best*

*When you get airborne, enjoy the 10kt thermals. But to fly cross-countries, you must brave rugged terrain, fast-growing cu-nims, and kidnap, robbery or worse...*



## Three steps to heaven

Klaus Ohlmann photographed the Argentinian skies on his three MWP expeditions. Enjoy

*Above: not an alien world, but a lenticular over stratocumulus*

*Below: lift and more lift – as far as the eye can see*



*Above: Lake Viedma on a flight to Feuerland in the far south. Wind at height was 130km/h (70kts): it took Klaus 3hrs to do 50km...*

*Below: a desolate, forbidding landscape called the Meseta de la Muerte: the tableland of death*



# Views from Chile

Carl Peters (below) and Tony Wray (right) describe flying from the club at Santiago

ONE OF the advantages of being in the RAF is flying with the RAFGSA. However, detachments to far-flung places are all part of the deal and, when I found out I was to spend six months in the Falkland Islands as Engineer Officer for the Tornados stationed there, my thoughts turned to how I might get some gliding.

Research revealed that it was possible to fly to Santiago, Chile for my seven-day rest period last January. After much assistance from Paul Stienen, I contacted Alex Channes, CFI of the Club de Planeadores Santiago, the foremost civilian club in Chile. He was extremely helpful.

My detachment allowed me to miss the UK winter and coincided with the Chilean soaring season. I spent mornings touring Santiago waiting for thermals to develop, going to the club at about 14.00hrs. With its tennis courts, swimming pool, excellent clubhouse and restaurant, it has to be one of the most appealing clubs I've visited. It is bordered by a number of spurs from the Andes, allowing easy transition from local soaring to the mountains. It owns Super Blaniks and Pilatus B4s, a L33 and a handful of Janus Bs; all in excellent condition. Despite schoolboy Spanish, I was made extremely welcome; Alex was the perfect host. I flew on four of the five days.

All my flying was dual because of the licensing laws, but, as with any mountain flying, this is the best way to learn the local conditions. Once a Chilean has gained a gliding licence and a certain level of experience, they can take passengers, so on some days I sat in the back while more junior pilots flew. It felt rather strange to be P2 to pilots with as little as 70-170hrs, but I learned a great deal about thermo-dynamic soaring in the lower Andean mountains, passing on my knowledge of thermalling when safely away from the rocks! Everyone I flew with put safety above all else and I got the impression that the Chilean training system is well structured and progressive.

On the first and last days, I was lucky enough to fly with Alex, who had just won the national championships. These flights, in a Janus, were simply stunning. On my





Above: Flying up the lower ridges and valleys to get into the heart of the mountains (Carl Peters)

Left: Snowy plains such as these often link ridge lines in the high Andes (Carl Peters)

final day, we flew into the heart of the Andes in an attempt to climb over the highest peak in the range. We covered around 250km over some of the most spectacular, unlandable terrain I have ever seen. The lift, mostly thermodynamic, was extremely close to the ridge tops and we spent a lot of time around a wingspan from the rock face, slightly below the ridgeline. Although there were some areas of extreme turbulence, I was surprised how smooth the majority of the lift was and, after a while, I gradually gained enough confidence to move in close enough to make reasonable use of it. Once we reached the higher mountains, above 12,500ft, we began to pick off better-formed thermals to climb higher above the tops to panoramic views.

Close to cloudbase, max lift reached 8m/s (15.5kts); it had varied from 4-6m/s (c8-12kts) close to the rock faces. When

### **'My instinctive reaction was to pull back, which produced a lot of shouting from the back...'**

flying in such lift, my instinctive reaction was to pull back to slow the glider down. This initially produced a lot of shouting from the back cockpit and then (as I lowered the nose to push on) a fine view of rocks right over the nose of the glider! You very quickly learn that the best, and only safe, way to use lift so close to a mountain-side is to maintain the glider's attitude and lower the flaps. Likewise, you never simply push forward to get away from sink, you just gently use the flaps to speed the glider up. This took some getting used to, but avoids pulling up only to subsequently push forward towards rising ground, which has its inherent dangers...

The trip was a chance of a lifetime. I am indebted to my hosts for their hospitality and generosity. If you ever meet a Chilean in the UK, please return the favour.

Carl, 25, has 700hrs gliding, Gold, two Diamonds and a BI rating. He has been on RAFGSA expeditions to France and Spain. Previously a member of Bicester, Four Counties and Deeside GCs, Carl will fly from Bannerdown (Keevil) when he returns to the UK

### **A very fine soaring area**

PRESENTED with the opportunity to visit friends in Santiago de Chile, an amazingly cheap return flight (£350) from my home in Spain, free accommodation and the chance of gliding over the neighbouring Cordilleras de los Andes, I took less than 30 seconds to decide to go two weeks later.

The journey was very long, but with only a six-hour time difference, it could have been much worse. The leg to Santiago over the Andes on a bright, sunny morning was delightful.

We soon found our way to the Club de Planeadores de Santiago, pleasantly sited by a river in the north of the city. There are about 60 gliders, mainly in covered but open-sided hangars, owned by three or four organisations, including Blaniks, a Janus B, Pilatus B4s, Libelle, Nimbus 3D, Janus C, Ventus CM and Discus Turbo.

Local mountains and the Cordilleras, snow-topped, shone brightly in the cloudless sky, which prevailed for almost all our visit. Santiago has the third worst smog in the world at times: a little could be seen hanging over the city, but it didn't affect us.

There would be no problem, I learned, for someone of my experience to get a flight in the Janus the next day. Just after 14.00hrs, I was airborne with Arturo Diez, who is authorised to fly in the mountains, which he said Klaus Holighaus described as: "a very fine soaring area, but potentially very dangerous". The aircraft had oxygen but not parachutes.



After an aerotow behind a Super Cub to some 2,400m about 20 miles north-east of the airfield (an area called El Cordón de los Espanoles), we pulled off in lift and climbed slowly north, going from ridge to ridge. We eventually reached some 3,400m (11,152ft) overlooking the town of Los Andes, but the lift was too broken. Just 3,500m (11,480ft) would have let us go further north but, lacking those few feet, we went south and, after an exciting ride over various ridges, returned to Los Condes airfield from the east after 2hrs 10mins. It had certainly been most turbulent at times and, of necessity, we had been very close to the rocks on the ridge tops, but overall it had been an unbeatable experience with a real expert. I was fortunate enough to see a pair of magnificent condors in flight, and the sight of Mt Aconcagua 60 miles to the north-east (at 7,030m/23,058ft, the highest mountain in South America) was fantastic.

My main problem was equating the instrumentation in metres (height) and kilometres per hour (speed) to what I was used to – particularly Arturo's injunction not to get any slower than 110km/h (59kts) in the tricky bits on the jagged ridges. We communicated pretty well in his passable English and my Spanish, although when he was talking by radio I didn't understand too much of his rapid and, for all I knew, colloquial Spanish. The flight had been a never-to-be-forgotten event and, at a cost of around £60, I was well content.

Tony Wray has a Diamond Badge and 900hrs

Left: Arturo Diez and the Janus he and Tony flew. Flying two-seaters requires no paperwork but the club won't lend/hire gliders to non-members (to join costs US\$4,000 + \$55pcm). To take your own glider you'd need customs clearance, a C of A and a permit to fly over Chile: the club can help you achieve these, and delivery to the site, in three or so days for \$500. Gliding insurance is "very expensive". To fly imported gliders you need a UK glider pilot's licence validated at the DGAC in Santiago. Tows are \$18-\$50. Dual checks are \$30 (Janus) or \$50 (imported two-seater). There is no charge for solo time, temporary hangarage or camping. For more information, tel (56) 2 218 4135 or (56) 2 218 4109 or email: club@planeadoreschile.cl

# The glint of distant wings



the white planes picture co.

**Haze, weak lift – and his first comp. Chris Curtis recalls the emotions of a tricky cross-country flight**

**T**HE WAY ahead looked hopeless. Murky haze and increasing cloud cover had cast a veil of uncertainty over the countryside, allowing barely a glimmer of sunshine to reach the ground. The visibility had deteriorated rapidly in the last hour.

Observing other gliders below and ahead, each one cautiously slipping away into the gloom, I felt privileged to be at 3,000ft, although I knew that my turn also would come soon.

In my years of gliding I have become accustomed to the feeling of inevitability that often accompanies the prelude to an outlanding. Rarely in any other sport is one compelled to just sit there and wait for the inevitable to happen. A last effort or burst of energy can usually be summoned up from somewhere; but not in gliding; and especially not in pea soups such as this.

In this sort of weather, one's decisions are no longer a reliable factor in determining the outcome of the flight, save for the final choice of field in which to land. The pilot is relegated to the role of curious passenger, at the mercy of best glide ratio and headwind; not really knowing where this unbroken movement will finally rumble to a halt, but acutely aware that in ten minutes or so the answer will be revealed. It never fails to generate an excitement in the pit of my stomach.

I took a deep breath in readiness for some concentration, momentarily adjusting myself against the tight confines of seat and straps. That was when I saw Bernard. Of course, I did not realise it was Bernard at

that stage... just a thin pair of wings in the distance. But these wings were different from others I had seen recently. They were turning. Whether they were in anything substantial or not was irrelevant; there was nothing else in the sky to suggest the presence of lift. The change in mental gear was as automatic as my change of heading. I now had something between myself and the inevitable... one last chance.

The wings ahead were lower than me and I estimated that I would arrive there a few hundred feet higher. Many seasoned pilots increase their average cross-country speed by noting the position of circling gliders ahead and using them as thermal markers, thus avoiding the waste of time

## **'I was intrigued by Bernard's determination not to change heading towards the first TP'**

spent in searching for lift. Pilots who have become wise to this trick usually abandon their thermal just before the bandits arrive, compelling the new arrival to waste time searching out the core of the thermal. I prayed that this wouldn't happen to me.

As I converged above the glider its fin competition number came into view. It was 40, Bernard Fitchett. "Aha!" I thought. "Now here's a man who knows what he's doing." A pilot of his experience would almost certainly have noticed my approach but he presumably had chosen, quite correctly, to ignore me.

As I tucked my left wing down for a turn on the opposite side of the circle I could

see Bernard well, from above, his one hand on the stick, the other purposefully supporting a map in front of him. Had he seen me at all? He briefly glanced up at me. I waved. The map waggled up and down a bit, then Bernard resumed his studies. Was he lost or working out his next move? Shortly, suggestive of a verdict, the map was stowed away. We continued our aerial ballet for some minutes, slowly climbing. I resolved to stick to Bernard like a leech for the rest of the flight, if that was possible. I might be able to learn something from a former British Team pilot and, anyway, I had run out of ideas.

Suddenly, Bernard's wings levelled and, to my astonishment, he set off on a heading 45° south of track. Where on earth was he going?

Having made my decision to stick to him I followed suit without delay. I would contemplate his move while following him. Hesitation now on my part would jeopardise my tactics. I could not risk losing sight of him.

We flew on at about 55kts. Bernard was tiptoeing. I remained about five glider lengths behind him and a little to the left so that he would not occupy that dangerous blind spot beneath my nose. The glide was long and straight. I was intrigued by Bernard's apparent resolve not to change heading towards the first turning point, 20nm away. After some minutes, as the altimeter continued to unwind, intrigue gave way to apprehension. Soon my emotions culminated in a strange conflict of desires, one telling me to abandon this



suicidal rush away from track; the other, more logical, reasoning with me that Bernard was fully aware of what he was doing. Relentlessly he flew on, and I followed as if drawn by some demonic angel, leading me by the hand, unresisting and spellbound, to my doom.

My emotional disquiet was abruptly quelled by a revelation. There was a perceptible lightening of the sky ahead. Suddenly all the pieces were fitting into place and I began to appreciate the talent displayed by Bernard's strategy. Not having seen what Bernard had obviously noted before we began this long glide made me feel a little inadequate, especially when I realised how long it had taken me to catch on. He must have detected this now almost sunny break in the cloud cover from that last weak thermal. Why else would he have set off so resolutely on such a divergent heading? A few minutes by his side and I had learnt something already. Sure enough, a familiar turbulence told us the air was livening up and soon we were wrapped around the core of a 2kt thermal over Newbury.

My first Regionals competition (in 1979) had started very well and, on this third day, I was sixth overall. Today's short task of 136km was a flattish triangular course from Booker, via Marlborough and Didcot.

At the briefing that morning, most of us thought it was over-ambitious. Just as the met man had said: "It's going to get worse before it gets better," the sound of the gentle rain on the tin blister-hangar roof above us unexpectedly matured into a thunderous roar as the heavens opened. It earned the met man rapturous applause.

But, as forecast, the day had improved and about 40 gliders were belatedly hauled into the air by six tugs in a great flurry of activity. I remember marvelling at the change in pace. Not long ago we had all been wondering whether to de-rig the gliders, and then, there I was, at 2,000ft in the drop zone, releasing the tow rope. There followed a number of good climbs before the start line. Then conditions had worsened again. This see-saw sequence in the weather had stamped the hallmark of irritation on the day. I learned later that many pilots were relieved when they had landed in their fields. Perhaps tomorrow would be better. Nobody got back.

The lift was weakening. Bernard and I were getting close to the top of our thermal. My Kestrel 19 was no match for Bernard's ASW 17. He had gradually overtaken me and was now about 100ft above me, flirting with the cloudbase.

It is well known that gliding can generate a manic-depressive state in some pilots. A typical scenario is the late save. At one moment all is lost as one struggles to select a suitable landing site from low altitude; at the next, one experiences the exhilarating ride skywards on the buoyant support of a strong, unexpected thermal. My present elation, emanating from my good fortune,



*Chris Curtis soloed at Wrekin GC in 1971, did Silver and two Diamonds and flew ten regionals (winning one) before giving up for family reasons in 1985. Chris and daughter Sarah are members of Welland; he now aims to regain his instructor rating and buy an ASW 17*

was enhanced by the numerous plaintive radio calls from pilots about to land halfway up the first leg of the course... all sounding as condemned men resigned to their fate. I was on top of the world. But this was to be short lived. Again I began my gradual fall to earth.

This time, as expected, Bernard's wings levelled on to a new heading which would take us almost due west, to the first TP. My eyes, oblivious of my dark glasses, narrowed while looking up at Bernard, further ahead again and almost silhouetted against a lowering sun – a fascinating and tranquil sight, the long slender wings in stark contrast against the bright sky. The scene was occasionally punctuated by thin insubstantial wisps of cloud whipping past us, generating that wonderful sensation of speed, and bearing testimony that the suspended stillness of the glider above was illusory. The vivid green of sunlit England

### **'All this magnificent scenery and unimpeded motion was a free gift from the laws of nature'**

below slid by in linear slow motion and presented a collage of twisting silvered river and patterned fields, interlaced with roads winding their way in all directions into the distant haze. All this magnificent scenery and unimpeded motion was a free gift from the laws of nature. I was not having to expend energy. The only power that was conveying this quarter ton of machinery to its uncertain destination was the sun and my brain. This, I thought, is why I love gliding. How could one possibly describe such expansive beauty, and the wonderment at the science of it all, to another?

A smoky white stream from Bernard's glider told me that he was jettisoning the waterballast in his wings. Not having much confidence in the weather ahead, I thought this eminently sensible and I also opened the taps to reduce the wing loading. If we were to encounter any lift at all, it would be weak and so shedding all excess weight now was important.

Bernard and I stayed silent companions for a while longer. Bernard was renowned for his mute radio. I had already imposed on his airspace and felt that prattling to him would not be welcomed. Besides, the

ignominy of him not responding would be too much for my pride. My best chance of learning would be by observation. Even in this bright hazy sunshine, for long stretches the air had become ominously still again, presaging the end of the day; the few areas of turbulence only serving to taunt us. But Bernard knew how to handle them.

His first manoeuvre took me by surprise. He responded to a promising gust by immediately pulling up and starting a turn to the right. But before he had completed a quarter turn he had already dismissed his sample and was rolling out to the left to head on up track again. I was heading in almost the opposite direction before I too rolled out to the left, effectively completing a very wasteful S-turn. The message was clear. Hit it right first time. Otherwise, don't waste time searching for it. A full turn in zero sink was not going to get us any further up track. And the sun was lowering. Every minute wasted meant weaker thermals.

After some minutes it became clear that we were not going to get much more from the sky. Bernard was well ahead and higher than me now, a striking demonstration of the performance gap between our machines. Furthermore, the turbulent areas I was experiencing were not in accord with the movements of my companion. It dawned on me that we were no longer flying in the same airmass. For me, this abrupt awakening was devastating; akin to an unexpected examination question that befuddles the mind.

Suddenly I was on my own. Bernard had been doing all my thinking for me but, although still in sight, now had effectively deserted me, leaving a very great vacuum in my head, which I found difficult to fill. In the company of Bernard, my instruments had assumed a secondary importance, my decisions being orchestrated by my unwitting tutor. Now my altimeter was shouting at me, proclaiming its priority in the panel and admonishing me for my inattention – 800ft! I turned the volume down on the electric variometer and for the first time that day began to look for suitable fields. There was no reassurance from the seemingly-endless green, high crop. I was also over high terrain, confirmed by the map and the short, sloping fields. My thoughts progressed roughly as follows.

"Wrong time of year to be doing this – my mouth is dry – pick a field – knees are shaking – it all looks very green and tall – can't stop my knees shaking – Relax! – Quick! Pick a field. Good grief! A disused airfield beneath me. Look at the map. Yes! Ramsbury. Look at the field. No! High crop either side of a very narrow strip that must once have been a taxiway – Oh help! Now what? – Carry on a bit. THERE! That'll have to do."

Those infamous last thoughts which have caused many an accident – the great "That'll do!"

*See the next issue for how Chris's flight ended*



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# Make a start at the finish

**Paul Crabb, former European Standard Class Champion and comps committee member, keeps you on track, on time**

**M**ANY PILOTS remain confused about the best tactics for flying assigned area tasks (AATs). This article offers a simple guide to making the most of them.

Your aim as the pilot is, in a sentence, to fly as fast as possible round the task, going into each area in the correct order, then return to the finish line *after* the designated time has run out. Remember, the designated time is a **minimum** time; there is no speed penalty for exceeding it.

For our purposes here there are two main areas used, called the first and the last (see Figure 1). Small circular control areas are ignored as they have little effect on planning.

AATs need planning in advance if you are to get right the two major decisions of the flight:

**When to leave the first area:** You must **not** leave the first area and head for the last area until you are sure that you can still cover enough distance in the last area to ensure that you do not get home before the designated time runs out.

A good way to ensure this is to estimate the total distance you think you will cover in the allocated task time. Then, working backwards from the finish line and aiming to cover as much of this distance as possible in the last area, you can calculate the absolute minimum distance you should fly in the first area.

**When to leave the last area** It is vital not to over-estimate the time it takes to get home. If there is a reasonable cloudbase, final glide (Standard Class) will be at about 80kts = 2.5km/min or 220ft/min = 11km/1,000ft = 4.5min/1,000ft.

**Marking your map** A good method is to work backwards from the finish line and draw a series of lines on your map that represent the time it will take you to reach the finish line – including the final glide. These lines can then be used to make sure that you don't head for home with too much time still remaining.

For example:

- For a 4,000ft cloudbase, final glide time =  $4 \times 4.5\text{min} = 18\text{min}$
- Final glide distance =  $4 \times 11\text{km} = 44\text{km}$  from the finish line
- Draw a line on your map, in the last area, approximately 44km from the finish line, and write 18 minutes next to it
- Assuming you have an overall task speed of 90km/h (this, of course, varies depending on the weather forecast) then:  $90\text{ km/h} =$

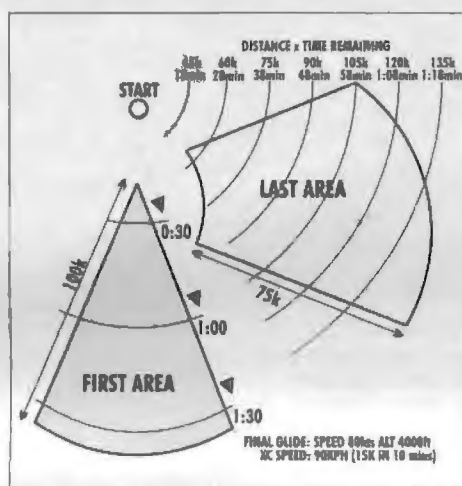


Fig 1: plan your return before you start (Jon Hall, HRA)

$1.5\text{km/min} = 15\text{km in } 10\text{ min}$

- Working backwards from the 18-minute line, draw another line, also in the last area which is another 15km further away from the finish line and write 28 minutes next to it ( $18\text{min} + 10\text{min} = 28\text{ mins}$ )
- Add more lines to your map as necessary

When flying into your last area of the task, these lines will be an invaluable guide for judging when to head for home. Never head home too soon: remember, arriving at the finish line 10 minutes too early could mean 15-20km of wasted distance!

Fly at maximum glide speed so that you cover as much distance as possible before the designated time is up – but don't stretch it too far or you may land out early and be out of the comp.

Get an electronic parking meter count-down clock. It will give you an instant readout of how much time is left.

**When the allocated time has run out**

Keep on flying as fast as possible. Remember, it is your total speed around the task **to the finish line** that counts.

## Benefits of assigned area tasks

- Allow pilots to maximise the weather
- Avoid localised poor weather
- Everyone flies in approximately the same direction
- Excellent for handicapped comps – everyone flies for the same time
- Pilot decisions can have a larger influence on the outcome
- Break up gagging and reduce leeching
- Landing out after a good flight does not wreck your comp
- Very effective fall-back strategy for organisers (reduce the designated time)
- Scoring is very compatible with normal 'speed' tasks

## Navigating within an assigned area

Pick 5-10 turnpoints (TPs) in and around each of the areas and mark these on your map. Navigate towards them using the GOTO function on your GPS. Task sheets should have these TPs and the areas drawn on them – **so use them**.

Having selected a good weather direction to fly in, navigate towards a TP that is approximately in that direction. This helps to keep you heading on a reasonably straight track.

## Make sure you stay in the assigned area

Area tasks are defined using TRUE bearings. Garmin GPS units give accurate 'bearing' information – **loggers don't**, they are not accurate at distances over 50km. Don't trust them to precisely judge your position. If you rely solely on a logger to navigate, then allow a margin for error, perhaps 3°. Check bearing errors on the ground by selecting TPs over 100km away and compare with bearings on a Garmin GPS.

Learn how to draw the areas on a Garmin moving map using the 'route' facility. Define the far corners of an area using the 'reference waypoint' facility then use these points to build up a 'route'. (You will need the GPS manual or, even better, a helpful friend who's already learned how to do this). Place each area in a separate 'route'. After starting, each area that you navigate to is displayed by 'activating' the relevant 'route'. For circular areas, use the distance to the centre.

**Scoring** The main point to get your head around is that both finishers and outlanders **always** get a speed – this speed is then used for scoring. The scores are calculated using the same formula as normal 'speed' tasks. Assuming everyone finishes, the total day points and their distribution will be the same as a normal task. For more details, see the *BGA Competition Handbook 2001*.

The big difference is how outlanders are treated. The speed for an outlander is calculated from their distance flown in the designated time. If they have landed out before the designated time, the distance is calculated to their landing point. If they have landed out after the designated time the distance is calculated to the point where the designated time ran out. The calculated speed is then reduced by 10%, which equates approximately to a 20% reduction in points. The 10% reduction in speed falls to 0% speed reduction when everyone lands out.

**Example** score for a 1000-point day:  
A finishes and wins at 100km/h: **1000pts**  
B lands out at 100km/h – 10%  
= 90km/h – **800pts**  
C – lands out at 110km/h – 10%  
= 99km/h – **980pts**



# How does your ship's handicap compare?

**F**OLLOWING extensive work by Russell Cheetham and Henry Rebbeck during 2000 the current list of still air indices (handicaps) have been re-evaluated for 2001. The new list is shown on the right.

You will note that the datum glider has changed, and the new handicap upper limit for entry into the Club Class Nationals has also been revised and is now 95 per cent.

Some glider types previously excluded from entry to the Club Class are now eligible following their revised performance estimates.

The revised list reflects the change in glider performance over recent years and, while any performance handicapping cannot take into account variable weather conditions, it is hoped the new list will remove some of the previous anomalies.

Please note that the handicap remains unchanged for all variants fitted with turbo or self-launching capacity. The maximum weight allowed will be the lesser of the certified weight and 750kg.

Winglets may be added for no additional handicap, provided the wingspan remains unchanged. Any increase in span will attract a handicap of one per cent per half metre or part thereof, pending evidence to substantiate amendment.

On behalf of the Competition & Awards Committee I would like to thank Russell and Henry for their unstinting hard work and dedication in preparing the new handicapping for 2001.

**Ron Bridges**

**Chairman**

**Competition & Awards Committee**

## New UK handicaps for 2001

118	ASW 22B, Nimbus 4
117	ASW 22B
116	Nimbus 3 (25.5), ASH 25 (27), Nimbus 4D
115	ASH 25 (25.6), Nimbus 3D (25.5), Nimbus 3 (24.5), ASW 22 (24)
114	ASH 25, Nimbus 3D
110	ASH 26, Ventus 2c (18), Lak-17A (18), DG-800 (18)
107	LS6c (18), DG-600 (18), Glasflügel 604, Kestrel (22)
106	Nimbus 2B, Nimbus 2C, ASW 17, LS8 (18), LS6c (17.6), Ventus (17.6), Jantar 2
105	DG-600 (17), Jantar 1, Kestrel (20), ASW 12, Lak-12, DG-500/505 (22)
104	ASW 27A, ASW 27B, Ventus 2A, Ventus 2B, Lak-17A, Ventus (16.6), Kestrel (19)
103	Duo Discus, ASW 20AL, ASW 20CL, SZD-56, Ventus 2c (15), DG-500/505 (20), DG-800 (15)
101	LS6, Ventus A, Ventus B, DG-400 (17), DG-202 (17), ASW 20L, LS3 (17), IS-32
100	Discus 2, LS8, ASW 28, ASW 20B, ASW 20C, Vega L (17), Calli A-21, Diamant 18, Janus C (retractable)
99	DG-600
98	Discus, ASW 24, LS7, SZD-55, DG-303, Glasflügel 304, Janus C (fixed)
97	Mosquito A, Mosquito B, ASW 20, ASW 20F, Mini Nimbus, LS3, Kestrel (17)
96	DG-200, DG-202 (15), Vega (15)
95	LS4, DG-300, Libelle 301, Pik 20, Speed Astir, Janus B, Cirrus (18.8)
94	Pegase, DG-300 Club (retractable), Janus A
93	Cirrus (17.7)
92	ASW 19A, ASW 19B, DG-300 Club (fixed), Phoebe 17
91	Std Jantar, Club Pegase (fixed), SZD-59, Std Cirrus (16)
90	LS1F
89	DG-100/101, Std Cirrus, Hornet, ASW 19 Club
88	ASW 15, Std Libelle, SHK-1, Astir CS, Acro Twin J, Diamant (16.5), FK-3, Sport Vega, DG-500/505 trainer (retractable)
87	LS10, LS1C, LS1D, Silene, Mistral C (fixed), DG-500/505 trainer (fixed)
86	JP15-35A, KH-1, Twin Astir
85	Astir Jeans, Club Libelle
84	Acro Twin 2, K-21, K-23, Cobra 15, SFH34, Viking, AC-4C, Grob 102, LS1-Q (fixed)
82	Dart 17R, Foka 5, IS-29D, SB-5E (16.5), Torva, Zugvogel 3B, SZD-51, Junior, SF-27B
81	SF-27A, Pilatus B4 (retractable)
80	Foka 4, K-6E, SB-5A, SB-5B, SB-5C, SD 3/15, Sie-3, PW-5, K-18
79	Pilatus B4 (fixed), Iris, IS-28B, SZD-50, Puchacz
78	SZD-30, Pirat, Skylark 4, Olympia 419
77	Skylark 3
76	K-6CR, Dart 15, Olympia 403, Olympia 463
74	BG 135, Fauvette, M-200
72	K-14, L-Spatz, M-100S, Moswey 4, Super Blanik
69	Bergfalke 4, Jaskolka, K-8, Moswey 3, SF-26, T-53
68	Eagle
67	K-13, Sky, Skylark 2, Weihe
65	Bergfalke, Blanik, Bocian, Mucha Std
64	Superfalke, K-2, K-7, SP5-31
62	Capstan, Meise, Olympia 2, Swallow
60	K-16, Kite 2A, RF-5B, Tandem Falke
58	Kranich, Mu13
56	Prefect
55	Grunau Baby
50	T-21
46	Falke



At the opposite ends of the scale:  
ASW 22B, above, and Prefect, below



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# Going

**O**FTEN, the language of a sport is as evocative as the sport itself. "Brakes closed and locked." *Oh my God, am I really going to have to do this now? "Take up slack." The cable snakes taut and the cold realisation comes that now is my last chance to back out. "All out."*

The wire and drogue chute accelerate away in front of me and now I know the true meaning of commitment. I hold the wings level as we start the trundle; a bit of rudder keeps us aiming at the winch.

All goes smoothly as the main wheel unsticks and K-21 JAV gets airborne. Hold low and level till the airspeed climbs through 55-60kts then pull back into that rocket-like launch attitude. I look out to check the wings are level and quickly look back in. The panel, its instruments and sky over the nose are much more comforting than the rapidly-retreating earth below. Monitor airspeed. If it increases too much I steepen the climb; too slow and I lower the nose. The adrenaline flows, keeping me sharp. Fly the plane; control the feelings. I run through what I would do if the cable broke.

My first solo glider flight: so far, so good.



The K-21's empty rear seat and Steve's smile say it all

At 1,300ft the tow slows down. Now's the time to lower the nose, gain airspeed and pull the release – twice, just to make sure the wire's away. Did that really release? I'd know by now if it hadn't, and anyway it would back-release, wouldn't it?

The frenetic whistle of the wire and the glider together has gone and all is peace. The soft hiss of 50kts is comforting as the realisation of being part of this thoroughbred flying machine sinks in. I'm really flying! The sky is mine.

Well, not quite: other gliders operating from the airfield, the descending winch wire, possibly an aerotow tug or other powered aircraft, perhaps even military jets from Leeming – all conspire to give reason not to neglect my lookout.

A puffy cumulus is starting to form upwind of the field. Upwind is good,

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# solo: the sky is mine

**Steve Derwin describes his first taste of soaring sailplanes with no instructor**



Wolds GC member Steve Derwin at 1,200ft over Pocklington on his first glider solo after a week's training course

because if necessary I can beat a quick retreat back to the field. Even so, it does seem a long way out. Make a plan. You can always change it if it doesn't work. It's better than bimbaling aimlessly about the sky, or so I've been told. OK, so I'll fly for the cloud. When I'm down to 900ft I'll turn back for the field. Another 400ft lost on the return would see me back at 500ft on base ready for approach and landing.

Now, what did Chris tell me about the MacCready ring? I know speed-to-fly is important but it's early days yet for me to assume an understanding of these niceties. Still, I should try. Ten years of flying hang-gliders has left a yearning not to sled ride straight back to earth after gaining that all-too-precious height off the winch. So I lower the nose and speed up the aircraft in pursuit of the elusive thermal.

I'm starting to get twitchy as I approach 900ft. I'm some distance from the field and not yet under the cloud and sink is all I've flown through. The temptation to turn gets stronger and a decision to go back is

imminent, but one last look at the vario tells me I'm holding level. I hang in there while I'm maintaining height, promising myself I'll beat that retreat the moment I start to sink. Whoopee! The vario goes positive – more than positive, ballistic: 8-10kts up as I turn with no real idea of where the lift is. No-one else is here as a marker and I've no idea what the trigger is.

## **'What a day to be alive!'**

However, I hit lucky and seem to have found the core. Eyes shift rapidly between the whirling tilted horizon and the oscillating vario. Sometimes lift, sometimes level but rarely down. Can't quite work out the delay on this device but I seem to stay in touch with the centre of the lift anyway and my climb continues towards the cloud. What a day to be alive!

After a few minutes of a dizzying ascent that all my hang-gliding had never shown me to be possible (particularly in Britain on a cold October afternoon) I reach 1,900ft and then commit the most cardinal sin of

all soaring flight. I leave a perfectly good thermal. Cloudbase is still a good way above me but due to some inexplicable and aberrant thought process I desert the lift in the belief, I guess, that I should be exploring the sky for something better. Why? I don't know. "At a safe height, in safe conditions, never, ever leave lift," my instructor had said to me, and on more than one occasion.

You guessed it: I find nothing but sink, and lots of it.

Back over the field I get a short reprieve and climb again, but this time for only a couple of hundred feet. Then I lose it.

The inevitable now has to be prepared for. The following circuit is uneventful, except that I have to work to contain my thoughts, which default to the experiences of the last half hour. No: I need to get this right. Concentrate! Fix the reference point. Set height, angle, attitude. Turn finals. Set up high on approach, set the attitude, maintain 55-60kts, look well ahead, not at the threshold. Airbrakes are a wonderful invention. Hold off, hold off, hold off and now bleed off the speed. Round out, touch down and steer straight on the ground run and already I'm wishing I was still up there.

The culmination of a week's training course at Wolds GC was that three of the four students, admittedly with previous flying experience, went solo. The fourth, with only a couple of flights beforehand, was near solo. As an outdoor training instructor, I have attended many training courses and I have to say that none has compared to this for sheer quality of instruction and good fun. To my mind, all the instructors at Wolds GC have the right attitude and appreciate the importance of balancing enjoyment and learning. Flying must be safe but it must also be fun, or we wouldn't do it, would we?

Steve Derwin is a regional co-ordinator for the British Disabled Flying Club. He holds a PPL (M), an FAA Airman's Certificate, BHPA paragliding and hang-gliding ratings and is building a Jabiru UL under the auspices of the Popular Flying Association

Wolds GC has fitted hand controls to K-21 JAV, seen right launching with Steve Derwin in the cockpit.

The club has run several "disabled flying days".

As a result more than 100 "disabled flights" have been conducted there, with participants being able to share fully in the experience of a lesson.

Four disabled people have so far joined the club as full members and several others are showing interest

Other clubs wishing to follow their lead can contact

Alan McWhirter, CFI, on 0411 551989

Simon Parker, manager, on 01759 303579

the BDFC's gliding adviser on 01395 274186

or Steve Derwin on 01642 898989







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### Aeronautical Charts - ICAO 1:500,000 scale

Chart name	Current edition	Next edition
S. England & Wales	22 Mar 2001	21 Mar 2002
N. England & N. Ireland	*18 May 2000	17 May 01
Scotland	*15 Jun 2000	27 Dec 01

### Topographical Air Charts 1:250,000 scale

Chart No./Name	Current edition	Next edition
1 N. Scotland West	*30 Nov 2000	To be announced
2 N. Scotland East	*2 Nov 2000	To be announced
3 N. Ireland	4 Nov 1999	*9 Aug 2001
4 The Borders	15 Jul 1999	*12 Jul 2001
5 Central Eng. & Wales	*19 Apr 2001	To be announced
6 England East	*10 Aug 2000	18 Apr 2002
7 West & South Wales	*13 Jul 2000	11 Jul 2002
8 England South	22 Feb 2001	21 Feb 2002

Note: Publication dates are subject to change.

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# Update on 2001 airspace

**Carr Withall, the chairman of the BGA's airspace committee, describes recommended procedures and recent airspace changes**

**T**HE YEAR 2000 was at last a very quiet year, with no new ATZs, and just one change (for the better), in the Belfast airspace structure from Class A airspace to Class D airspace. There is a new parachute site at the Redlands micro-light strip, which is south east of Swindon. These changes will be on the new aviation maps. There will be no changes to TMAs or airways until the new Air Traffic Control Centre near Southampton is open in spring 2002. This does not stop airfields from putting forward proposals. Currently we are having discussions about proposals from Bristol, RAF Brize Norton, Farnborough and Luton. Finningley is also still applying for consent to be a civil airport.

This S&G does not therefore include the full description of all types of airspace. See *Gliding and UK airspace update*, April-May 2000, p41, for full details and descriptions of airspace. Nothing has changed. What is important is that we follow recommended practices that will assist our safety and other users of airspace.

## Flights through Class D airspace

Remember the code of conduct: you must obtain an ATC 'clearance' to fly through any Class D airspace. Tell the controller that you are a 15m/Standard or Open Class glider. Keep the controller informed of any change of your planned route, due to massive sink, for example.

Do not circle on the extended centre line of the airfield runway. Be prepared to initiate avoiding action notwithstanding your right of way priority. You are flying VFR rules and therefore separation is not provided from other aircraft. An R/T licence is required. However, safety and common sense takes priority over whether or not you have a licence when unavoidably drifting into Class D airspace.

If the cloudbase is so high that one can fly over the top of Lyneham or Brize Norton zones please give them a call. They will see you on radar and will assume that you are in their zone and so divert their military traffic five miles from the radar target. They are very helpful.

## Parachute drop zone procedures

The list of parachute sites and appropriate contact ATC frequency is on the aviation maps as a block of information. Contact the ATC unit and they will be able to say if the site is active. The glider pilot can then request the DZ frequency to obtain the current activity. By talking directly to the parachute site one may either be allowed to cross safely, if they are having a break,

or fly around the zone if they are busy. However, most importantly, in the event of a nil response from the parachute site frequency the glider should act on the strategic information given by the ATC unit and remain clear of the site. **YOU WILL NEVER SEE A FREE FALL PARACHUTIST IN TIME TO TAKE AVOIDING ACTION. IF IN DOUBT, KEEP OUT.** The major sites at Langar, Peterborough/Sibson and Weston on the Green are very busy. Be sure to make in-flight R/T calls to ascertain actual status of DZs on your route. An R/T licence is NOT required.

## Airspace infringements

Once again we have had a good record, with only three reports. However, two resulted in Airprox reports and they were aggravated by the pilots flying on the QFE altimeter setting (I recognise that this is our normal practice). The airspace sub-committee suggests that the airfield QNH should be written down on the map before take-off. When flying close to the base of controlled airspace, this QNH setting or 1013, as appropriate, should be set on the altimeter. It is bad practice to add the airfield height to the altimeter reading during flight.

## Airprox reports

There were several airprox reports involving gliders, at less than winch launch height, over the gliding club airfield. These were caused by both military and civil aircraft disregarding the gliding site symbol on the map. There were also very many other incursions over gliding sites well below winch launch height. We are again asking the maps department at the CAA for a symbol, similar to the parachute site, that should enable other pilots to plan to avoid our sites below the cable height.

If you are considering filing an airprox, or suspect an airprox may be filed against you, then please contact Bruce Cooper on 01628 525313/bruce.cooper68@virgin.net or Carr Withall on 01442 862577 or email carrwithall@ahappylanding.freemove.co.uk as soon as possible. If carrying a logger please keep the trace. The use of traces has,

**The full, five-page description of UK airspace was in the April-May 2000 S&G. It is essential reading for all glider pilots. If you missed it, back issues can be bought while stocks last from the BGA, Kimberley House, Vaughan Way, Leicester LE1 4SE, telephone 0116 253 1051 or email ruth@gliding.co.uk**



*Carr Withall pictured directing the 2000 Standard Class Nationals at his home club, London GC, whose site, Dunstable, is affected by Luton airport's airspace*

on two recent airprox occasions, completely exonerated glider pilots from greatly-exaggerated claims by other pilots as to how close the aircraft came.

## Maps

There is much useful information at the bottom and side of the map that can greatly assist on cross-country flights: for example, parachute site contact frequencies, ATZ frequencies, Danger Area activity, etc. With ever-increasing numbers of light aircraft and gliders flying in our congested skies it is essential to use every bit of airspace possible. This can only be done if the correct frequency is immediately to hand when you wish to inform airfields that you likely to fly over fly. Always fly with the current map (see the Civil Aviation Authority advertisement on the opposite page for details of publication dates).

## Danger Areas

The huge Salisbury plain danger areas are permanently active and the MoD is prosecuting pilots caught flying in the areas. These and other ranges have become significantly more active since the army withdrew from Germany.

## Finally, if you're lost...

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



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# Tributes to pioneering pilots

## S&G pays tribute to three pilots who have died recently, starting with the UK's Anne Burns

FIRST cross-country flights for most pilots are straightforward 50km attempts. But for her first cross-country in 1955, Anne Burns flew her Olympia from Lasham to RAF Tern Hill in Shropshire – a distance of 215.64km, beating the British Women's distance record by 50 miles and missing her Silver duration by five minutes. Just 18 months later on December 2, 1956 Anne was bungy-launched in a Skylark 3b from the Long Mynd and soared to 11,890ft, setting a new women's British National, UK absolute altitude and gain-of-height record (10,500ft). Eight months later, again flying a Skylark 3, she became the first woman to cross the Channel in a sailplane. She took off from Lasham intending to fly to Hawking in Kent, but eventually landed at Rely, near Merville, 41 miles south-east of Calais, after flying 257.48km.

It was epic feats such as this that made Anne, who died in February aged 85, one of the mainstays of British gliding during the '50s and '60s.

Born in Howarth, Yorkshire, her first flight came as a teenager while at school in Reading when she slipped away from her class during a visit to Woodley Aerodrome and persuaded a pilot to take her up in a Gipsy Moth.

At the outbreak of war she worked for the Ministry of Supply, joining what was to become the Structures and Mechanical Department at the Royal Aeronautical Establishment at Farnborough. She learned to fly in a Tiger Moth and won her pilot's licence in 1948. Much of her work involved in-flight tests and, as a Principal Scientific Officer, she was involved in investigat-

ing the Comet 1, for which she won the Queen's Commendation in 1955.

A year earlier, at the age of 39, she had taken up gliding, with her husband, Denis. Theirs was to be an enduring love affair with the sport. After her first cross-country success, Anne completed her Gold in 1958. Her next major achievement came in 1959 at the National Championships at Lasham on the day Nick Goodhart flew to Portmoak; Anne flew the second longest distance – 238 miles to Bellingham, Northumberland – setting a new women's distance record.

By 1960 she was the holder of 10 out of 11 UK women's records, and capped that in January 1961 in South Africa where she set four new records in the Skylark 3 – 200km triangle at 79.01km/h; 300km triangle at 66.70km/h, a distance of 436.44km and an altitude gain of 9,119m (29,919ft) in a cu-nim. This won her the Britannia Trophy (with Denis) and the California In England Trophy for the best performance of the year by a woman pilot.

Anne followed that in 1963 by claiming the women's 500km triangle title at 103.33km/h. Denis and Anne's Skylark 3 was replaced in 1964 by an Austria and during the year she raised the women's 300km triangle speed to 86.66km/h, increasing it a year later to 93.62.

Anne finally became National Champion, at the age of 50, in 1966 at Lasham flying an SHK – the first woman to win a UK nationals. It was shortly after this that she proved that however many hours and records a pilot might have, we are all human. She landed out wheels-up in the Upavon area one day and, after the undamaged glider had been lifted up and the wheel lowered, she asked one of her "rescuers" never to tell anyone how the newly crowned British Champion could make such a mistake!

*Right: Anne Burns featured on the cover of the August-September S&G in 1966, after she became the first woman to win a British Nationals*

*Five of her records still stand today, 23 years after she gave up gliding*

## SAILPLANE & GLIDING



Anne's gliding career almost ended in tragedy in 1977 when her Nimbus suffered a bird-strike and nose-dived. The canopy jammed and she finally opened it and bailed out at 2,000ft. She landed in a tree and was rescued by a farmer. As with most of her gliding career, this near-tragedy was also a record as she became the first woman since the Thirties to become a member of Irvin's Caterpillar Club and, at 62, the oldest.

After retiring from gliding Anne took up fly-fishing and snooker, winning awards in both.

Twenty-three years on, five of Anne's records remain unbeaten – National, Feminine, Open Gain of Height (9119m, Skylark 3b) and Absolute Altitude (10,550m/34,614ft Skylark 3b) and UK Feminine Open and 20m Straight Distance (454km in a Skylark 3A) and UK Feminine Open 200km Goal (85.5km/h, Olympia 419).

Nick Wall

## She escaped from occupied Holland and joined the ATA

IN THE 1930s, only ten women in The Netherlands had a private pilot's licence; even fewer were glider pilots. Ida Veldhuyzen van Zanten, born into a family of flower bulb growers, dreamed of the new profession of air hostess and decided to learn to fly, assuming it would improve her chances. A small inheritance enabled her to visit England in summer 1938, where lessons were cheaper. She began on the Gipsy Moth at London Air Park, Hanworth, soloing after ten hours and getting her licence in July. She then visited the National Gliding Meeting at Dunstable and, in August, started gliding on a Dagling. After 36 hops she got her A certificate and after 65 her B. She flew her C at Yorkshire GC. A meeting with a Polish girl led to flights at Lwow and Katowice in Polish gliders like the Wrona, Zaba and Salamandra. Back home, she continued to glide, and was accepted as a KLM stewardess. But it was not to last: once war began in September 1939, the airline's network was drastically curtailed.

After the German invasion of the Netherlands in May 1940, Ida tried to escape to England to join the fight against the enemy as a pilot. Two attempted Channel crossings in small boats failed, but a journey to neutral Switzerland succeeded. Disappointment awaited her. The Dutch government-in-exile was not interested in getting women to England. Instead, they offered her passage from Portugal to the Dutch Caribbean. She accepted

*Glider and Air Transport Auxiliary pilot Ida Veldhuyzen van Zanten in wartime uniform with Dutch shoulder badge. She joined up on May 18, 1943, leaving, as did many others, on September 30, 1945*



but sold the ticket and hid in Lisbon, contacting former colleagues in London for help. In August 1942 they managed to fly her in a KLM DC3 to London, where she quickly found that there was no place for female pilots in the RAF, even in wartime. The Dutch government did nothing to involve her in the war effort.

Intervention by Prince Bernhard, himself a keen pilot, resulted in an application to the ATA. Women were allowed in; foreigners too, if sufficiently qualified. As a third officer she did 674 hours, in Tiger Moth, Miles Magister and Mentor, Blackburn B2, Fairchild Argus, Airspeed Oxford, Whitney Straight, Percival Proctor, Stinson Reliant,

Hawker Hart and Hind, Gloster Gladiator, North American Harvard and the famous Fairey Swordfish. Cross-country flights of three to six hours were no exception. She was stationed at Thame, White Waltham, Hamble and Sherburn. In 1943 she also flew gliders with the Central Command Gliding School at Harrow.

In March 1946 she returned to the liberated Netherlands ferrying Tiger Moths for the National School of Aviation, and by spring 1947 she was tug pilot for the "Flying Circus" (a Tiger Moth, a Baby and a Kranich) which breathed new life into the Dutch gliding movement. Unable to make a living in flying, she became a social worker.

But she continued to fly: aerotowing with Aeroclub Hoogetveen and gliding in many types: the Baby, Minimoa, Rhönlérche, Olympia Meise, K-13, Sedbergh, Skylark, Castel 25S and 310P, Nord 2000, C-800, K-21, Astir CS and Twin Astir.

Ida, who died in October last year aged 89, was a distinguished member of the Royal Netherlands Aeronautical Association. A bearer of the Dutch Cross of Merit and the Resistance Remembrance Cross, she was the only woman awarded the (Dutch) Flying Cross. She has a special place in the aviation history of The Netherlands, so closely linked to that of WW2 in England.

With thanks to: (authors) Frits Sniijder, editor of Dutch magazine Thermiek; George Slot, instructor at Hoogetveen; and (translator) Bruno Zijl



## The first woman to hold a glider pilot's licence in the USA

ANNE MORROW LINDBERGH died in February 2001 at the age of 94.

The daughter of a banker (who became a US Senator) and a writer, Anne Morrow married the famous transatlantic aviator, Charles Lindbergh, in 1927.

He was already an American hero, having become the first person to fly solo across the Atlantic. She soon became his co-pilot, co-navigator and radio operator.

Their flights fascinated the public – as did their life together. But that fascination took a tragic twist when, in 1932, their baby son was kidnapped and later found dead.

Anne published 13 books of memoirs, fiction, poems and essays and in 1934, became the first woman to win the National Geographic Society's Hubbard Gold Medal for distinction in exploration, discovery and research. Among many other achievements, she was the first woman to earn an American glider pilot's licence.

Her husband had a friend in California called Hawley Bowlus. Hawley had built a single-seat sailplane which, in 1930, Charles had flown. A week later, Anne tried it out after first experiencing ground hops behind a car.

Then they went to the highest hill in the area with an unobstructed slope and fields at the bottom.

Anne wrote to her mother (a letter published in *Hour of Gold, Hour of Lead*, her journal for 1929-32): "When we got up to the edge of the hill, the sailplane perched on the edge, the nice little green fields below – it felt terrific. All the men were ready to pull the elastic cord and shoot me off. Camera men all set and ready for a show. Hawley pacing around nervously, giving me futile last instructions.

"Oh, the relief of getting off! It was quiet and the ship rose steadily... And it was so delicious... so still. I picked out my route: along one hill, across to another, and down into a green field – a very conservative route. I did very little soaring because I felt rather timid about getting too near the sides of the hills. I didn't want to experiment the first time. But I felt the ship go up to currents in each crevasse in the hillside.

"When I was quite near the field I heard a bird singing. Then I turned around the field to face it the long way and skimmed along the ground and it stopped, without any jolt, like a sled plowing into snow with a slight crust. Then I jumped out, lifted up the tail to see if the scraping had hurt anything (it's very light) and looked at the road. Cars were stopping and people came up. They stood grinning. "Where did you come from?" I, in my white overalls, pointed up to the mountain that looked in the clouds.

"C. agrees that it is more sheer sport than a power plane. A big hawk circled C. when he was up, curious and unafraid, and Hawley says he has sometimes used them as guides to ascending air currents."

With thanks to the History Library, National Aviation Hall of Fame, Dayton, Ohio, United States

# Club news

## Angus (Drumshade)

THE WEATHER during December and January restricted our flying. But whenever we had a reasonable Sunday, enough members braved the cold to practise a few circuits. We even flew the T-21 in almost-freezing temperatures: wrapped up warm on the odd sunny day, this was very enjoyable. We are starting to move the C of A dates towards this time of year so all club gliders will be available when the thermal season starts. Alex Maitland, who started university last autumn, is starting up a club at Dundee's Abertay University. A number of students have been out on a couple of occasions. Details of affiliated membership are being worked out, but there will be pilots coming out of this venture.

Wolf Rossmann

## Bannerdown (Keevil)

OUR AGM was conducted by Chairman Arthur Huskie, hot-foot from a 19hr flight (Hercules not Astir!). We were delighted to have as guests your editor, Helen Evans, and her husband Nick Wall. Helen presented Hog-of-the-Year to Al Stacey, not only for hours but to mark a very successful year as CFI. Chris Lear received the Bannerdown Bowl for most progress and Steve Ayres the Keevil Trophy for a commendable 500km under difficult conditions. Merv Ridout was presented the Bannerdown Cup, to much acclaim, for outstanding engineering work on winches, not least his own baby, due to be christened soon. It will take its place alongside our new Skylaunch, which is already giving us superbly smooth launches. Club finances are sound, not least as a result of Chris Lear's organisation of trial lesson evening flights. Acceptable increases in fees have been made, particularly to cover the rise in fuel prices.

Derek Findlay

## Bath Wilts & North Dorset (The Park)

CONGRATULATIONS to Joe Leber, one of our younger members, who was sent solo by Nick Bowers on January 20. We have been flying, but our field will be in urgent need of rolling when the rains stop. We have been exceptionally exposed to the elements on the launchpoint this winter because our caravan is being overhauled by Graham Callaway and helpers. Our committee has been working on a new three-year plan and one result of its work is an increase in flying fees.

Joy Lynch

## Black Mountains (Talgarth)

WE HAD some fun early in January trying to launch from a very waterlogged field. Visitors from Oxford ignored our advice to clean the mud out of the wheel-box of their K-21 before putting it to bed. The result was several hours' flying lost the next day, removing large volumes of frozen slush and mud. Never mind, they'll know next time! At last the field is drying out and we have had easterly wave lifting several members to over 10,000ft in the primary, directly over the field. Our main ridge to Hay Bluff has allowed lots of gliders and pilots to entertain the hill walkers. Work on the new buildings is about to start. Potential visitors need not be put off... we will still be flying every day of the week from Easter. Pilot briefing notes are on our website.

Robbie Robertson



Steve Lambourne (right) congratulates bursary holder Paul White on soloing at Bath, Wilts and North Dorset

## Booker (Wycombe Air Park)

DESPITE the awful weather and apparently almost permanently waterlogged airfield and countryside, we have at least achieved two first solos: Rachel Mine, one of our cadets, and Alan Johnstone. Congratulations to both in such dire weather. Our additional K-21 has now arrived, so this year club members have access to a two-seater fleet of Duo Discus, three K-21s, three K-13s and our old faithful T-21. Our training, ranging from basic to highly advanced, continues with an increasing proportion accomplished under intensive courses and pre-booked lessons (with no additional charge). We continue to prepare for the 15-metre Nationals at the end of June. We are working particularly hard to again provide a high-class support structure as well as excellent flying arrangements.

Roger Neal

## Borders (Milfield)

GOOD WAVE soaring in December led to many flights in excess of 14,000ft, giving Gold heights. January and February have been poor, due to wet weather, but we have still had some reasonable soaring for those willing to wrap up well and brave the elements. We had our annual dinner in January, in a replica of the gentlemen's smoking lounge in the Titanic, which was salvaged from its sister ship the Olympic. We had a visit from the RAF to discuss low flying in the area, which had caused us some concern during our flying weeks. All parties went away with a better understanding of each other's needs. We are already starting to get bookings for our wave weeks. Membership continues to increase, mainly due to visiting pilots joining us as country members.

Bob Cassidy

## Bowland Forest (Chipping)

WE HAVE managed to get some flying in, during the period of hard frost, but unfortunately, we are back to rain, rain and rain again. However, we can now enjoy our non-flying even more as we have just acquired a Falke motorglider! We are also looking for a Junior to enhance our fleet – can anyone help? We are interviewing candidates (mainly from local schools) to form a squad of five cadets. The scheme, which has operated for the past four years, offers the cadets the opportunity to fly at no cost to themselves for a year, with the aim of introducing more young people to the sport.

Eileen Littler

## Bristol & Gloucestershire (Nympsfield)

A PROPOSAL to change our trading name to Nympsfield GC was rejected by members at an EGM in February. It was agreed to spend a VAT windfall on capital projects rather than pay it to members. The Supacat winch is to have a new engine. A new mid-week instructor, Andy Beatty, from Herts, was appointed so if you want to brush away the winter cobwebs come and do your field landing checks, some sightseeing in

Please send your entries to [helen@sandg.dircon.co.uk](mailto:helen@sandg.dircon.co.uk) or Helen Evans, 6 Salop Close, Shrivvenham, Swindon SN6 8EN, to arrive by April 17 for the June-July issue (June 12 for August-September). Photographs – slides or prints from film – are welcome



# Club focus



When flying at Aquila, listen out on the airfield frequency 119.45 and announce your intentions to "Hinton Traffic"

AQUILA GC claims that its home, Hinton in the Hedges, is one of the UK's best cross-country soaring sites. But, where is this superb site, what makes it so good – and why is it called Aquila? A little history will help.

The club started in October 1966 as – wait for it – the Rocket Propulsion Establishment GC, using a loaned Kranich II and autotow launching (without rocket assistance) at Westcott airfield near Aylesbury. In 1969, site difficulties and failed planning applications sent us walkabout. We visited Enstone, Gaydon, Turweston and Shotteswell before arriving at Hinton in April 1972. We also became Aquila GC (Latin for eagle) as a non-site-specific name. The name stuck and the club has prospered.

Aerotow was introduced in 1974, and one of the first Pawnee tugs arrived ten years later (at a quarter of today's prices!). We stopped winching in 1998 and a generous Foundation for Sport grant added a Super Cub 180 to our fleet. A K-21 arrived in 1999 and was much in demand for cross-country training during its first season last year.

Meanwhile, membership grew well during

the 1990s, boosted a little by the closure of nearby clubs at Turweston, Cranfield and Enstone. With some 90 full members, we operate weekends, and midweek through much of July and August, providing beginners' courses, and launches for members.

So why is the site so good? Hinton is just off the M40 between Banbury and Brackley, about as far from the coast as you can get – no sea breezes to spoil the thermals. And we are so far from both the London and Birmingham airspace that we have total freedom of choice about where to go. In a country that only rarely has a good gliding day everywhere, this is often a real bonus – if it's clagged in to the east, we go west into Wales, or vice versa. Indeed, since we joined the Inter-Club League in 1993, we have hosted 27 competition days, flying tasks on 20 – and five of the seven lost days have been in the last two years (definitely not a trend!)

The airfield is ex-WW2, with three paved runways – one recently re-surfaced. We normally use large grass strips around the edge of the central triangle, giving a wide choice of launch and landing directions. Though the airfield is also used by some powered aircraft and by parachuting, co-operation is generally excellent, with an unstaffed air-ground frequency used by all. A real bonus is that our site never gets too wet to disrupt flying.

We are financially very strong despite competitive prices and, with recent closures locally, very practised at involving newcomers – experienced or beginners – with our friendly bunch of soarers. We think our site and operation are a bit special.

Mel Eastburn



First flight at 16 years old in the club's popular K-8

Wales or potter along the best ridges in the south. The club mag has been given a make-over and changed to A4 with more illustrations. Chris Hughes got to 8,000ft while everyone else, including the CFI, sat on the ridge in January. Alison Mulder managed only 105km on her Silver distance in Oz. But "our" Mike Strathern, now in New Zealand, came a creditable sixth in his first attempt at the nationals at Omarama. A large contingent is off to Gap again with our DG-505. Another Trevor Stuart trip to the Isle of Wight (*Isle of Dreams*, December 2000-January 2001, p39) is on; it's said Dunstable already have ten names on the list.

Bernard Smyth

## Burn (Burn)

DESPITE the weather, flying has been well supported, with the reduced price for soaring time from aerotows proving popular, as well as helping the tug economics. Steve Martin and his team achieved wonders cleaning up the runways; together with the weed-killing exercise the site is a lot tidier. Rod Salmon has led the team redecorating the clubhouse; the tea bus is next in line. Our new winch is ready for service. Reduced costs because of the conversion to LPG will help pay for it. A Janus has joined the fleet. By Easter, Bronze pilots should be checked out to fly it. This year's pantomime, *Treasure Island*, was brilliantly written and produced by Alison Jepson. Site security has given us some problems over the last year and the entrance gates are now kept locked when we are off site. The numbers to call so that your retrieve can collect you will be on our answerphone (01757 270296).

Bill Thorp

## Cairngorm (Feshiebridge)

WE HAVE been very active over the winter, seizing every soaring opportunity for some mountain flying, and getting the facilities ship-shape for our visitors. On Jan 14, during a period of anticyclonic, nil wind conditions with unlimited visibility, four of us thought it a good idea to put our new four-seater Robin tug through its paces and embarked on a highland safari, visiting three airfields (Plockton, Broadford, and Connell) in one day. The vista of heather and water with the Black Cuillin of Skye as a backdrop is a sight I shall never forget. Dates for your Diary: Club Flying Week, May 19-25; Task Week May 26-June 2; Octoberfest autumn wave Festival, Sept 29-Oct 20, everyone welcome, book early! Visit our web site [www.gliding.org](http://www.gliding.org) for more details or phone Ruth on 01667 493459 (bookings) or the club on 01540 651317.

Chris Fiorentini

## At a glance

Launch type & cost:  
Aerotow, £16 to 2,000ft

Club fleet:  
K-21, 2xK-13, ASW-19, K-8

Private gliders: 28

Instructors: 18

Types of lift: thermal, occasional wave

Operating days:  
Weekends and Bank Holidays  
Many weekdays in July & August

Contact:  
Andy: 01296 720415

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# Club news



Coldstream bridge looking west (Bob Cassidy, **Borders**)

## Chilterns (RAF Halton)

CFI LUKE Homsey is putting out emails each week to tell us the state of the airfield (usually very soft or wet) and we manage to fly when the ground is frozen or snow-covered. R34, one of our two K-13s, looks like new in its post-re-cover colour scheme. For this we thank Don Knight, Keith Beattie (an artist with a broad paintbrush) and helpers. Re-gelling of other gliders is leading to long trips into Europe. Gordon Howarth has transformed the 'cave' at the back of our hangar with a tin-opener and paint to look like a prospective launch-point-control trailer. After last year's anniversary, there's a plot to make the reunion a regular feature of the longest Saturday. Past members: please note diary date of June 3: put the word around, come, fly and then celebrate. Let us know you're coming by leaving an answerphone message on 01296 623535 ext 6198.

Tony Gee & Dave Sale

## Cleavelands (Dishforth)

EIGHTEEN locals and visitors enjoyed a traditional Christmas Day: gentle flying followed by a splendid dinner. Thanks to Andy Causer and helpers for slaving over a hot cooker. Flying in wave camp was pleasant and plentiful, but the wave appeared only fleetingly. However, after all the rain, it was lovely to be outdoors in the crisp, clear (and very cold) air. Bicester kindly loaned us their Duo Discus. Our wave season lasts all year, so if it's wind's in it, west, think about visiting us. See: [www.dishforthairfield.freeserve.co.uk](http://www.dishforthairfield.freeserve.co.uk)

Polly Whitehead

## Cotswold (Aston Down)

EVEN SNOW between Christmas and New Year did not deter members anxious to take to the air after all the rain. January also produced two much-appreciated fine weekends. At our AGM, Andrew Flewelling was elected

chairman, with Richard Carter and Robin Birch as project and marketing managers respectively. We wish them success. At our dinner dance, we were treated to jokes by retiring chairman Larry Bleaken before trophies (including the infamous white stick) were presented: Olly Ward (best comp performance); Dave Moore (height gain); Ted Walker (100km triangle); Ken Lloyd (best two-seater); Mike Frost (best pre-Silver); Richard Carter (best over-50); and Mark Parker (500km). Mark has completed Gold with a cloud climb for the height. Finally, our thanks to Tony Parker, who retires as CFI, and best wishes to Paul Gentil, who succeeds him.

Frank Birlison

## Cornish (Perranporth)

GUESTS from Culdrose, Brentor and the Long Mynd were among 95 people at the annual dinner at the Seiner Arms, Perranporth. Michael Learning and his wife, Julia, were our guests. He described the role of helicopters in war and peace, in particular Air Sea Rescue work. Gordon Hunter ran the raffle and Julia presented the trophies: John Dale (best pre-Bronze progress); Barry Green (ab initio circuit burner); Dean Penny (first cross-country of year over 25km - with out-landing); and Peter Arthur (all-round efficiency). Alan Reddington collected six trophies (meritorious flight; height gains; total distances; Ladder trophy). The Seiner Arms Award for services to the club went to Dorothy Hunter. Her dedicated support was summed up by this successful evening of comradeship, happy chatter and laughter, all thanks to the hard work and detailed organisation of Dorothy and her husband, wotsisname.

Mike Sheedy

## Cranwell (RAF Cranwell)

THE SILVER lining in our particular cloud has been the vast amount of maintenance achieved during the abysmal weather. Our thanks to Steve Bennand and a stalwart group of weather-resistant regulars. Taking aircraft off line for C of A doesn't seem to hurt as much when there is little flying to be had, anyway. There were, however, some reasonable periods in which to promote flying currency and Dave Gilder completed his first solo. A K-21 and team from waterlogged Wrekin (Cosford) joined us for a while..

Paul Skiera

## Deeside (Aboyne)

AFTER a great start to the New Year with excellent wave flights, winter descended on Aboyne. The airfield looks like Antarctica. We hope today's rain will melt the remaining snow and let us get on with flying. The Met



Dreams of summer when all gliders had left **Cranwell**

Office has installed a webcam on the airfield: see <http://www.meto.gov.uk/weather/europe/uk/webcam/aboyne/index.html> Congratulations to Charlie Duncan, who has soloed for the second time, a few years since his first at Portmoak, and has claimed his Silver height.

Sue Heard

## Denbigh (Denbigh)

IN SPITE of lousy weather we have soared in wave and flown our ridge this winter. A major site improvement is due to start very soon - watch this space! Plans are also in place for our Competition 50 on September 15-22, open to all glider classes with pilots in their prime, for details see our advert (p62) or our website. With great sadness we report the deaths of Dick Moore, Gerry Maddocks and Neville Ashburner. Dick, a member of North Wales GC and, more recently Denbigh, gave both his time and money to gliding over many years. Gerry died suddenly in hospital. He was a very capable pilot with over 16 years' experience. Neville did not fly very much. But when he did, in his beloved T-21 turbo, the effort of getting him aboard was worthwhile. All three will be sadly missed.

Martin Jones

## Derby & Lincs (Camphill)

WET WEATHER interspersed with wave has been the theme of winter flying with flights of up to 10,000ft (well done, Dave Salmon). The New Year's Eve party, although curtailed slightly by the blizzard outside, was greatly enjoyed by all who attended. Camphill will again host the Vintage Rally from June 23-30, 2001. So if you have a vintage glider or just want to soak up the atmosphere, book now. Visitors will be welcomed by the recently-appointed new steward and stewardess, David and Louise.

Diane Reid

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# Club news

## ➤ Devon & Somerset (North Hill)

A COUPLE of epic wave flights (after long aerotows) to climb in easterly Dartmoor wave, the club DG-505 actually made it back to North Hill, finding lift right across Dartmoor! Otherwise wind, rain, sleet, flu ... all too depressing for words.

Phil Morrison

## Dukeries (Gamston)

DESPITE being absent from the last two editions we are still very active. We have had two away events, first the two-seater comp at Pockington and, in October, ten members took six aircraft to Portmoak, flying 190hrs between us. Gary Wardle gained Silver height in a week when the wave was there but only to 10,000ft. The winter has seen the winch sprout Year 2000 compliant guillotines thanks to the good work of Mike Burrows and many other engineering types. We look forward to our soaring season. This usually starts in early February due to our well-drained site, which we think is one of the best thermalling sites in the country.

Mike Terry

## East Sussex (Ringmer)

OUR NEW CFI, Dave Williams, celebrates seven months on the job and is still smiling, so much so that he is organising a trip at Easter! We have expanded the scholarship scheme and an application to the Sports Council for a tug (boat?) is progressing. Various pilots have flown at nearby clubs (Kent and Southdown), familiarising themselves with their facilities and terrain and winning many friends in the process. Or not! AWL

## Essex (North Weald/Ridgewell)

ALTHOUGH flying has been interrupted by poor weather, those hardy individuals who travelled to the Mynd enjoyed flying glass ships, some for the first time. The strong winds certainly made it interesting! Our thanks to all the Mynd members who made our visit memorable: the flying and the bar afterwards. Our thanks also to all who braved mud and rain to continue to improve our Ridgewell site. Gift vouchers remain popular and, thanks to Geoff Martin, our new system is working smoothly. Quite a few mile high ones have been bought. Height restrictions at North Weald mean these will be flown at Ridgewell, come summer. Well done to Hugh Maddams for his BI rating. Our Super Cub tug is having its C of A done by the squadron at North Weald, who are also kindly letting us use their clubhouse for our annual dinner. A recent talk on parachute use and care was well attended, and one on meteorology is planned. Our updated website includes a video clip: see [www.essexgliding.org](http://www.essexgliding.org). My apologies to John Hampson for misnaming him when reporting his Silver duration in our last Club News.

Peter Perry

## Essex & Suffolk (Wormingford)

CRAP weather, strip's flooded, minimal flying. What's new(s)?

Steve Jones



Tom Fowles after his first solo at Essex GC's North Weald site, pictured with instructor Geoff Martin



Members of North Wales GC at Llantilio in January about to take their first launch since winning their planning appeal (see p12)

Photo: Tony Dickinson

## Fenland (RAF Marham)

A WELL-ATTENDED AGM was held on February 10, with awards going to the following pilots. Member of the year went to Bob Boughten for outstanding service to the club despite the fact he is not yet solo. The Efficiency Trophy was awarded to Al Raffan for major refurbishment of the K-13. Both the Speed and Distance Trophies went to Peter Stafford Allen for achieving 110.65km/h over 103km and for a flight of 461km. The "Aux Vaches" Trophy, presented for the most difficult or humorous retrieve, went to Don Johnstone for landing 7km outboud at Tibenham during the Anglia Cup (his first field landing) then bragging about it! The Ladder Trophy went to Tim Edmunds for getting his full Silver. Plans for the new hangar are progressing well, as are hopes of our own motorglider. We are replacing our LS8 with a Discus, which more people can fly.

AJ Padgett

## Four Counties (Syerston)

OUR EASTER flying week runs from April 16 so we are hoping for some dry weather for a change. We are also planning a soaring week beginning August 25: visitors welcome – service and civilian – so check our website for details. Adrian Hatton is developing a website for field landings which will be very useful to cross-country pilots of all abilities. We have recently installed a new kitchen, which will further improve our club facilities.

Sue Armstrong

## Imperial College (Lasham)

THERE was a great buzz in February with the return of the World Club Class Champions. Pete Masson (1st) and Afandi Darlington (4th) are both ex-icGC captains and Afandi is the club's honorary president. "We are all very proud" (IC Rector). Well done to all the British Team. March was another busy month for us: our annual dinner (a lot less formal than last year – I didn't do the cooking!) and ICU Rag, with its second Annual Scrubbin' Day, when we raised money for charity by washing trailers and cars at Lasham. As you read this, we will be at The Long Mynd experiencing ridge/hill soaring in preparation for our summer expedition to Jaca in July. Similar sort of thing but with slightly bigger hills! You know it's time to go when the members vote in a new committee and this is what was due to at icGC's AGM: details to follow in the next issue. Visit our website on [www.su.ic.ac.uk/gliding](http://www.su.ic.ac.uk/gliding)

Hemraj Nithianandarajah

## Kent (Challock)

JOHN HOYE has been clocking up a lot of hours tugging and gliding, including a fair number of cross-country kilometres in the K-21. He reckons that most days of late have been soarable with strong thermals and high cloudbases. I suppose overwintering in Australia has something to do with it! Meanwhile, in waterlogged Kent, training has still continued in spite of it all. I can also report early enthusiasm to get syndicate Cs of A completed – because things can only get better.

Caroline Whitbread

## Lakes (Walney Island)

AFTER the appalling weather stopped us flying we are now a gliding club again; we have even had a few good flying days! January is C of A time so we have been busy with aircraft inspections and general fleet maintenance. Thanks to Dave North, Phil Storer et al for their efforts. It was also time for our tug, Oscar Lima, to have its C of A; this has unfortunately led to a prolonged period of maintenance. The club would like to thank Lasham for stepping in with the loan of a Super Cub; without that, we would not be able to fly.

Peter Seddon

## Lasham Gliding Society (Lasham)

WE ARE proud to congratulate 25-year-old Peter Masson on winning the World Club Class Championships at Gawler in South Australia (see p30). Praise also to Richard Hood from Four Counties GC, who came second, and Afandi Darlington from Lasham, who was fourth. Nick Robson from neighbouring RAF Odiham gave a well-attended lecture with a clear and helpful exposition of local airspace. Evening BI flights in 2000 were supported by David Penney, Morag Saunders, John Cuthbert and Merv Bull. Nearly 300 personal letters led to 62 organisations flying, compared with 24 in 1999. Bronze Badge lectures have been given by Gordon MacDonald, John Simmonds and Chris Gibson. Our cadet scheme, run by David Oliver, has 25 members. We congratulate cadets Tim Charlesworth, George Dadd and Richard Verrall on BI ratings. CFH Graham McAndrew has some "bad weather" aphorisms: *it is nearly always better than it looks and if you never go, you will never know.*

Tony Segal

## London (Dunstable)

FLYING has continued throughout the winter, thanks to our well-drained site; and some good westerlies have kept us on the hill, with Ed Downham getting the Duo out to Chinnor and back on the last Saturday of January. Our cadet scheme is again over-subscribed for the year. Andy Roche has been to Poppenhausen to collect our new K-21. We've got two club trips in March and April, to Shobdon and to Cerdanya. We have an Easter comp, and our open day is on May 20. The same instructors will again be running our holiday courses, and we're running three soaring courses throughout the summer, open to all. Book early to avoid disappointment.

AH

## Mendip (Halesland)

BUCKING the national trend, we have increased our launch rate for the third successive year, passing the 3,000 mark with a month to spare. We have also attracted several new (and keen) junior members. Despite the weather, we have three new solo pilots. Chris Lee had a trial lesson in September and found that he was hooked. Alan Cridge arrived with a PPL but then had to learn to use his feet and Dave Maddicks, who originally joined as a fresh-faced kid when we flew from Weston-super-Mare, has returned to the fold.

Keith Simmons



### Midland (The Long Mynd)

SPOILT for wave. From every direction it came in January with the record for an easterly being broken at 13,000ft. Our course season is under way and visitors can lounge within newly-decorated walls and under newly-hung ceilings. Flying is on a pay-as-you-go basis for the first seven weeks of courses. Much wetness in the privates (gliders that is) has prompted plans to install a power system on the trailer rail so that dehumidifiers can run. With great regret we say farewell to Liz Platt, who has been invaluable in many roles but especially as part of the frontline office team with Janet Stuart. Liz came on a course 15 years ago along with father Derek and brother Richard and has rarely been off-site since. We have introduced a Mille High Club (read as you will) as an option for BI flights. There is a daily flying log by John Stuart on our website.

Roland Bailey

### Needwood Forest (Cross Hayes)

WHILE visiting gliders are always welcome here, the committee has decided that in everyone's interest, no glider (club or private) shall be launched without documentary proof of insurance being provided.

Grant Williams

### Nene Valley (Upwood)

DURING December the perimeter track provided the sole usable landing strip. The social committee held an excellent annual dinner dance in February. Barry Meech won not only the Chairman's and the CFI's awards but also the new Marshal Papworth Trophy, for the best all round contribution to the club, presented by Stewart Papworth in memory of his brother. In their speeches Martin Reynolds, the Chairman, and John Young, the CFI, emphasised the need to maintain safety standards but at the same to enjoy flying. Steve Codd was thanked by the CFI for encouraging inter-club competition flying. Les Walsh won the Gold Ladder award. Clubhouse and hangar have been transformed. Ron Sibley, Les Walsh, Janet Emms and Tracy Meech have served us well and deserve their new Savoy Grill. The fleet is looking good on tender loving care from Brian Cracknell and assistants. Taff Turner and Roger Morrisroe are modifying a Transit van for cable towing, ably assisted by hired hands. Visitors to Upwood can expect a very warm welcome.

John Pike

### Newark & Notts (Winthorpe)

THE ANNUAL shutdown was brought forward to facilitate modifications required on our winches. Work is progressing well with one almost ready, thanks in the main to Bob Grant. No real horror stories were uncovered and all aircraft are in good health. Barring any disasters we should be flying again by the end of February. Our flying weeks are booked for May 26-June 3 and August 25-September 2: visiting pilots welcome. The end of the year was overshadowed by the sad loss of our treasurer, Frank Hunt. Our former CFI John Maddison has written an obituary (see p59).

Chris Dring

### Norfolk (Tibenhams)

DESPITE the rainy winter, we have lost very few days' flying and have continued to entertain hosts of refugees from grass airfields. Mike Bean's winter Bronze lectures have been well-attended. New member David Bullent has gone solo after only five weeks, thanks to some intensive weekend work with instructor Matt Cook.

Bonnie Wade

### Peterborough & Spalding (Crowland)

THE LAKE on the airfield is not getting any smaller. Everyone is waiting patiently for dry weather. Very little flying has taken place since last winter. Jeff Tucker returned from South Africa with tales of sunshine and excellent soaring in his ASH 25. Jeff flew with John Coutts and completed 400km in 2hrs 39mins taking only nine climbs, one to 14,000ft. Club Cs of A are nearly all completed and we are ready for spring when it arrives. In May a number of club members are heading off to fly in Spain and hopefully the certainty of good weather. Preparations for our open day on June 24 are well under way; we intend to promote the event by exhibiting a glider in Peterborough town centre on the preceding weekend. Dave Crowhurst, our CFI, has brought an LS3 to add to the private owners' fleet.

Pete Goulding

### Phoenix (Brüggen)

AS THE sun goes down on the last RAF outpost (flying) in Germany, it is time to bid farewell to gliding from Brüggen. Past members are invited to attend a Final Fling party here on June 2, 2001, details on: <http://members.aol.com/bruggengliding/index> POC is Graham French, 31 Sqn, RAF Brüggen, BFPO 25 ([bruggengliding@aol.com](mailto:bruggengliding@aol.com)). Names and £10 deposit please. Cheques to be made payable to SIF RAF Brüggen (no Postal Orders, thanks). Lastly, our news: Silver height and duration for Graham French, Silver distance and, hence, full Silver for Sandra Gillmeister and solos for John Schollens and Dave Owen.

Graham French

### Rattlesden (Rattlesden)

OUR SITE improvement programme continues apace, with the second phase of our runway resurfacing scheduled to take place this spring. In between winter circuits many members have put in a lot of time redecorating the vital facilities of the clubhouse. After the appalling season last year we have finally been forced to bring out our club savant, Grenville Croll, to placate the rain gods. He tells me we are now assured of 500km days every weekend. You heard it here first!

Pat Gold

### Scottish Gliding Centre (Portmoak)

AT THE club's Christmas dinner awards were presented to Kevin Hook, Steve Nutley, John Galloway, John Williams, Z Goudie, Tony Brown, George Turnbull, Andrew Bates, and Neil Irving. Awards for service to the club were presented to Joe Fisher and Chris Robinson. We have not had as much flying as we would have wished this winter, but we are well prepared for when



Nene Valley GC's prizegiving with, from left, chairman Martin Reynolds, Stewart Papworth, Barry Meech (with the Marshal Papworth Trophy) and CFI John Young

the weather improves: Chris Robinson has most efficiently organised Cs of A for our fleet, and our winch has come back from a service with a significant performance gain. Congratulations to Peter Clayton on his Bronze, Cross-country Endorsement, and Silver height, and to Tim Sands for completing Bronze. Colin Hamilton, Eoin MacDonald, and Mike Ward are organising a Tuesday evening course for ab initios to run from the end of February over the summer.

Neil Irving

### Shalbourne Soaring Society (Rivar Hill)

THE NEW committee is planning how to develop the club next season. This includes reviewing how trial lessons fit in with the rest of the flying, looking again at the duty system and increasing midweek evening flying. At the club dinner, thanks went to outgoing chair Steve Ottner, awarded Club Member of the Year for all his sterling work. Instructor of the Year went to Martin Hoskins (but not for his jokes). Keith Lovesey, who runs the winches on Kryptonite, is Retired Member of the Year. Geoff and Annette Purcell won the Dave Maleham cup for the pilots who have made most notable progress. Liz Sparrow (our CFI) cleaned up the club ladder and fastest cross-country awards. Pete Ballard, who came to learn to fly in his school holidays, was awarded the Bernie Shackell trophy for taking the CFI round a 60km triangle before he could fly solo. Carol Pike steered his way through the crowds to accept his "You landed where?" award. For entertaining the locals by doing what comes naturally after a seven-hour flight, I was given the Golden Spigot Award. A warm welcome to Reading University Gliding Society (RUCGS), who we hope will enjoy their flying with us.

Kay Draper

### Shenington (Shenington)

TIM PARKER has completed his Bronze and Cross-country Endorsement, while we have two new tug pilots in Gary Brightman and Roger Andrews. We also have a new CFI, Phil Brennan, and our thanks go to Rowan Griffin, who has just stepped down. Our AGM is on March 17 and we hope to welcome new blood to the committee. We've had a Christmas party and an annual dinner, where prizes were awarded to Roger Andrews, Jonathan Sherman, Roger Tyrrell, John 'Dodger' Hamley, Kath and Paul Barnes, Daryl Burton and Bob Playle for various assorted achievements. We start intensive midweek courses in March (so if you need a refresher after all this rain, do give us a call), and have two fly-in weekends already organised for summer, plus a BGA soaring course. Despite the recent drenchings, we've tried to stay airborne – sadly little in the way of ridge flying but we live in hope and stay current. Do visit, or see [www.gliding-club.co.uk](http://www.gliding-club.co.uk)

Tess Whiting

### Shropshire Soaring Group (Sleap)

VIC CARR has discovered the secret of thermalling in December – go to South Africa. As well as a few flights in an ASW 20 he also flew P2 in an ASH 25 around a



Northumbria's "Magnificent Seven" K-7 syndicate (from left): Len Dent, Denis Driver, Ron Davis and Ken Murphy. Denis has been in this syndicate 35 years – is this a record? photograph taken by Hugh Baird



# Club news

➤ 500km route. What impressed him most was the performance of a new Czech microlight, which with a Rotax 912 engine did a Herculean task of towing. Is it time to pension off our Chipmunk? Back at Sleaf we have flown most weeks with generally weak wave but Alistair Gilson managed 8,500ft after most of us had settled for toboggan rides. Our president, Arthur Jones was the first to take a biennial check ride – not had at 83. John Catmur has joined the Twin Astir syndicate as, sadly, Barry Dixon-Bate bows out. Visitors will find that our clubroom has been transformed, with a good range of hot food available all week.

Keith Field

## Southdown (Parham)

THE SOUTHDOWN sub-aqua and occasional gliding club has just survived the wettest winter on record. Our Christmas dinner provided an opportunity to honour the season's high flyers. These included Dick Dixon (York Cup and Sky Sailing Trophy, for 647km); Jim Tucker (Lawford Trophy, for 16,500ft at Portmoak); Stuart Ross (Mount Harry – South Harting Speed Run); Ian Ashdown and Jim Heath (Two-Seater Award); and Dick Thirkhill (Merritt Shield, for greatest distance flown in a wooden glider – his K-6). We have to record the loss of Derek Payne, a stalwart member of the maintenance squad, who died suddenly of natural causes. Near Benalla, Australia, Sue Hill (one of the most capable and intelligent of pilots) was killed in a glider accident.

Peter Holloway

## South London Gliding Centre (Kenley)

THE UNSEASONABLE wet weather reduced activities over the past few months but our winter maintenance programme is, in consequence, ahead of schedule. And with our Tarmac runways, we have at least been able to start to fly whenever the rain stopped. As for 2001, we hope, within a few weeks, to see our old but pristine fleet supplemented by a motorglider. With accelerated training, we hope to lose fewer members and maybe



Another CB SIFT CB E – the Campaign By Sensible Individuals for Trailer Colourfulness. By 'Eck. The design and photo of this Janus trailer are by Jo Fox and the words from Chris Fox of the Shropshire Soaring Group

see a few old ones come back. Watch this space.

Peter Bolton

## Staffordshire (Seighford)

OUR THANKS go to Alice May for running the annual dinner in early February, which attracted more than 80 people. We thanked Roy and Pauline Goodwin for their work as treasurers by making them honorary life members. The Chairman's Trophy went to Lee Featherstone (and Toby) for his efforts as secretary, while the Vice-Chairman's Award went to Neville Cooper for building a new club entrance. John McLaughlin won the Club Ladder Trophy; Jeff Heard, the Ken Sherif Trophy (for his splendid 300km in a K-6 from Bicester); Sally Cooper, the Best *ab initio* Trophy and Tankard (for soloing on her 16th birthday); Sally Longstaff, the John Burke Plate (for her efforts as 100 Club treasurer); Brian Pearson, the Early Bird Trophy (first 100km of the year); Derek Heaton, the CFI's Cup (for his efforts in the Club Ladder); I got the Distance Boomerang and Fledgling Trophy for my first cross-country; and Graham Burton

took the Height Boomerang. Roy Goodwin secured the Burnt-out Kettle (he let the sheep out while we were still flying!) but the Grotty Potty came to me for doing all three Silver legs in one flight – with the barograph upside-down. Thanks go to Graham Burton for keeping the ground equipment in good order. We have been able to winch but the tug is feeling neglected due to a very wet aerotow strip. Thanks also to those involved in instructor training.

Paul (Barney) Crump

## Surrey & Hants (Lasham)

THE CLUB has its very own World Champion! Our very warmest congratulations to committee member Pete Masson on becoming Club Class World Champion. Peter is an inspiration to the rest of us, who are all very proud of his achievements. Together with his brother, our chairman David, Peter plays an active part in the club and has helped other hopefuls who want to follow in his footsteps. Our new ASW 19, SH5, has had its first club outing with Colin Hunt and a further ASW19 has been purchased. The take-up on unlimited deals is even more popular. These offer inclusive membership with insurance waiver, five days hire (often used for a course, competition, or expedition), and unlimited flying with no soaring fees. This encourages more flying and provides some certain club income. Cs of A are going to plan and we hope the fleet will be done by March ready for the season – if it would just stop raining!

John Simmonds

## The Soaring Centre (Husbands Bosworth)

CONGRATULATIONS to Ron Davidson, who broke the UK out-and-return distance record and the UK free out-and-return distance record whilst flying in Australia over the winter, with just over 750km. The club ran another successful soaring trip to The Long Mynd in February. We will hold our start-of-season mini-task weekend over Easter, with the annual Tug Pilots' Party on Saturday night (April 14). The winter hardstanding for the winch is finished – thanks to everyone who helped! We have sold our motorglider and are looking for a replacement. Flying courses start on April 17. The AGM will be held in the clubhouse on April 28.

Siobhan Hindley

## Trent Valley (Kirton Lindsey)

THANKS to the generosity of Joe Wheeler we have an excellent Janus to fly: funny how fast the back seat of a K-13 loses its appeal. Ashley Grant has gone solo and our winter lecture programme is under way. An aerobatics training weekend has been arranged for March. Simon Grant has been busy sawing as opposed to soaring: he's building a new trailer.

John Kitchen

## Vale of White Horse (Sandhill Farm)

WINTER flying has been disrupted by the wet weather, although our site has remained dry enough, just, to be



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able to keep flying when the immediate weather permits. With spring, summer and, we hope, good flying conditions in mind we plan to open the airfield on some weekdays, particularly for Ed's Week, which has become something of an institution. This is planned for July 16-20, and we would be very pleased to have other glider pilots drop in on us that week or, for that matter, at any other time when we are flying.

**Graham Turner**

## Vectis (Bembridge)

WET WEATHER has once again ruled out any chance of flying after what seemed like a reasonable start to the year, with a few days in January being flyable. The well-soaked airfield made us take refuge in the hangar, where we prepared tug and gliders for their annual inspections. We hope to complete them by the time the airfield has dried out enough for the gliders to fly again.

**Peter Seago**

## Vintage Glider Club

INTERNATIONAL news, to start with. In Germany, two Kranich 2s, a Reiher 3 and a Musterle have had their first flights. In Switzerland, a restored Kranich 2 has also flown. New builds of two Hutter H28-2s, a Minimoa 36 and two more Reiher 3s are believed to be in progress. In Denmark, an original Mu 13D (OY-MUX) is being rebuilt. In Holland, another Minimoa 36 is being new built. In France, the ultra-modern Musée de l'Air Regionale has been set up at the new airfield of Angers Marce. In Estonia, Peep Lauk is working on a flying wing based on Horten designs, with a span of 15m and a hoped-for max L/D of more than 1:50! At Lasham, a Grunau Baby 2b, a K-4, a prototype Sky and an EoN Olympia 465 are being worked on; at Dunstable, Peter Underwood is progressing with Minimoa BGA 1639, Laurie Woodage with his Scud 3; at Booker, work proceeds on a Kite 2 and Jaskolka.

**Chris Wills**

## Welland (Lyveden)

THE SLABBING of the hangar floor has continued, as has the K-8 refurbishment. Some flying has been enjoyed in spite of the soggy conditions at Lyveden, thanks to the owners of the nearby hard runway at Spanhoe from where aerotowing has taken place.

**Jane Cooper**

## Wolds (Pocklington)

WITH much intimidation by Colin (Mr Motivator) Wiles, we are throwing down the cross-country gauntlet this year in the Inter-club League. With Tim Milner providing

expert training and Jon Smith cloud flying experience, we expect there to be little competition (according to our sponsors). Bronze lectures are to commence soon, and another cohort will be undertaking their RT Licence training. The annual trip to Portmoak is quickly approaching, which signals the start of the soaring season. All our thanks go to Bob Fox, who leaves his role as chair due to other commitments, whilst Martin Fryer takes the helm during what promises to be, according to old weatherman Alan McWhirter, a stonking summer.

**Ged McCann**

## Wrekin (Cosford)

A BIG thank you to Cranwell CFI and members for their hospitality to us during December and January when our field was waterlogged. We were happy to see the replacement Chipmunk arrive in January to give us aerotow facilities again. Refurbishing the motorglider continues together with Cs of A and fettling of the club fleet. Congratulations to Brian MacKenzie on his 500km flight during the Australian expedition.

**Sheila Russon**

## Wyvern (Upavon)

THE LAST couple of months have been fairly quiet at Upavon. Bruce Hudson's guitar playing entertained the small gathering over the New Year weekend. The strong wind was for once straight down the strip and most pilots got good 2,000ft winch launches. By the time this is read, the club fleet should all be through C of A. We are having double-glazed windows and new doors fitted to the clubhouse which should make it more hospitable, particularly at this time of year. Ken Marsden, with a small band of willing assistants, is building larger, safer and more comfortable cabs for both Tust winches in time for the first ab initio course in March.

**Gavin Deane**

## York Gliding Centre (Rufforth)

THE CLUB now boasts an excellent newly-refurbished launchpoint control vehicle, as well as a new fire vehicle. Sherburn Aero Club has continued to utilise our hard runways during the current era of wet weather, whilst their own runways are waterlogged. The club received some welcome local publicity when members laid a wreath at Garrowby Hill to commemorate the loss of a Halifax bomber crew who lost their lives on a flight from Rufforth in bad weather in wartime. We are pleased to report that Dave Dickinson went solo on the club's fixed-price-to-solo scheme recently.

**Mike Cohler**

## Gwilym Griffiths (1931-2001) - Dartmoor

IT IS WITH great sadness that I report the death in February of friend and club member Gwilym Griffiths. Gwilym, a long-term member of Dartmoor Gliding Society, spent the best part of his working life as a designer for British Aerospace. He had a great knowledge of aeronautical design theory, mostly concerned with supersonic flight in composite materials. Despite his hi-tech background, he could never be persuaded to depart from his Oly 2a, which he kept as original as possible and flew whenever the weather allowed. This unassuming, affable man will be missed by all at Dartmoor.

**Mark Arnold**



## Frank Hunt (1928-2000) - Newark & Notts, Wolds

ONE OF our longer-standing members, Frank Hunt, passed away in October after a short illness. Frank (left) worked as an engineer for Rolls-Royce before setting

up in business as a motor engineer. His passion for gliding intensified upon his retirement and he enjoyed nothing better than visiting other clubs. He was a member of Wolds GC where he and Dorothy spent many happy times. Until his illness last year, Frank never missed the annual two-seater competition. He was treasurer for Newark & Notts GC for many years, generously giving up his time to maintain equipment, in particular the winch and retrieve truck. Often members would call at the club mid-week and the sound of Frank doing repairs would be heard from the back of the hangar. An ambassador for the sport, he will be sadly missed by us all.

**John Maddison**

## Alan Yates (1913-2001) - Cranfield, Imperial College, London

BEFORE World War Two, Alan Yates lectured at Imperial College on hydraulics, and was secretary to ICGC in 1939, having soloed on a Dagling in 1938. When war broke out, he was moved to the Ministry of Aircraft Production, and kept ICGC alive by indulging in extensive correspondence with members. I met him at Boscombe Down in 1945 where, hearing that the ministry was about to send me to IC, said: "lolly good place - it's got a gliding club!" After the war, he flew firstly at Cranfield, doing his Silver distance in 1948. He went on to become Principal of Bath Technical College (now the University of Bath). Alan chaired the BGA Technical Committee from 1979-1984 and was an OSTIV board member. At London GC in the 1960s and 1970s, his was an independent approach to gliding. Once, having landed out near Stoke on Trent during a flight to spot a canal lock that interested him, he caught buses and trains back to Dunstable before driving to retrieve the glider by himself. He decided to stop gliding in his 70s, after 50 years in the sport. His children, Graham, Martin and Dilys, are glider pilots. Alan will be remembered for his sound judgment and for being a most courteous, civilised and engaging friend.

**Frank Irving**



## BGA Badges

Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
<b>DIAMOND BADGE</b>		
593 John Bradbury	PNGC (Darling Downs)	11/12/00
594 Roger Davies	Bicester (D'ing Downs)	27/11/00
595 Christopher Waller	Chilterns (D'ing Downs)	30/11/00
596 Robert Bottomley	Lasham (Mafeking)	12/1/01
<b>Diamond Distance</b>		
1-646 Ian Godfrey	Lasham (Fuertamienas)	28/7/00
1-647 Shelly Dawson	Bannardown	18/7/00
1-648 John Bradbury	PNGC (Darling Downs)	5/12/00
1-649 Roger Davies	Bicester (D'ing Downs)	27/11/00
1-850 Christopher Waller	Chilterns (D'ing Downs)	30/11/00
1-851 Robert Bottomley	Lasham (Mafeking)	12/1/01
<b>Diamond goal</b>		
2-2775 Bill Inglis	Bidford	17/7/00
2-2776 Robert Johnson	Lasham (Mafeking)	2/12/00
2-2777 John Bradbury	PNGC (Darling Downs)	11/12/00
2-2778 Jerry Pack	Shaibourne	3/9/00
<b>Diamond height</b>		
3-1526 Peter Masson	Lasham (Omarama)	20/12/00
<b>GOLD BADGE</b>		
2157 Simon Waddell	Booker (in France)	7/1/1988
5218 Roger Partington	Borders	10/12/00
2158 Robert Johnson	Lasham (Mafeking)	2/12/00

2160 Mark Parker	Cotswold	20/8/00
2161 Peter Masson	Lasham (Omarama)	20/12/00
<b>Gold distance</b>		
Simon Waddell	Booker (in France)	7/1/1988
Bill Inglis	Bidford	17/7/00
Ian Gutsell	Burn (Gransden)	22/8/00
Robert Johnson	Lasham (Mafeking)	2/12/00
Jerry Pack	Shaibourne	3/9/00
<b>Gold height</b>		
Roger Partington	Borders	10/12/00
Mark Parker	Cotswold	20/8/00
Peter Masson	Lasham (Omarama)	20/12/00
Andrew Anderson	Highland	1/10/00
<b>SILVER BADGE</b>		
10858 Charles Cooper	Wyvern	24/12/1999
10859 Roger Wilson	Bidford	11/8/00
10860 Brian Pratt	The Soaring Centre	18/7/00
10861 Gary Wardle	Dukeries	18/10/00
10862 Mark Arnold	Dartmoor	27/11/00
10863 Stephen Westlake	Devon & Somerset	30/7/00
<b>UK CROSS-COUNTRY DIPLOMA</b>		
Pt 1 Stephen Dry	Portsmouth Naval	30/8/00
Pt 2 Gordon Bowes	Trent Valley	20/8/00
Pt 1 Richard Brickwood	Cambridge	10/9/00
<b>AEROBATICS BADGES</b>		
Graham Saw	Intermediate Unknown	10/9/00



## Time to think before you fly

**A**FTER a long UK winter, most glider pilots are a little rusty and all of us are keen to get stuck into some decent flying. But this unavoidable situation leads many pilots to get airborne unprepared for what faces them.

Let's face it: most accidents happen because the pilot clutching the stick makes the wrong decision at a critical, and unexpected, point in flight. So taking into consideration your own limits, being aware of the options and thinking "what if...?" before dragging your glider to the launch-point should help get you focused. You may think twice about getting airborne (not a bad thing!), but the key point is that you will have assessed the risks and thought about your ability to cope when things go wrong. Applying the same mental process before changing the plan during any flight will help you stay out of trouble.

So, what kind of problems are we talking about?

### **Taking off with a control disconnected**

Rushing, distraction, unfamiliarity or even over-familiarity make it quite easy to get it wrong when rigging. The best insurance is to insist on a post-rig independent check followed by positive control checks. Nobody is perfect.

### **Failure to cope with a launch problem**

A poorly-executed winch launch failure

recovery can easily lead to a spin departure – all it takes is a rushed turn before the glider has accelerated to a safe recovery speed. All pilots should undergo periodic launch failure training and further spin training to help ensure that the problems are recognised and that their flying skills are up to speed. Why not get a couple of dual flights before the weather gets good? Treat them as a learning experience and not a test – chances are you'll enjoy it!

### **High and cramped circuit into a field**

The circuit judgment picture to a field will, at first, generally look different from the one at your own airfield – partly because the field is a fraction of the size. Getting into a motorglider with a suitable instructor, selecting a couple of fields and having a go at flying circuits around your chosen crop will satisfy you that your judgment is still OK – or, more usefully, remind you about the pitfalls that catch out pilots every year. What it may not do, however, is convince you of the need to pick a field in good time: half the substantial field landing accidents in 2000 were caused by late selection.

### **Currency on type**

If you haven't flown much for a few months, it is essential to spend some time flying locally and therefore getting a few take-offs and landings under your belt

before racing off cross-country. Practising lots of stalling and spin departure recoveries will help get you in the groove and provide some conditioned insurance for later in the year. For those low-hours pilots (and out-of-practice old lags) lucky enough to have access to exotic but slightly complex gliders, getting some flying time in a less complex glider may be an idea.

Carving up thermals as you relearn how to soar while fumbling for flap lever, GPS or palm top will not endear you to others or contribute to collision avoidance.

### **Collision avoidance**

Seven glider pilots were involved in mid-air collisions last year. How many times have you climbed in the first few, weak thermals of the year and found yourself having to work a bit harder than you expected? That type of preoccupation (and competitive spirit?) coupled with a bit of variometer fixation can be a major problem. Remember that effective lookout, not just occasionally glancing over your shoulder, is the best way of avoiding a mid-air collision.

The accident reports from a number of mid-air collisions in the circuit have highlighted the FACT that lots of glider pilots become preoccupied with looking at the landing area (judging height, distance and angle) and fail to maintain an effective lookout. Gliders in circuit have collided

## Salutary Soaring: avoiding the nuclear option

**D**URING the Cold War, UK strategy included the ability to launch aircraft in Germany to strike at a Soviet invasion with tactical nuclear weapons.

Where there are RAF aircraft there are usually glider pilots, so in the mid 1980s we flew 6,500 trouble-free winch launches a year from a gliding strip about 200m from the Special Weapons storage area at a certain airfield. Our grass strip, alongside the single east-west concrete runway, was surrounded by hardened aircraft shelters and assorted buildings in mature woodland. On one run, the base leg was flown round the Quick Reaction Alert compound and its blast-proof concrete shelters, where more than one Tornado (guarded by well-armed, bored police) was always ready to head east with a 'special' bomb load. About 45km south was a similar military airfield, also with a gliding club.

Understandably, a healthy competitive spirit existed between the two clubs, spurred on by a trophy claimed by flying cross-country to the other site, picking up the trophy and soaring home. Great fun!

I was a shiny new three Diamonds pilot who flew my own glider every weekend,

and who felt very good about my abilities. Being one of the club's few experienced pilots, there wasn't the opportunity to chat with guys who really knew what life was about. I thought I was the bee's knees...

On yet another wonderful, continental summer's afternoon, somebody from the other club landed, claimed the trophy, took a winch launch and disappeared off into the distance. "No problem," I announced to the crowd of wide-eyed K-8 pilots at the launchpoint, "once the Cirrus lands, I'll jump in and get our trophy back!" Shortly afterwards, I launched across a stiffening southerly breeze (we never could launch into wind), climbed in good lift and zoomed south to restore our glory.

With trophy stowed on parcel shelf, I got away from the other site after two launches and, helped by a strong breeze, drifted north. A check of the glide calc confirmed I had the height to get home plus a little bit. Off I went. But what about all those trees and buildings? I was only 23 and had even more to learn than I have now...

Although the field was well hidden (even the runway was painted green), keeping the road on your left and looking for the local

town church always kept us straight. Feeling even more confident, I piled on the speed, smoked over trees and buildings through the turbulence and dropped down on to the clear ground towards the launchpoint. "Great, lots of people to impress," I must have thought as I swept across the launchpoint caravan at 10ft with lots of adoring (?) eyes looking up at me. All I had to do was pull up and drop the gear ready to sharp turn right...

Next thing I knew, I was pitching down, rolling and yawing very alarmingly to the right, and staring vertically at the concrete in the middle of that Quick Reaction Alert compound. After completing about 180° of a spin departure, my conditioned reaction sorted it out and somehow – luckily – the gliding strip vaguely lined itself up in front of me. A hurried landing was followed by a lay down in the dust, a comment from the CFI ("Hmmm, that was impressive!") and a sheepish couple of beers in the bar.

So why did I nearly kill myself? I was over-confident – all the signs were there – but there wasn't anyone around either experienced enough to notice or bothered enough to do something about it. I was



with other circling gliders, or with aircraft turning finals in the same bit of sky or with aircraft climbing or descending.

A European study into mid-air collisions has identified electronic equipment, such as GPS, as a significant airborne distraction. Using this (essential?) kit sensibly can help reduce the time spent looking down. For example, if you need to make navigation calculations or seek information, do not attempt to use the keyboards or touch screens in higher collision risk flight modes, eg, flying in or near thermals – leave it until you are in the glide and well clear of cloudbase. Pre-flight planning should, of course, include checking the intended task and programming it in to your kit as a route – let the GPS do the work. As well as maintaining lookout, your cloud spotting skills may improve!

### Supervision

An awful lot of potential problems can be avoided with proactive supervision – who, if anyone, is keeping a beady eye on your club launchpoint during club flying? Senior pilots can really help by monitoring who is getting into what cockpit and when. A few words of guidance from an experienced pilot are generally accepted in the manner in which they are intended and can help enormously. Most pilots are sensible; no-one goes gliding for the day intending to crash – avoiding problems through discreet and considered advice prior to launch has to be a better option than having to call an ambulance after the event.

Pete Stratten

also showing off – a male trait, whether young or old. And I failed to think about that wind gradient: trees, buildings and a 20kt wind should not be treated lightly.

It is dangerous to pull up through a significant wind gradient on the tail then accelerate back down into it. The result is a surprisingly limited height gain and an equally surprising reduction in airspeed. Include a bit of turbulence, some punchy flying close to the ground and the chances are that the whole thing will end in tears. If you need more detail, ask your CFI.

So why didn't I kill myself? Well, we regularly stalled and spinned any glider we could. In the winter, my partner and I used to take turns to provoke our Std Cirrus to see how quickly we could sort it out. So we knew the glider really well. When it all went wrong, I knew immediately what was going on. My response was conditioned by lots of recent practice in stalling and spinning on type, not my pre-solo training. So the stick went centrally forward, careful use of rudder stopped the yaw and the glider was smoothly flown into a recovery – its direction more luck than judgment.

And no, the police in the compound never saw a thing. I guess airborne attacks by out-of-control gliders were not on the list of things to watch out for. There were lessons for everyone in this story.

## Accident/incident summaries

by Dave Wright

AIRCRAFT Ref	Type	BGA No	Damage	DATE Time	Place	PILOT(S) Age	Injury	P1 Hours
163	Pegase	3710	Minor	29-Jul-00 1522	Parham	73	None	1907
While landing after a cross-country flight the pilot changed his mind on his landing line. After a poor final approach to the revised landing area he misjudged the clearance of a parked glider and hit its wingtip.								
164	DG 300	3519	Minor	18-Jul-00 1310	Petworth	75	None	34
The pilot was attempting a 100km cross-country flight in a sea breeze front along the line of hills. Crossing a gap, he encountered sink and so moved to fly away from the hills. He just made the edge of the hills but as there were only poor fields ahead he landed on the hilltop in a field of standing crop. The glider groundlooped on landing.								
165	K-21 1210		Substantial Minor	16-Sep-00	Pocklington	48	Minor	270 0
While on a trial lesson flight the instructor set up a sideslip final approach with airbrake. After coming out of the sideslip he was unable to fully round out and the glider landed very heavily. Both pilots suffered back injuries.								
1	Astir	2226	Minor	26-Oct-00 1350	Dunstable	72	None	815
The pilot made an approach through gusty conditions and landed near the bottom of a dip in the airfield. This was known to cause local wind speed variations greater than those on the rest of the airfield. During the ground run the pilot was unable to stop the glider groundlooping violently as a wing dropped and caught in the grass.								
3	LAK 17A	—	Minor	03-Oct-00	Milfield	64	None	286
The pilot encountered severe turbulence on the approach and mistakenly used the flap lever instead of the airbrakes. During the landing the glider ground-looped and sustained minor damage.								
4	Std Cirrus	1966	Minor	24-Oct-00	Loch Kinead	54	None	420
While on a wave flight the glider was passing under a cloud at 90kts when it hit turbulence. There was a loud bang when the "hand-held" radio smashed the canopy and was lost.								
5	Kestrel 19	1850	Minor	01-Oct-00 1532	Halesland	50	None	221
The pilot took two short flights in the K-18 before flying his Kestrel for the first time in three months. These went well so he winch launched the Kestrel. During the launch the canopy flew off but fortunately missed the tail. He continued the launch to a safe height before making a normal landing. The pilot is having a modified catch fitted.								
6	Kestrel 19	1940	Minor	23-Oct-00 1532	Aboyne	51	None	385
After a short flight the pilot flew a normal circuit, approach and landing. However, during the landing roll a swing developed, probably due to a crosswind gust, and the left wing dropped onto the ground causing a groundloop. The glider slid sideways on the mainwheel and left wing, damaging the wingtip and canopy.								

## Better forms for incident and accident reports

ONE OF the Safety Committee's tasks involves assessing your accident and incident reports to provide useful information to various BGA groups to make gliding safer. The new "accident or incident" form is a simple, two-page document that asks for essential facts to enable us to understand what happened and to help prevent it happening again. It is not the intention to apportion any blame.

**Why must accidents and incidents be reported?** Legally, all substantial glider accidents (fatal/serious injury or substantial damage) plus accidents involving CAA-registered (powered) aircraft, including motorgliders, **MUST** be reported through the AAIB. Additionally, BGA *Laws & Rules* requires reporting of all accidents to BGA-registered gliders at home or abroad. We encourage reporting of gliding incidents and of incidents to tugs and motorgliders.

**Who should report?** P1 is legally required to report an accident or, failing that, the owner or operator. Legally, if an accident occurs on an airfield the airfield owner should report it, too! This is commonly interpreted to mean that the CFI of a gliding site should ensure that all accidents there are reported.

**What information should be given?** Full details are needed of the glider and pilot(s) involved; weather (where relevant) and how the situation occurred. In some cases, information requested on the form may be irrelevant (like landing/take-off direction when the report involves a cross-country!). Use your common sense when filling it in, omit difficult-to-source, non-relevant information if it will delay the report.

**Why report actions taken?** The action you or your club have taken to prevent it happening again can help others in the same situation. This section is often completed by the CFI or safety officer.

**Have reports been of use?** Actions resulting from the investigation of reports include: work on energy-absorbing cushions, under-carriage design improvements, ergonomic recommendations on cockpit layout and instrument use, changes in instructional technique and more generally aware pilots.

If you ever have to fill in a form, after an incident that you were relieved didn't develop into anything worse or, sadly, after one that did, please make sure it is the latest version (reference includes **JNM** at the bottom) and give as much relevant information as needed.

Jonathan Mills



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# Classifieds

Please send the text of your advert, and your payment, to Debbie Carr at the BGA office (not to the editor).

Please remember that, if you are emailing text, your advert may not appear unless we have received payment by the deadline

The deadline for classifieds to be included in the June-July issue of S&G is **May 4** after which any adverts received will be published in the following issue.

Text: 80p/word, minimum twenty words (£16).  
Black and white photographs: £6 extra  
Box number: £3 extra. All prices include VAT.

## For Sale

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## Can you help?

Do you have copies of *The Sailplane and Glider* (1930-55), *Gliding* (1950-5) or *S&G* (1955-60), which you would be happy to:

- donate to the BGA to complete the editor's archive (the BGA archive is, rightly, kept at Leicester but the editor works from home) and/or
- sell to me for my own personal archive?

If you do have issues you no longer need, please let me know (contact details, page 3). I would like to thank (in alphabetical order): Roger Barrett, Gillian Bryce-Smith, David Carrow, Mike Evans, Ted Holmes and Wally Kahn for their kind donations of post-1950 and (from Wally) some pre-1950 issues.

*Helen Evans, Editor, S&G*

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

**Barry Rolfe**  
Promoter

To: Barry Rolfe, British Gliding Association, Kimberley House, Vaughan Way, Leicester LE1 4SE

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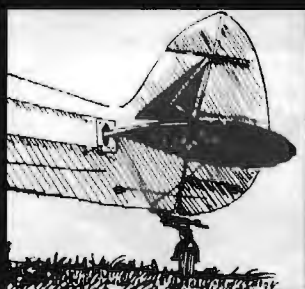
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Tost, Gadringer,  
Winter)

## OXYGEN EQUIPMENT

(including cannula masks and  
lightweight kevlar bottles)

## COBRA TRAILERS

(including spares)

For more information contact:

**SOUTHERN SAILPLANES**

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