

# Sailplane & Gliding




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Feb-March 2009  
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Taken near Bicester on 6 December (one of the nice weekends we had this winter), Derren Francis is flying in formation with a Supercub. See his story on buying a new Ventus-2cxa on p24. (Damien Dyer)

# Sailplane & Gliding

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In the second part of his feature **Gavin Wills** shares more observations on complex wave patterns and shapes

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■ AS YOU may be aware, the final date for responses to NPA 17 has been extended again to 28 February 2009 in order that respondees can align their responses with related NPAs, *writes Chris Gibson*. The BGA response to NPA 17 is now available for your information on the BGA website at [www.glidering.co.uk/bgainfo/npp1/futurelicensing.htm](http://www.glidering.co.uk/bgainfo/npp1/futurelicensing.htm) and, whilst this may be further refined as we continue to work with European colleagues, there is unlikely to be significant change. We would encourage you to review the BGA response and respond in your own words as you see appropriate. Your response can be submitted using the EASA online CRT tool or by email. The timescales for implementation are unchanged and this legislation will be effective from April 2012. As we move into the new year our focus is moving from the NPA response to developing our transition plans, and working with the CAA, to ensure the process is carried out in an effective and timely fashion.

■ A LECTURE on recent advances in Sailplane Aerodynamics is being hosted by the Royal Aeronautical Society. The lecture will be given by Loek Boermans, president of OSTIV and associate professor of Aerodynamics at Delft University, at 6pm on 17 February in the RAeS headquarters at 10 Hamilton Place, London W1. There is no charge, but you are asked to let the organisers know if you plan to attend. More details can be found at: [www.raes.org.uk/conference/indexlect.html](http://www.raes.org.uk/conference/indexlect.html). On 26 May, Yves Rossy is giving a lecture *The Dream Of Flying: Jet-Wing Across the Channel* at the same venue.

■ HIS Royal Highness The Earl of Wessex has agreed to become President of CCPR when The Duke of Edinburgh steps down after 58 years. The Earl of Wessex will take over after CCPR's Annual General Meeting in July 2009. CCPR is the umbrella organisation for 280 national governing and representative bodies of sport and recreation in the UK, which speaks and acts to promote, protect and develop the interests of sport and physical recreation at all levels.

■ THE latest edition of GASIL, the CAA's General Aviation Safety publication, can be downloaded from [www.caa.co.uk/docs/33/srg\\_gasil4of2008.pdf](http://www.caa.co.uk/docs/33/srg_gasil4of2008.pdf). A listing of upcoming CAA General Aviation Safety Evenings is included in this edition.

■ SCHOOLCHILDREN in Ranchi, India, are being offered free glider flights as an incentive to stay on at school. A 2008 state government survey found 40 per cent of students studying in the east Indian state's government schools drop out before they are 15. About 720 state school students aged between 8 and 16 will win a flight in a glider provided by the state's Civil Aviation Department. And if they don't fancy gliding, they can opt for the alternative of a free haircut or birthday bash!

■ YOU can apply online for the 2009 nationals at [www.glidering.co.uk/bgainfo/competitions/news.htm](http://www.glidering.co.uk/bgainfo/competitions/news.htm). The provisional rankings list, which is used to prioritise places for the championships, is available at [www.glidering.co.uk/bgainfo/competitions/ratings.htm](http://www.glidering.co.uk/bgainfo/competitions/ratings.htm)

# New spin on training

IN mid-November 2008, BGA National Coach Mike Fox and Senior Regional Examiner Simon Adlard met up with CFI of the Air Cadets Central Gliding School, Chris Heames, at RAF Syerston.

The purpose of the visit was to review some of the BGA instructing exercises. Always on the lookout to enhance safety, Mike and Simon (Dave Bullock missing the event due to a crash on the M1) had been tasked by the BGA Instructors Sub Committee to delve into some of the Air Cadet training methods to see if sport gliding can learn any lessons from them.

Chris gave detailed briefings and then Mike

and Simon had the chance to fly a practical demonstration by Chris in the Air Cadets' modified Viking. Locally called 'The Spinner', this G103 has been modified with 'whiskers' to make the aircraft spin more readily.

Chris is also the RAFGSA representative as a senior regional examiner on the BGA Instructors Sub Committee, as well as an accomplished competition pilot and ex-military and current civilian jet and glider airshow pilot.

Mike and Simon came away from the day with some interesting ideas, especially regarding training structure, and alternative ideas on stalling and spinning.



Simon Adlard (back) and Chris Heames in 'The Spinner' – the Air Cadets' Viking, which has been modified with 'whiskers' to make the aircraft spin more readily (Mike Fox)

## Nationals, regionals and other dates

### BGA Conference and AGM:

Please make a note that the BGA Conference and AGM will be held on **Saturday 7 March 2009** at the Hellidon Lakes Hotel, Daventry. For more information see the advert on p9.

### BGA-rated and international competitions:

Overseas Championships	Ocana	18-29/5/09
World Air Games	Torino	7-13/6/09
Bidford Regionals	Bidford	20-28/6/09
Junior World Champ	Finland	21/6-5/7/09
European Champ (flapped)	Slovakia	27/6-11/7/09
Competition Enterprise (not rated)	Long Mynd	4-12/7/09
Shenington Regionals	Edgehill	4-12/7/09
Booker Regionals	Booker	11-19/7/09
Club Class Nationals	Pocklington	11-19/7/09
European Champ (unflapped)	Lithuania	25/7-8/8/09
Bicester Regionals	Bicester	18-26/7/09
Women's World Champ	Hungary	25/7-8/8/09
18-Metre Nationals	Hus Bos	25/7-2/8/09
Dunstable Regionals	Dunstable	25/7-2/8/09
Northern Regionals	Sutton Bank	1-9/8/09
Inter-Services	Keevil	1-9/8/09

Standard Class Nationals	Nympsfield	8-16/8/09
Tibenham Regionals	Tibenham	8-16/8/09
20-Metre 2-Seater Champ	Tibenham	8-16/8/09
Open Class Nationals	Lasham	8-16/8/09
Lasham Regionals	Lasham	8-16/8/09
Midiand Regionals	Hus Bos	8-16/8/09
15m-Metre Nationals	Aston Down	22-30/8/09
Junior Championships	Dunstable	22-30/8/09
Gransden Regionals	Gransden	22-30/8/09
2-Seater Comp (not rated)	Pocklington	23-30/8/09

### 2009 glider aerobatic contests:

Dan Smith Memorial (K21)	Dunstable	28-29/3/09
Glider Aerobatic Nationals	Saltby	11-14/6/09
Saltby Open	Saltby	11-13/9/09
Power vs Glider	Wickenby	2-4/10/09

### Other notable dates:

Aerobatic Judging School (all disciplines), Wellesbourne	
Airfield 20-21/3/09	
World Aerobatic Championships (power), Silverstone, 20-30/8/09	





■ THE first BGA Marketing Grant has been made to Bath, Wilts & N Dorset GC. The grant, for £290, is to assist with public gliding displays within final glide of the Park, with the aim of raising profile and increasing membership.

BGA Communications Officer Keith Auchterlonie is pictured (centre, left) making a presentation to Bath, Wilts & N Dorset's

Chairman Mark Hawkins and other members of the club.

The scheme offers financial assistance to clubs planning specific projects with the objective of increasing membership. Funds are available on a first come, first served basis. More details can be found at: [www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/clubmanagement/documents.htm#mkt](http://www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/clubmanagement/documents.htm#mkt)

# Schempp's Arcus now taking shape

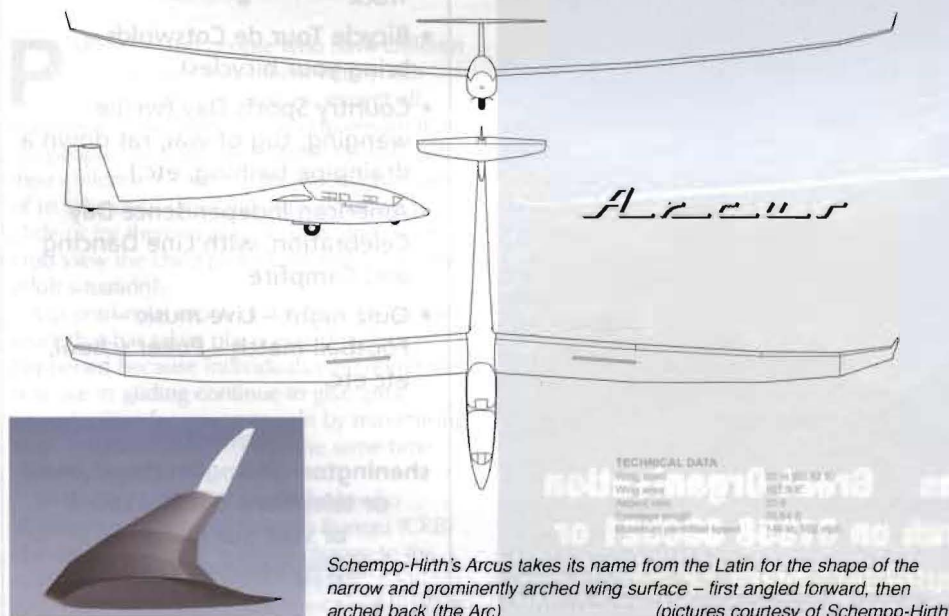
A 20m flapped two-seater, called Arcus, is being worked on by Schempp-Hirth, which aims to fly the prototype during 2009.

The sailplane takes its name from the Latin for the shape of the narrow and prominently arched wing surface – first angled forward, then arched back (the Arc).

To be available as glider, turbo or self-start versions, the Arcus will have a flapped wing designed and constructed using new

calculation and simulation programs, combined with tested data. Schempp-Hirth says the wing design is geared not only towards glide ratio, but to achieving the best possible handling and climb results under high wingloading.

The flaps will provide the additional lift necessary for a smooth take-off performance, while integrated full span flaperons are said to provide impressive maneuverability.



Schempp-Hirth's Arcus takes its name from the Latin for the shape of the narrow and prominently arched wing surface – first angled forward, then arched back (the Arc) (pictures courtesy of Schempp-Hirth)

■ CLUB Chairmen will get an extra opportunity to meet BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli and Chief Executive Pete Stratten, in the morning of the BGA Conference, for a discussion which will follow up on some of the topics raised at January's Chairmen's Conference. The BGA Conference and AGM is on Saturday 7 March at the Hellidon Lakes Hotel, Daventry.

■ THE Royal Aeronautical Society Centennial Scholarship Fund has again generously provided funding for the BGA to offer up to 20 flying scholarships. These are available to young glider pilots and to other young people wishing to take up the sport. To apply, you must be 15 -17 years old, in full-time education, and not yet have flown solo. Both existing club members and newcomers to the sport are eligible. Applications, which must be countersigned by your CFI, must be made to the BGA by 26 February; successful applicants will be notified during April. Full details and an application form are on the Juniors page of the BGA website at [www.gliding.co.uk/juniors](http://www.gliding.co.uk/juniors)

■ A REMINDER that applications for Royal Aero Club Trust Flying for Youth 2009 bursaries must be received by the BGA no later than 1 March (to allow time for counter-signature and submission before the RAC deadline of 31 March). These bursaries, each of up to £500, are for anyone between 16 and 21 who wants to progress their interest in either air sports or aviation. Many young glider pilots have benefited from these bursaries in previous years. More details at [www.royalaeroclubtrust.org/bursaries.html](http://www.royalaeroclubtrust.org/bursaries.html)

■ AIR League Trust Gliding Scholarships are also currently open for applications from pilots aged between 16 and 26. These scholarships offer financial assistance for cross-country gliding, aerobatic gliding or SLMG flying to gain flying experience and new qualifications. The closing date for applications is 27 February. More details at [www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/juniors/juniors.htm](http://www.gliding.co.uk/bgainfo/juniors/juniors.htm)

■ THE CAA has published a summary of responses to the Mode S consultation held last year. This also contains its response to the key issues raised and sets out the proposed further development of Mode S policy. The documents can be seen at [www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?catid=1698&pagetype=90&pageid=9307](http://www.caa.co.uk/default.aspx?catid=1698&pagetype=90&pageid=9307). The BGA is currently considering its position and will inform members about its response in due course. There was a total of 1982 responses to the consultation of which 1582 (79.8 per cent) were from those involved in gliding.

■ A GREEN-FLYING exhibit, which includes aircraft with electric motors, is part of Aero Friedrichshafen 2009. The event includes everything from gliders and motor gliders to business jets, ultralights, parachuting and paragliding. Now an annual event, the world's sailplane showcase is this year being held on 2-5 April.

■ RECENT winners of the BGA 1000 Club Lottery include: November winner AW Doughty (£23.50), with runners-up MC Costin and John Delafield (£11.75). December's winner was RH Dixon (£21.24) with runners-up S Eastell and CE Wick (£10.62).



## Winching tale could have had very different ending

HAVING had a bit of a moment during a winch launch, I have a hangar story on the theme discussed by Don Puttock and Andy Holmes (*From ground run*, December 2008-January 2009, p22).

Some years ago, I took part in a Wave Camp in Ambri in the Alps where a winch with 2km of cable was available; quite apart from the flying, this is an experience in itself. Just after one launch, the winch driver heard something on the radio which he wrongly interpreted as a stop instruction. This happened – naturally – at just about the worst possible moment: I was nicely in the middle of rotating into the climb. The warning was in the form of a dramatic g change; nothing was audible.

Over the years I have tried to develop a hard-wired link in my head: if something goes wrong, get your tail up and then think. This is what I did, and it worked. Once in normal flight, there were a few cycles of mild pilot-induced oscillation, but no difficulty in landing straight ahead. I had, after all, 2km of runway ahead of me. There was no reason to turn, and the idea never crossed my mind;

nor did I wait for a loss of speed.

During the push-over I remember being aware that I was more or less weightless. This was quite instinctive, although it now strikes me as the right thing to do. At zero-g the wing is generating no lift, and drag is therefore as low as possible. During those important milliseconds, this probably helped a bit.

At the time I was fairly relaxed about the incident – certainly more so than the camp manager, who could do no more than watch helplessly. But I now think he had a point: it could easily have ended rather badly.

Finally, I do have a nit-picking sort of comment on the article: at half-g the stall speed is not half its normal value. One quarter-g would be correct on paper for half stall-speed.

**John F. Crawford, B.Sc., Ph.D., Switzerland**

*Please send letters (marked "for publication") to the editor at editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk or the address on p3, including your full contact details. The deadline for the next issue is 9 February*

Royal Aeronautical Society Lecture



### "Research on Sailplane Aerodynamics at Delft University of Technology, Recent and Current Developments"

Loek Boermans,  
Associate Professor of Aerodynamics

**Tuesday 17th February, 2009**

Refreshments from 17.30 hrs,  
Lecture commences at 18.00 hours  
Attendance is free

Royal Aeronautical Society,  
No.4, Hamilton Place, London, W1J 7BQ  
[www.aerosociety.com/conference](http://www.aerosociety.com/conference)

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contact:

shenington-gliding@hotmail.co.uk  
or telephone 01295 680008  
or visit our website,  
[www.regionals09.co.uk](http://www.regionals09.co.uk)

**Midland Regionals  
August 8th-16th 2009**

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# Southdown GC secures tenure

**Chairman Craig Lowrie reports on the club's purchase of Parham Airfield, a process that has secured a long-term future and scope for Southdown's development**

**T**HE Southdown Gliding Club was originally formed in 1930 and occupied a series of sites on or near the South Downs in Sussex, before moving to Parham Airfield in 1974.

At that time no one could have believed the potential of this site but with all-year-round soaring and cross-country flying possible and with several flights in excess of 750km, Parham is now visited regularly by those wishing to experience the excellent flying that the club offers.

Situated close to the town of Storrington, the club was always going to be seen as a prime site for development and the seemingly endless march of the town soon left the proximity measured in feet instead of miles.

As chairman, I was working on a variety of fronts, but always had the long-term objective of site purchase as top of the list. When rumours of a sale became fact in late 2007 it was necessary to drive the project aggressively to ensure this opportunity was not missed.

Grant applications and supporting documentation were started immediately, as this looked likely to take the longest time.



Katie Simmonds

Selecting a first class solicitor and chartered surveyor occurred early in the process and was key to securing the outcome.

In many cases today, land is sold with overage provision, sharing any future profit from large re-development with the current owner. A huge amount of negotiation was needed to ensure adequate freedom for the long-term future and development of the club in this regard.

Despite submitting four comprehensive grant applications, we were unsuccessful in



Technical Manager Jim Heath (left) and Craig Lowrie celebrate the purchase of Southdown GC's airfield, pictured left. Much of the cash was raised from the membership via donations, interest-free loans and life memberships

securing funds and had to raise much of the cash from the membership via donations, interest-free loans and life memberships. We secured significant Gift Aid by virtue of our registration as a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC).

In addition, with the support of the BGA together with the Philip Wills Memorial Fund, we were helped with loans to bridge the gap.

In 1909 a rudimentary glider designed by Jose Weiss and piloted by Gordon England achieved the world's first recorded gain of height on the hills near our site.

On 9 January 2009, we became the proud owners of our airfield and secured the future of our club in the centenary year of that momentous event.

## Child protection is your responsibility

**P**ARENTS, and people who have children and regularly leave them with youth groups and organisations, expect all avenues to have been checked to ensure that the people involved are suitable to work with their children. Gliding is no exception. Many of us take children to the club, whether to glide or for them to play, so how does your club view the child protection and vulnerable adult situation?

Up until now, much of the child protection work that has taken place in gliding has happened because individuals care about the way we in gliding continue to give great opportunities for young people by maximising these opportunities whilst at the same time minimising risk.

From October 2009, individuals who already have Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks in place will notice a change to the system the next time they make an application. They will no longer need to fill in

a form for every work or voluntary role where they work with children (under 18-year-olds) or vulnerable adults; individuals will need to register once, however many roles they hold. The new system is known as vetting and barring and will also include a register of individuals barred from working with children.

The new system will see a shift in other ways. One of these will affect all gliding clubs – ALL volunteers and members of staff who work with children and vulnerable people will need to be registered under the new vetting and barring scheme and it is the gliding club (ie the committee and chairman) that will be responsible for ensuring that the necessary checks are in place.

Phil Burton, the BGA's Child Protection Lead and a member of the BGA Executive, has been carrying out child protection awareness training for gliding clubs for the past four years. He says: "Many people find

change difficult to embrace or are unaccepting of the issues. I hear comments like 'you are joking' or 'it was never a problem in my day'. The sad thing is, it is a problem today and, in giving free awareness training, the BGA hopes to enhance and further share the best practice already embraced by so many of you and your clubs."

In light of the need to get at least one person trained at each club and to refresh training for those clubs who already have Child Protection Policies and Child Protection Leads (or Officers) in place, Phil will be delivering a programme of awareness training and presentations around the UK. Details will be published in *S&G*, on the website and in the BGA Newsletter.

More information is available from [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/independent/safeguardingauthority/](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/independent/safeguardingauthority/)

You can contact Phil by email – [PhilBurtonPhoto@aol.com](mailto:PhilBurtonPhoto@aol.com)



# More to gliding than regulation



**BGA Chairman Patrick Naegeli gives an update on the Mode S debate, reminds us that there is more to gliding than regulation and reveals some of his hopes for the year ahead**

**S**OME learned publication (though not quite as learned as *S&G*) – *The Economist*, I think – believes that one can gauge a community's sense of optimism by monitoring the frequency of the appearance of key words in its official texts.

I applied this simple test to the 16 previous columns I've written for *S&G*. The results were, for me, concerning – too many references to EASA, the CAA, and forthcoming regulation. I joined the BGA Executive to help develop the sport of gliding. Instead, I appear to have become a regulation wonk.

I try not to make New Year's Resolutions. But, for as long as I work in the service of the BGA, I will ensure that I confound the hypothesis put forward by *The Economist* and maintain a proper balance in my reports to you.

Now, back to regulation. Damn.

Reasonably quietly, at the very beginning of December, the CAA published its review of the responses to the consultation exercise on Interoperability in UK airspace – or Mode S as we (more correctly, I think) prefer to call it.

Purely coincidentally, a couple of weeks before the review appeared I had written to the CAA Director of Airspace Policy, John Arscott, and enquired as to the status of his team's work and suggested a meeting to discuss potential outcomes.

A meeting date was duly set and, in keeping with the tradition of previous such meetings, it was attended by the BGA and a small number of other air sport associations – we should not lose sight of the implications it has for other air sports and flying communities.

At the time of writing, the BGA had not had enough time to undertake an exhaustive analysis of the CAA's musings. One is, however, in process and so I will not attempt things in detail here. We will report back to everyone concerned in due course.

So where, from what we have seen, do we think things/we stand?

A preliminary assessment would suggest that:

- Gliding has continued to be successful in making its thoughts and concerns clear to the CAA – nearly 80 per cent of the 1,900-odd consultation responses were from the gliding community and gliding-specific references peppered the CAA's review. All of which suggests that our basic issues have been noted



*Discussions between the CAA and BGA could result in a more clearly-defined set of measures designed to enable gliding to operate practically within the new interoperability regime (Pete Masson, glidingimages.com)*

if not necessarily taken on board. Generally helpful.

- The arguments that we have made for using an evidence-based approach to establishing risk levels as a way of determining whether or not the proposed measures should apply to gliding has been acknowledged, but not accepted. Instead, the CAA appears to be suggesting that it will take gliding-specific factors into account on a case-by-case basis rather than grant us blanket exemptions to the basic regulations.

Generally unhelpful, but not a complete disaster.

- The level at which the impact of regulatory measures are assessed as being "proportionate" will, for the most part, be higher than that at which the specific characteristics of gliding come into clear relief. Not helpful – but not a lost cause.

- The value of existing, non-technical interoperability mechanisms – Letters of Agreement and the like that we make extensive use of – is acknowledged and seen to be a feature of the system in the future. Helpful.

In short, a curate's egg. What is clear is that the basic pressures for a technical solution (Mode S in the CAA's view) to interoperability are expected to increase further over time and gliding will not be able to avoid them in all cases.

It seems, however, that the CAA does want to do something to accommodate gliding. It has suggested that it enters into a detailed dialogue with the BGA to resolve our concerns in as practical a way as possible. The outcome of such a process would probably be a more clearly-defined set of measures designed to enable gliding to operate practically within the new interoperability regime, and, a transition timetable that allows gliding to enter into new

arrangements within a sensible period of time. Potentially helpful.

It feels as though we have spent the best part of two years sorting out our terms of engagement with the CAA. Now we can get into the detail. The words "end of the beginning" come to mind.

There is more to gliding than regulation, really, and I very much hope that 2009 will be another year in which UK gliding takes significant strides forward. Some easy predictions:

- The BGA will draw together those of its activities most concerned with club and pilot development into a more coherent set of activities aimed at significantly growing the sport. By the time you read this the first meeting will have taken place.

- The Youth Development Strategy will enter a new phase as it implements a number of new initiatives that will help inform a new national-level strategy that we hope will be implemented from 2010 on.

- The weather will be better – it could not be worse than 2009. Could it?

Most predictions suggest that we will face challenging economic times for many months to come. These will affect gliding as individuals' priorities change. The BGA, along with clubs, will be working hard on doing what needs to be done to keep gliding relevant and growing against such a backdrop.

Whatever your aspirations for your gliding in 2009, I wish you every success.

Have fun, stay safe.

**Patrick Naegeli**  
Chairman, British Gliding Association  
December 2008



# **BGA Sporting Conference 2009 Awards Ceremony & Dinner**

**Hellidon Lakes Hotel & Country Club, Daventry**

**Saturday 7 March 2009**

## **09:15 am Governance Session**

- Club Chairman's Forum with the BGA Chairman and Chief Executive
- CFI's/Instructors Forum - Airspace Safety and Other Training Developments

**Main Conference opens: 10:30 - Closes 18:00**

## **Morning**

- **"Sailplane Design"**  
Join Afandi Darlington as we hear about some insights into sailplane design.
- **"BGA Central"**  
Consultation and events in 2009, including licensing, EASA changes, instructing - with Pete Stratten
- **"Recent Weather Trends"**  
What's really been happening to our weather recently? Has it been all bad...or were there a few surprises. Dave Mason and Phil Gunn explain all.

## **Afternoon**

- **Annual General Meeting of the BGA**  
Followed by the Caroline Trust Awards
- **Exhibition Walkabout**  
Take a walk around the stands, view the latest gadgets or take a look at the gliders on display. The new BGA Flight Simulator will also be on display.
- **Key Note Presentation**  
To Be Confirmed

## **Evening**

- Annual Awards Ceremony and Dinner
- After Dinner Speaker - to be announced

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

Dinner £32pp (or £26 for ages 25 and under)

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# Be aware of your obligations

**T**HE Airspace & Safety Initiative (ASI) is a joint CAA, NATS, GA and military review with the aims of enhancing safety outside controlled airspace while meeting the needs of all airspace users. It emerged from discussion between the CAA, NATS and the MoD following a number of incidents where light aircraft infringed controlled airspace, or military and commercial flights lost separation outside controlled airspace.

Two areas of work flowing out of the ASI that the BGA is engaged with, as a responsible stakeholder, are associated with Air Traffic Services Outside Controlled Airspace (ATSOCAS) and the Airspace Communication and Education Programme (ACEP).

Under the title of ATSOCA, air traffic services in Class G will change subtly with effect from early March 2009. Although many glider pilots rarely need an air traffic service, as responsible users of Class G all cross-country pilots and instructors need to make themselves aware of the changes. Look out for an article in the next issue which will provide detailed and practical guidance for glider pilots operating in Class G.

ACEP aims to address the communication



**With changes to air traffic services in Class G on their way, BGA Chief Executive Pete**

## **Stratten brings us up to date on airspace safety education and airworthiness issues**

and education safety issues by developing and implementing a strategy to better co-ordinate future airspace safety education initiatives to improve overall aviation safety.

Gliding has a good record of getting it right. The bad news is that every year some people in aviation, including in gliding, get it wrong and we have to address that together.

As a glider pilot you will, of course, be aware of your personal obligation to understand the airspace environment in which you operate, and to operate with the needs of all airspace users in mind. During 2009, the BGA will be reinforcing this message with practical guidance as well as ensuring that, where required, sustainable improvements in pilot awareness of NOTAMs and airspace structure as well as improved altimetry and core navigation skills are developed.

The excellent *Fly On Track* website includes a variety of airspace safety tips and links, including to ATSOCA information. See <http://xsvr.com/flyontrack/content>

## **Airworthiness and Part M**

The transition to EASA CoFA and ARC continues apace. By the time *S&G* has printed, the CAA should have finally approved the BGA ARC renewal process, which will allow owners to renew their ARC through BGA authorised inspectors.

The numbers of inspectors authorised to renew ARCs will increase as a concise training programme rolls out into 2009. See [www.gliding.co.uk](http://www.gliding.co.uk) for more information, including detailed advice for owners and for inspectors.

Following a significant amount of work by air sport bodies within Europe, including the BGA, the previously totally disproportionate Part M maintenance rules have been alleviated somewhat for non-complex aircraft, including gliders.

The CAA has decided that in the UK, Part M will apply to powered aircraft in January 2009 and in full to gliders in May 2009. Following the alleviations to Part M published in December 2008, the BGA is developing its subpart F maintenance organisation approval to meet the needs of the entire gliding community.

The views of many of the professional maintainers have been sought as well as volunteer inspectors and the BGA technical committee.

The BGA is often held up by the CAA as an exemplar of an organisation that can responsibly self-manage and operates reasonably safely. Although there are details that the BGA and CAA have yet to agree, it is clear that proportionate application of regulation, processes and fee structures that are not designed with a self-managing gliding community in mind is vitally important going forward. The BGA will continue to work closely with the CAA on these and many other issues affecting gliding.

■ CFIs will have received a letter from the BGA in January regarding airspace safety and advising that additional advice will be published for all pilots during 2009.

The BGA is currently considering how training might be modified to instil the right habits starting from *ab-initio* training and would urge you to ensure that during Bronze and cross-country endorsement theory and flying tests, the subject of NOTAMs, airspace structure and altimetry receives very close attention.

## COMPETITION ENTERPRISE 2009



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# Keep your members (sweet)

**T**HE balance between membership recruitment and retention can be tricky to master. As a follow-on from the last Development News (*Attracting new members* December 2008-January 2009, p12) here we examine ways of retaining your hard-won club members.

## Can they fly?

Picture this – it's early May and you've been grafting at the club since before the hangar doors were opened, and by late morning the sky is brewing nicely. Having timed the list well, it is almost your turn to fly.

You're looking forward to having a soaring flight and making some progress. All the club two-seaters are busy with people like you.

Oh dear ... across the field you see approaching a colourful, well-dressed group of people clutching cameras and camcorders, grinning and excited about their booked trial lessons. More arrive in the next couple of hours and two-seaters are diverted to fly them. You finally fly at 3.30pm and struggle to stay up now that the thermals are harder to work from winch height.

You've spent the last four hours looking after and making these people feel welcome – just like others did for you last September



**You've put the effort in attracting new members, but how are you going to hang on to them?**

**BGA Development Officer Alison Randle looks at some tried and tested solutions**

and apparently it was worth it because one of them has joined the club. One of the two-seaters is still airing off-line following an earlier mishap with a sick bag... perhaps on reflection you should have met up with your mates who were off to the riverside pub this lunchtime?

OR – you retire to the bar following a day of hard work and fun and have flown without distraction or undue frustration because your club has considered your needs as a valued club member. In addition to your personal flying, you have had time and energy to help with running the launch point and the booked trial lessons – helping to encourage one couple to take the plunge and join.

Is the second scenario pure fiction – some sort of unachievable utopia? Not at some clubs in the UK. Here are some ideas and suggestions from clubs who have tried some new thinking.

## Maximising the use of your club fleet

An increasing number of clubs look at who is booked in for trial lessons and (if they do it) for instruction too, then designate specific gliders for specific roles. Sometimes this will vary during the day. It allows the instructor team to control the day and to manage people's expectations effectively.

It also helps to keep the treasurer happy because more of the fleet is likely to be in use at any one time. Allocation of the fleet works for all types of flying needs, not just for trial lessons and pre-solo training.

Every weekend day, Yorkshire GC designates their DG-1000 (plus cross-country instructor) to be booked out by one student for the whole day.

## Assessing needs of temporary members

Everyone who comes to fly a glider has their own reason for doing so. For some they may need to understand in-depth technicalities, but others just want to go and look at their house from the air. Some will only ever want to fly once; for a few, this is the first day of the rest of their life and they'll be full members by lunchtime.

Windrushers now triage temporary members to match their needs so that potential new club members are shown a trial

## CASE STUDY: How Highland GC introduced its 'New Way', by club chairman Robert Tait

**THE MOST** effective decision we took was to move all the trial lessons to set days per month and make them aerotow only. We also increased the price by 50 per cent in a deliberate effort to charge them at their full value. On those days, the second two-seater is dedicated to flying trial

lessons using Basic Instructors only. This frees up the duty instructor to focus entirely on training full members.

These slots are booked and paid for online by the public. The training and advanced slots can be booked online, in advance.

The key to the success of this

was flexibility. At first glance, the structure of the day looks rigid and formal. That was deliberate but the flexibility lies in the timing.

The core of the day is the training slots. They are protected at the expense of the check flights and advanced training. If

the weather delays the start of the slots, they move. If the afternoon forecast is bad, they can be brought forward if the trainee is there.

The need to have a check flight before 11am gets flying started earlier.

Advanced training is for post-solo pilots only. It is entirely at the instructors' discretion to use the time as they see fit.

Unused training slots can be used for anything.

If someone turns up wanting a trial lesson, they should be informed of the online booking system and asked to book a suitable time and date.

If this is not possible, they should only be flown if there is an aircraft, aerotow and instructor available. Club members take priority if there is any doubt.

There has been only one down side so far. We were so successful with the online bookable trial lesson slots, we were oversubscribed!

## Breakdown of Highland GC's flying day



Of course, there has to be some flexibility to the above structure. Weather, launch delays etc, can all affect the timetable. Below is a guideline for how delays should be managed.

<b>Unflyable first thing</b>	The day effectively shifts up to two hours. Check flights can be done as above, and training sessions remain 3 hours long and move into the advanced training slot. The advanced training slot is shortened.
<b>Intermittent showers or launch delays</b>	The ultimate priority for the instructor is to ensure the training sessions are covered as best possible. This means that check flights and advanced training may need to be curtailed to compensate.
<b>One or both training sessions not booked</b>	Any spare slots can be used at the instructor's discretion. For example, longer check flights, advanced training, building his/her own solo hours or maybe even just a cup of coffee!





More clubs are now designating specific gliders for specific roles. This allocation works for all types of flying needs, not just for trial lessons and pre-solo training. Structuring the launch point, by giving trial lessons their own launching area alongside and separate from the main club launch point, can also prove beneficial (Kevin Moseley)

club membership experience, whilst those looking for a once in a lifetime experience are given just that.

### Structuring the launch point

Trial lessons are given their own launching area alongside and separate from the main club launch point. This works best at clubs which can make a tug available but it is also possible to have individual (parallel) launch lines for winch-only clubs (where the width of the site allows). Both systems require a launch director with a hand on the launch signals and radio who can control launching, prioritising between club training, private gliders and trial lessons. The downside is that club members are away from trial lesson people, but, with careful planning, using a triage system and a sprinkling of enthusiastic helpers, there's no reason why those visitors who want to learn more about the club shouldn't do so.

### Limiting trial lessons

An increasing number of clubs will now limit this activity to prevent it from overwhelming and exhausting existing club members:

- by volume
- to set parts of the day
- to set days of the week.

### Mentoring

Each new member has a mentor or buddy assigned to them. Not necessarily an instructor, this is someone who can show them the ropes and be a point of contact whilst they are building their confidence and making new friends. We may think that the launch point banter is friendly, but we've been ribbing one another for years and it can be quite daunting to break into for someone new (it's worth remembering that some glider pilots can be quite shy around new people too). If a new member hasn't been around for a few weeks, it is important that someone from the club gives them a call

to see if anything is amiss – most effective if this is from their well-known buddy. Perhaps this doesn't have to be limited to new members.

### Membership waiting lists

All the 'best' clubs have them... How many people can your club effectively train and look after at once? Borders GC took the decision to close their membership for a while following a successful period of recruitment in order to give their existing club members full value for money. If your club has hit gold on the 'converting trial lesson people to club member' conundrum, specific monitoring of the quality of experience for club members should be taking place in order to avoid losing them by membership renewal season. This sort of management will work well with a mentoring system.



Everyone who comes to fly a glider has their own reason for doing so. Triage temporary members to match their needs – some will only ever want to fly once; for a few, this is the first day of the rest of their life and they will be full members by lunchtime (David Clark)

## Help to access more money

A CD toolkit to help charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) boost their income through Gift Aid has been launched by HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC).

The toolkit contains clear, basic guidance, templates, an interactive claim form and other materials to help CASCs get started with Gift Aid and use Gift Aid in different fundraising situations. CASCs are also encouraged to sign up to receive automatic updates on issues relevant to them from HMRC's website. See <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/rss/rss.htm>

David Richardson Director of Charities, Assets and Residence at HMRC said: "We have worked with charities to develop the toolkit, which should reduce administrative burdens. Our aim is to make Gift Aid easy for all charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs by providing the tools and guidance to help them at every step."

The toolkit can be obtained by calling HMRC Charities on 08453 020 203 or emailing [charities@hmrc.gov.uk](mailto:charities@hmrc.gov.uk)

Not yet registered as a CASC? More information and advice is available from [www.cascinfo.co.uk](http://www.cascinfo.co.uk) with gliding specific information on the BGA website <http://www.gliding.co.uk/forms/casc-scheme.pdf>

## Personal tax planning

IF YOUR gliding club is a CASC, then both you and your club will benefit from any donations you make as part of your plans to mitigate personal tax, because CASC status is equivalent to charitable status in the eyes of the taxman.

So, as well as Gift Aid on donations you make during your lifetime, it includes tax relief on any bequest you make to a CASC in your will.

## Windfarm warning

GENERALLY, the BGA should be automatically consulted as part of the planning process for proposed windfarms. When notified, the relevant BGA Development Officer (usually Roger Coote) will contact any club(s) likely to be affected before preparing an appropriate response.

However, there have been two cases recently where it is apparent that the BGA has been left out of the consultation process. Luckily, local club members had become aware and the BGA was able to contribute to the planning process.

If you see something in the local press or hear something in the community, do check because there is a chance that the BGA don't know about it. Please talk to your club chairman and/or email Roger Coote [jrcoote@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:jrcoote@tiscali.co.uk)



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# Tackling the weakest link

**T**HE start of the year brought a lot of high winds on flying days and a significant increase in the number of weak link failures. At Burn any lead rope falling off the runway is lost in the farmers' fields, only to be recovered when it jams his combine harvester!

With lead ropes and fittings costing about £30, it was well worth investigating ways of reducing the number of failures.

We were aware that speeds above 70 knots in the upper section of the launch could give cable loads in excess of the weak link strength. The solution would be to improve communication between glider and winch. The club decided to try the Winch Launch Assistant, marketed by Skylaunch.

A phone call to Mike Groves of Skylaunch had four transmitters and a receiver on their way to us. In June the receiver was mounted in the Tost winch and the K-21, K-13 and PW-5 were equipped with transmitters.

The system was an immediate success with both winch drivers and pilots. As the gliders' speed can be maintained easily within +/- 5 knots of the optimum, launch heights are consistently better. The controlled reduction of power at the top of the launch has seen



**Concerned by increasing numbers of weak link failures, Burn GC decided to try the Winch Launch Assistant. Bill Thorp reports on the club's findings**

nearly all launches terminate with the cable back-releasing from the hook, rather than releasing under tension.

The first private glider to be equipped was a K-6 and the owners are very pleased with the results, as it had been too easy for its maximum speed to be exceeded.

In general, glass-fibre private gliders tend to benefit from the club aircraft being equipped. Winch drivers become attuned to the weather conditions by launching the club aircraft and can adjust when launching those without transmitters.

However for anyone regularly taking winch launches, particularly in gliders with a low maximum winch speed, the cost of a transmitter is far less than any other piece of electronic equipment, and the extra height on the launch may make all the difference between a soaring flight and a quick circuit.

## What is the equipment?

The transmitter is teed into the pitot and static lines of the ASI and the 12v supply of the glider. As the glider accelerates through 27kts it transmits the airspeed for 90 seconds and turns off. The receiver is mounted to one side

of the winch screen, so it is readily visible to the winch driver. It needs only a 12v supply.

## How is it operated?

The take-off and rotation of the glider are controlled as usual, with no reference to the speed

display. When the glider is established in the climb, the driver glances at the screen and adjusts the throttle as necessary to maintain the glider at its best speed band – 60 +/- 5 kts for most glass-fibre gliders and 55 +/- 5 kts for K-6s and K-13s. Towards the top of the launch, power is reduced and the glider flies off the wire at about 50kts as the throttle is closed. In the majority of cases the cable back releases from the hook.

Maintaining the optimum climb speed, release heights are higher. Height is not lost by needing to signal "too fast", or by lowering the nose if the speed becomes "too slow". There is less pressure on the pilot at the top of the launch, as the speed no longer tends to increase. The gliders rarely release with the cable under tension, so there is less chance of the winch drum "throwing a loop".

So far the only adverse comment has been from a winch driver who claimed the system had been de-skilled and now everyone could be as good as him! However, this is the target. We aim to train all solo pilots to be able to operate the winch, which is a lot easier when they no longer have to judge the speed by eye. With 30 regular drivers, much more consistent launches are being achieved.

One possible change is that Instructors will now have to request an overspeed so they can demonstrate the "too fast" signal.

We have broken only one blue link in five months and no black. However, we have had the rope of the lead rope fail due to wear. These are now being strengthened.

The details are available on Skylaunch website, [www.skylaunchuk.com](http://www.skylaunchuk.com) or if you want to see it in operation, visit us at Burn.

**Bill Thorp, who flies at Burn, retired from instructing and power flying this year. He has 2,300 hours gliding and 2,700 power and wants to get the gliding hours above the power. He believes that a club's economic viability can depend on efficient winch launches.**



Improving communication between glider and winch, the Winch Launch Assistant shows K-21 at full climb (above) and at release (right)

## FOOTNOTE FROM THE BGA'S WINCHING ADVISOR AND NATIONAL COACH

THANKS to Bill Thorp of Burn GC for reporting the club's findings. An airspeed readout in the winch cab sounds like it may be very useful to achieve consistent launches, particularly on days with a strong wind or severe wind gradient. We suggest that clubs considering this system bear in mind the following points:

- As noted in the article, the winch must be driven conventionally for ground run, liftoff, rotation and initial launch to ensure that the winch driver's full attention is directed at the glider during this critical phase. This is the only way that a winch driver would be able to respond correctly to a low launch failure

involving the parachute inflating close to the glider or to a wingdrop/cartwheel.

- As always, the golden rule of winch driving applies. It is always better to launch the glider slightly too fast than slightly too slow. This is particularly the case when considering the energy available to the glider for recovering from a low cable break.
- Once the glider is established in the full climb at a safe height then the winch driver may occasionally glance at the airspeed readout. However, this must not distract the winch driver from monitoring the glider and reacting appropriately to any 'unusual events'.

- Winch drivers should consider that the airspeed display will not show them that a real or simulated cable break has occurred, but it will continue to show the speed. This is one of the many reasons why the winch driver's primary job must still be to monitor the glider, cable and engine sound, not to focus on the airspeed display.
- Any adjustments to the throttle must be made smoothly and progressively.
- Obviously, drivers must be trained to use the winch without this aid.

Andy Holmes – BGA winching advisor  
Mike Fox – BGA national coach





**TAIL FEATHERS**  
by Platypus

**DON'T give us a break**

"THAT'S a bit ambitious," muttered The Guru from the back seat as the retrieve-tug hauled us out of the valley and made straight for a high ridge – on the other side of which there was absolutely nowhere for us to land if anything went wrong. "Ambitious" is a lovely understatement. It means optimistic, indeed bold; and generally asking for rather too much to go just right.

"Yes," I said, "I had really hoped they would do a couple of circles over the valley to gain height first."

It was as rough as Hell on tow. This usually has the effect of making me go very quiet. Eventually, as we staggered over the crest and into the boondocks with a few hundred feet to spare and the long wings thrashing up and down, I uttered my thoughts:

"There have been several occasions in my gliding career," I said, "when I have been on a long aerotow and have prayed that the tug and the glider would not part company – and this is one of those occasions..."

I do not believe in Providence, and therefore I do not believe anything one says, however foolish, can tempt Her (or Him or It or Them) to do some mischief. Nevertheless one could imagine some malevolent demon pouncing on those anxious words, for only a few seconds later, "Ping!" the rope broke.

(Well, I imagine it would have made an audible "Ping!" if it had not been for the roar of the tug and the howling of the wind and the creaking of the glider's suffering structure; let's call it poetic licence.)

This is the first time I have seen a rope break near the tug, and seen it snaking back at me; usually whatever goes wrong is at my end, as you can guess. I promptly released it, of course, and some poor sheep – or sheep-farmer – is probably still wondering what hit him. With commendable aplomb, born of many years of senior managerial experience, I delegated the problem to The Guru with some constructive message like "It's all yours!".

The Guru took over masterfully, hampered though he was for a while by my inability to decide which way I should push or pull the undercarriage lever. We were so low I thought at first that The Guru wanted to land imminently and needed the wheel down. But

**'There have been several occasions in my gliding career,' I said, 'when I have been on a long aerotow and have prayed that the tug and the glider would not part company – and this is one of those occasions...'**

no, soaring was what we were there for; the wheel came up for the third time and stayed up. After an heroic struggle – of which I was not the hero – we got enough height to make it home. After landing, I was undecided whether the first priority was to have a stern word with the tuggie or to have a beer. I decided to have a beer and let The Guru go and talk to the tuggie. Another display of officer-like delegation-skills on my part, as you see.

I have said in the past that I am an expert on aviation safety in the way that a burglar is an expert on the criminal law. That means I don't preach. A scary story does one's preaching and moral-pointing for one, don't you agree?

**PS** My scariest time on tow was at Easter 1975 when the tuggie came to fetch me in my brand-new Kestrel 19 and said: "It's now or never – if you don't come back with me straightaway I'll have to fly back to the club to do more tows."

I gave in, and he promptly towed me into a blizzard around 400ft above the North Downs for a terrifying 30 minutes. He had reassured me that he could tow me between two giant snow-clouds, which I was worried about, but

\* So-called by the pilots of wartime troop-carrying gliders as a very rough guide to whether they were too high or too low when on tow at night or in cloud.

\*\* Some experts say you should tape the line to the bottom of the glider to discourage inadvertent back-releases. Others believe in blocking the back-release with a piece of wood or wiring it shut.

\*\*\* A misnomer, since one couldn't soar there at all. Our accidental wave-triumph turned out to be the only decent flight of the entire expedition.

the great white masses fell in love and became one just as we headed for the gap.

I found myself and the tug flying in formation from time to time, with the line streaming behind us in a vast, menacing bow; or I was unable to see the tug at all and had to rely on the famous "angle of dangle\*", the apparent slope of the line as it disappeared into a dense white wall.

I survived because I had a nose-hook on the Kestrel and the rope was in robust health. Belly-hooks for long-distance aerotows are vulnerable to back-releasing in turbulent air\*\*. That's happened to me three times: the happiest of them was in Spain near the Pyrenees when Marion Barritt was in the back seat. She interrupted my bleats on the radio as I called for info on safe landing-fields by saying, "Haven't you noticed we're going up at eight knots?"

The Pyrenean wave-rotor had disconnected us from the tug and was now flinging us upwards to 16,000 ft, whereupon I could stop quivering and enjoy the toboggan-ride to our destination, Soria\*\*\*. Being rotor, it could equally well have flung us downwards on to some very unpromising mountainous terrain.

Though I don't believe in Providence, I do believe, as a statistician, poker-player and horse-racing punter, that there is such a thing as Plain Dumb Luck.

**Safe as lighthouses**

I read in *The Times* the other day that Princess Anne is a pharologist – someone who collects lighthouses. Well, I don't mean that she steals them and carts them off to put in her estate like so many garden gnomes, leaving the hapless seafarers to run their ships on the rocks. She just goes round looking at them and, no doubt like a train-spotter or a "birder", puts each new one in her little book and then heads off to the next one.

I did not long ago suggest that we should wean ourselves off the ridiculous paranoia we have about the baleful effects of sea air, by encouraging glider pilots to send in photographs of lighthouses and giving some award to the best collection; special honour would go to whoever managed to photograph multiple lighthouses in one cross-country flight.

I think the winners would be obliged to put



their gliders down on solid ground at the end of the flight – rather in the way that some gliding badges require you to have made a normal landing, and record flights require you to survive 24 hours, to discourage kamikaze-style, death-or-glory aviating. Though I am not sure that particular message has entirely got through, watching some people.

Taking a photograph of a turning-point from below is not all that uncommon – I remember taking a picture from below of a romantic mountain-top German castle in the Swabian Alps during the Hahnweide contest, and successfully getting away again.

**'I think the winners would be obliged to put their gliders down on solid ground at the end of the flight'**

(Rather less adroitly I took a very fine portrait of Ely cathedral in the 1971 UK Nationals and a minute or so later my Dart 17 harvested some very tall wheat, for which I had to pay the farmer. The absence in East Anglia of escarpments and anabatic updraughts may account for my failure to soar. Very flat, that part of the world. But I had the turning-point in the camera and could proudly tell Control I had rounded it, just.)

As I was saying, anybody who lands the glider in the ocean after snapping a lighthouse must be disqualified from getting the Soaring-Pharologist Trophy; we could make certain of that by getting a hard-nosed insurance broker to sponsor the award.

Someone might however get the Cambridge Club to make a gesture of acknowledgment to the daring pilot, posthumously or not as the case may be: after World War Two that club, consisting chiefly of kamikaze-style, death-or-glory university undergraduates, some with Colditz on their very recent *curricula vitae*, put two gliders in the sea on opposite sides of our country in one year.

## The snows of July

It was Wednesday 23 July 2008, and I was looking for a gliding forecast on the web, not caring precisely who issued it so long as long as it dealt with southern England generally. Immediately YES! up came a soaring-pilots' southern England forecast for Wednesday 23rd, exactly as I wanted. It seemed a bit downbeat, but my suspicions were only properly aroused when warnings of snow came up on the screen. Snow? In July?

After careful inspection I saw it was indeed, quite by chance, dated Wednesday 23rd, but in a very different month, in a year long past. This reminded me of my being vain enough some years ago to Google myself – my advice is, don't do it – and to my horror seeing a site headlined, "Platypus to give convention speech in USA" at a date only three weeks ahead.

How could I have forgotten a promise to speak to the Soaring Society of America? I hadn't booked a flight or a hotel – Help!! Then it turned out to be just like the above-mentioned soaring forecast – years out of date, cluttering up cyberspace to no useful purpose whatever except to cause seizures in sensitive seniors. I had given the speech nearly a decade earlier.

## Why is the "future" always history?

Later in 2008 I was keen to fly in a competition in the first half of 2009. Every time I looked up this particular competition I got a mass of fascinating stuff about the 2002 contest and the ones in 2005 and 2007, and the one they say is "upcoming" is – Oh, damn it – the 2008 competition, which of course already long past and gone; nothing anywhere about 2009.

I needed to sort my calendar out well in advance and nobody was able to give me the data I need. What is the matter with these people? Gliding contains some of the worst

web-marketers in the world. They seem quite unable to put useful information into their sites, or to take out useless information.

The excuse I got from an official of a sporting aviation organisation was that this garbage, instead of being neatly binned and disposed of in the manner of tidy suburban householders, was left on the site "for the record". Utter rubbish! It was just too much work to clean up.

A serious challenge to software experts would be to devise a way to make it quite clear to web users that any announcement of an event (rock concert, football match, whatever), once it has already happened, has a wide, translucent red line automatically put through it, so that one can still read it but will know that one is now looking at history. The software only has to look for the date of the upcoming event and compare it with today's date. It ain't rocket science, surely?

## The most useless message sent – nearly

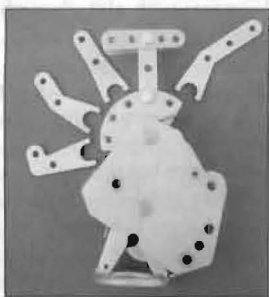
A dear gliding friend of mine living in Minden, which as you know vies with Omarama as the World's Finest Soaring Site, absolutely hates opening emails; so on the very rare occasions that incoming emails are looked at, a veritable avalanche of junk pours forth. This problem naturally accumulates and gets worse and worse, increasing the dread.

A week before Christmas I was right on the point of sending an exasperated email asking my friend to PLEASE open Microsoft Entourage and download; then I realised I was nearly replicating that famous 1960s transmission during a UK nationals: "Frank, switch on your radio!".

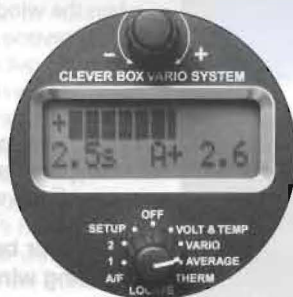
Now I would never do anything as silly and pointless as that, would I?

**platsandg@blueyonder.co.uk**

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# Wave shapes – part two

**S**URFERS ride the “inversion” between the sea and the sky. If only we glider pilots could ride such an interface. If, for example, we could fly the “surface” between the stable laminar flow in a wave and the unstable turbulent flow below, soaring atmospheric waves would be as easy as surfing on the ocean!

However, glider pilots ride waves formed within the atmospheric medium, not on it like the ocean and, because the atmosphere varies more than the sea, the shape of waves in the sky are more complex (as well as much bigger). This makes the surfing glider pilot’s task even more challenging than that of our ocean brothers.

We know that the shape of atmospheric waves is a function of wind speed and direction, trigger shape and orientation and the relative stability of layers within the atmosphere. Most of these variables change with location, altitude and time and this is what makes wave shapes complex. However if the glider pilot remains pragmatic and looks for the simplest explanation it becomes clear



**In the second part of his feature Gavin Wills shares more observations on complex wave patterns and shapes**

that certain shapes relate to certain changes in these variables.

Part One of *wave shapes* described some complex lee wave shapes and patterns that are mainly controlled by the wind crossing mountain triggers. In Part two we look at the shape of atmospheric waves that are somewhat independent of the initiating terrain triggers. These wave shapes are generally caused by thermal activity and/or wind shears within the atmospheric profile and when these shear and thermal waves interact with mountain lee waves some really interesting shapes are observed!

Wind blowing across water makes waves.

At the interface between the wind and the water there is a shear as the wind and water move in different speeds and directions. These wind blown waves travel downwind and are known as shear waves.

In the atmosphere, shear waves are common. For example wind blowing across a stable, stationary pool of air (such as that trapped below a valley inversion) may create shear waves. Unlike lee waves which are stationary with respect to their trigger, shear waves move downwind across the ground.

## Simple shear waves (Fig 1)

Shear waves that result from such shallow wind gradients are small both in wavelength and in amplitude and tend to disappear as the two air masses become mixed. Therefore, they are not much use to glider pilots.

Two air masses blowing over each other from different directions will create shear waves. In addition, the upper air flow may lift over a lee wave embedded in the lower airflow, triggering a wave pattern in the upper flow.

Deep wind shear where the wind gradient occurs over hundreds or even thousands of feet can dramatically affect the shape of lee waves.

Classic lee waves that propagate high into the atmosphere as well as extensively downwind, do so when, amongst other factors, the wind speed increases with altitude. In other words, there is a deep wind shear. A deep powerful shear is known to encourage the vertical development of wave.

## Classic vertical wave development (Fig 2)

When wind increases with height and there is an isothermal layer above the ridge. Note the longer wave length with altitude (adapted from Bradbury).

If there is a constant wind gradient lee waves tend to dissipate with altitude but when the wind decreases with altitude such as in a reverse shear, not only do the lee waves die out with altitude but they tend to become forward hooked and sometimes even topple and break. Breaking waves are rare below the tropopause but when they do occur, pilots involved have been known to swear off wave-flying for ever!

## Hooked or breaking waves due to a reducing wind gradient (Fig 3)

Sometimes lee waves are encouraged to tilt forward on their axis. A forward-tilting wave axis means that the wave soaring pilot will sometimes find himself soaring over or in front of his wave trigger. When low in the wave the pilot may look up and see a lenticular cloud associated with the secondary wave almost overhead and try to climb the glider up to it and be most surprised when the lift gives way to sink. The

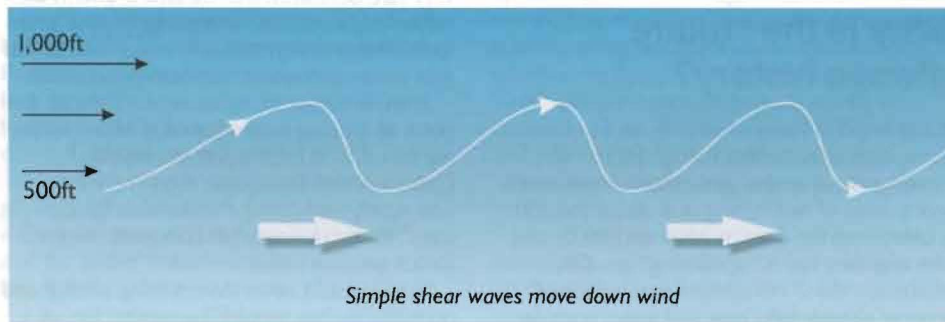


Figure 1



En echelon lenticulars and the Omarama windsock

(Gavin Wills)





An inverse Witch's Hat over Mount Benmore, Omarama, New Zealand  
(Gavin Wills)



A convective wave embedded in, and enhancing, a lee wave in the lee of the Ben Ohau Range, Omarama  
(Gavin Wills)

trick in wave is always to seek upwind for lift before looking downwind.

#### Tilted and asymmetric waves, adapted from Bradbury (Fig 4)

Changes of wind direction with altitude change the shape of lee waves. It is, of course, normal for wind direction to change with altitude due to Coriolis' effect. Waves that originate parallel to a surface trigger may become skewed with altitude as the wind backs in the southern hemisphere or veers in the northern hemisphere. Sometimes this results in a form of Witch's Hat (see Fig 6c).

Thermal waves occur when strong thermals push up through a zone of wind shear to trigger a wave pattern. They are similar in shape to mountain lee waves formed in light wind conditions. However, these thermal waves move downwind with their thermal generators unless anchored by terrain.

#### Thermal wave with pileus cloud and a lenticular above (Fig 5)

Note the wave moves downwind with the thermal and the wind above the boundary layer (about 10,000ft) increases with altitude.

This phenomenon is common in Australia and dry continental areas where deep convection occurs with increasing winds aloft. In New Zealand they are rare but we once observed and flew along an interesting example of a stationary lenticular cloud at 18,000ft that was triggered by towering cumuli anchored to a very low mountain ridge upwind of us. As the sun's heating died, so the clouds collapsed and our wave disappeared, leaving us with a last-minute "how to get home" problem.

Extensive vertical development in lenticular clouds is caused by one of three factors; the shape of the terrain, wind-shearing in direction and/or speed with altitude or from possible conditional instability within the cloudy air mass itself. Conditional instability, for example, drives thunderstorms. If condensing water vapour in a forming cumulus releases latent heat and causes

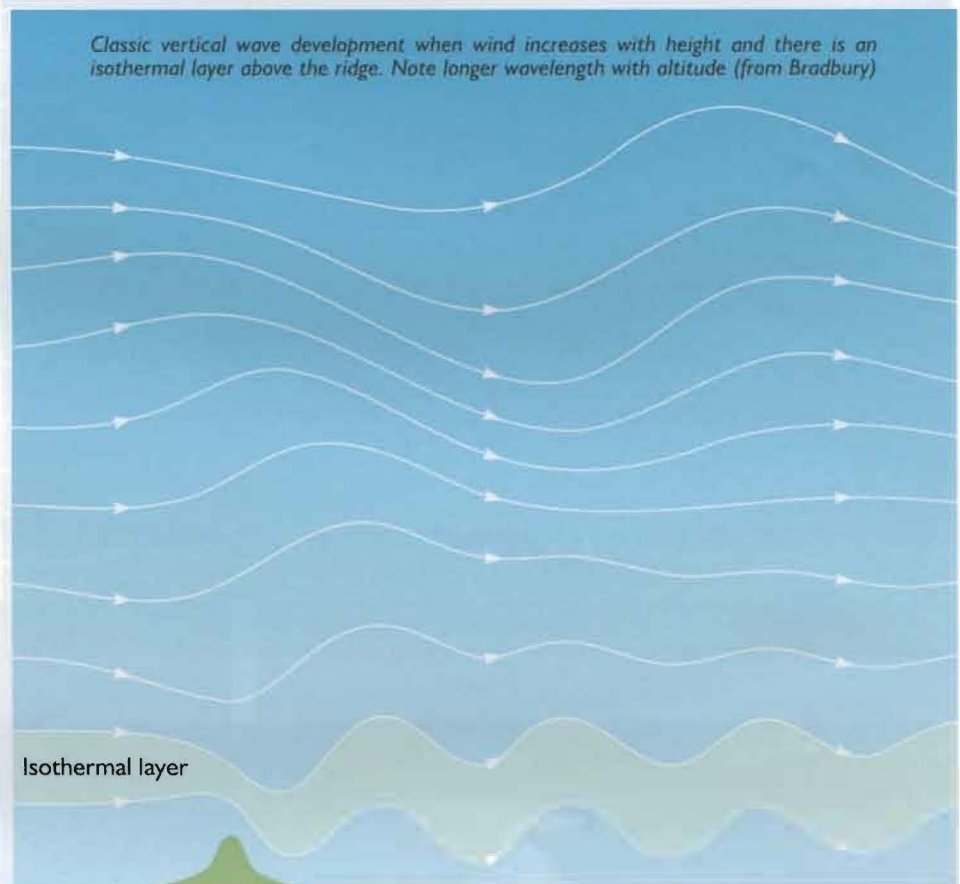


Figure 2

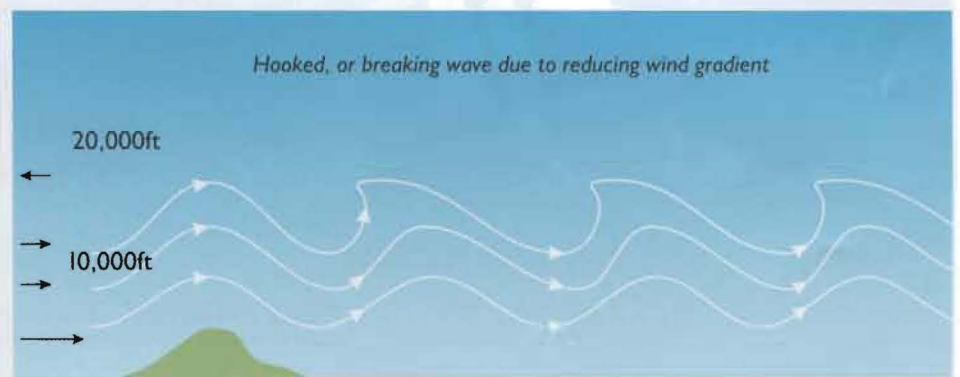


Figure 3





Lenticular cloud over the Omarama airfield with a scalloped-by-the-wind oblique to its trigger (Gavin Wills)

➤ the cloud to tower, the air mass forming the cloud is considered to be conditionally unstable.

Conditional instability may also drive cumulus-like deformation in lenticular clouds. Air rising in the wave condenses to a cloud, which becomes more buoyant than the surrounding laminar flow due to the release of latent heat.

### Witch's Hats (Fig 6)

Witch's Hats are isolated lenticular clouds with extensive vertical development. Generally they are taller than they are wide.

Sometimes they pop out above a lower lenticular cloud. Occasionally they seem to hang beneath a lenticular. They appear in numerous forms and usually indicate changing winds with altitude. Sometimes they form when conditional instability is present.

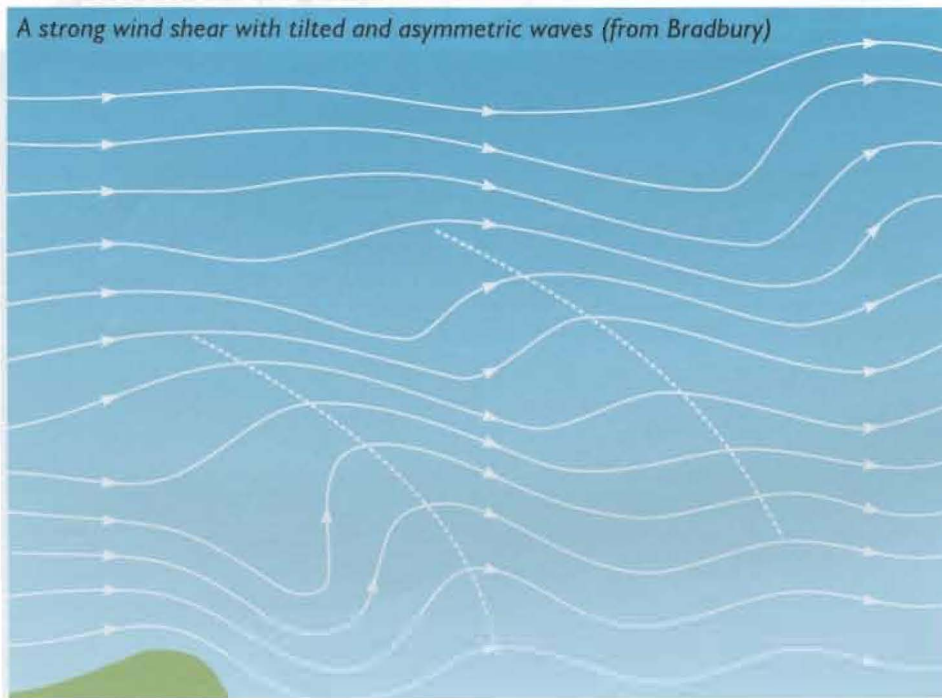
**(Fig 6a)** A Witch's Hat formed by the vertical development of a lee wave roto-cumulus due to the conditional instability of the lower air mass. The cloud is stationary.

**(Fig 6b)** A Witch's Hat formed by the wind's veering 90 degrees with altitude.

**(Fig 6c)** A Witch's Hat formed by two wind shears with three changes of wind direction with altitude

A few years ago wave flying at Omarama, New Zealand, I had an unusual experience and learned something about the genesis of Witch's Hats. Winds were from 290 degrees increasing to 60 knots at 15,000ft then rapidly dying out. This flow formed a well-marked powerful low-level wave to about 16,000ft. High above at about 22,000ft was a waving cloud sheet with a wind direction that appeared to be about 240 degrees.

We flew along the low-level wave until we were at a spot where the edge of the high wave intersected a spot directly above our wave and searched for a climb to take us above 16,000ft. We encountered some light wind shear turbulence first and then began to climb steadily at about 1.5 knots, but we



A strong wind shear with tilted and asymmetric waves (from Bradbury)

Figure 4

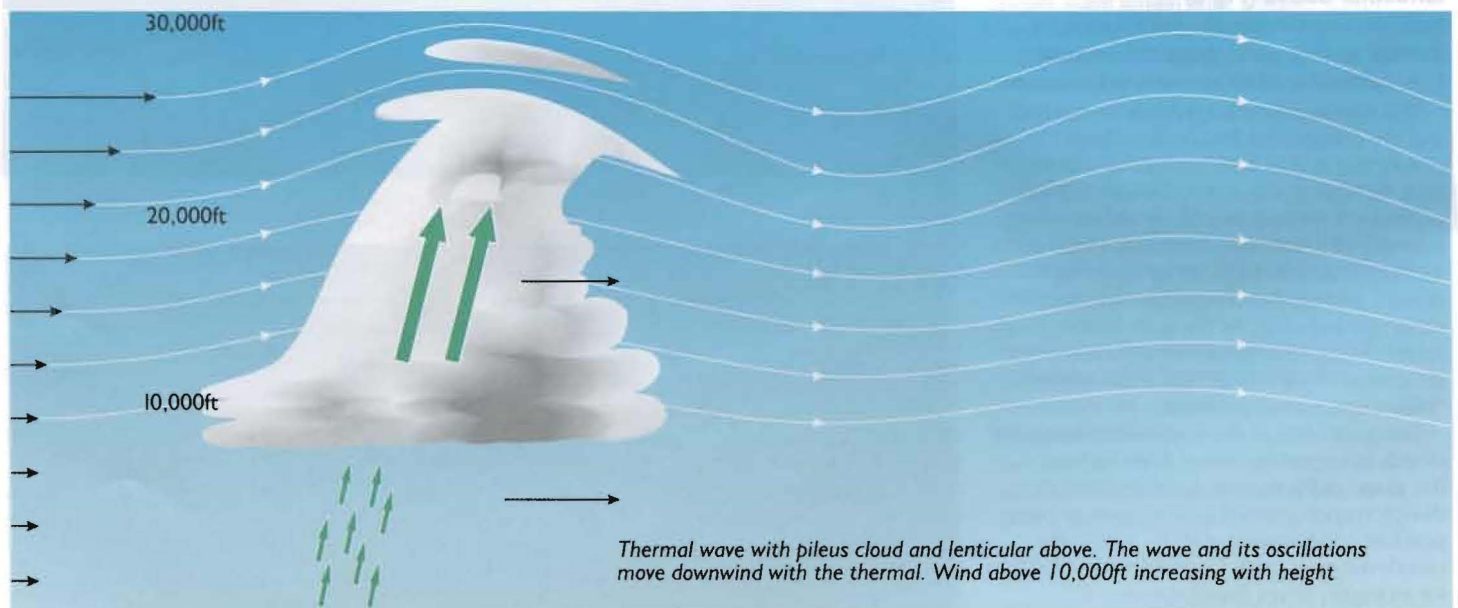


Figure 5



were facing a different direction; the wind had changed to 030 degrees at about 10 knots! A weak blue wave connected the upper and lower wave systems with a dramatically different wind strength and direction.

As we slowly climbed, we noticed that at similar locations to the south, where there was more moisture, clouds like Witch's Hats (Fig 6c) connected the lower to the upper wave systems.

It was clear that the wave pattern in the mid-level 030-wind flow was triggered by the lower wave system and was in turn triggering the high-level wave. We eventually climbed to the edge of the upper cloud sheet and cruised along it until the sun set. As we returned in the gloaming we realised that we had observed one of nature's little atmospheric secrets.

A variety of interesting shapes occur in amongst thermal generated rotor cumuli associated with lee waves. A particular phenomenon we call a Rolling Wave occurs when the inversion at the bottom of a lee wave is weak and the thermal action below the boundary layer is relatively strong. The thermal pushes up into the laminar flow, creating a thermal wave embedded in the lee wave.

**The Rolling Wave (Fig 7)**

Thermal waves embedded in a lee wave create a rolling wave. The large lee wave structure is stationary over the ground but the small embedded waves, which may be a thousand or 1,500ft high, move downwind with the roto-cumulus clouds.

Embedded thermal waves can create transitional difficulties for glider pilots as



Two Witch's Hats stacked over the Gamack Mountains, Omarama

(Geoff Soper)

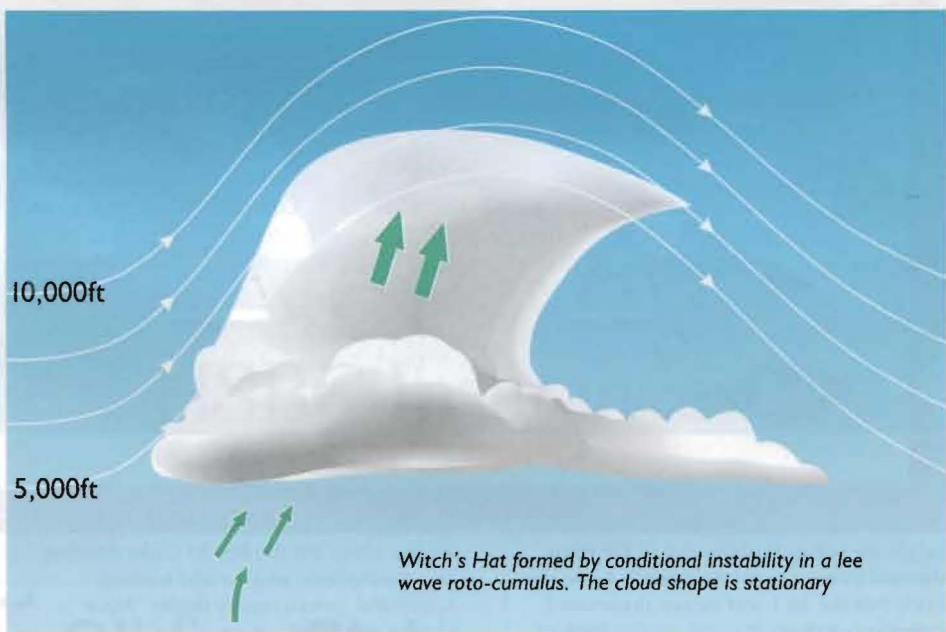


Figure 6a

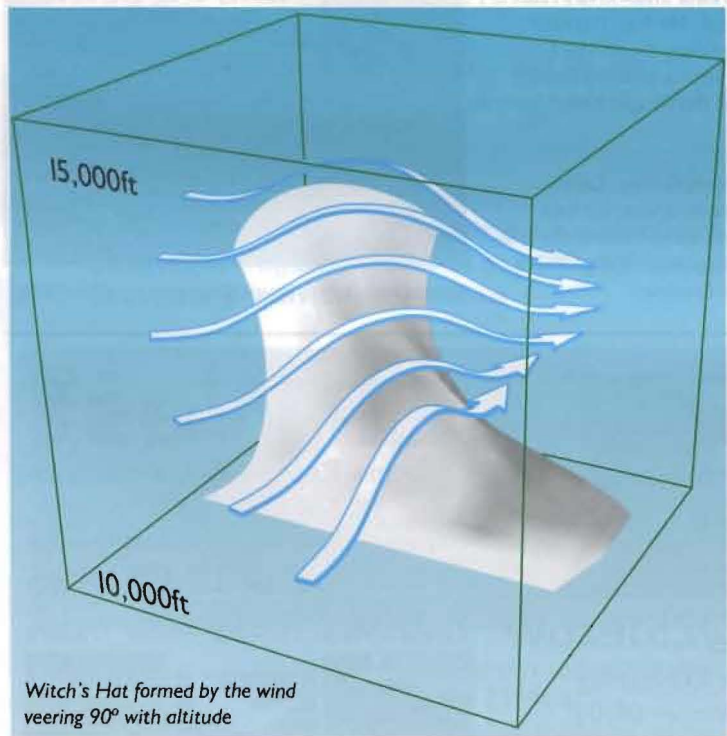


Figure 6b

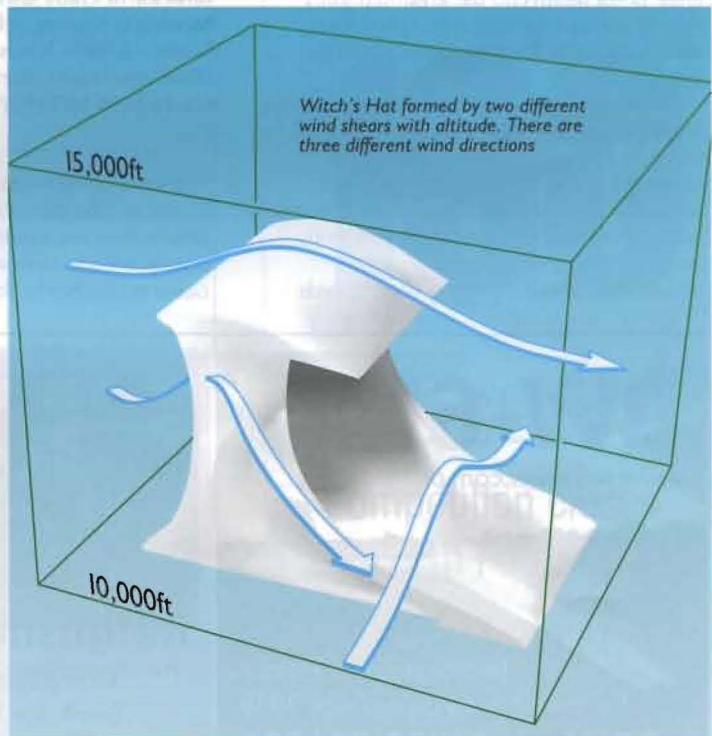


Figure 6c



A rolling wave embedded in a lee wave. The large wave structure is stationary, but the small embedded waves move downwind with the thermal clouds

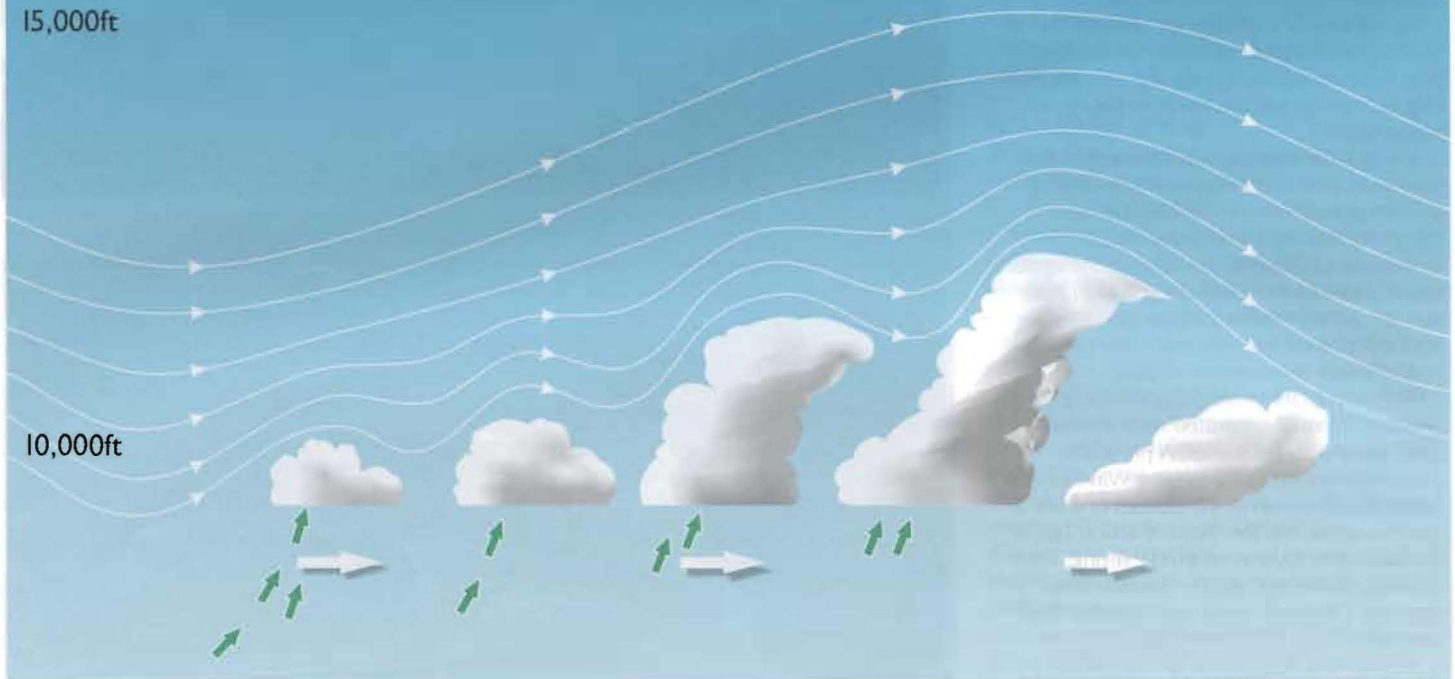


Figure 7

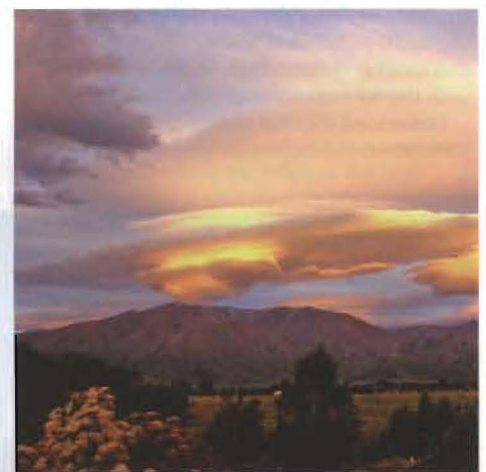
➤ one tries to become established in the larger lee wave. Pushing out of the rotor thermal to transition into smooth wave one finds that the lift band moves downwind eventually to become sink on the back of the lee wave. The trick is to keep pushing upwind to remain over the primary wave entry point relative to the ground. If the rolling waves are marked by cloud then always move to the new cloud forming upwind.

Atmospheric waves therefore are complex. Their shapes vary a lot and, when marked by cloud, some very interesting forms are observed. If the observant glider pilot understands why these clouds have formed he or she may not only soar more efficiently amongst them but can gather useful information about changing wind speeds

and direction. Such observations in the widest sense are the key to understanding the atmospheric engine and making successful cross-country flights. Wave shapes can help!

■ **Gavin Wills is the founder, owner and director of Glide Omarama and Gavin Wills Mountain Soaring School. He has 10,000+ hours – 6,000+ hours gliding since 1957 (then aged nine). Born into a soaring family, Gavin grew up flying in the mountains.**

The writer would like to thank G Dale, Lemmy Tanner and the Glide Omarama team for their observations and countless wave discussions and to acknowledge *Meteorology and Flight: A Pilot's Guide to Weather* by Tom Bradbury.



Sunset from Gavin's house, Omarama (Gavin Wills)

Illustrations by Steve Longland

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# Buying a work of art

It's not every day that you buy a brand new glider (particularly in these credit crunch times), but when Derren Francis visited the Schemmp-Hirth factory to view the first production Ventus-2cxa, he was the proverbial kid in a sweetie shop



**W**HEN Phil Jones (18m World Champion 2006) told me about a new mark of Schemmp-Hirth 18m/15m racing ship which comes with a jet engine I thought "how cool is that, I've got to have one of those".

Last April, after placing my order, I was invited by Tilo Holighaus (CEO Schemmp-Hirth) to his factory in Kirchheim Teck, near Stuttgart, to view the first production Ventus-2cxa. Someone needed to contain my excitement so I took my friend and jet engine technical adviser Gavin Goudie with me.

We arrived at the huge Schemmp-Hirth facility and met Tilo and Biggo Berger (face of Schemmp-Hirth), who gave us a full tour of all the workshops. I think it must have been five minutes before I turned into a kid in a

sweetie shop. What a fantastic experience.

What surprised me was the size of the whole operation; there are around five large workshops, final production shop, wing shop, fuselage shop and paint shops with a multitude of work going on, rubbing, polishing, manufacturing etc, the man hours required to produce such works of art is astonishing.

During our visit, Swen Lehner flew a Ventus-2cxa with a jet-sustainer; yes I did say jet-sustainer! Swen began by testing air starting, climb characteristics and performance. The optimised performance designed 'a' fuselage has a lengthened cockpit area which allows pilots now up to 6ft 2in to fit in. With an inch more in width, the 'a' cockpit is now roomier.

The fuselage behind the seat is still too

small for the solo engine, so the only reasonable solution for an engine is the small Olympus jet from AMT. The weight of the jet system in the fuselage is only 8kg; an additional 10kg weight is caused by the wing tanks.

The jet has a fuel consumption of about 0.6 to 0.8 litres a minute. One fuselage tank with 8 litres and two wing tanks (each 10 litres capacity) will last around 40 minutes. The jet control unit is designed by Martin Käppeler and is very easy to operate with just an on/off switch.

The first flights confirmed expectations and achieved a climb rate of 1.6 knots at full power at a speed of around 90 knots. Testing of this system continues to improve performance and should outclass some self-levelling turbos.





Tilo Holighaus (right) and Derren pictured above with the new Ventus-2cxa fuselage at the Schempp-Hirth factory and (below) Gavin and Derren with the Ventus-2cxa (Jet Turbo)



**My new Ventus-2cxa**

I returned to the factory in July to collect F2, work number 121, Ventus-2cxa no 9 with Mark Lavender, who helped with the hideous 12-hour drive.

It's the most wonderful feeling collecting your first brand new glider, which I never ever thought I would do. On arrival, Biggo explained that my Ventus was off to Hanweide for its acceptance test flight. We wasted no time in getting there to see it!

After a rapid return to the UK (obeying all international speed limits) F2 was rigged and I had the chance to do a quick circuit at Bicester. It's a delightfully comfortable glider and the extra few inches of cockpit fitted my ample size.

My second flight was at the MTOW of 600kg (8.6 tubs of water) on a weak low cloudbase summer day and first impressions were of a light and responsive aircraft with lots of feedback from the 18m wings and it climbs at max weight at 51kts very well.

A 200km flight against Afandi Darlington (no slouch) in his ASG seemed very promising. Results in the Worlds in Lüsse show it's a formidable machine, with Ronald Termatt achieving second place.

I asked Pete Stratten and Gavin Goudie to write an unbiased view on the glider after they had flown the "mighty machine", no point asking me for a straight answer!

The glider is due back to the factory in winter to have its jet fitted – so watch this space.

■ **Derren Francis is an airline pilot for Tag Aviation. He flies a Challenger 605, glides at Windrushers and enters national gliding competitions. He started gliding in 1985 at Lee on Solent and has a Ventus-2cxa and 8,000 hours.**

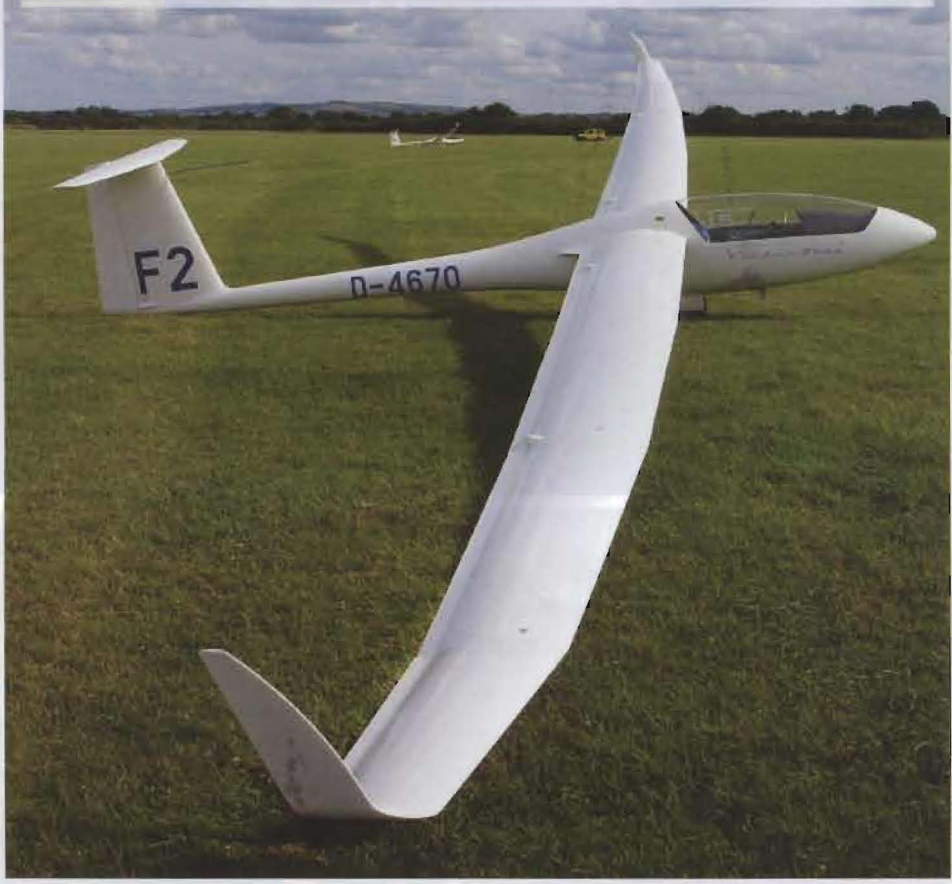
**Pete Stratten writes...**

DERREN generously offered me a trip in his 18m Ventus-2cxa with a request that I supply some comment for his planned S&G article.

The competition results always speak for themselves with this class of glider and detailed flight test reports are available. However, the following observations might be of interest to a potential owner. **Fittings and finish:** Excellent. **Rigging:** A light four-piece wing, one pin and straightforward. **Cockpit:** No luxuries but plenty of room

even at 6ft 2in. **Handling:** Effortless. How do the designers do it? **Climbing performance:** Despite my efforts the glider out-climbed the few others I met during this mid-October 90-minute flight. **Stall/spin:** Exactly as described on the tin, with control authority and obvious warning right up to the point of departure with no surprises. Recovery from a developed spin was prompt with the standard technique. **Approach control:** Problem free with plenty of drag available.

In my view the Ventus-2cxa is another good reason for buying a lottery ticket.



Ron Smith Photography

**Gavin Goudie writes...**



I'M A big chap (6ft without heels) with wide shoulders and, on the occasions that I have flown 'a' model Schempp gliders, I have found that careful preparation and liberal amounts of Vaseline were required to get in and to get anywhere near comfortable.

So, when I first got in the 'cxa' fuselage at Kirchheim Teck I was pleasantly surprised to find an ample cockpit width and rudder pedals that even I had to pull towards me to reach. My first flight did not disappoint and the glider proved to be very comfortable, although a little more reclined than I'm used to, to ensure adequate clearance from the

canopy. The cockpit is well laid out and I immediately felt at home with all the knobs and levers just where they should be.

The controls are incredibly well harmonised and the Ventus displays all the traits of Schempp gliders that I love. It seems that on entering a thermal and pulling into the core there is an never-ending supply of extra lift as you slide the flap lever back from 'S2' to the climb settings. Even with the 18-metre wings, re-centering and quick roll reversal are easy while still all the way back in slow speed 'L' flap.

F2 is a delight to fly and provides that extra girth required by the modern-day glider pilot, whilst maintaining a sleek figure – I was joking about the Vaseline, no really I was.





# Shades of beauty



THANKS as ever to these photographers, this page, top:

YGC's famous clubhouse silhouetted against the rising sun. The Vale of York was shrouded in fog but the top of Sutton Bank was beautifully clear  
(Charles Cowley)

Burn's K-21 at sunset (Alastair Mackenzie)

Opposite page listed clockwise from top left:

The tug landing at Long Mynd on a winter's day  
(Robbie Robertson)

Flying over Glen Einich, taken from the back seat of Cairngorm's Grob103  
(Bob Forrest)

Black Mountain's K-21 in East Wave above Cymdu  
(Robbie Robertson)

(centre) Portsmouth and the Naval base, with Gosport on the right and the Isle of Wight in the background  
(Neil Shaw)

Paul Shuttleworth in LS6c soaring the west ridge at the Mynd with the Stiperstones in the background  
(Jon Hall)

(inset) John Williams is pictured on the retrieve tractor at Wyvern  
(Alec Watt)

DG800 flying from the Lakes Gliding Club at about 8,000ft looking out over the Irish Sea  
(Peter Redshaw)

If you would like your photographs to be considered for publication in Gliding Gallery or included elsewhere in S&G, do please send them to [editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk](mailto:editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk)







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# Making light of towing

**Douglas Every's invention makes light work of towing a glider. His alternative towing-out bar arrangement avoids having to lift the tail of his glider**

**A**LONG with, I am sure, very many others within the gliding fraternity, I find the task of rigging and de-rigging my glider (a Ventus CT) getting progressively more difficult as I get older.

Now approaching 63, the situation is made worse for me personally by the steadily worsening effects of rheumatoid arthritis. In this regard I am extremely grateful to my fellow club members at Dorset Gliding Club for their willing assistance; for without their help I would find it impossible to continue owning and flying my own glider.

Whilst I could see no easy answer to the rigging issue, it had crossed my mind that there might be a better way of towing the glider that avoided having to simultaneously lift the tail of the glider with one arm whilst fitting the tail dolly with the other, a process that had previously caused me to rupture a tendon in my arm.

## Early prototype design

My thought process led to an early prototype design based around the concept that the tail dolly would no longer have a heavy castor wheel fitted but some kind of receptor device.

The wheels would be mounted on the towing-out bar and be in such a position that the towing-out bar could be used as a lever to lift the tail of the glider, some 33kg in my case, easily and safely. The towing-out bar would latch into the receptor somehow and then be used to tow the glider safely.

Ably assisted by Dave Piercy, a fellow club member who manufactured the early prototypes, the design was tested and progressively modified until a functioning variant proved the concept to our satisfaction.

## Tube bending and welding

It was then a relatively short step to translate the design into something that could be reproduced to production standards at reasonable cost and in that regard I was lucky to find a very obliging company in Poole who undertook the necessary tube bending and welding operations at reasonable cost.

In its latest form, the towing-out bar features a simple arrangement to allow it to be split in two for transport. It is now in full use whilst the design is evaluated thoroughly to see if any changes or improvements are required.

The only drawback that I have come across is that it is not possible to reverse the car any distance with glider under tow because there is, in effect, a double articulation.



- 1 Early prototype testing
- 2 Production prototype
- 3 Fitting the tail clamp without having to lift glider
- 4 Locating the towing-out bar into the tail clamp
- 5 Lifting the glider easily with one hand
- 6 Towing-out bar in safe parked position
- 7 Hitching on without lifting
- 8 Hitched up and ready to roll

(Photographs by Colin Weyman)



# Aboyne's peak performers

**H**AVING returned from another particularly wet week at the Juniors, I didn't want to get my hopes too high for the 11th UK Mountain Soaring Championships to be held at Aboyne (30 August – 6 September 2008). I didn't think I would cope with another comp sat in the rain! Indeed, the forecast at the start of the week was not optimistic.

Director Mike Law opened the competition on Sunday 30 August with a brief silence in memory of James Davidson. This comp was his brainchild, and we would continue with the same fundamentals it had always run with – to provide a fun and exciting competition, utilising Aboyne's unique soaring conditions.

The line-up was 15 pilots from around the UK, a lot of them returning from previous UKMSCs and a couple of new faces. Gliders ranged from a Grob Twin Acro to a Nimbus 3T and, for the first time, we would be using the Regionals scoring system. In previous years the little ships had trouble keeping up, so we hoped this would settle the issue. We would also make good use of Assigned Area Tasks to ensure as level a playing field as possible while over the mountains.

Day 1 was a bit of an unusual one. After launch, we were buzzing around the Glen Tanner area in good strong lift, but it was immediately obvious there would be some large rain showers to contend with. With that in mind, everyone opted to start the moment the gate opened.

There was a good cloudstreet heading down the Dee Valley, but I was already not optimistic about the chances of pulling this



**Charlie Jordan reports from the 11th UK Mountain Soaring Championships. This year, the Regionals scoring system was used for the first time, a move which allowed the little ships to close the gap in a hard-fought comp**

task off – the first TP (Braemar) was being rained on heavily, and looked to remain that way for some time! Parking myself at the edge of the soarable weather, I tried to stay high as I watched some gliders getting very low further down track.

After hanging on for half an hour and not seeing anyone make much progress, I tucked tail and ran for home.

**'It wasn't long before I was rained on heavily (my cockpit is surprisingly leaky) and I came out the other side with wet wings and almost as wet sleeves'**

Amazingly, all the low gliders did climb away and bugged out home. More amazingly, John Williams (Z7) had gritted teeth and made a dive through the rain to nick the TP and glide back down the valley. A respectable 70km made it a comp day, albeit it only achieving 30 points for his troubles! No doubt our Royal Lochnagar whisky sponsor day prize made up for it.

Day 2 dawned brighter, and everyone was wiping the rain off their wings from the previous night with a little more enthusiasm.

It was a large AAT going on a tour of the North East corner of Scotland. I made a good start, and flew the first 15km with Robert Tait (P50 – the Acro – and he can make that thing go!). However, we came across a large shower, and I decided to take my Std Cirrus (S75) round the long way, gunning for the maximum distance. Truth be told, I didn't think the day would last long enough for anyone to get around, and wanted to get as many kilometers under my belt as possible.

After an agonisingly long glide, I found a climb, thanks to Pete Gray (606). Meeting up with Peter Ryland (403) I eventually got back to cloudbase and set off under a dead sky, heading for the second sector, Turrieff. It wasn't long before I was rained on heavily (my cockpit is surprisingly leaky) and I came out the other side with wet wings and almost as wet sleeves.

Low and struggling to climb, I met briefly with Scott Napier (R53). At 1,100ft, it was a last-ditch attempt and I left him in favour of a small spot of sun on the ground – 2knots turning into 6. I enjoyed a fast run down a sea-breeze (or something) front to the TP. I didn't go particularly far in, but almost on the north coast, to give a reasonable distance. Roy Wilson (A39) and John Williams, who arrived half an hour earlier than me, did maximum distance in this sector.

Looking down track towards the final sector (Loch Muick) I was in despair. It looked flat and wet. There was sunshine on the other side, but the Cirrus would hit the spuds before I got there. I therefore decided that staying airborne was the priority, in hope the day would cycle – and headed back along the coast to the first sector. It was slow progress with numerous low points – a big thanks to Stuart Naylor (R1) who marked the thermal that got me back to cloudbase!

My plan was to then head south over the mountains and nick the far edge of the final sector over Braemar. It was not to be, and I landed at Tomintoul, having unsuccessfully tried to cross a blue gap. Initially disappointed at my performance, things looked up after hearing that everyone had indeed landed out. A day win at 200km, the key being my massive detour which took me almost into the Spey Valley. It is a strange feeling to spend 1.5 hours going sideways and making no progress down track, but needs must...

Day 3 was another AAT, due to the



Charlie Jordan's glider, about to launch on task

(Laura Macaulay)





Field-landing in Glen Clova during the UK Mountain Soaring Championships

(James Addison)

unknown quantity of showers that would crop up again. A fantastic cloud street in the Tarland Bowl kept us entertained while waiting for the gate to open. I had a great start and initial run to the first sector at Mossat. Admittedly, I got carried away and went quite far into the sector – and when I turned around, the picture had changed dramatically. A wall of water stood between me and the next sector. I saw P50 landing out below, unable to make it over the ridge I was hovering over at barely 1,000ft, when I was joined by R1. We pushed out towards a couple of nice fields and, as if by magic, I cored a good climb. It was smooth and steady up to cloudbase, and the race was on against R1.

I shot off to another climb, which peaked at 7 knots. Running out of time before entering cloud, I saw a small gap through the rain and made a beeline for it. Sun was on the other side, and I just had to hope it would produce. Tactically, this was the wrong decision, and R1 took a different route. I did not have the height to get over the north ridge, and landed at Strathdon.

Stuart carried on and had a good struggle to a respectable effort, landing at Tomintoul. There were finishers however, with Dave Latimer (780) storming the day. He had gone

minimum distance, but in the day's conditions it was the right choice. It also appeared that cloud climbs were of huge benefit, and key to crossing the large areas of unsoarable air.

Day 4 was set as a standard racing task. The moment the gate opened, 780 and I promptly raced off and got low. I was cursing myself, scratching low after just 12km. Unfortunately, Dave landed there.

### **'A dirty dash to a cloud street running along the north of the Dee Valley paid dividends and I joined R1 for a stupendously fast run down the second leg'**

A last-ditch effort gifted me a decent climb, which peaked at 10 knots. Rounding the first TP at Heugh Head, I headed down a cloud street towards the second turn, Spittal of Glenshee. I was presented with a bit of a problem – large blue gap and rising ground meant there was not a large flying space for the Cirrus to find a climb. Many ridges later, I plonked it down in Braemar and went to find some lunch.

Those who did get to Spittal before the rain came enjoyed a struggle, but importantly, a finish. Patience was the key on that day, and I

screwed up. Within 15 minutes of landing the blue gap filled in, and it cost me. The whisky went to Phil King (618) for a sterling effort, making him the 4th winner in four days. The comp was proving to be anything but predictable, but Roy Wilson had sneaked in consistent high performances to leave him overall leader... a matter of just a few points separated the top five.

I almost went back to sleep after looking out the window on Day 5. The cloud was barely above the hangar, and by 11.30 it was not much better. However, we were holding out for a clearance, and it came along quickly. The heat got through and everything bubbled up nicely. Scramble! The first sector of another AAT was to be Corgarf Castle – a spectacular landmark, and I sure got a close-up view of it. Someone was looking after me, and a nice thermal came off a ridge that got me back to cloudbase. However, I now had to contend with a massive headwind. A dirty dash to a cloud street running along the north of the Dee Valley paid dividends, and I joined R1 for a stupendously fast run down the second leg: 160kph out of the little wings.

The street ended 8km short of the turn – Glen Dee Bridge. I had never been here, the terrain was barren and the sky didn't look ➤

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## UK MOUNTAIN SOARING CHAMPIONSHIPS

➤ promising. Getting there would be easy, but punching 8km into 25knots of wind would test the Cirrus and my nerves!

I cautiously followed the Duo into and out of the turn, but on the return trip I was losing out badly. Realising I would not make it over the ridge, I pushed on around the hill, making use of whatever I found. All I needed was 50ft, and I squeaked over the ridge into lift. Not wanting to put in a turn, I carried on straight and level...it took an agonisingly long time, but eventually by flying a straight line even at such a low level, I arrived at cloudbase.

I was effectively team flying with R1, and I think we thanked each other for the company on the third and final butt-clenching leg. For the first time in the week, we finished. Three more finishers screamed over head, but even more trailers left. John Williams and I became joint day winners.

Although there was effectively one comp day left, the weather did not look good. At 12, it was scrubbed, and we proceeded to prize-giving. At the UKMSC we also run a height competition in conjunction with the main comp. John Ellis (112) had been putting in some good height gains by cloud climbing and walked away with the trophy. He also took third place, receiving numerous prizes courtesy of our main sponsor, Joint Aviation.

Phil King ran in second, confirming his place as one of the top pilots this competition attracts. However, gongs went to the quiet but effective performance by Roy Wilson – a fantastic effort in such an unpredictable competition, and a lesson in damage

limitation. He received a very nice painting by a local artist of the stunning scenery we had spent the past week racing over.

The novice trophy went to Scott Napier of Easterton, who had fought the entire week with our novice, James Addison. Finally, Stuart Naylor and I took the Enigma trophy – no one knows what the trophy is for, so it was awarded for my and R1's team flying efforts throughout the entire week. Without it, neither of us would have done so well!

At five days, we quite possibly had the best UK comp of the year. And surprisingly, that has been the case for the last few years – apparently 21 comp days out of 28 over the past four years.

Aboyne has produced fantastic soaring and racing conditions, making this an exciting, enjoyable and hard-fought comp. The results

speaking for themselves, proving that employing the Regionals scoring has allowed us little ships to close the gap.

I would like to finish by thanking everyone involved in running the competition, and my crew for making my many landouts an efficient and hassle-free experience! In 2009, the comp will be run from 6-12 September, and we are taking bookings now. In every UKMSC we have novices and tasks reflecting the range of experience, so an in-depth knowledge of mountain flying is not essential. More information on this year's comp at [www.ukmsc.co.uk](http://www.ukmsc.co.uk)

■ Charlie has been flying for nine years, since he was 10. He soloed on his 16th birthday and has around 350 hours. He is a Basic Instructor and flies a Std Cirrus out of Aboyne.



Winners of the 2008 UK Mountain Soaring Championships (left to right) Scott Napier (Novice), Phil King (2nd), Charlie Jordan (Enigma trophy), Roy Wilson (UKMSC Winner), John Ellis (Height trophy and 3rd) and Stuart Naylor (Enigma trophy) (Laura Macaulay)

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# Cross Fell – a 50

IT IS very odd to take a 1,200ft winch launch from a field 650ft above sea level and find oneself staring at a finger of hillside with another 1,000ft to go to the top. Cross Fell: the western edge of the Pennines, rising out of the Eden Valley to just short of 3,000ft, a 45km ridge with enough bowls and gullies, cliffs and crags to satisfy the most demanding hill-pilot.

I first set out to fly this great hill in March 1958 with my fellow Cambridge students John Griffiths and Peter Bulman. We took ropes, a bungee, and the CUGC Skylark II, with Stuart Waller as crew (he who later flew the home-built Swallow Penguin from Dunstable to Anglesey). But the wind blew neither from the south-west (for soaring the hill) nor from the north-east (for catching the famous wave).

Stuck in a south-easterly for the week, we auto-bungeyed from Priests Crag above Ullswater and had a merry time in and out of the local hills, venturing as far downwind as Souther Fell, from where John transferred to Blencathra itself. You can read all about it in *Sailplane and Gliding* for December 1958. Now, 50 years later, I have at last arrived on the slopes of Cross Fell with a winch launch from Skelling, home of Edensoaring.

The inspiration behind our 1958 expedition had been the 1939 flight by Noel McLean of the Newcastle Club, who on 22 June was winched into the lee of the Cross Fell peak itself and climbed 10,540ft in a Grunau Baby. In a north-easterly the famous 'Helm wind' (so called because of the associated helmet-shaped cloud-cap) roars down the slopes of Cross Fell, at times causing great damage between the hill and the River Eden ("t'Helm never crosses t'Eden").

The Newcastle pilots, encouraged by the meteorologist Gordon Manley, reckoned that the resulting wave system would be worth exploring, and they were right. (Remember that it was only six years after the first-ever soaring in wave, in Germany.)

The story is told in *Sailplane and Glider* for July and August 1939, and repeated in Terence Horsley's *Soaring Flight* (1944) and Ann Welch's *The Story of Gliding* (1965, 1980).

So we called our 1958 trip the 'Cross Fell Expedition' in anticipation, and at Christmas 1957 John and Peter reconnoitred the Hartside area at the northern end of the range for launching fields (some authors refer to the whole Cross Fell range as 'Hartside').

Peter was at that time jointly developing one of the first electric variometers, marketed in due course as the Cross Fell Variometer. But the right wind never blew, and from that time to this, flying on Cross Fell itself has been an



**S&G's armchair pilot Anthony Edwards climbs back into the cockpit to realise a 50-year-old ambition at Cross Fell with a flight that was a real family affair**

unspoken ambition of mine. It has taken just over 50 years to realise it.

In the intervening time I did make one half-successful further effort, mounting a second Cross Fell Expedition in March 1974 with the next generation of Cambridge students. Again, the winds were unhelpful, but we launched several gliders from Croglin Fell, near Hartside, in a southerly. Alas, one of them crashed – close to the 1939 launching site as it happened – and we crept back to Cambridge.

I did get away from my own bungee launch but the flight hardly counted as soaring Cross Fell because the wind was only 10 knots and I quickly found a thermal and flew around the Eden Valley for a couple of hours. As the immortal hill-pilot Bill Crease used to say, "the thermals were mucking up the hill-lift".

**'Each beat I am higher and can turn further up the gully of Ardale Beck, until I breast the top of the spur at 1,750ft. Just like 50 years ago in the Lakes'**

So the years went by, marked by my occasional flights from Latrigg, near Keswick, to soar Skiddaw itself, to run down the Helvellyn range to Dollywaggon Pike and back in a south-westerly, and to thermal up Borrowdale and over Scafell in an easterly (all in Swallows). Exquisite flights, but not on Cross Fell.

Then the Latrigg crowd, who had been quietly maintaining the Cambridge tradition of expedition flying, founded Edensoaring on Skelling Farm beneath Cross Fell itself. Thomas, my son, who carries the hill gene (see S&G October-November 2008, p34), is secretary and treasurer, and had invited me and his sister Ann (Midland Gliding Club) to the mid-September flying week he was running. So Ann and I hitched on the Swallow trailer and headed north.

Fifty years has taken its toll, and for the first few days I felt too tired to want to fly. By Wednesday I was recovering, but it rained all day. Thursday was sunny, with a nice south-easterly which, Skelling pilots have learnt, is perfectly soarable by working the spurs of the great hill (just as Bill Crease taught me to do

at the Clwyds all those years ago). Ann and I rigged the Swallow and the urge to fly overwhelmed us.

Thomas himself winched me up to 1,200ft, some 1,850ft asl, and on turning left my cockpit seemed filled with the mighty slope stretching from horizon to horizon, its top still a thousand feet above. I flew straight as a dart to the first spur 'Man at Edge', arriving at 1,550ft asl to be greeted with the lovely turbulent energy of air climbing over the hill. Tuck into the hillside, startle the sheep. No need to be too close, the lift is so good. Try and keep the airspeed somewhere between 40 and 50 knots, ball in the middle.

Each beat I am higher and can turn further up the gully of Ardale Beck, until I breast the top of the spur at 1,750ft. Just like 50 years ago in the Lakes. Higher still, and I can creep forward over High Cap to Kirkland Fell, which slopes steadily up to the Cross Fell summit. But above its steep escarpment of Wildboar Scar the moor rises so gently as to be unsoarable in this wind. Still 300ft below the top at 2,650ft is the best I can do.

There's wave about and I went for it out in the valley, but it was not for the Swallow (a Duo Discus climbed to 10,000ft during my flight) and after a few beats back on Man at Edge and Muska Hill I returned to Skelling to let Ann fly.

In a long gliding career one remembers certain flights above all others. With me they are not the longest in distance or duration, or the highest or the fastest, but the ones in the deepest communion with the contours of the hill country, studying the flow of the air, watching the heather slide by a wing-span away, rising silently until the panorama of distant hills emerges beyond the nearer ridges, perhaps ending the flight in a thermal from where one can look down on the sculpted land that has given so much pleasure.

■ Anthony started with the Cambridge University Gliding Club in 1955 and was chairman from 1969-1977 and then president until the club reformed as CGC in 1996. S&G's Armchair Pilot and for many years chairman of its magazine committee, he flew plastic for too long before returning to his first love, a Swallow.



# 10-year odyssey



*Main picture: Anthony's daughter Ann in the Swallow over Thirlmere, photographed by son Thomas from his Mosquito*

*Above: Thomas in his Olympia 463 under Cross Fell*

*Below: Anthony in the CUGC Skylark II over Ullswater in March 1958*

*Bottom: After the storm, a fairytale ending*





# The other Australia

– part one



Narrogin Gliding Club's Puchacz on aerotow above runway 27, framed by local scenery. Dave Mellors at the controls. Lance Cole (left) is pictured below in Dimona with David Goldsmith at Bendigo

(Lance Cole)

**T**HE big gliding clubs of Australia are famous and often visited by overseas pilots, notably the Brits – us 'Poms'. Good weather, acres of airspace, and the ability to build hours and badges quickly are the key ingredients why pilots travel to Australia to glide – and quite right too.

From Benalla, Narroowmine, Geelong, and Lake Keepit, etc, many of you know the names and the places. But beyond the big names, there are other gliding clubs around what I like to call 'Big Island' – as opposed to our own 'Mud Island'.

So, fed up and frustrated with the British weather and its noose around my attempts to convert from power flying to gliding, I took off for three months touring in Australia as the gliding equivalent of a 'surf bum'. Consistent flying training and hanging around gliders under the sun being my aim.

As a novice – albeit with experience in aerodynamics and design – I was reluctant to show up at a big competitive club and, aiming for something different; seeing the other Australian gliding demographic was my starting point.

Which is how in November 2008 I ended up 20 miles north of Bendigo, Victoria, at Bendigo Gliding club's own Raywood airfield. The club is normally a weekends-only operation, but was holding its annual task week, allied to a gathering of the Vintage Glider club of Australia.

I pitched my tent amongst others and sidestepped the occasional spider and snake



## Escaping 2008's wet British weather, Lance Cole took off 'Down Under', to explore an alternative Australian aerial adventure

in the beautiful farming country and its wide open areas – ideal for landing out; the members provided a warm welcome and put the barbeque on...

The runway line-up saw modern composite/glassfibre beside vintage gliders for the dual winch and aerotow the club set up for the week.

It was refreshing to see a modern club scene working hand in hand with a vintage gathering: The line-up included the DG glider range, Jantar, LS, ASK and PW-5 and 6. These mixed with a Kookaburra, K-6, an Arrow, plus a Foka and others.

Leigh Bunting's pristine, restored 1955 Grunau Baby 2b VH-GDN and Jonathon Macallice's yellow Slingsby Dart circa 1962 (looking modern and slippery despite not being made of plastic), were real highlights on the flightline.

The Grunau went airborne in less than six feet on the winch and climbed like a swift on steroids. Club chair Peter Rapheal took it high and had fun.

Next up were leading lights of the vintage movement, Jenne Goldsmith in her K-6 and

husband David in his modified Kookaburra with aerodynamically re-profiled nose, canopy and tail.

My first flight was in a motor glider – the Diamona – which in the strong thermals climbed up to meet the pure gliders at 7,000ft one hot but bumpy afternoon. Motor gliders are increasingly popular in the rural isolation of Australia where the ability to self launch without a ground crew is more noteworthy than in the UK. More than 60 per cent of recent glider sales have been pylon-mounted retractables or fixed engine, motor gliders.

Then came a ride in the PW-6. Being used to K-13s I found the sensitive controls a challenge but did manage to thermal with proper high bank angles – too high... But it proved one thing – contrary to urban myth and the short look of those wings, the PW-6 rides and soars very well, especially in the tropics.

The PW-6 proved the point behind why UK clubs are upgrading to glassfibre for trainers from the stalwart K-13 design – as learning on non-glass and then moving on to a more modern airframe requires transition – which I





Clockwise from top left: Kookaburra glider owned by David and Jenne Goldsmith landing at Bendigo GC, Victoria, Australia; Grunau Baby 2 taking off from Vintage fly in at Bendigo GC; K-6 air-to-air being flown by Jenne Goldsmith over Victoria; Jantar landing at Bendigo GC (Lance Cole)

failed to grasp on that day.

Before I left Britain, I took a flying course at my local Cotswold Gliding Club, where under Simon Buckley's superb safety culture leadership, two PW-6s are offering a more slippery, better connected and modern introduction to gliding over the K-13.

But after a gap in my flying, the PW-6 and I needed work. I was also surprised when I tried to fly it from the back seat, just how much the high instrument cluster and low

seat restricted visibility. "Sit on a cushion" came the Australian response...

Of note, the weather became a defining factor and a growing learning curve; I noted even experienced pilots studying it intently.

"Glider pilots from Europe need to check out the local Australian weather patterns and characteristics to make the most of their flying when visiting us."

So said a respected veteran local pilot. His point was well made because with high latent temperatures, convective effects, moisture gradients with polar airflow, and convergent air patterns and pressure flows, Australian flying weather is easy to both predict and to localise for your specific location.

On a daily basis at Bendigo, detailed meteorological forecasts accurately predicted the heights of inversions, pressure patterns and thermal trigger times and locations. Flights of four to six hours were made as daily routine and this level of pilot information is clearly a technique to be aped where applicable.

Being out in the country also means that the airspace is open all the way up to 24,000ft – and beyond with ATC notification – that's real freedom.

From Bendigo, I called in at the Southern Cross club at Camden, near Sydney – where young and old members alike were ever eager to assist a visiting pilot – even if he was a Pom!

As I was to find all over Australia, the future of gliding in the country and elsewhere and

the type of people it attracts, was a core debate. Another key discussion was on parachutes – some Australian clubs tend not to use them on two-seaters for club flying, but wear them for solo work. I was probably lighting a blue touch paper, but the debate was worth having.

Next it was off to Western Australia (WA) to visit the Narrogin Club – again a smaller club that was running a week-long visiting meet and, due to demand, an extra, novice to solo course.

WA's big club is at Cunderdin, but I chose Narrogin through a friend's recommendation and out in the wheatlands a warm welcome awaited surrounded by more gliding fanatics who were 100 per cent professional.

Meanwhile the Brits back home were shivering in winter, and their gliders mostly packed away.

Being a gliding 'bum' in the sun was becoming addictive; all I really needed was a VW camper van and a Sheila...

**Lance Cole is a former columnist for *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Independent*. He is an internationally published journalist/broadcaster, author of eight books on cars and aircraft and comes from a family with gliding links going back over 60 years. Lance crewed a Catalina flying boat through Africa in the 1990s. Concorde test pilot Brian Trubshaw wrote the foreword to Lance's book on the Vickers VC10 published by Crowood Aviation. More tales from Lance's trip in the next issue.**



Impressive cloud form photographed between Northern Territory and Timor at 35,000ft (Lance Cole)



# Super soaring in Spain

**F**OR the last 10 years a small group of Yorkshire Gliding Club members has travelled to Spain to fly at Fuentemilanos. The airfield, at 3,000ft AMSL, is situated just to the north of Madrid close to the Guadarrama mountain range.

The mountains stretch for 300km and are up to 3,500ft above the airfield. Strong thermals are produced in the area (typically 6 to 8 knots) coupled with a soaring day which can be eight to 10 hours long. An average club pilot should easily achieve 300km or 500km flights while the experts regularly fly 750km or 1000km.

Both blue days and days with the sky full of cumulus can be expected, but the famous feature of Fuentemilanos is the convergence line which sets up on many days to give long flights without the need to stop and turn. Cloudbase on these days can be 6,000-13,000ft above the ground.

The airfield is at the centre of the mountain chain and has many alternative airfields or short landing strips in either direction. This is ideal as outlandings can present problems unless care is taken. If low, one flies to the plains where by late June the crop is cut and there are many stubble fields.

It is essential that you receive a comprehensive briefing before flying and a site check in one of the club gliders if possible. All launch instructions are given by the pilot and a call is always given when downwind on the airfield frequency.



**Peter Clay reveals the attraction of Spain's Fuentemilanos airfield – a convergence line which sets up on many days to give long flights without the need to stop and turn, with a cloudbase of up to 13,000ft above the ground**

You can hire the club gliders if you do not take your own. July and August are the recommended months to visit as these give the best flying conditions and longer days. Also as this is the busiest time you can guarantee camping, restaurant facilities and two tug aircraft will be available

Although the local pilots use the site at weekends for most of the year, if you decide to go at any other time I suggest that you contact the airfield by phone or email to ensure that the facilities you require will be there.

Flying days start with a briefing at 09.30. Local soundings are taken and the weather forecast is very comprehensive and usually accurate. It is given verbally in English, Spanish and German and all the staff speak English. Then you can make your own plans for the day.

You can take your glider to the launch point and you do not usually wait long for a tug.

On average there are 50 gliders to launch but since over half can be self-launchers these

are slotted in and cause no delays. The runway is 1,000 metres and all tarmac. Airspace changes a little each year and in 2007 it was 9,500ft above the airfield, but 19,500ft was available within 50km in one direction and 120km in the other.

Fuentemilanos airfield is also a recognised camping site with all the usual facilities such as toilets and showers (cleaned daily), swimming pool, tent areas with electric points and a few bungalows. The bungalows sleep three with toilet, shower and air conditioning.

**'It is possible to take off about two o'clock after a morning's sight-seeing and a leisurely lunch and still do 500km in the six to seven hours soaring left'**

The bar and restaurant are open from 09.00 till late and serve all day. In 2007, a three-course evening meal with a drink included was 11 euros.

It is a sad reflection on the British weather that I have done more hours and kilometres in three weeks in Spain than all year at home.

If you are the laid back type it is possible to take off about two o'clock after a morning's sight-seeing, a visit to the supermarket and a leisurely lunch and still do 500km in the six to seven hours soaring left! A 1,000km needs a little more commitment!

There are many different ways to travel to Spain. One is the long ferry trip to Santander and another is the Dover-Calais route. Either will mean two days travelling and costs can sometimes be reduced by early booking.

This paragraph has been left to last as most glider pilots I know will have no other interest in the visit other than flying. If, however, you do take your family they will find an area rich in history. Madrid is only 30 minutes away by the new high-speed train, and the walled cities of Avila and Salamanca are worth a visit. Royal palaces and castles are not far away and even the local villages are full of surprises. The final bonus is that you are unlikely to find any lager louts or even a British tourist here!

Information is available at [www.fuentemilanos.com](http://www.fuentemilanos.com)

**Peter Clay flies at the Yorkshire Gliding Club at Sutton Bank. He is the owner of a Ventus Turbo.**

## What you need to fly in Spain

There are very few formalities if you take your glider to Fuentemilanos but you will need to take the following documents:

- A current medical certificate
- Glider CofA details
- Glider insurance certificate

- Glider log book (up to date)
- Pilot's licence (if you have one)
- If you intend to fly club gliders you will need to book well in advance of your visit. Take your personal log book, medical certificate and FAI badge book.



Malcolm Winter





Main picture: Pushing on to a good-looking sky. Inset (l-r) Still early morning but cumulus already building on the mountains (Malcolm Winter); Control tower, clubhouse and hangar; An English day forecast with bases starting at 4,000ft and rising to 6,000ft agl later. No rush to take off yet then! (John Ellis)



Looking to the north from Avila. Good lift and 13,000ft asl cloudbase on the plains (John Ellis)

## A few tips to make your trip easier

- Take a Michelin road map of the area. Air maps with details of local NOTAMs and letters of agreement are available at the club.
- Oxygen is useful as operating heights can be well above 10,000ft.
- Many gliders now carry flarm.
- Load up Spanish maps and waypoints into your navigation equipment before you go.
- Always carry plenty of water. Not always used during flight but a lifesaver if you land out.
- If you intend to claim badge flights take a BGA form and an official observer if you can. Spanish claims otherwise are a long and difficult process.
- You can self-brief from the notes in the briefing room but much better to get one from an instructor.



# Please, don't cry for me A

WRITE this as I look out on the massive Avenue Julio 9. It's 04:00 in Buenos Aires, a city that really never sleeps. From the hotel window I count 26 lanes between me and the buildings opposite and taxis race around, oblivious to any semblance of European road discipline. In a few hours I'll use one to start off home, meanwhile I reflect on what was, what might have been, and what may be yet to come.

Normally a mention of 04:00 in these pages is about early launching prior to a big flight – after all that's what I had in mind coming to Argentina just over two weeks ago. In fact I'm taking home a log book with just one new entry, a one-hour local ridge flight as P2 in a club two-seater...

Many would see that as a massive waste of time and money, somehow it doesn't feel that way and I try to work out why. A little book called *Mastery* by George Leonard comes to mind; I read it 15 years ago but what stuck in my mind was the bit about progress happening in fits and starts. We tend to think of progress as the breaking through to the next level in sport or in life, and often look on the long grinding stretches in between as times of frustrating, wasted stagnation.

Leonard's point was that the many plateaux are where the real progress happens; breakthroughs that seem to magically emerge later are no more than the inevitable result. So don't get hacked off by times of apparent stagnation, rather recognise them as the essence of future breakthroughs.

I guess it works for the circuit bashings that precede good landings, outlandings that precede Silver distances, scales and arpeggios that precede Plat's musical mastery. Maybe the chance to sniff around, inhale cultural differences, look at logistics and mentally



**John Williams returns from a trip to Argentina with just one hour in his log book, but with a wealth of information to stand him in good stead for his next trip**

rehearse what would be needed to come back with a glider is an essential prerequisite for completing big flights in a new country too?

I've been privileged to fly in Scotland at a time when pioneering flights have been possible and to explore up to (and sometimes a little beyond) its edges. There is unquestionably much more to be done (1,500km in GB may be doable), in addition to further enjoying the delights of what we already know is possible.

**'Don't get hacked off by times of apparent stagnation, rather recognise them as the essence of future breakthroughs'**

However at 56degN the scarcity of December daylight hours does tempt you to open the atlas – interestingly it shows that Portmoak is nearer to the North Pole than Cape Horn is to the South Pole and it confirms that Tierra del Fuego does seem to lie at one end of an awesome ridge run...

At last year's OLC (Online Competition) conference I'd heard Klaus Ohlman describing Patagonian wave, and read of his gargantuan exploits in S&G. So I phoned him

at Serres, he was charming and most generous with his time and vast font of information and experience.

He'd be pleased to fly with me in Argentina ([www.quovadis-aero.com](http://www.quovadis-aero.com)) but wouldn't have a two-seater available this year. He will only have a DG-400 at San Martin los Andes this year (watch out for tumbling 15m records), but suggested that maybe Jean-Marie Clément would again be running an operation from Bariloche and could help?

Perhaps less known to UK S&G readers, Jean-Marie is the third part of the record-breaking triumvirate which also included Terry Delore/Steve Fosset and Klaus Ohlmann. My call to JMC revealed that yes, he was shipping his Nimbus 4dm out this year (his 8th successive year in Patagonia – [www.topfly.free.fr](http://www.topfly.free.fr)) and I could book an early November slot.

So on impulse I did just that.

A vast supply of excellent preparatory information followed by email and I started to enquire more about the man. I noted (in an unjustly brief summary) that he was a long-standing French team member, the first person to do 1,000km in wave in the Alps, the first in the world to complete a declared 2,000km out and return and that he had a sub five-hour personal best time around 1,000km.

Talking to and eventually meeting him revealed why; a huge level of experience, a meticulous attention to detail, a deeply engrained safety ethic, a fundamental understanding of wave (including recognition of atmospheric "hydraulic jumps" from his past as a civil engineering professional) and last, but not least, the patience of a saint – essential to overcoming the endless bureaucratic challenges of importing a glider

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# Argentina

to S America. However none of those qualities could overcome the abject failure of the company shipping his Nimbus – 18 days late on a promised 18-day journey, meaning that I embark on my flight home on the very day that the glider first arrives at Bariloche. So I'm left with just a few thoughts about spending a wave season in Patagonia:

- Swallows (feathered ones) aren't daft – think glorious spring days in November and December
- Argentina is truly enormous – 35 times the area of Scotland
- Patagonia is exquisitely beautiful – think Lake District on steroids
- Visibility is just silly – at the start of a 1,000km o/r you can see as far as the TP
- Airspace is good by our standards – but need aviation Spanish for local ATC
- You undoubtedly need experienced help to start to fly there
- The people are delightful and will do anything they can to help you
- The wave I saw on arrival in Bariloche was stunning
- Not every day is good so don't chance a short trip
- Perfect wave days are not good sightseeing days (clag on peaks)
- Perfect tourism days aren't good gliding days (no wind for wave)
- The soaring potential is unparalleled
- The non-gliding options are huge too.

A trip to Patagonia is undoubtedly a serious commitment, a major adventure in its own right, and an extraordinary opportunity to do phenomenal things in gliders. I know a certain Antares that just has to get there in 2009 if it's to fulfil its destiny – now does anyone know a trustworthy shipping company?



Bariloche wave bars in the moonlight –the next big step to four or five thousand km flights? (Jean-Marie Clément )



Sitting behind Roberto Petri (no really – not Bob Petri the Portmoak CFI but Roberto Petri the Club Planeadores Bariloche instructor!) admiring the view of Lake Nahuel Huapi and a tiny piece of the Andes from an IS28B. Bariloche town in the distant centre (John Williams)

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# JS1 is a design revelation

**AFANDI:** Briefly describe for S&G readers, the backgrounds of the Jonker brothers. What got you started in aviation and how come you are now running a glider factory?

**Uys:** Like many aviation enthusiasts, we can trace much influence back to our father and his interests. In our early youth my brother Attie and I built model airplanes like a lot of kids, but the major catalyst came from a plans-built Miller Tern glider project that our father undertook during our pre-teens and into our teenage years.

Watching and participating in the project really shaped us into thinking that it was commonplace for people to build gliders. Our father also instructed us to fly gliders which led to initial competition with the Tern, and also a Standard Austria we rebuilt from a wreck, but our real desire was to compete with glass ships.

Due to limited finances, we rebuilt a pair of Cirruses, competed with them, and eventually made the South African Team. We also dreamed of designing our own glider, but my brother and I had engineering educations to complete, after which I began a career with Denel Aviation (a South African aviation manufacturer that is part of Saab Aerostructures) and my brother Attie began lecturing at the university in Potchefstroom.

**AFANDI:** When did the JS1 project begin, and why choose to make an 18m glider?

**Uys:** The project really has multiple beginnings depending on how far back one goes: first there was the obvious aspiration during our university days to build a racing glider that we could compete with, and then we can also define a more formal start in



The Jonker brothers shared a dream of building the best competition glider in the world. Their JS1 Revelation has proved a consistent winner in the South African Nationals and fared well in the 18m Nationals at Bicester last year. Here, Afandi Darlington talks to Uys Jonker to give us the inside story about the racer's origins, designers, construction and performance

2001 when we established the business corporation. As for the glider span, our overall vision was strongly influenced by the belief we could achieve Open Class performance and at the same time retain the handling of a 15m class glider. Strangely this actually led us to decide on 18 metres before the FAI class formally existed.

**AFANDI:** Was the JS1 always intended to be strictly an 18m glider? What features of the JS1 were optimised for the 18m class?

**Uys:** In addition to being our personal preference, we always felt that the 18m class was the most competitive for new glider designs. Our aerodynamicist Johan Bosman and my brother Attie aerodynamically optimised the JS1's wing for single span and thus avoided some of the performance and handling compromises that can creep into multi-span designs. We put a lot of effort into quantifying the handling of the glider while it was still on the drawing board. For example, we used a polyhedral design with flaperons extending all the way to the wingtips and analyzed the aerodynamics with the glider steeply banked.

Connecting the flaperons across the multiple kinks in the wing posed some

challenges, but we were able to design around that and the system works well. We have given some consideration to offering the JS1 with alternate span options (either shorter or longer or both) and may well go that route in the future. For now our priority is rounding out the JS1 model range by adding sustainer and self-launch versions.

Our customers have commented that having the 15m span is really not a high priority for them; and also for the self-launcher version it makes little sense to have only 15 metres of span due to the extra fixed weight. Still, we may offer a multi-span 15m/18m glider if the demand becomes real.

**AFANDI:** What was the biggest surprise you had during development of the JS1?

**Uys:** One very exciting moment I recall fondly was when the wings were first joined to the fuselage – the moulds for each had been cut separately and the subassemblies built without any trial fit or integration outside of the CAD models. We were understandably apprehensive about bringing the parts together and we were pleasantly surprised with the accuracy of the computer models when the fuselage and wing roots fitted perfectly.

The development side was mostly a lot of fun and in many ways a big adventure without much pressure. However, the transition to production gave us a pretty big surprise with the sheer magnitude of work needed to go from prototype to producing series gliders.

Overall, I'd have to say the biggest surprise has been the level of interest and overall support from the soaring community.

The number of people that have called us and congratulated us has been phenomenal – even though we had a website all along, we never really appreciated how many people were following the JS1's progress and rooting for us.

**AFANDI:** How long was it between the project starting and the JS1 flying?

**Uys:** I figured you'd ask a question that is going to make my head hurt; we formally established Jonker Sailplanes in 2001 and first flew the prototype in December of 2006, so that makes it five years. But if you also



The brains behind the JS1 Revelation (left to right) aerodynamicist Johan Bosman, Attie Jonker and Uys Jonker



consider the timeframe preceding the decision to go into series production, we were actually working on calculations and drawings as far back as the mid nineties – so from that perspective it's a full decade.

If I think back to the 2006 prototype, it was very much production conforming since most of the moulds and tooling were actually finalised, however it still had some less apparent details to be worked out such as the landing gear door mechanism, the seat back adjustment, the brake fluid reservoir, etc. These and a myriad of other details have been refined since then, many based on very constructive feedback from our customers.

**AFANDI:** Can you describe some of the design features of the JS1, and any features that make the JS1 different from other 18m gliders?

**Uys:** With the JS1 we wanted to advance the performance and handling in the 18m class, yet also stay close to the expectations of conservative pilots and maintenance personnel. We wanted pilots to easily transition to the JS1 and be able to quickly focus on extracting all the performance it has to offer.

We also had repaired quite a few gliders over the years and we had some pretty clear ideas of things we liked and things we didn't. To begin with, the flaperon mixing is done within the fuselage. This means that there are only two control connections per wing (one airbrake and one flaperon) instead of three (airbrake, aileron, and flap) as is true for some gliders that have mixers in their wings.

So, fundamentally our glider has full span flaperon sections that always move in unison, which is quite different from gliders that have the outboard flaperon sections reflex when the inboard flaperon sections go to extreme positive settings. Having all the flaperon sections work together has some benefits, but also requires extra design attention.

One advantage is the wing thickness can be reduced without concern for encroaching on space for flaperon mixers in the wings.

Being in the fuselage, the JS1's mixer linkages are also fairly accessible to work on. On the other hand, due to the thin wing, the JS1's airbrakes need triple blades to fit in the wing and still achieve the required panel area when extended. This did create a design challenge, but the linkage solution actually turned out to be quite ordinary. Since all the flaperons are lowered together we had to address tip stalling.

The practical and fairly unique solution was to design location-specific profiles from the parent T12 airfoil developed by Johan Bosman. There are six profiles and the outboard ones are tailored for the reduced Reynolds numbers and designed to stall at progressively higher lift coefficients. This immensely benefits handling during steep turns and keeps the stall behaviour docile and predictable during landings.

Since the entire flaperon span is at very positive flap settings we have seen some





➤ impressive short-field approach capability. We also decided early on to put in a Cleveland hydraulic disc brake as standard equipment and it really shortens the landing roll-out.

There are numerous smaller details that we are pleased with: the horizontal stabiliser's planform shape and high aspect-ratio are quite eye catching – we've received many compliments about it and also about the main wing shape; the water tanks in the wings vent through breather holes at the base of the winglets as one would expect – the unique detail is that when the wing extensions are installed at the wing junction the o-ring sealed brass vent fittings plug in automatically so there are no tubes to connect; for tail ballast we have two tanks – a main one that is dumpable in unison with the wing tanks and a secondary tail tank to tune the CofG for specific pilot weights; lastly we've added flush-mounted water fill points in the skin of the vertical stabiliser so that the tails tanks can be filled and drained even after the wing tanks have been filled.

**AFANDI:** The wing sections of the JS1 are thinner, at 12.7 per cent, than other new 18m gliders which are around 13.1-13.4 per cent thick. How much of a drag saving does this give and how does the maximum lift coefficient compare to thicker sections? Have you managed to make a set of wing sections with lower drag than previous sections, but with the same level of maximum lift?

**Uys:** This is difficult to quantify because we have wing section data for our T12 profile series, but only published data from older gliders are available and nothing from the current production 18m gliders. Also, one has to be careful when comparing profiles to really ensure apples to apples comparisons: is the data calculated (software) or experimental (wind-tunnel); if calculated are the underlying methods the same and if

experimental are there suitable correction factors between tunnels?

Our optimisation was a progressive refinement whereby we kept improving on our previous iterations as opposed to quantifying against other designs. On the qualitative side I can say that in cruise the JS1 behaves much like a glider of higher wing loading. In other words, with a lower wing loading we keep up with comparable 18m gliders that are more heavily loaded. We are fairly convinced this is due to the thinner section.

The climb performance has exceeded our expectations and apparently turned some heads in contest gaggles.

**AFANDI:** There was some mention of an innovative double-row blowing turbulator system on the JS1. Is the system working yet and if you can make it work, what level of performance improvement might it deliver?

**Uys:** The double row system actually allows for blowing from one row over a certain speed range and suction from the other row over a lower range of speeds.

Current production JS1 sailplanes all have a single row of blow holes and they can be upgraded if we decide to implement the second row.

The performance with the single row is very good in its own right. The second row with suction has been tested in the wind-tunnel and shows a quantifiable improvement. For now the method has been patented by the university and Jonker Sailplanes will pay a royalty to the university if we decide to implement it in production sailplanes.

As for the numbers, extrapolation of the wind-tunnel test results gives the prediction of another point or two of glide performance. The challenge is still on how to generate the suction energy in the actual aircraft. We have some academic research focused towards this at the moment.

**AFANDI:** Crashworthiness is a very important design aspect for new gliders, how has Jonker Sailplanes tackled this on the JS1?

**Uys:** We definitely consider pilot safety to be one of the highest priorities at JS and we feel that crashworthiness just cannot be compromised for economics, racing performance, or other motives – especially true when considering some of the more rugged locations we now compete in.

The aero-structural design aspect (wing strength, flutter, etc) is well addressed by various certification standards whereas there are additional design avenues for the crashworthiness side of things. A lot of pioneering work has been done by university groups, researchers, and notable designers (Gerhard Waibel to name one) and most of this information is readily available via OSTIV and other published resources.

So for the most part we built on the foundation work of others when doing the JS1 cockpit calculations and analyses. My brother Attie is the structural analysis expert in the company and he and his design team performed extensive finite element analysis (FEA) in the cockpit area. We independently tested materials in the university labs to be certain the actual properties were used instead of just using reference data. We also built composite assemblies and loaded them to create benchmark data then created the exact same models in the finite element software and applied the same loads in order to validate our computer methods.

The airframe was modelled by Attie in metric units and independently modelled in imperial units by one of his graduate students to further ensure validity of the analyses. On the whole I think we have well exceeded the requirements called for by the aviation standards.

Lastly, we've also attempted to carry the pilot safety philosophy to often overlooked elements of the cockpit. As an example, the upholstery of the JS1 has an energy-absorbing foam sheet sewn into the seat-pan cushion. There are published test results that show a dramatic decrease in spinal shock during impact tests for these types of specialty foam. As far as I know we are the first and currently the only manufacturer to offer this simple benefit as standard equipment.

**AFANDI:** How far through the certification process is the JS1?

**Uys:** The certification procedure actually has multiple phases. The first step is to achieve design organisation approval. We have already accomplished this and in many ways it represents the biggest certification hurdle. After this comes the manufacturing facility approval and then approval of specific aircraft types. We are currently working extensively on both of these phases with the South African Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and we expect CAA approval by early 2009. The ground work for European (EASA) and



All photographs courtesy of Jonker Sailplanes



American (FAA) certification is already in place to streamline approval by those entities.

**AFANDI: When are first deliveries expected in Europe?**

**Uys:** Unlike South Africa and the United States (both allow sailplanes to begin competing with racing or other airworthiness certificates) we've seen that most of Europe is more restrictive regarding certification. We are thus cautious about delivering sailplanes to European customers until EASA certification is imminent. We definitely prefer to avoid customer frustration that could come from unforeseen certification issues.

Interestingly, quite a few initial European customers have requested first delivery of their sailplanes in South Africa with the intent of doing some soaring safaris at some of Southern Africa's best soaring sites, with subsequent shipment of their gliders at a later date. Both the registration of JS1s with the South Africa CAA and issuance of temporary pilot certificates based on foreign licences are quite practical, so it provides an interesting option to pilots looking for adventure flying. We estimate that EASA certification will be complete in late 2009 and the first Europe destined gliders will be shipped at around the same time.

**AFANDI: How many JS1s have been built so far?**

**Uys:** Serial numbers 1 through 6 are all flying. Numbers 7 and 8 are in fairly advanced production states with first flights expected in January/February of '09. Numerous parts and subassemblies for numbers 9 and 10 are complete.

**AFANDI: What's the plan regarding the jet engine self sustainer version?**

**Uys:** We designed the JS1 from the outset to accommodate engine powerplants (either sustainer or self-launch), but the reality is development of new models must occur in manageable increments. Now that the pure sailplane design is finalised we are focusing more on the powered versions.

**AFANDI: Will the jet sustainer version meet the noise requirements (flyover noise less than 64dB(A))?**

**Uys:** We are familiar with the European noise requirements and believe that we'll be able to meet the sound level value.

**AFANDI: What plans are in place for the next product? Will it be a two-seater, or perhaps a stretch of the JS1 with a gross weight of 850kg would make a special open class glider, I think**

**Uys:** All good thoughts Afandi, but, as I mentioned earlier, our immediate focus is to round-out the JS1 product series with the



*Jonker Sailplanes claims that there has been a general consensus from pilots about the JS1 being able to readily out-climb and slightly outrun other 18m ships when at similar wing loadings*

powered variants. We do have long-term strategies in place to keep us at the competitive edge of glider racing. For example, we have ongoing aerodynamic and materials research at the university. My apologies, but due to their proprietary nature I cannot speak about the details just yet.

**AFANDI: What has been the hardest part of getting to where the company is now?**

**Uys:** There are substantial challenges to starting a new glider company. For us the biggest challenge has been to ramp up manufacturing with balanced growth in trained staff and suitable facilities. On the personnel side, we continue to invest a lot of effort into training our employees – whether experienced technicians from our glider repair business, transferred composites staff from our wind-turbine division, or new hires from other aviation industries.

The good news is that our technicians are now really up to speed and our quality control procedures are working well. Fortunately we are located a stone's throw from a top university and technical college environment and we therefore have a good selection of people.

Facility growth poses a slightly different challenge in that expansion happens in steps (as compared with the gradual introduction of new employees). Managing our finances and planning for building expansion to accommodate increased production requires much discipline. Overall we are quite conservative and financially our main focus is on the long-term viability of Jonker Sailplanes.

There are a myriad of other exciting challenges too, ranging from ensuring a visible contest presence (especially early on), to logistics, to airworthiness certification, to managing currency fluctuations, to the establishment of exclusive brand recognition.

**AFANDI: The JS1 certainly performs well, have any performance flight tests been done on the JS1? If so, what were the results?**

**Uys:** Thanks for the compliment. As yet, there have been no independent flight tests, only informal side-by-side flights with friendly competition pilots flying other 18m racing sailplanes. We have been able to compare numerous flight traces and the results certainly appear to be in our favour. It has also been satisfying to hear a general consensus from pilots about the JS1 being able to readily out-climb and slightly outrun other 18m ships when at similar wing loadings.

We're also pleased that this aligns very much with part of our design philosophy: specifically more wing area (benefiting the climb) and a thinner section (to maintain the run). We also have made internal flight tests with on-board data acquisition, but for now the focus of these is on the flight dynamics side (handling response, flutter, etc).

The bottom line is that we are happy with the JS1's performance relative to the competition. The 53:1 published glide performance is, of course, a calculated value and until someone independently shows otherwise, as I'm sure someone will try, we fully intend to stick with it.

**AFANDI: I understand you recently received an award from the Royal Aeronautical Society, can you tell us about it?**

**Uys:** Sure. We received a bronze award from the Royal Aeronautical Society at the 2008 Specialist Medals and Awards ceremony in London last November. My father Dr Tienie Jonker attended on behalf of Jonker Sailplanes since Attie, Johan, and I were unable to go.

The award is quite something for us since it is the first time a South African organisation has received such recognition from the RAeS since its foundation in 1866; the award recognises "a work of merit, which led to an advance or contribution in specialist disciplines in the aerospace industry.

The other award winners were a 30-man team from Skynet 5 Space for their work in developing an advanced military satellite for the British Ministry of Defence and a team from Airbus and Rolls-Royce for work on a quieter jet engine.

We also were made aware that the RAeS has a long history of recognition for work done in aerospace research since 1908, when Wilbur and Orville Wright went to London to receive the Society's first two Gold Medals a century ago.

It's quite special to have a connection like that.

**■ Afandi is an experienced aeronautical engineer and is Chief Engineer for the Kestrel turboprop business aircraft. He started gliding in 1989, has 1,400 hours and flies an ASG-29E at Lasham.**



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# Wing strike vs wing drop

**I**N THIS issue we look at the very first few seconds of the winch launch, from “all out” to the glider airborne and focus on two case studies with quite different outcomes – both highly dangerous.

The thing I have learned is that the earlier the wing drops, the worse the situation can be. It is also the case that if a wing clips the ground despite the pilot having full control, he may simply not notice.

The article goes on to describe how we know the wings are level, and the typical mistakes a pilot might make.

We also examine how the wingtip holder might avert a disaster.

## The consequences of a wing drop

In case 1, there was no injury or damage, but the risks were extremely high. In case 2 there were no injuries, but the aircraft damage was substantial.

## Case study 1 (glider does take off)

This case was first published in *S&G* and a short time later a similar incident occurred at Lasham, and some useful photographs were taken.

This glider was a relatively low wing loading K-13, being launched by a relatively powerful Supacat winch. The wing touched the ground very soon after “all out”, and caused the glider to start to turn. Very rapid acceleration meant the glider became airborne while turning.

This highly dangerous situation developed in a few seconds, and the only resolution was



**In those first few seconds of a winch launch from “all out” to getting airborne, it is vital to keep the wings level. Don Puttock looks at how to avoid a potential disaster caused by a wing striking the ground**

to pull the release immediately. Had the release not been pulled, the aircraft may well have turned upside down with catastrophic results.

## Case study 2 (glider does not take off)

I was unfortunate to witness a wing drop with a DG-505 being launched by a Supacat winch. The pilot failed to pull the release in good time, in five seconds the incident was over and the DG-505 had nearly £20,000 of damage.

In this case, the grass was long, but not excessively so. The additional drag was enough to retard the wing and cause the glider to behave a little like a child's spinning top.

The whole event was over from start to coming to rest in five seconds. The pilot stated he did not realise a wing had gone down and was initially unsure which way he was turning.

The twisting forces were so large the tail plane mountings bent and the tail plane fell off! Eventually the back release mechanism detached the glider from the cable. The pilot

then became a “passenger” and he had no further control of the aircraft. (See diagram on p49.)

## Wing strikes versus wing drops

Wing strike is my own terminology for a wing striking the ground while the pilot actually has aileron control – but because he did not notice, he fails to pull the release. We sometimes witness this during the ground run of a winch launch. This normally happens because the pilot did not notice the wing going down. Wing strikes are serious because there is a major training issue. Eventually these pilots will have an accident, it's just a matter of time.

A wing drop may or may not be noticed by the pilot, but this time he does not have aileron control.

Both situations are equally dangerous if the pilot does not release immediately; whether or not they have aileron control. I will deal with the two situations separately.

## Complacency

For every serious incident, we may see 10 or more near misses. These are occasions when the pilot gets away with “hanging on to the launch”, even if the wing touches the ground.

We also know that we can aerotow, for instance, starting with the wing on the ground. This is done in Australia a lot, without serious mishap.

These things can lead us to believe that we are skilled enough to deal with the problem. The problem is that no amount of skill will enable a pilot to recover from the circumstances shown in these case studies. The only solution is to pull the release before the wing touches the ground – there is no time for evaluation.

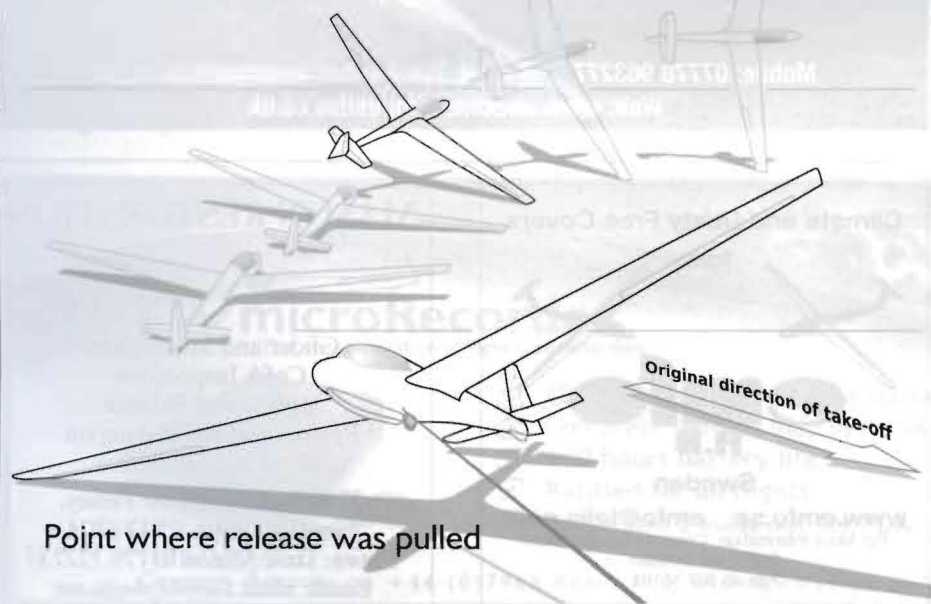
## How do we know the wings are no longer level?

You might think that the answer is obvious, but it is not. In many cases the horizon can be obscured by other features, and may be anything but symmetrical around the cockpit.

I am often asked how we can tell if a wing is going down during the acceleration phase of the launch. The human eye/brain is very good at detecting angular changes, and what most people do subconsciously is calibrate themselves before take-off. So ➤

## Case study 1

What would otherwise have happened





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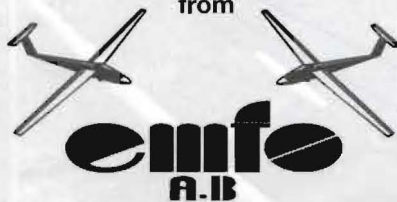
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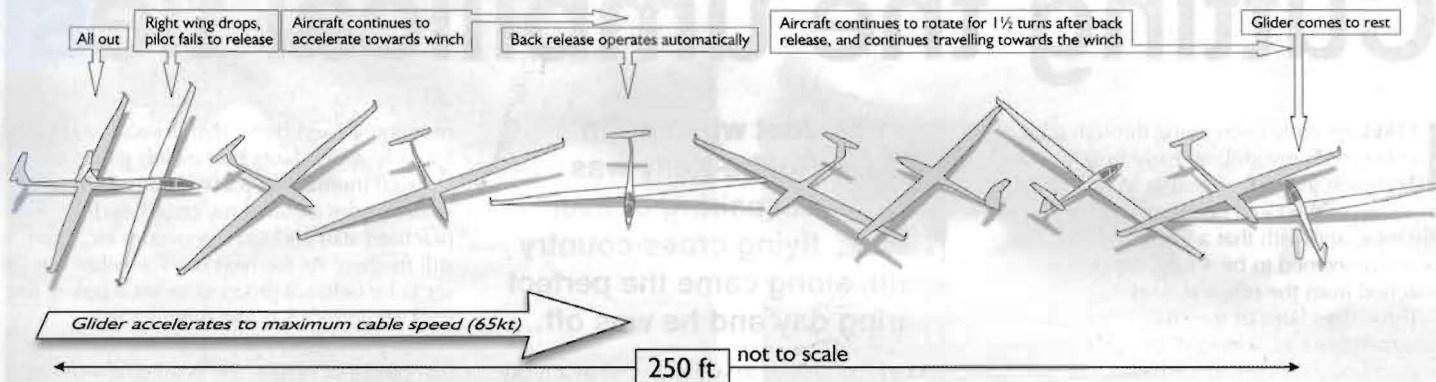
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**Case study 2**



Illustrations by Steve Longland

➤ by glancing at the wings before the take-off run starts we can confirm our wings are level and the view ahead corresponds to that. If the view changes, the wings are no longer level (see diagram to right).

What we should not do is fixate on the wingtips during the ground run, which will almost guarantee you drop a wing.

What we should also not do is fixate on the airspeed indicator. The aircraft will not take off without flying speed, so there is no real need to look at it until the glider starts to take off.

What you should do during the acceleration phase is look ahead, hand on release, keep the wings level with aileron and keep straight with the rudder, and balance the glider on mainwheel with elevator.

**Summary**

**What we can do to prevent a wing touching the ground:**

- During the ground run, look ahead and concentrate on keeping the wings level until the glider leaves the ground.
- Avoid yaw. Start with the glider aligned with the cable run. Get the cable pulled out in front of the glider if appropriate. Centralise the rudder, but be ready to apply as appropriate.
- Avoid roll. Ensure the ailerons are neutral. Be ready to react to un-commanded roll if it occurs.
- Insist the wingtip holder keeps your wings level, and runs forward with it during the first stage of the ground run.

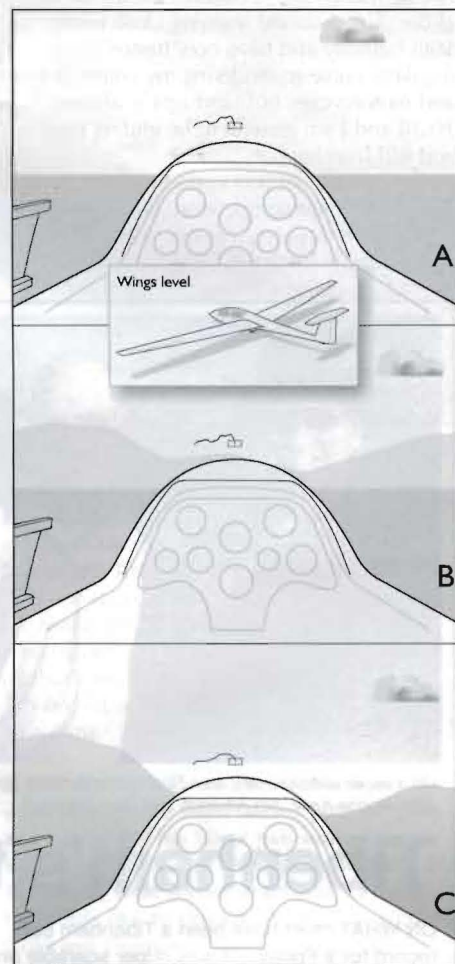
**What we can do to minimise the damage if the wing does touch the ground:**

- Keep your hand on the release, and pull it if the wing touches the ground. Don't hesitate.

*In both of the case studies, the pilot had less than two seconds to respond to the wing going down.*

■ Don Puttock is a professional gliding instructor and DCFI at Bristol and Gloucestershire GC with 4,000 hours gliding, PPL and MGIR.

The views of the author are not necessarily the views of the BGA Instructors Sub-Committee.



**The role of the wingtip holder**

The wingtip holder can play a vital part in the process. He/she needs to hold the wings level, but if the pilot has inadvertently applied some aileron, the wingman will feel it as a force he needs to oppose.

Sometimes it is obvious to the wingman that if he releases the wing, it will either go up or down. The wingman should not allow the launch to proceed until the wing is in balance, and should therefore attract the pilot's attention to the problem by stopping the launch in good time.

The wingtip holder should run with the wing for a few paces, a practice that seems to be in decline. Possibly the very worst time for a wing to touch the ground is at the beginning of the ground-run!

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# Cutting the umbilical ties

I HAVE recently been going through a bit of a crisis with my gliding. Early in 2008 I had set myself the task of getting at least one more leg of the Gold badge, probably distance, and with that a Diamond too. The best day seemed to be 4 July, which I watched from the office at work.

Three days later, at the club, I heard that one member had achieved the same ambition and, although delighted for him, I was livid at having missed the opportunity. I am no young glider pilot; I started learning close to my 50th birthday and have now turned 55! I regularly curse squandering my youth on beer and motorcycles, but hindsight is always 20:20 and I am grateful to be gliding now and still learning.

A second target was to participate in a second regional competition. I thoroughly enjoyed the Inter-services last year and had entered again for 2008. Circumstances



**Just when John Roche-Kelly was despairing of ever flying cross-country again, along came the perfect soaring day and he was off...**

caused me to have to withdraw; what a lucky escape? Even my inter-club league opportunities were mired by the weather.

From Tibenham twice, on reasonable tasks, I lost confidence and returned to the airfield. On one attempt I was washed out of the sky 8km from home by the only shower of the day. I think I caused the shower by climbing under the cloud! You may now understand how my head was affecting my flying.

I had a few days holiday from work but the Wednesday's weather was set to be poor. The

morning looked better than forecast so I took an early winch launch in a club glider and enjoyed thermals to 6,000ft. After an hour or so club rules dictated my return, so I practised stall and spin recoveries etc. I can still fly then! As the next day's weather was set to be better, a group of us set a task of just over 100km for fun and diploma legs.

Once in the air I just could not get going. I had plenty of height, the headwind was not too strong, maximum was about 15kt at 4,000ft, but I could not bring myself to break the umbilical bond! I spent four and a half hours local soaring, pushing further and further away from the airfield but never brave enough to go cross-country. A pitiful wretch.

On landing our professional instructor (Mick) asked me if I would do some trial flights the next day and, although I had work to do, I agreed.

So Friday 15 August dawned, the forecast was the best for ages (since 4 July actually.) I did not care, I went to work early and got done what I needed to do and arrived at the club just after 11:00 to fly the trials.

The place was littered with rigged gliders and pilots jabbering of 300km tasks. I got swept up with the excitement and at 12:30 found that I had made alternative arrangements for the trials, rigged and checked the glider, entered TIB-MEN-NOS-TIB into the Garmin and the PDA and was on the back of the grid.

The flight was superb, no low bits to speak of, although getting past Cambridge was harder than it should have been. Pushing on was the approach I took, and yesterday I



On a super soarable day, four Tibenham members achieved first 300km flights: (left to right) Paul Wilkinson, John Roche-Kelly, Jan Atherton and Gary Marshall (Ian Atherton)

## Tibenham's fantastic four

ON WHAT must have been a Tibenham club record for a Friday – it was super soarable on 15 August from 11am and continued to well after 6pm.

There were many great soaring flights, including four first 300km Gold distance/ Diamond goal flights. Well done to Tibenham's FANTASTIC FOUR – John Roche-Kelly (ASW-19), Gary Marshall (Astir), Jan Atherton (ASW-20) and Paul 'Captain Fantastic' Wilkinson (Std Cirrus), who also completed his Silver on the flight by clocking up 5+ hours and gaining his Silver height all in one flight!

Congratulations also to Berkeley Pittaway for gaining his Silver height whilst soaring locally.

Will Day flew Hus Bos O/R in his Vega. CFI Mark Wright managed to escape from work

and flew his ASW-27 round a couple of hundred km. Jim Lawn flew the tug until 2pm then set off in his ASW-20 for a romp round the county for the rest of the afternoon.

Youth cadet Harley (15) flew the G103 with Mick Hughes and had an hour at the seaside soaring the sea breeze (which never got as far as TIB). Locally, John Kinley celebrated his birthday with two and a half hours in a club Astir, climbing to cloudbase from a 1,500ft release. Later a new member, 16-year-old Ben Kirk, and I took the last launch of the day and enjoyed over an hour and a half in the Grob 103 with a wander down to Knettishall, Great Ashfield and back on what was only his fifth flight ever to complete a wonderful day's soaring.

Ian Atherton, Deputy CFI,  
Norfolk Gliding Club (Tibenham)



Perfect day at Tibenham on 15 August (Ian Atherton)





Looking back on a day to be remembered at Tibenham

(Ian Atherton)



Thermals galore inspired John Roche-Kelly to fly cross-country

(Ian Atherton)

couldn't push away from Tibenham!

At Northampton the glider went quiet and I realised that the audio-vario was silent. My batteries were both flat, yesterday had flattened one and earlier flights had seen to the other. The PDA had stopped receiving signals from its GPS aerial because of a poor connection so now everything was turned off except the Garmin and the EW logger and I was flying on mechanical vario.

Very little problem, the clouds were lined up along my track and were working. I took a climb to 6,000ft before the military airbases and final glided 53km home carefully routing to the east of the A11 to avoid the Thetford danger area.

I arrived at a deserted airfield, well almost. There was no sign of the other pilots. Had they all finished and packed away? Worse still

had they landed back, or out. Where is everyone? I found my OO, who removed the logger and started to download the trace. I discovered from her that nobody else was back except the CFI, who had to go to work and our tug pilot, who had also taken a launch (Mick can fly power too).

Thirty minutes later another arrival and then a further 40 minutes or so another. So what kept you? The delight on all our faces was amazing, what a magical experience, and we all have tales to relive and retell.

But where was B12 (an aged Astir recently bought by a new member from the club)? He had set off first and I had last heard him on the radio just past Cambridge. He too eventually finished, taking over seven and a half hours.

Gliders were put away (the club ones too,

but that's a different moan) celebratory beers poured and then home. My thanks and congratulations to Paul, Jan and Gary, my fellow first 300s, but also to Jenny (our OO), Will (for suggesting the task), Mick (for flying the trials), Jim (the tuggie) and everyone else who helped make my day (season) and gave me back my confidence.

Now, let me look at RASP for tomorrow.



■ John Roche-Kelly has been gliding for five years after a trial flight for his 50th birthday and completed his Silver two summers ago. Winchmaster, BI and committee member at Tibenham, John is now practising for Ass Cat. He would like to experience wave and get his Gold and Diamond heights, as well as completing a 500km.



## COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING COMMITTEE



The BGA is seeking two marketing volunteers to assist the BGA Communications and Marketing Committee (C&MC) in the promotion of gliding. The aim of the C&MC is to provide advice and practical support by developing and implementing communication and marketing strategies for the BGA. These hands-on roles play a key part in the ongoing promotion of

gliding as well as looking at all aspects of communication, both internally and externally. Prospective candidates should ideally have a knowledge and passion for the sport, as well as being able to attend approximately six committee meetings each year. If you would like to become involved, and have the time and enthusiasm to help out, we look forward to hearing from you.

Applicants for this voluntary role should apply to:

Claire Emson, Chairman BGA Communications and Marketing Committee via the BGA Office. Email: [office@gliding.co.uk](mailto:office@gliding.co.uk)

A short CV outlining relevant experience should accompany the application.





This page, clockwise from top left:

Ridge, thermal and wave all together at **Black Mountains** with Martin Pingle in his Mini Nimbus  
(Robbie Robertson)

Tuxford power station on the River Trent. Simon Lewis and Stephen Lynn flew **Dunstable-Tuxford-Bedford Bridge-Cranwell North** (a nice 503k on 4 July) in the Duo Discus  
(Stephen Lynn)

Frosty flying – a team tow out the K-13 at **Tibenham** on a cold December morning  
(Ian Atherton)

Opposite page:

Bonfire night celebrations at **Sutton Bank**. Braving the rain and gales in tents was worth it just for this we think  
(Alistair Green)

Dave Peters and John Firth bringing home their Nimbus at **Burn**  
(Kevin Moseley)

RAF Dishforth in the snow, taken from **Cleveland's K-18**  
(Matt Woodhouse)

The view from the Blanik at 10,000ft above **Shobdon**  
(Mike Dodd)

**Portsmouth Naval's Sport Vega** taking up slack to launch from Daedalus at Lee-on-the-Solent  
(Neil Shaw)

**Leeds University** borrowed the BGA simulator for their fresher week  
(Matthew Summers)

Our thanks to all the photographers and to our Club News contributors for sending these in. Remember, if you'd like to submit your previously-unpublished photographs for possible inclusion somewhere in S&G, do send them to editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk









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# Club news



Formation final glide, submitted to **Booker's** photo competition

(Pete Wells)

## **Bannerdown (RAF Keevil)**

WE HAVE been enjoying some wave and ridge soaring and an exceptional field landing adventure when our "Turbo" Janus landed out. Simon Foster has travelled to sunnier climates to prepare for his two-year work placement in Algeria. Despite the rain and high wind, the bonfire party went with a bang – thanks to everyone who helped. Congratulations to Alex Haddad, a USAF F15 pilot who has joined our club and gone solo. The big push for Bannerdown now is the Inter-Services competition for which planning has begun.

**Debb Hackett**

## **Bath, Wilts and North Dorset (The Park)**

THE Trophy presentation evening in November was a great success with everyone enjoying a superb buffet provided by Sue Cutler and Jan Smith. The Gordon Mealing Trophy went to Richard Hankey for his outstanding efforts during the year in maintaining and repairing the winch. We have, perhaps, the tidiest winch in the UK thanks to Richard. Flying trophies went to Alastair MacGregor, Mike Schlotter, Laurie Smith, Colin Field, and Mark Player. Congratulations to them all. Plans by Dick Dixon to enhance our cross-country training are already in place. They are aimed at encouraging more pilots to fly further away from their home base as well as build confidence in those uncertain of their abilities. The interesting winter lectures planned by David Parkes have encouraged a number of members out on a Saturday despite the weather.

**Jan Smith**

## **Bidford (Bidford)**

WE HAVE been working very hard to upgrade and update our website (thanks to Dave Allcott for creating the site). We are now also working on the structure of courses to be offered next season, details of which will appear on our site as soon as they are finalised. We have been keeping pretty busy when the weather allows with our motor glider, which has proved ideal to visit the winter wave at our site. Our Christmas Dinner is again fully booked, and we are all looking forward to a festive celebration – by the time this goes to print we should have the pictures on the website to prove it! Congratulations to Alan Wallace and Nick Ghee, who have both gone solo for the NPPL, and our winter NPPL lecture programme has worked well with average exam pass marks of over 95 per cent so far. It has also proved popular for glider pilots wishing to consolidate their theoretical knowledge.

**Lynne Burkert**

## **Black Mountains (Talgarth)**

AFTER a pretty dreadful summer, autumn reminded us what fun it is at Talgarth. Thermal, ridge and lots and lots of wave throughout October really brought the smiles back to members and the many visiting

pilots. Even our treasurer managed a sort of grin! Martin Pingle is doing a super job watching for good midweek flying days and organising tuggies etc – seems to be working very well. Visiting Silver C pilots are welcome as well, so watch the club forum for alerts. Despite rain and gales, we had a great firework party early in November sustained by great food and refreshments laid on by the lady members. All the work done a couple of years ago putting in field drains seems to have paid off and it is rare for wet field conditions to stop us flying.

**Robbie Robertson**

## **Borders (Milfield Wooller)**

THE HILLS were alive with the sound of chattering teeth, over the last few weeks with temperatures down to -10°C at 2,000ft. That didn't put off either Tom Farquhar or Steve Ray, who both completed their two-hour Bronze legs. Well done to you both. Our Remembrance Day Service, hosted at our memorial on Tuesday the 11th, went very well. It was well attended with not only veterans who served at RAF Milfield but children from Milfield 1st School and our own club members. Huge thanks to Jimmy Hogarth, the Reverend John Evans and the ladies of the club who help out enormously. Borders also hosted one of the BGA Motor Glider Instructor Seminars, which also was well attended. Thanks again to all who helped organise the event.

**Rich Abercrombie**

## **Booker (Booker)**

QUITE a lot of changes in personnel to report for this issue. We welcome our new full-time CFI Mike Collett and member deputy Doug Hilton, and two new committee members, Dennis Campbell and Geoff Tabbner. We say a big thank you to CFI Andy Perkins, standing down after two years. Sadly we said goodbye to staff instructors, Mike Richardson and Julian Saakwa Mante although we hope they stay around as club instructors. Recent achievements include, at Aboyne, Rolf Kern with Gold height and William Parker and Bob Smith with Diamonds. Dennis Campbell also achieved a 500+ km flight at Aboyne. At Booker, David Clark and Graham Wells have soloed. During the winter our Duo Discus is again based at Parham, awaiting the northerlies. Winter activities include a series of lectures both for aspiring Bronze C and cross-country pilots, as well as planning 2009's activities. Aero Expo will be held from June 12-14 where we will of course be exhibiting. More news and pictures of club activity can be found at <http://bookergc.blogspot.com>

**Roger Neal**

## **Bowland Forest (Chipping)**

THANKS to all the people, in particular Reg Wooller, who were involved in meetings with Salford University, we now have a steady stream of students. With various degrees of experience, they are fitting

nically into our card system and enjoying not only hill soaring but some superb wave conditions of late. Our K-21 is based at Dishforth for the winter months with club members training up on aerotow and wave flying. Thanks to our hosts for their hospitality. Back at home, due to the hard work put in by the ground staff on the centre track and field, we are able to fly in more or less all conditions. In October we were invited to attend a sports exhibition. Unfortunately it was poorly attended. However, as the company was good and in furthering the great cause of sport, it still worked as some rock climbers became trampolinists, some tennis players became rock climbers, sub aqua divers became footballers and glider pilots became badminton players – so sport was the winner.

**Phil Punt**

## **Bristol & Gloucestershire (Nympsfield)**

MEMBERS decided at an EGM to stop using our Scout tug, a K-8 and a K-13. The Pawnee is to be retained. A new club strategy is being discussed with members and was no doubt raised at the AGM in December. John Morris completed his Bronze and Mark Hall went solo. Fred Ballard organised the reinstatement of the badger fence with teams of volunteers. There have been several good ridge running days used by Trevor Stuart, Rob Thompson, Alan Price, John McWilliam and CFI Tim Macfadyen and others. Barry Walker and son Phil (Duo) and John McWilliam and Julian Rees (Nimbus) flew to Wales in November, frightened some sheep, got very cold in wave and flew home. We're installing an anemometer to check crosswind speeds.

**Bernard Smyth**

## **Burn (Burn)**

IAN and Margaret Stoddart organised a well-attended bonfire and fireworks party, which also included the presentation of solo certificates. Our thanks to them and to their team of helpers. The threat of an eco-town development on the airfield has disappeared for the time being. We have, therefore, been offered a new three-year lease from February 2009. We are in the process of refurbishing our clubhouse; a bright new kitchen has already been installed. Much of the work has been carried out by a dedicated band of club members for which we are most grateful. One of our K-13s has been overhauled and the K-21 is away at present having a major refurbishment. So our instructors will be ready and raring to go when the spring thermals arrive.

**George Goodenough**

Please send news to [editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk](mailto:editor@sailplaneandgliding.co.uk) or to Susan Newby, BGA, Kimberley House, Vaughan Way, Leicester LE1 4SE to arrive by 9 February for the next issue (later deadlines at [www.gliding.co.uk](http://www.gliding.co.uk))



# Club news

## ➤ Chilterns (RAF Halton)

CONGRATULATIONS to Jono Davidson for winning a plethora of awards at our AGM in November; other winners included ex-CFI Colin McInnes (now a DCFI). The Chilterns' Winter Mid-Week Ladder is running well, with Colin already achieving flights of 122km, while Luke has achieved task speeds of 82 kph so far; we look forward to more of this derring-do over the rest of the winter season – hopefully inspiring the rest of us to do better. An expedition is being arranged to the Long Mynd for mid-March, while other members are already looking forward to the summer and competition flying, predominantly the Inter-Services (open to civilians as well) at Keevil in early August.

Andrew Hyslop

## Cleveland's (RAF Dishforth)

THE winter season continues with many of the club's wave junkies getting their fill, and still enthusiastic for more! It's good to see the hangar getting emptied of all the toys at the merest hint of a westerly. Worthy of note are Tom Elliot's conversion to the K-18, and Roger Burghall's continued enjoyment of his newly-acquired ASW-20. If the author felt like blowing his own trumpet, he might also mention his Silver duration flight to 12,000ft in wave. We're always keen to share the wave with visitors, so if you fancy a piece of the action one weekend we'd be pleased to see you. Be sure to contact us in advance though! [www.clevelandsgliding.org.uk](http://www.clevelandsgliding.org.uk)

Matt Woodhouse

## Cotswold (Aston Down)

OUR annual autumn expedition to Portmoak was very enjoyable although the weather did not allow any badge claims. Twelve pilots made the trip and we were pleased to welcome some new faces. Congratulations to deputy chairman, Eugene Lambert, who achieved Gold height at Edensoaring. He further distinguished himself by flying back to Aston Down with the car and trailer keys in his pocket! We welcomed back the students from the University of the West of England this autumn so the two-seaters have been pretty busy. Richard Kill, our resident organiser, has arranged an après-flying party just before the festive season and we hold our AGM and dinner-dance in January so plenty to look forward to.

Frank Birlison

## Cranwell (RAF Cranwell)

HERE we are again in to the New Year with Christmas over and the club fleet on the receiving end of much polishing and fettling ready for this year's activity. Congratulations to those members who received various awards and trophies, especially to Rob Sumner who had his first competition year and who will need to extend his mantelpiece to hold those club trophies that he collected. Once again a number of club members were able to soar in wave over the Lincoln edge and, whilst lift was weak and



Preparing to launch the Discus bT into the wave at on Derby & Lincs' FL195 day

did not go very high compared to hill sites, flights of over an hour were achieved with the last flight of the day by Kev Atkinson and A.N. Other pilot, who shall remain nameless, having to come down because they were running out of daylight. No doubt by the time this is printed most of us will have completed field landing checks ready for (I'm not going to say it) this season, but we are looking forward to the longer days.

Zeb Zamo

## Crusaders (Kingsfield, Cyprus)

AS THE summer was winding down we had visits from both Jon Arnold and Paul Moslin – enabling Sunday flying and helping us with our paperwork – thank you gentlemen, you are always welcome. Our aircraft member, Nikos Karaolides, successfully completed his Half Cat course and CFI, Erdinch Ustenler, passed his PPL skills test – well done boys. Instructor Glenn Turpin is back on the island, opening the airfield regularly on Sundays – he also brought some good soaring weather with him – thanks Glenn! One of our newer members, Richard Flavel, was sent solo during the period – congratulations. Our runway colleagues at the parachute club (we glide in the afternoon after they have finished operations) stop jumping at the end of November for two months – so earlier starts were available for the Xmas period – yippee.

Jo Rigby

## Darlington (Darlington)

A RELATIVELY quiet flying period over the last two months, but some significant changes in management with the appointment of a new chairman and treasurer. Grateful thanks go to the previous incumbents, John Talbot and Noel Kerr, for their sterling efforts in literally getting the Darlington Club off the ground. Thanks also to Lance Swannack and Paul Newby, two of our BI's who have recently relinquished the role. Planning approval has now been granted for a second hangar, acquired from the

old Dukeries Club site, and work will commence in the New Year on this additional facility. Our motor glider syndicate has several new members who are currently converting to the Motor Falke way of life. Our second Annual Dinner and Presentation of Awards took place in October, which was a lively and memorable event and was closely followed by a visit to the Borders Club (Milfield) with members enjoying the challenge of wave flying over the Cheviots and visiting the many local hostels! Darlington members extend a warm welcome to all visitors.

Geoff Homan

## Dartmoor (Brentor)

AS I write this in the depths of December, during seemingly endless wet and windy conditions, the airfield has, with the assistance of a few hardy members, stood up quite well to the above average rainfall. The all-weather track lived up to its name and flying has continued without the need to fit the gliders with floats. On one occasion at the end of November a gentle but steady northerly produced weak wave conditions. It set a challenge to those used to much stronger conditions; however it rewarded those pilots who persevered. Since we normally only get wave with the wind in the east, it left us wondering where it had emanated from. On days when it was not flyable we lavished extra care and attention on the vehicles. The quad bike runs much quieter now and the Range Rover always starts first time! The refurbished Guslaunch winch was tested by launching our CFI, Roger Matthews – in a K-13 we hasten to add – and it is now available for general use.

Martin Cropper

## Deeside (Aboynne)

WELL done to our visitors who achieved Diamond heights and good cross-country tasks in the last couple of months. Don't forget we can get good wave conditions at any time of the year. Flights in excess of 500km and Diamond heights were flown in November, so make it a resolution to visit us; it's worth it just for the breath-taking views (or is that the hypoxia?). Details available at [www.deesideglidingclub.co.uk](http://www.deesideglidingclub.co.uk). The club enjoyed an excellent Christmas party and prize-giving ceremony. Congratulations go to Lauren Stammers: CFI's Progress Award; Roy Wilson: Gain of Height, Club Ladder and Best Cross-country Flight; James Addison: Most Meritorious Flight. Congratulations also go to Gareth Ferguson for completing his five hours. Mike Law is standing down as CFI to be replaced by Graham Holloway. We extend our thanks to Mike for his excellent stewardship, dedication and immense patience.

James Addison

## Derby & Lincs (Camphill)

THE last couple of months have been fairly quiet at Camphill, but we have been blessed with a few days



Anthony Sanders went solo at Dorset on the evening of 18 October



Dorset GC's refurbished K-13, G-DFAT. The work was mainly done by Barry Thomas (front seat) and Alan Coatsworth



Bill Blundell in the Blanik enjoying the wave at 10,000ft above Shobdon (Mike Dodd)



of wave. Some have been gentle soaring in warm October and November sunshine to 2-3,000ft, but one day gave FL195 in our wave box with Manchester's co-operation. Straight into the wave off the wire, but over 40kts of wind at 2,000ft made headway a little difficult for lower performance gliders. You can find out what has been happening at Camphill by accessing the flying blog on either the members' or public website. Our AGM takes place a day after our illustrious Editor's deadline, so any changes will be reported next time. The 10mm plastic ropes on our Skylaunch appear to be giving higher launches, and so far, no real downside. Unfortunately the Tost drums do not have the capacity to take this material. We are trying a new Chinese tractor for retrieves on the field, hopefully to replace our other ageing vehicles.

**Dave Salmon**

#### **Dorset (Eyres Field)**

THERE has been plenty of maintenance work at the club with Dave Finch and Doug Every busy refurbishing an old control van. As usual they will both do an excellent job. The clubhouse roof is finished and with the french doors giving an uninterrupted view of the field we may have some trouble getting our members out on to the field! Congratulations to Anthony Sanders on going solo in October, and then doing two very smooth flights on the winch. (Well, it was yours truly driving it). We had to put off some group flying due to bad weather, but managed to accommodate them when we had a fair spell of weather in the autumn. Sadly, Ted Andrew, a long-standing club member, passed away in October. He was one of the original founder members of the Dorset Gliding Club in the 1950's and, with his passing, there are now only a couple of them left. All club members offer their sincere condolences to his family. He will be sadly missed.

**Colin Weyman**

#### **Edensoaring (Penrith)**

OUR visitors seemed to enjoy some great flights in spite of the weather in 2008, with many pilots now calling us England's Mountain Soaring Site. Our development from a site for visiting soaring pilots to include a regular training club for the local area will depend on the outcome of our planning application, the result of which can be seen on our website [www.edensoaring.co.uk](http://www.edensoaring.co.uk). At the time of writing we are optimistic. We shall be holding the usual Penrith Week at Skelling, this year a little earlier, on 2 May, please register your interest in any remaining places. There will be other visitor weeks throughout the year with a five-week period mid-September to mid-October.

**Pete Whitehead**

#### **Edinburgh University (Portmoak)**

IT has been quite some years since our club posted its own news entry in *S&G*, but we feel that recent events warrant some mention. On Saturday 22 November we welcomed over 60 guests to a reunion dinner in Edinburgh to celebrate what we had thought was the club's 50th anniversary. Unfortunately our information was incorrect! Despite chasing rumours of an earlier founding right up until the last minute, those in attendance confirmed the club began in 1964. Nevertheless a great time was reportedly had by all, including many who braved the cold to fly at Portmoak over the weekend – some after a gap of over 40 years. A huge amount of material has been collected for a club history, work on which is beginning. For anyone who missed the event, a full write-up will appear on the club's website – and we'll try again in 2014!

**Martin Ling**



*Edinburgh University GC members past and present at the 44th anniversary reunion*

*(Neil Hodgins)*

#### **Essex (Ridgewell)**

THERE have been a number of achievements with Shruti Thacker and Phil Talbot re-soloing, Paul Bott gaining Silver height, Sam Fisher completing his Bronze and Steve Rhenius passing the Radio Exam. Well done to you all. Much to the delight of Engineer Dave Jones we have purchased a new gear-driven rotary mower – it's a big improvement. Our Ridgewell field has now been put to bed for the winter and given its final "short back and sides" cut. Thanks to everyone who was involved in this task. By the time you read this we will have ceased flying from Ridgewell, and have once again taken advantage of the very kind offer of Anglia Gliding Club to fly with them. As we have taken a couple of our own gliders it is not only our thanks that go to Anglia, but also the aircraft we have taken over there, as during a quiet moment, they informed me that they really do appreciate the luxury of their warm and spacious quarters after a hard day's work.

**Peter Perry**

#### **Essex and Suffolk (Wormingford)**

WITH winter upon us there is not much soaring but still a lot of activity at the club with training flights whenever the weather permits, and the chance to get up to date with routine maintenance. After a very successful refurbishment of one winch early this year, the second winch has now departed for similar treatment and gives us confidence for double-winch operation next year with four cables to get members (and visitors) launched. Site maintenance work has included improved drainage, and club gliders are also getting attention. Congratulations are due to Will Ellis on his selection for the 2009 British Junior Team. We look forward to celebrating his undoubted success when he visits Finland next May.

**Dick Skinner**

#### **Fenland (RAF Marham)**

CONGRATULATIONS to Terry Parnell on going solo. We are looking forward to some aerotowing this weekend and the chance to put our new K-21 through some aerobatics. We are also looking forward to the proposed exped to the Mynd.

**Natalie Day**

#### **Herefordshire (Shobdon)**

WE have enjoyed some good wave and ridge days this autumn. Several have been midweek, but Peter Poole has made the most of his self-launcher at times when other members were unable to be at the club. Well done to Phil King, who completed 317km in wave, while our chairman Dewi Edwards was thrilled by his best-ever solo height in the club Junior and CFI Mike Dodd took the Blanik to 10,000ft. Phil

has requalified as an instructor after a 19-year gap and will be a welcome addition to the rota. We have acquired a golf buggy to retrieve gliders off the runway more efficiently. At the AGM in November, Peter Poole and Geoff Roberts joined the committee. A group visit to the Maintenance Hangar at the RAF Museum at Cosford was a great success.

**Diana King**

#### **Highland (Easterton)**

THE RAF Expedition to Easterton in October was highly successful with an enthusiastic group making the best of the conditions. The week ended with a superb meal arranged by Glenda – with a little help from her friends. Carl Melen achieved Bronze, cross-country endorsement and Silver height – in fact he made three Silver height climbs on a day where there was a wave bar directly above the site. Congratulations to Ben Sola on going solo, to Morag Allan, Mark Matthews and Rich Thornton who re-soloed and to Ian Lane who has been cleared to fly the tug. Arrangements for our Spring Mountain Soaring Championships are well under way. The event will take place from 5-11 April 2009 and is limited to a maximum of 20 entries. Why not start the year with the most northerly competition to be held in the UK?

**John Thomson**

#### **Kent (Challock)**

THE end of 2008 saw the culmination of an action-packed year at Kent GC. We continued to develop our all-glass fleet with the delivery of our new K-21, which was put to immediate work in our ever-successful summer courses, *ab-initio*, and cross-country training. Our annual Bonfire Night and Annual Dinner were great successes, and our thanks go to Karen and her catering team for their efforts. On the flying front, our congratulations go to Richard Hill and John Lutkin for their first solos, and also to club members Darren Palmer and Chris Grebby for achieving their Commercial Pilot Licences. We always welcome visiting pilots, and are all looking forward to the 2009 soaring season. Why not pay KGC a visit? [www.kent-gliding-club.co.uk](http://www.kent-gliding-club.co.uk)

**Darren Palmer**

#### **Kestrel (RAF Odiham)**

2009 sees Kestrel celebrate 60 years of gliding, all of them from RAF Odiham except for a brief stay down the road in the very early days of Lasham. A number of events are being organised throughout the year, with an open day on 13 June and the club would like to hear from any ex-members. More on this event will appear on the club's website during the coming months. Congratulations go to ➤



# Club news



**Lakes' Corentin** wearing his Team Capstan official uniform in his F16 on his way to the UK



**Mike Dawson** after his first solo at Dunstable



**Midland GC's Charles Jessop** pictured after his first solo with instructor Dave Crowson



**Nottingham Uni's James Fowkes** in the Skylark with Bishop Hill in the background (Andrew Langton)

➤ Shane Naish for completing his NPPL just before Christmas, while the usual round of winter works on the aircraft and MT have progressed well.  
**Neil Armstrong**

## Lakes (Barrow in Furness)

A GREAT couple of months here with new members and fantastic wave. We welcome Marijn Wijbenga from Holland along with Lewis Alderson from the Kendal Air Cadets and his grandfather Sid. Lewis is particularly welcome as he now picks up the title of our youngest pilot and will benefit from reduced rates for junior members. The club expedition to Portnoak was a success with the weather being kind. The 2nd November saw some classic Lakes wave with club members reaching 1,200ft. The month finished with a no-airbrake spot landing competition – one didn't even make it to the right runway! Team Capstan has a new crew member. Corentin, who helped 23 rig in France, is seen wearing his Capstan Team official uniform in his F16 on his way to the UK. The club annual dinner has been rescheduled to February 2009, visitors all very welcome, details to follow on the website [www.lakesgc.co.uk](http://www.lakesgc.co.uk). (PS BGA National Coach Mike Fox has proofread the spot landing comment and says 'sounds dodgy'. A club visit on the way!)  
**Kate Frost**

## Lasham Gliding Society (Lasham)

OUR winter talks programme on Saturday nights are running again, so if you are in the area why not drop in and join us? The bar and restaurant will be open. Bunkhouse accommodation is available. The airfield is looking a bit like Terminal 6, with all the defunct airline planes parked here, but luckily we have the room, and most will have gone by the time we get really busy with the soaring season. The club has ordered two new Skylaunch 2 winches and hopes to take delivery any day now. The usual CofA activity is everywhere, especially with all the new amendments. Sadly we have to announce the death of Pat Swoffer in Guernsey, a long-term member of Lasham. Pat and his 'Harrods green' Tiger Moth were a well-known sight by many in the past. We offer our condolences to his family and friends.  
**Marjorie Hobby**

## London (Dunstable)

WE HAVE enjoyed some good winter conditions with lots of "sporty" ridge flying, the occasional hint of wave and even the odd thermal. Congratulations to soloists Mike Dawson, Mike Fase, Steve Haynes, Marcus Holden and James Innes, and to Aidan Paul, who has qualified as a Basic Instructor. The winners at our annual prize dinner are too numerous to mention here, our thanks and congratulations to them all. The new weekend booking system has helped to significantly improve our conversion of trial lesson probationers to full membership. The cadets have been keeping busy – Stefan Astley, Ryan

Berry and Dave Hayden have qualified as winch drivers. Mark Davis is our new Inter-club league captain. After a delicious Christmas lunch, chef Geoff has started the New Year with his Sunday carvery, and soon our new members can welcome dinner. The winter events programme continues with Bronze lectures, the quiz night, and presentations on safety, our recent Talgarth expedition, and our local air ambulance service. We are looking forward to the new season with Easter expeditions to Shobdon and Cerdanya. The Dan Smith aerobatics competition takes place on the weekend of 28-29 March.  
**Andrew Sampson**

## Midland (The Mynd)

WINTER started early at The Mynd this year. At the end of October, hangar unpacking had to be delayed while the snow was dug away from outside the doors. Since then there have been some very good wave days. On 20 November, Simon Adlard reached Borth, on the Welsh coast, despite a 60kt headwind at times. On the same day, Dave Crowson reached 13,500ft QNH, at one point losing 5,500ft jumping wave bars. Congratulations to Charles Jessop on his first solo and to Luke Sanders, who has now completed his Silver. Bonfire night celebrations were well attended and a roaring fire kept the chill at bay. The fireworks were sufficiently powerful to be unaffected by the very low cloud. Young racing driver Tom Bradshaw spent a day with us for a trial lesson in November. Tom has recently won the Porsche Carrera Cup GB scholarship for next season.  
**Steven Gunn-Russell**

## Norfolk (Tibenhams)

WINTER is upon us and the Annual Flight Tests are in full swing. The Grob 109 is back in the air with its new engine so NPL training and field landing checks can now continue. At the annual dinner the club trophies for furthest, fastest and highest were presented to Tom Smith, Paul Wilkinson, Gary Marshall, Mick Hughes, John Roche-Kelly, Chris Lawrence, Dave Taylor and Ray Hart. Youngest and oldest first solos went to Harley Grayling and Brian McLean with Eric Ratcliffe receiving the coveted AGIP cup for services to the club. An expedition in November to Sutton Bank led by Mick Hughes failed to find wave but they all enjoyed the hospitality of the YGC.  
**Mike Bean**

## North Wales (Llantysilio)

TAKING stock of the past year, it has been kind to us. Our new members are supporting us well, in spite of the summer not having been a vintage one and the club having had one of its two-seaters off line. Since the arrival of the Open Cirrus we have sold our K-8 to Chipping, which just leaves us our "out of hours" Blanik to be disposed of. A T-hangar extension is about to be constructed, which will house our K-7M when it is back on line. The club's visit to

Feshiebridge was much enjoyed by the seven members who ventured up there. Although on some days the conditions were very borderline, the tug pilot Chris Fiorentini and his colleagues did some sterling work in getting us established in the conditions. Lots of fun in the air (and on the ground) though our club's best height was 8,500ft while some others managed 14,000ft. Thank you Feshie for your great hospitality, let us also hope it is a good year for all of us.  
**Brian Williams**

## Nottingham University (RAF Cranwell)

IT'S another university year and, with over 70 members already signed up, it looks like the committee's hard work rigging the Acro on the sports field every day has paid off. Azusa Yoshida has taken over as club president and we have had solos for Louise Beech, Becky Seyburn and Claudia Krehl. CCS, the famous red and yellow Skylark 2 which has featured in these pages before has been doing sterling (Silver) work, with several members gaining their five hours in it at Portnoak. Simon Attack, James Fowkes and John Vodden have all subsequently completed their Silvers. We are looking forward to our usual expedition to the SGU again at Easter, which any other university is welcome to attend. See our website [www.nugc.net](http://www.nugc.net) for further details.  
**Andrew Langton**

## Peterborough & Spalding (Crowland)

WITH the festive season upon us we have booked The Bridge Inn at Crowland for our Christmas get-together. Our hangar floor fund is doing well and we are getting towards the midway point in meeting the required funds. We hope get the hangar floor concreted around the start of next summer. As always many thanks have to go to the ladies who organise the weekly raffle draws and who prepare and sell the food to hungry pilots. Our publicity team are doing a sterling job in promoting gliding trial lessons by the use of flyers, leaflets and local advertising. This is a great time of year for the public to purchase that special Christmas present with a difference for someone. We are all looking forward to the next season and let's face it – it can't be any worse than the last one can it? Hopefully some of our new members will be ready to go solo. We have two expeditions booked for next year. One is our annual pilgrimage to Aboyne and other is at Milfield. These are booked for September and October.  
**Merv Bull**

## Portsmouth Naval (Lee on Solent)

AS WE reflect on 2008, we see a year of success. Membership and launch rates have increased, and flying achievements have been strong. We managed stability and good safety on the airfield, with relationships building with key stakeholders. As the year closed, we had a minibus and 4x4 donated by RN Lottery, and a new fuel bowser allocated. Keith





**Rattlesden's** Darren Hatcher landing after his first solo



**Soloist Geoff Crockford** seated in the glider with instructor Allan Wright at **Snitterfield**



**Richard Knight** also went solo at **Snitterfield**



**Andrew Hewitt** after his first solo at **Norfolk GC**

Morton continues to show huge commitment to train Instructors as Air-Ground radio operators, vital to run an active airfield alongside GA traffic – almost half are complete. Tony World had a second leg operation and is now flying again. As club manager he developed a pleasing solution for glider CofAs and maintenance for 2009 through Geoff Clark, and core elements of that are being implemented. In December we had enjoyable Christmas party. Best wishes to members and their families – let's hope for some really good weather in the New Year.

**Neil Shaw**

**Rattlesden (Rattlesden)**

AN enjoyable evening was had at the annual dinner held in November; Kevin King was awarded the Numb Bum Cup, Martin Raper won both the Woody Winch and Cunningham Triangle Cups, Aiden Hughes won the Jean Towse Cup for the best flight in a club glider, and Roger Cottee won both the Landlords cup (most improved pilot) and the Club Ladder, congratulations to all of them. Congratulations to Darren Hatcher, who went solo on 12 October and to Graham Drewery, who has re-soloed.

**Helen Page**

**Scottish Gliding Union (Portmoak)**

ALTHOUGH we have had only two badge claims since last issue – well done to Maurice Williams and Mike Cartney on getting their Gold heights – our competition pundits are jockeying for position at the top of various National and local ladders. As of the beginning of December (ladders closed at 31 December), our own John Williams is currently second behind Roy Wilson (Deeside) on the National Open Ladder; Kevin Hook is leading the National Open Height Ladder (with Roy Wilson in second position) and the National Weekend Ladder with our own Vic Leitch in second position. Our SGU Open Ladder top five positions are: John Williams, Kevin Hook, Z Goudie, Brian Scougall and Mark Dickson. Finally, I would like to record my thanks to Hugh Woodsend for his excellent review of my book in the last issue of S&C and remind anyone who would like a copy to either collect one from the club or contact me with a delivery address.

**Ian Easson**

**Southdown (Parham)**

THE ridge has provided us with some splendid soaring during the first few weeks of winter. The mild and sunny early November weather produced thermals off the South Downs, before the icy Arctic northerlies arrived in strength. Gliders were able to fly the 90km from Eastbourne to buster Hill at heights approaching 2,000ft. Visitors from Dunstable, Essex, Lasham and East Sussex joined in the fun, and winter membership is proving popular. Rick Foresheew took advantage of the conditions to fly his Silver duration, and the cross-country squad have been able to boost their flying averages. We

welcome two new ready-made instructors in Mark Fisher from Talgarth, and Jonathan Sherman from Shenington. Howard Joseph is leaving us temporarily to take his ATPL in New Zealand and we wish him well. Jackie Williams has taken over the running of our office, and all enquiries for winter membership should be made to her.

**Peter J Holloway**

**South Wales (Usk)**

WINTER is always difficult time to write a report for a gliding club, but due to the literal genius that I am we have plenty to report in 150 words (thanks Mrs Editor). Like swallows Ian Kennedy has migrated to the south. Well a little further, Wellington GC in NZ, we look forward to his return in the spring with his stories of derring-do. The running theme this year seems that most, if not all, of the soaring weather has been during the week, but we have had small windows of opportunity for wave and ridge flying at the weekend. Also some full days of training have been achieved with the advent of the daily briefing for all intending to fly. Our AGM will be held on 6 December, which will mean we will have had two AGMs in one year – lucky us.

**George Robertson**

**Stratford on Avon (Snitterfield)**

CONGRATULATIONS to Geoff Crockford, who soloed in mid-November and Richard Knight, who soloed in early December. Our winter flying rates are proving to be popular again this year – we just need airfield and weather conditions to remain favourable. Away from the flying we continue to make the new clubhouse more homely and the workshop actually looks like a workshop now, waiting to be used as soon as it is commissioned. Our thanks go to Barry Kerby and Dave Benton on being the driving forces behind its erection. Without their efforts it would not have reached this stage so quickly. Our traditional Christmas Do at the Golf Club across the road was well attended and all those who were there had a good festive time. This year no snowmen were harmed in any way. The committee continue to plough through the never-ending deluge of EASA paperwork, and preparations are well advanced for the usual round of Bronze C lectures and seminars on radio procedures that will help us while away the dark winter evenings.

**Richard Maksymowicz**

**Surrey Hills (Kenley)**

THE club has increased flying this year by 10 per cent in launches and hours flown. Congratulations to Thomas Arscott on soloing as close to his 16th birthday as weather allowed. December saw the club's annual Christmas Dinner with prize-giving that was a very social affair. The Club Award went to Philip Chapman, who went that little bit further in helping the club this year. The *ab-initio* award went to David Kirby-Smith, who managed to obtain his

Bronze, and the Alex Wright Award, given to the member who has show outstanding commitment to the club goes to Adrian Hewlett (our chairman), who has worked very hard over a number of years. Well done and congratulations to all our award-winners. Finally, the club's new winch is on order, and we hope to take delivery of it early next year. This new Skylaunch will relieve our ageing Tost, and hopefully improve our launch rate even further. Don't forget that Kenley has all-year-round flying thanks to its hard runways, so if you are having trouble keeping current through the winter, pay us a visit.

**Marc Corrance**

**The Gliding Centre (Hus Bos)**

CONGRATULATIONS to all those club members who received trophies at our Annual Awards Dinner in November. Our bonfire and fireworks night was well attended – if cold! The Children's Party was successful once again. Thanks to everyone who helped out at these events. Martin Turnham is now producing a regular club newsletter. Contact the office for a copy if you haven't one already. Roy Spreckley has resigned as our club manager. We thank him for all his efforts over the last couple of years. Keith Nurcombe and his marketing team have been hard at work. They attended the SPLASH (Sport and Light Aviation) show at the NEC and have been doing glider displays in towns, and getting on the radio.

**Siobhan Crabb**

**Vale of the White Horse (Sandhill Farm)**

WINTER has arrived in the vale, bringing with it some crisp, clear days, good for 4,000ft tows and lazy glides back. It is also a good time for checking your glider's performance and playing with a spin or two, and maybe a bit of wave. Speaking of wave, several members hitched up their gliders and trailed them up to Aboyne for the famous wave season. Everyone had a good time but the flying was mostly washed out in common with the rest of the year. Apparently it was much better the week before they arrived. During our recent AGM it was decided to operate on all Fridays from April and as many other midweek days as weather will permit, by arrangement. We have also scheduled our first open days for the May Bank Holiday followed by a full flying week. Finally, team White Horse will be competing in the Shenington regionals in July where we are hoping to trample the competition (pun fully intended) and of course the weather, for the entire season, will be outstanding.

**Jay Myrdal**

**Welland (Lyveden)**

OVER the autumn Malcolm Johnson earned his BI rating and Paul Cronk his motor glider licence. Our annual prize-giving recognised such close studentship that both Simon Pratt and Aaron Wickham shared the Sedburgh Cup for best *ab initio*. Paul Sallis, best pre-Silver pilot, took the RCPC



# Club news

➤ Cup and the Best in Wood was taken by Jo Cooper in close competition with Dick Short. The 267 for the fastest handicap 100km was swept away by Mike Taylor. Alan Bushnell took both the Rigging Pin and the CFI Shield for being the backbone of the club. Jane Cooper was presented with the Peter Heywood Award for ground support with quick-witted morale officer ability. The club ladder trophies were won by Richard Lovegrove and Jo Cooper.

**Strzeb**

## Windrushers (Bicester)

THE dates for 2009 Regionals have been published and details are available from the club website. Dickie Feakes has decided that he wants to fly his ASH this year and, at the time of going to press, a Director has yet to be stitched up, sorry appointed. Winter flying continues with various adventures to the Chiltern Hills, with the BGA Duo Discus doing an out-and-return to Halton in November. The AGM took place on 22 November with many trophies awarded, including the Chairman's Trophy to John Wright – for all his web design work, regular instructing and stepping in as secretary. For a fuller list of awards and recipients, see our website [www.windrushers.org.uk](http://www.windrushers.org.uk). Finally, congratulations to Tony Cleworth, who has become a BI – roll on spring.

**David Smith**

## Wolds (Pocklington)

WE all wish to express our thanks to Chris Price, who stood down as CFI in November. Tim Milner has replaced him, so best wishes to Tim. The autumn saw plenty of flying with many pilots enjoying the local wave, including one day when members had all the club fleet up in it. Congratulations to Jamie



*Jamie Thompson, who went solo on his 16th birthday, is pictured with his father at Pocklington*

Thompson, who went solo on his 16th birthday and then gained Silver height off the winch on his 7th solo flight. Our Manchester University students have returned with enthusiasm after their summer break. We have been asked to host the Inter-University Task Week again in 2009, dates to be confirmed. Solo pilots were invited to "swap" clubs for a day with The York Gliding Centre in December. Bronze C lectures run through January and February; the RT course is on 14 March; the annual dinner dance and awards evening will be on 28 February in the club room. We are already preparing for the Club Class Nationals which we are hosting 11-19 July.

**Avelyn Dell**

## Wyvern (Upavon)

THE expedition to Milfield was a great success with most members getting both wave flying and rock polishing flights in the Cheviots. Will Chappel got to Diamond height and Paul Jessop and Andy Gibson both reached FL170 to bag Gold heights to complete their Gold badges. Many thanks are due to Borders Gliding Club for their hospitality. Congratulations also to Jonathon Courtney, one of our QinetiQ Graduate members, and Gemma Fargher, both of whom went solo in September/October and to Will Chappel on being selected as a reserve for the British Juniors team. Regrettably the club is facing another crisis – an immediate eviction from our hangar, workshop, offices and toilets because the building has been condemned by MoD. Whilst there is light at the end of the tunnel in that demolition of the hangar will create space for a purpose-built hangar, there are obviously many hurdles to overcome. In the short term the club has to learn how to keep flying with only the clubhouse housing the bar and temporary office, and five garages as the only indoor accommodation.

**Andy Gibson**

## York (Rufforth)

TWO parachutes stolen by intruders, who broke into our clubhouse, were found dumped in a hedgerow about three miles away. They had not been opened but were damp, so club member Mark Shuttleworth took them home to dry out the canopies before an advanced rigger carried out further tests and confirmed the chutes were safe to use. Alas, the club's computers which were stolen at the same time have not been recovered. Following an approach from nearby RAF Linton-on-Ouse, where fast-jet pilots are trained, an instructor and an air traffic controller visited our club to explain their communication procedures to advise both service and civilian aircraft how to avoid gliders. It was a useful PR exercise, leading to a greater understanding among all concerned. Retiring chairman Keith Batty, in his annual report, said there was a need to provide residential facilities as we cannot attract pilots or organise competitions if there is nowhere for visitors to sleep.

**Chris Brayne**

## Yorkshire (Sutton Bank)

THE prospect of wave flights and our ridges, capable of giving hours of enjoyable flying during winter months, brought a plethora of visiting clubs and pilots from the flat land sites. Gransden club keep one of their gliders here at Sutton Bank throughout the winter. Perhaps you should consider taking advantage of our winter membership, like David Bray, who, on his third ever wave flight, made an easy climb to over 13,000 ft, claiming Gold height. Richard Penman was another happy pilot to leave us with his Gold height too. Other notable achievements have been David Lowe going solo, and our tuggy from last year, Ian Plant, earning a Full Cat Rating. Congratulations to you all. Our social side goes from strength to strength, with a truly outstanding firework display carefully organised by David Latimer, John Ellis and Andy Darlington. Our chef, Brian Clarke, also did us proud, serving nearly 100 meals during the evening! Our 75th Anniversary celebrations for 2009 are now well under way. Why not visit us? We would love to see as many old and new gliders flying at Sutton Bank to help celebrate this meritorious occasion.

**John Marsh**

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

## Vintage and Classic Glider Club reflects on 2008

2008 was a year that will be remembered for bad gliding weather. Only our VGC National Rally during May had excellent weather.

The International Rally, which was held on one of Austria's oldest airfields, had 105 gliders taking part and about 500 people present.

Wels is in upper Austria, but mountains could only just be seen 14 miles away. Although the weather over the site was fine with thermals going to 1,800m there were almost no thermals between us and the mountains.

On one day, a task was set, but only one glider – the Olympia Meise of Johannes Fischer – managed to get to the mountains and back twice, with many adventures. Only one of the glider types taking part had never been with us before at one of our International Rallies. This was Pete Ocker's Russian Antonov A15. Unfortunately, this 1960 sailplane's wingtip became damaged by a runway marker while the aircraft was being towed out and we believe that the sailplane never got airborne during the rally.

The organisation of the rally was extremely good and the help given by the sponsor, Fronius, was outstanding.

During the rally, there were 863 winch

and aerotowed launches, which gave us 832 hours of flying.

We were glad to have had three H17as taking part – one from Denmark, two from England.

During 2008, in Britain, a Minimoa was made airworthy at Dunstable, a Grunau Baby 2b at the Park (Wiltshire GC), and a Mucha Standard by Bruce Stephenson. A superb new Minimoa was finished and test-flown by our member Mathias Voest in September at Landsberg, Germany.

In 2009, the International Rally will take place from 27 July - 7 August at Achmer near Osnabrueck.

The Rendez Vous Rally will take place at Lingen, Klausheide. At this rally, we hope that we can expect a new Reiher 3, a new Habicht (our third), a new Huetter H28-2, and many Minimoas, as well as the repaired Danish Kranich 2, plus the new 1941 Horten 4a flying wing. We also hope that the Dutch will bring their 1939 V-20, which they have just restored.

The club has almost 1,000 paid-up members in many different countries. After many years of service, our chairman David Shrimpton has retired. Jan Foster from Holland has taken his place. We thank them both very much.

*Chris Wills, President of the VGC*



## Yorkshire



Gillian Taylor

THIS year is the 75th anniversary of the Yorkshire Gliding Club. In 1934, two key members, Phillip Wills (former World Champion) and Fred Slingsby (founder of Slingsby Aviation), negotiated the lease of the land at Sutton Bank. Norman Sharpe also had a profound influence in the development of the club.

In 1934, the Yorkshire Gliding Club (YGC) was formed. Some three years later, a famous lady joined our club – Amy Johnson – a name that is no doubt familiar to everyone.

We are also in the unique position in that, today, our current club president, Moyra Johnson (who is now in her 94th year), flew here with Amy and yes, Moyra still takes the occasional flight today.

Post-war years were difficult for the club. It wasn't until the early 60s that the club made significant progress, encouraged by the foresight and financial help of Eric Reed. The unique circular clubhouse still serves us well.

With the vision of our board of directors, continued development and growth now sees the YGC as it is today, becoming one of the leading clubs in the country with probably the best club fleet available,

along with three tugs to support it.

With our full-time instructors, the YGC offers seven-day-a-week flying, 364 days a year. When the weather is deemed not good enough to fly, pilots can enjoy every aspect of gliding, in our two-seat simulator. Our Rotax Super Falke enables SLMG and NPPL training to be given.

Situated on the edge of the North York Moors, we offer ridge, thermal and wave flying. Our current record is over 30,000 feet. We also provide clean, comfortable accommodation, including restaurant and bar, a fully-equipped member's kitchen and showers, etc with a good range of local B&Bs within easy reach of the club.

As always, we offer a warm Yorkshire welcome to everyone. Come and join us, you won't be disappointed.

**John Marsh**

## At a glance

**Full Membership:** £345.00  
**Country Membership:** £295.00  
**Winter Membership:** £78.00  
**Juniors:** £42.50

**Launch type:** Aerotow: £24.50  
Winch £6.50

**Club Fleet:** DG-1000, DG-500, two K-21, DG-303, Discus, Astir, Ka-8

**Instructors/Members:** 30/170

**Private Gliders:** 45

**Types of lift:** ridge, thermal and wave

**Operates:** seven days a week

**Contact:** Office/Admin 01845 597237  
enquiry@ygc.co.uk

Radio 129.975

Sat Nav position N 5413.728 W 001.12.580



John Ellis



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# BGA Accident/incident summaries

AIRCRAFT Ref Type	Registration	Damage	Date, time	Place	PILOT(S) Age	Injury	P1 Hours
81 Mini Nimbus	G-EEBK	substantial	21/07/08 14:00	Southdown GC	50	none	not reported
Field landing into long grass caused a violent groundloop. Pilot initially thought grass was short enough to be landable.							
82 LS6	3964 / 855	minor	16/07/08 15:30	Bath, Wilts & N. Dorset	n / a	n / a	n / a
The glider was being retrieved down the edge of the airfield using the tow out gear when the wingtip struck the crop in an adjacent field. The rear of the glider came off the towgear and subsequently struck the towcar.							
83 Dimona H36	G-LYDA	none / minor	26/07/08 12:30	Tatenhill Airfield	66	n/a	900
Taxiing between two parked aircraft, the pilot misjudged the space available and clipped a Cessna with the TMG's wingtip.							
84 Standard Libelle	1755 / CRV	substantial	26/07/08 15:35	Highland GC	57	none	1420
Landing out at the end of a competition flight, the pilot overran his intended landing area. The glider crossed a steep downslope in the ground run, fracturing the fuselage.							
85 ASW20	4309 / HYK	substantial	23/07/08 15:30	York GC	76	none	280
Too low for a normal circuit, the pilot landed on a cross runway and then turned to avoid passing in front of the winch. A wingtip struck the tail of a parked Pawnee, damaging both glider and tug.							
86 Ka7	G-DELX	substantial	19/07/08 15:50	Nene Valley GC	47	none	not reported
The glider was blown sideways by a strong crosswind gust while rounding out. The wingtip hit a nearby windsock pole.							
87 Jantar	3511 / --	minor	26/07/08 16:30	Trent Valley GC	20	none	260
The pilot groundlooped the glider at the end of a short field landing after trying to soar away from his original field.							
88 Vega	G-DEAG	minor	27/07/08 17:25	Black Mountains GC	63	none	not reported
The pilot landed short of the threshold onto a steep upslope and rough ground with the wheel retracted.							
89 K21	4564 / JKA	minor	29/07/08 12:30	East Sussex GC	n / a	none/none	n / a
A TV cameraman was filming the flight from the tug. After the glider released, while positioning the tug for a better camera angle, the end of the tow rope hit the glider fuselage and wing.							
90 Discus	4092 / D5	minor	23/07/08 14:00	Essex & Suffolk GC	n / a	n / a	n / a
A club member got into the buggy to retrieve a glider without realising that another glider was still attached to its towrope. When the buggy moved off, the other glider swung round until its wing struck the tail of the Discus.							
91 Libelle	1768 / CSJ	none	28/07/08 12:25	Staffordshire GC	61	none	not reported
Inflight aileron disconnection. The glider landed safely.							
93 K8	3383 / FNA	substantial	23/07/08 14:50	Bowland forest GC	63	serious	132
The glider ran into a fence after the non-XC rated pilot attempted a field landing after losing sight of the airfield.							
95 Grob 109b	G-CEYN	substantial	01/08/08 09:00	Wing Farm airstrip	71	none	200 hours
A very heavy landing in gusty conditions damaged the main undercarriage and tailwheel, causing a propstrike.							
96 PA 25	G-NYMF	minor	09/08/08 10:30	Bristol & Gloucester GC	n / a	n / a	n / a
The tug rolled backwards, downhill, into a building, damaging the fin, rudder, elevator and tailplane. It had been left unbraked and unchocked outside the hangar until the wind backed and increased, weathercocking the aircraft.							
97 LS8	4195 / H8	minor	09/08/08 12:50	Cambridge GC	39	none	245 hours
Late field selection at the end of a competition flight combined with turbulence on approach led to an uncontrolled touchdown in a crop field.							
98 K13	G-EEBL	none	14/08/08 20:15	Derbyshire & Lancs GC	38 / 38	none/minor	515 hours
The glider landed on the nose skid without rounding out. Both pilots misjudged the height after being dazzled by the evening sun.							
99 Duo Discus T	EI-GLI	substantial	20/08/08 14:05	The Gliding Centre	62 / ?	none/minor	not reported
Returning for a relight during a competition, the glider landed heavily, breaking the fuselage and undercarriage doors.							
100 LS4	2785 / RH	destroyed	22/08/08 14:00	Cotswold GC	25	minor	400+ hours
The glider clipped a treetop on approach to a field landing at the end of a competition flight.							
101 Libelle	3750 / --	substantial	23/08/08 13:40	Channel GC	62	none	140 hours
Crop landing after the pilot flew a high, fast approach, could not set the flaps, did not use airbrakes and could not land within the airfield.							
102 Astir	G-EEBM	substantial	23/08/08 11:25	Yorkshire GC	68	none	60 hours
The glider landed heavily, bounced and broke the undercarriage frame on the second impact.							
103 K21	5130 / R12	minor	23/08/08 15:10	Bannerdown GC	56	none	54 hours
A heavy landing led to PIO and several subsequent touchdowns, damaging the tailwheel and structure around the nosewheel.							



## Lawrence G Watts 1927-2008



AFTER a short illness, Loll Watts died peacefully in hospital on 26 September 2008

Most notable gliding characters centre their interest round one gliding activity and/or site. Loll had a very broad interest in most things Engineering and Aviation. When

Nazi Germany carried out its 500-bomber raid on Coventry in 1940, it boasted that they had created a new verb! "to Coventrate".

Laurie, born in that city and 13 years of age, was there, taking shelter from the onslaught under the stairs, as there were very few purpose-built shelters at that time.

After the war he initially concentrated his attention on aeromodelling and made a substantial impact in this field in the late 1940s. In early 1953 he visited Baginton Airfield, home at that time to Armstrong Whitworth Company where the Coventry Gliding Club had begun solo gliding training, using a Kirby Cadet towed by a cut-down armoured car. Later that year they bought a T-21. So began the club today known as the Soaring Centre at Husbands Bosworth.

Loll never looked back, from that moment

on he was hooked on gliding. In due course he qualified as BGA Inspector and Instructor.

Amongst the other projects he avidly followed was a manpowered ornithopter, which was not successful, and much, much later he worked hard with others to help achieve a flight by Percy Pilcher's Triplane at Stamford Hall, near Rugby. This project had been a contemporary to the Wright Brothers' attempts to fly in the early 1900s. Again he was frustrated after a considerable amount of work.

Loll loved his flying and gliding and became involved with a few clubs in the west of the UK, Talgarth, Bideford and Haverfordwest to name but a few. Until late in his life, he owned and flew a Bocian and a Standard Cirrus.

Laurie Watts had another extraordinary talent, from which he earned his living. He was a skilled artist who produced expanded drawings detailing the engineering of a vast range of equipment.

Motorcycle engines, motorcycles, production cars, racing cars, aeroplanes and yes, gliders. The Slingsby Swallow, Dart 17R, HP 14 were among those I well remember. His drawings were published in various magazines, *Autocar*, *Motorcycle*, *Flight* and *Commercial Vehicle* and again *S&G*. A book *Watts my line*, published a couple of years ago, contains many of these drawings.

When he passed on, it was a very sad day for all of us who knew him well. He is survived by his devoted wife Eileen and two daughters, Julie and Rosemary.

Vic Carr

## Ian Trotter 1939-2008

IT IS with great sadness we announce the passing of a dear member, Ian Trotter.

Born in Dumfries, where he was head boy at the Academy, he took a degree in physics at Edinburgh and worked in computing with IBM and Ferranti. He became a keen climber and Alister Morrison, who he met up with again in gliding, tells a tale of how, after two hours' hard work on a long route on the Ben, they came to the actual start of the climb. Never one to be put off by a little adversity, nor one to lose his sense of humour, he then did a great job of leading them up and back before dark.

While he had a reputation for being a prickly personality, it was fuelled by a drive for improvement, backed up with a great enjoyment of debating. He entered hang gliding in the mid seventies and was soon involved in all its aspects. As well as instructing, an area where many sought him out for help, he did a lot of work in the SHPF competitions, where his IT background enabled him to exploit the new personal computers and revolutionise the scoring system.

He became chairman of the BHGA Flying and Safety Committee where he fought hard against the prejudice which often arose and was instrumental in turning the balance of credibility to the right position. Once, when a hang glider had to land because of the proximity of a too-nosy helicopter, Ian was contacted, tracked the helicopter pilot down and very clearly explained to him what ➤

## BGA Accident/incident summaries *continued*

AIRCRAFT Ref Type	Registration	Damage	Date, time	Place	PILOT(S)		
					Age	Injury	P1 Hours
104 Grob 103	2676 / EGN	minor	25/08/08 12:55	Staffordshire GC	n/a	none/none	n/a
The rear canopy opened during the early stages of the launch after a previous poor repair failed. The instructor closed the canopy but it cracked on landing.							
105 K18	4530 / 30	none	28/08/08 12:30	Wrekin GC	30	none	not reported
Incorrectly fitted ballast weight came loose at 250' agl, obstructing the controls during the winch launch on the pilot's second ever flight in a single seater.							
106 Pik 20	2537 / 786	minor	31/08/08 13:00	Buckminster GC	48	none	195 hours
Gear up landing on a tarmac runway by a pilot with little experience of flapped gliders.							
107 Cirrus	4825 / C74	none	22/07/08 ?	Stratford-on-Avon GC	43	none	320 hours
The glider stalled and dropped a wing during a winch launch as the pilot slid back in the seat, pulling the stick back. Loose shoulder straps and lack of currency on type cited as factors.							
108 LS4	4095 / HPL	substantial	10/09/08 15:30	Southdown GC	67	none	not reported
The glider struck the ground while turning after a low level launch failure. It then bounced back into the air and crashed into a fence just outside the airfield.							
109 ASW27	G-CJLY	substantial	13/09/08 13:00	The Gliding Centre	not reported	none	not reported
The fuselage broke during a groundloop as the pilot manoeuvred after landing too close behind other gliders.							
110 PW5	4325 / HZB	minor	14/09/08 16:30	Burn GC	60	none	27 hours
The nose wheel and axle were damaged after the inexperienced pilot allowed the glider to run off the runway, into a pothole, during a crosswind landing.							
111 Janus	G-JNSC	substantial	20/09/08 11:50	Upward Bound Trust GC	n/a	n/a	n/a
A parked glider was badly damaged as a falling cable being retrieved to the winch caught the tailplane							
112 Discus Bt	4543 / JJD	minor	25/09/08 14:30	Burn GC	72	none	1450 hours
The undercarriage collapsed after landing.							



No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
<b>GOLD DISTANCE</b>			
Janet Atherton	Norfolk(Tibenham)	15.8.2008	
Daniel Jamin	London(Dunstable)	21.7.2008	
Gary Marshall	Norfolk(Tibenham)	15.8.2008	
Martin Laxaback	Oxford	15.8.2008	
	(Weston on the Green)		
David White	London (Dunstable)	21.7.2008	
James Wilson	Windrushers (Bicester)	23.8.2008	
John Roche-Kelly	Norfolk (Tibenham)	15.8.2008	
Paul Wilkinson	Norfolk (Tibenham)	15.8.2008	
Stephen McCurdy	Oxford (Aboyne)	23.8.2008	
David Sandells	Gliding Centre	23.8.2008	
	Husbands Bosworth		

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
<b>GOLD HEIGHT</b>			
Matthew Wright	Devon & Somerset (Portmoak)	14.4.2008	
James Thompson	Derby & Lancs Aboyne	28.8.2008	
Michael Cartney	SGU (Portmoak)	16.10.2008	
Michael Longhurst	Mendip (Aboyne)	26.9.2008	
Eugene Lambert	Cotswold	16.10.2008	
	Edensoaring		
Patrick Hogarth	Mendip (Aboyne)	26.9.2008	
Andrew Gibson	Wyvern (Milfield)	13.10.2008	
Peter Bellham	Buckminster Aboyne	13.10.2008	
Tudor Williams	Kent (Aboyne)	30.9.2008	
Maurice Williams	SGU (Portmoak)	16.10.2008	
Nicola Marchant	Lasham (Lasham)	16.10.2008	
Stuart Black	Buckminster Milfield	15.11.2008	
Rudolf Kern	Booker (Aboyne)	11.10.2008	
David Rampton	SGU (Portmoak)	16.10.2008	

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
<b>GOLD BADGE</b>			
2471	Eugene Lambert	Cotswold	16.10.2008
2472	Patrick Hogarth	Mendip	26.9.2008
2473	Andrew Gibson	Wyvern	13.10.2008
2474	Peter Bellham	Buckminster	13.10.2008
2475	Nicola Marchant	Lasham	16.10.2008

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
<b>SILVER BADGE</b>			
11916	Sally Woolrich	Scottish Gliding Union	15.8.2008
11917	Jonathan Morris	Loughborough University	13.7.2008
11918	Alan Thomas	Black Mountains	16.6.2008
11919	John Vodden	Nottingham University	26.7.2008
11920	Liam Brady	Lasham	27.7.2008
11921	Caroline Billings	Essex & Suffolk	27.7.2008
11923	Gavin Preuss	Shenington	15.6.2008
11924	Matthew Wright	Devon & Somerset	31.5.2008
11925	Man Lok Chow	Windrushers	15.8.2008
11926	Stephen Phillips	Cambridge	14.8.2008
11927	Robert Crick	Clevelands	14.6.2008
11928	Peter Robinson	Dorset	15.8.2008
11929	Stephen Day	Derby & Lancs	15.8.2008



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No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
<b>SILVER BADGE (cont)</b>			
11930	Craig Ullrich	Lasham	13.7.2008
11931	Ian McKillop	Lasham	23.8.2008
11932	Christopher Morley	Buckminster	15.8.2008
11933	Stephen Brindley	Staffordshire	15.8.2008
11934	Jonathan Woodforth	Shenington	15.8.2008
11935	Malcolm Bradford	Essex & Suffolk	29.7.2008
11936	William Crane	Cambridge	15.8.2008
11937	Paul Wilkinson	Norfolk	15.8.2008
11938	Michael Samuels	Cambridge	21.7.2008
11939	Jonathan Cooper	Welland	27.7.2008
11940	Henry Ross	Booker	8.8.2007
11941	Christopher Bessent	Shalbourne	21.9.2008
11943	Travis Bellotte	Lasham	14.9.2008
11944	Alexander Jones	Lasham	15.8.2008
11945	Karl Martin	Cambridge	18.6.2008
11946	Christopher O'Boyle	Burn	23.8.2008
11947	David Mollison	SGU	16.7.2008
11948	Chris Knapp	Derby & Lancs	23.8.2008
11949	Colin Downes	Essex & Suffolk	27.9.2008
11950	James Fowkes	Cranwell	17.8.2008
11951	Mark Radice	Bath & Wilts	26.6.2008
11952	Graham Robertson	Lasham	23.8.2008
11953	Chris Bingham	Stratford on Avon	27.7.2008
11954	Gareth Bustin	Buckminster	18.9.2008
11956	Anthony Tayler	Gliding Centre	26.7.2008
11957	John Lloyd	Cambridge	14.9.2008
11958	Luke Sanders	Midland	10.10.2008
11959	Scott Hardie	SGU	27.10.2008

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
<b>DIAMOND DISTANCE</b>			
1-1104	Julian Bayford	Cambridge (Gransden Lodge)	23.8.2008
1-1105	William Chappel	Wyvern (Upavon)	4.7.2008
1-1106	Julian Hitchcock	Southdown (Parham)	15.8.2008

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
<b>DIAMOND GOAL</b>			
2-3238	Janet Atherton	Norfolk (Tibenham)	15.8.2008
2-3239	Daniel Jamin	London (Dunstable)	21.7.2008
2-3240	Gary Marshall	Norfolk (Tibenham)	15.8.2008
2-3241	Paul Smith	Oxford (Dunstable)	15.8.2008
2-3242	Martin Laxaback	Oxford (Weston on the Green)	15.8.2008
2-3243	David White	London (Dunstable)	21.7.2008
2-3244	John Roche-Kelly	Norfolk (Tibenham)	15.8.2008
2-3245	William Laine	SGU (Pociunai, Lithuania)	31.7.2008
2-3246	Paul Wilkinson	Norfolk (Tibenham)	15.8.2008
2-3247	Christopher Bryning	Seahawk (Leibertingen, Germany)	21.6.2008

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
<b>DIAMOND HEIGHT</b>			
3-1702	Robert Westlake	Lasham (Aboyne)	16.10.2008
3-1703	William Parker	Booker (Aboyne)	11.10.2008
3-1704	Robert Smith	Booker (Aboyne)	11.10.2008

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
<b>DIAMOND BADGE</b>			
736	Robert Theil		
737	Matthew Turnbull		

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
<b>UK CROSS COUNTRY DIPLOMA</b>			
1083	Geraldine Hasluck	Southdown	21.7.2008
1084	Jonathan Morris	Loughborough University	26.7.2008
1085	Martin Palmer	Stratford on Avon	27.7.2008
1086	William Crane	Cambridge	15.8.2008
1087	John Roche-Kelly	Norfolk	15.8.2008
1088	Paul Wilkinson	Norfolk	15.8.2008
1089	Jonathan Cooper	Welland	27.7.2008
1090	Howard Joseph	Southdown	7.6.2008
1091	Howard Joseph	Southdown	27.7.2008
1092	Colin Hinson	Cambridge	14.8.2008
1093	Graham Robertson	Lasham	23.8.2008

No.	Pilot	Club (place of flight)	Date
<b>AEROBATIC BADGES</b>			
	Standard Known	Nicholas Redfern Devon & Somerset	8.8.2008
	Standard Known	David Bray Oxford	24.6.2008
	Standard Known	Garry Simpson SGU	24.7.2008
	Sports Known	Jonathan Ross Lasham	11.10.2008



> downwash could do to a hang glider.

His great sense of humour allowed him both to give and take it. An anecdote from Donald McKenzie described how after an epic flight to 11,000ft at Killin by himself and Mike Armstrong, they went, a week later

to Broughton where Ian was about to fly. They heard Ian on radio saying "We're at the wrong place - we should have gone to Killin." They then went on air and pretended they were at Killin climbing through 11,000ft. When Ian turned round to find them standing behind him, they ran like hell.

Ian moved on to fixed-wing gliding in the late eighties, initially popping to the bar at Portmoak after hang gliding on the Bishop, and soon converted completely, eventually taking an instructor rating. While his brusque style did not suit everyone, many talk today with gratitude and respect for the constant efforts he put in.

David Hyde said: "I consider he taught me to fly, he didn't send me solo, he was just always there, every Wednesday. We flew almost irrespective of the weather, which is an important part of flying. The boundaries were there to be pushed and we pushed them. He was capable of putting you under pressure, not appreciated by all, but you have to develop the ability to cope with it, and thus in the end benefit."

Perhaps not that surprisingly, he found Portmoak bureaucracy at bit much at times and then found his home-from-home at Feshie where I met up with him again. To this day my best flight there has been a 100K in the Grob with him in thermal, where we revelled in the views of the Monadliath and our beloved 'Gorms.

He bore his illness with great fortitude and, as expected, added to the catalogue of tales about him. When Alister Morrison took him to a display at East Fortune and it was announced that due to a 12-knot crosswind the Spitfire and Hurricane would be unable to take off, he dourly remarked "Thank God we're not still fighting the Germans."

Another of his great loves was always meeting his friends in great Edinburgh pubs and so in his last days he would be found drinking milk in Thomsons on Wednesdays. He persuaded NHS 24 to show him how to unhook himself from his hydration drip so he could get to the pub.

He asked Chris Fiorentini, who had flown him down to one of his old hang gliding haunts, the Cairnwell, in May, if he would fly back and scatter his ashes there. That seems perfectly fitting.

**Ray Hill**



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Please remember that, if you are emailing text, your advert may not appear unless we have received payment by post or credit card by the deadline. The deadline for classifieds to be included in the April-May 2009 issue of *Sailplane & Gliding* is **5 March, 2009** after which any adverts received will be published in the following issue.

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Box number: £3 extra. All prices include VAT.

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