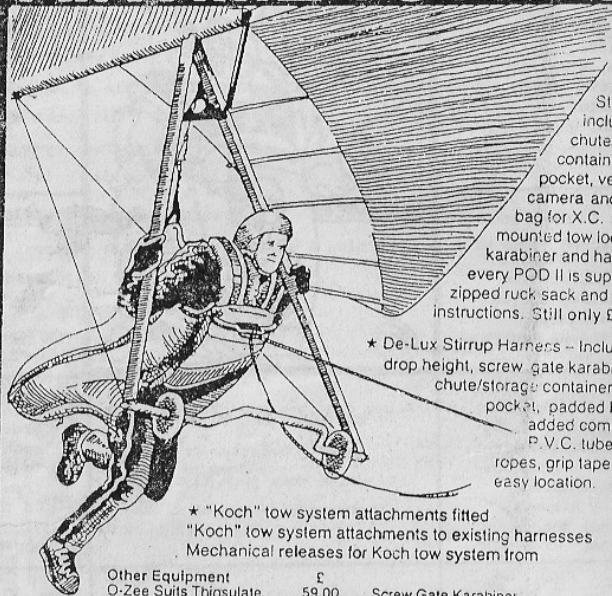


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Aug/Sept 86



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MORE DETAILS INSIDE



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CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

Sites is the big issue this month with a letter from the East Sussex County Council about the Firle top car park, and press coverage of Erighton Council's plans for the Dyke. Can I stress to you all to be on your best behaviour with the general public when you are 'on site' and to respect current site rules and arrangements?

The Annual Club Barbeque is happening very soon, on Saturday 4th October. If you want to give a hand in building the barbeque and/or the bonfire, please contact our Social Secretary Sharon Linskill as soon as possible (see opposite). Don't forget to order your food tickets in advance - we need to know how big to build the barbeque!

See you there then,

Johnny.

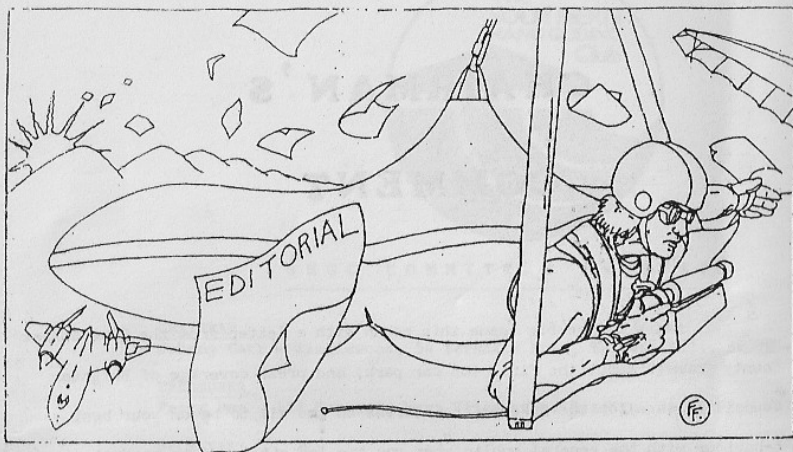
P.S. There'll be a barbeque sign outside my house in case some of you are lost.....

CONTRIBUTIONS

If you have an interesting story to tell or a comment to make, just write it down clearly and send or give, with any photos, to either of the editors. Please send a SAE if material is to be returned. Incident reports should be sent to the Safety Officer.

ADVERTISING: Private advertisements for members (to sell gliders, lost and found etc.) are free. All commercial advertisements are charged as follows: 1/6th page: £12 per year (in advance); 1/3rd page: £22 per year (in advance); full page: £5 per month, or £45 per year (in advance).

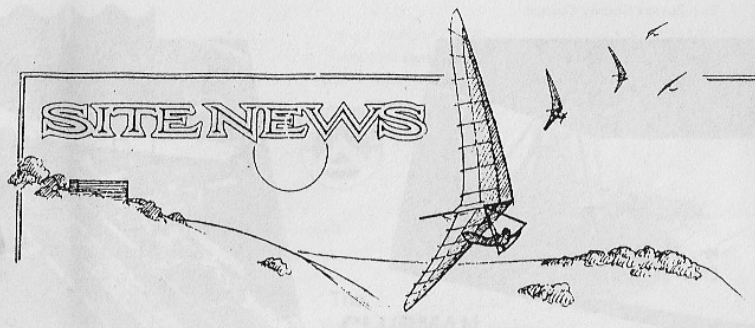
Note: Views expressed in WINDSOCK are not necessarily those of the SHGC, its Committee, or the Editors.



In this issue of WINDSOCK there are several press cuttings regarding safety and numbers at the Dyke. Following the recent inquest into Tony Payne's death earlier this year and one or two other publicized accidents, a local councillor is making noises about restricting numbers of hang gliders at the Dyke. It is surely not true to say that any of the accidents this year have been caused by overcrowding on the top of the Dyke; to my knowledge all of them were caused by pilot error which is a quite different matter. We are also told that the ground is being churned up "as more and more of them flock there." Such a statement is plainly ridiculous - more visitors use the top of the Dyke than we ever could - we are not even there for at least half the days in each year! When we are flying the site 99% of the visitors love watching our antics - we fascinate them! Witness Mark John's letter in this issue. Firle is the other site under fire at the moment as Chris Bartram explains in Sites News.

The last Club Night held on August 30th was a success with some 10 P1 pilots taking their P2 exams. Hope you all passed! The food laid on by Ken (the temporary Dyke landlord) was excellent value with light relief for exam-wearied brains being provided by The Johnny Carr Slide Show. This featured scenes from the 1974/75 era of hang gliding followed by beautiful shots taken on one of Johnny's many XC flights. They were enough to make anyone want to go XC, with the ridges so small you could hardly see them!

A couple of seasons ago a group of pilots were flying Firle when they were surprised by fast jets flying through them. A similar incident took place in May 1985 at Pandy in Wales and I have included a report on it in this issue. It comes from the Joint Airmiss Section of the National Air Traffic Services (NATS) and makes for some very interesting reading. Thanks to Kevin Pickering for sending in the article; any letters, articles, press cuttings etc are very welcome.



DEVILS DYKE

We are at present getting some flack from the press, as you can see from the press cuttings. The committee is urgently dealing with the situation. I would advise all members to support the committee. Please do not aggravate the situation. Councillor Brian Fitch has been contacted by the committee and we have had a favourable response. We hope to continue to talk to Mr Fitch to reach an understanding.

FIRLE

Amazing, just as we are getting things right about the car park we get this letter. From the County Council. To be fair though Phil Beldon did ring me first, and I explained that on this occasion the police had ordered our members to park at the top. Phil was also not fully aware that we had negotiated a top car park space. So it would appear that the situation had resolved itself. However will all pilots visiting Firle please park in the bottom car park area. Until October when we are allowed to use the top car park during winter.

To all Southern Hang-Gliding Club Members.

I wish to thank you all for your kindness and generosity, you have shown myself and the girls over the past few months.

A special thank you to Johnny Carr for his speech on the 19th August and to witnesses who had to go through the ordeal of sitting in a courtroom, to be questioned about that awful day of Thursday 5th June.

Thank you also, for those of you who came to our little ceremony at Devils Dyke on 19th August. I think Tony would have been really proud and pleased to know he was so well thought of, by so many. One of his dreams, was always to win one of your trophies for his flying, but it wasn't meant to be.

Knowing that his death will help others in future flying, is some consolation. And knowing Tony as I did, I'm sure there is no other way he would rather have died.

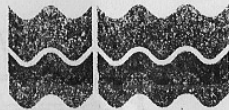
Thank you all.

Carol Payne.

East Sussex County Council

Malcolm Reece FRCA FRICS
County Planning Officer

Southover House
Southover Road, Lewes
East Sussex BN7 1YA
Telephone Lewes 475400
STD 0273 475400



East Sussex

Mr. P. Belden
Ext. 244

ES/1/2A/PAB

27th August, 1986

Dear Sir,

Parking and Hang-gliders, Bo-Peep.

I like to think that the Project co-operates well with all interest groups on the Downs. Such an approach is nearly always reciprocated by the various individuals and organisations.

It saddens and annoys me that the hand-gliding fraternity are no longer included in this relationship. The Project has worked with you to find flying sites and persuade both landowners and district councils to agree to allowing your sport. However, problems have subsequently arisen. The most serious, over which I have corresponded with you on many occasions, has been car parking at Bo-peep, Alciston.

I would have hoped that this situation could have been amicably resolved between us. But, instead the situation has got worse. I am now getting complaints from the public, that the parking area is full of your club's cars. There is a parking area at the bottom of the hill for you, you have a co-ordinator on site to plan flights. There should be no problems insisting that people park in the right place.

The situation reached a head last week when I received a call from a lady who was insulted and harrassed, just because she wanted to park her car. We cannot allow a minority sport to totally monopolize, yet we do not seem to be able to compromise.

I am sorry, but I feel that proceedings must be taken to ban flying from Bo-peep. The County Council own and manage the car park, but we shall also liaise with Firle Estate on this matter.

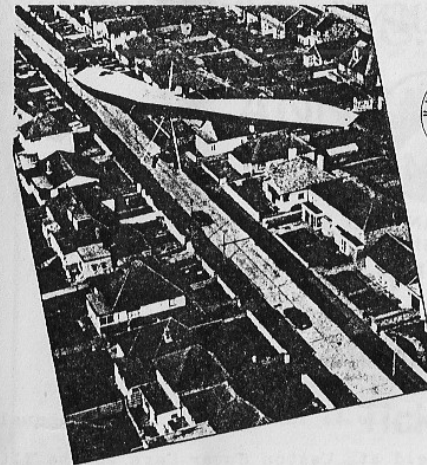
Before taking any action I shall allow you the courtesy of a reply. However, bearing in mind the belligerent nature of some of your members I see no alternative solution.

I await your reply.

Mr. C. Bartrum,
Southern Hang-gliding Club,
Unit G & H,
21 Campbell Road,
Brighton,
East Sussex.
BN1 4QD.

Yours faithfully,

P.A. Belden
Assistant South Downs
Conservation Officer



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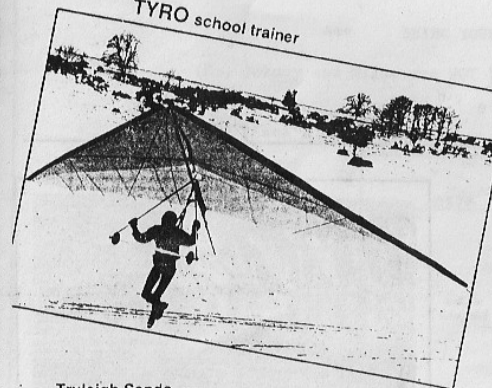
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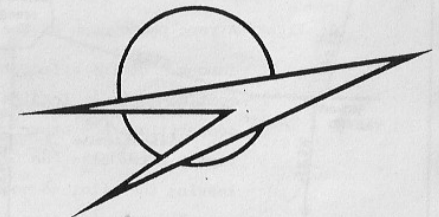
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please reply to:

Dear Club Secretary,

I am pleased to be able to inform you that the annual B.H.G.A. Clubmans' Jamboree will be held at Weston Super Mare on the 11th & 12th October. It is hoped also to run a clubs' forum during the evening of Friday 10th.

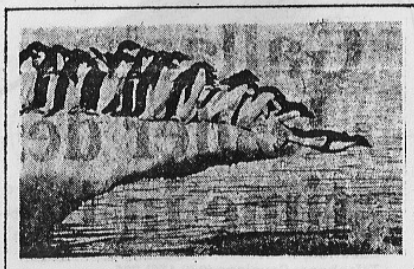
Further details will follow, but to whet your members' appetites I can tell you that we have negotiated the use of an airfield for towing operations and several coastal and inland sites for hill based flying. All the facilities of a large coastal resort will be available, so bring the wife and kids...

Write it in your diaries!!

Yours,

Mark Dale
Mark Dale

Right: A rare photograph of the now famous 'Domino effect,' used most commonly at foreign competitions and other crowded flying sites like the Dyke, leaving the pilot no control over his take-off time and leading to a high accident rate.



S. H. G. C.



ANNUAL BARBECUE & BONFIRE PARTY



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Saturday 4th Oct. - 6.30 onwards

Tickets: £2.50

Diane and Johnny and family are moving into their new house at the end of September - more like a Country Estate with several acres, so I'm told! - and they have generously agreed to the Southern Hang Gliding Club barbecue being held there the following SATURDAY 4TH OCTOBER, 6.30 PM ONWARDS.

This should be an ideal venue as there is plenty of space for the barbecue, a bonfire to keep out any autumn chills and the house to retreat to if it rains (and of course... it won't)! Barbecue food tickets - (required if you want to eat!) - available IN ADVANCE PLEASE from committee members 'on the hill' or from me by post.

*** MEMBERS FRIENDS ETC WELCOME ***

*** BARBECUE SUPPER SUPPLIED (ON PRODUCTION OF TICKET) ***

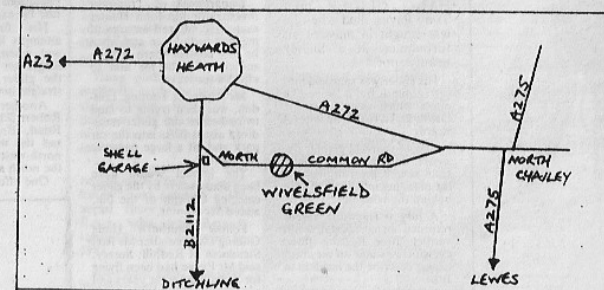
*** BRING YOUR OWN BOOZE ***

(No, Johnny and Diane are NOT licenced to sell alcohol - yet!)

Johnny and Diane's address:-

Map:-

'TILLERSHAW'
NORTH COMMON ROAD,
WIVELSFIELD GREEN,
SUSSEX.



Getting the wind up over fliers' safety

HANG-GLIDER pilots, reeling from one of their worst years for accidents, face new demands for flying restrictions on the South Downs.

Brighton councillor Brian Fitch is pressing for the number of hang-gliders taking off at popular Devil's Dyke to be limited.

One hang-glider pilot has been killed and two others injured in crashes at the Dyke this year. Last year, four accidents were reported.

Coun. Fitch, chairman of Brighton Parks and Recreation Committee, is concerned about the safety record and the risk posed by hang-gliding to downward walkers and picnickers.

Hazard

He is also worried about the airborne enthusiasts damaging grassy slopes at the Dyke through over-use.

"I would like to see restrictions imposed on the numbers of hang-gliders using what is Brighton's top area for visitors," Coun. Fitch said.

by Ian Thomas

"As more and more of them flock there, the ground is being churned up and they have become a hazard to walkers."

Tighter controls on hang-gliding are part of his plan to ensure the Dyke is managed in the interests of conservation.

He hopes the plan will be adopted by the borough council so that the area can be preserved for recreation.

Concerned

The National Trust has banned hang-gliding at Ditchling Beacon, only a few miles away. But Coun. Fitch believes such a move at the Dyke would be going too far.

A Brighton Council spokesman said they were monitoring the situation, but no action was yet planned.

"We are most concerned about the recent accidents. If it was decided it was necessary, we would invoke by-laws to control hang-gliding there."

Hang-glider Steve Martin,

28, of Southwick, who regularly uses the Dyke, said it was usually only inexperienced hang-gliders who got into trouble.

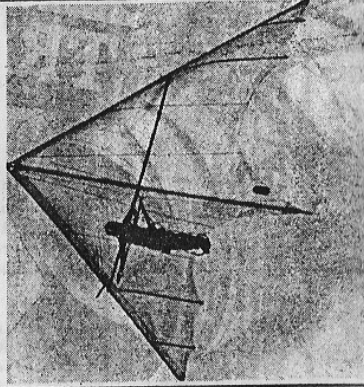
"Sometimes the wind conditions can be a bit unpredictable, but this should not present too much of a problem."

Inquest

A 20-year-old hang-glider fell 30ft. after hitting power cables at the Dyke in April.

Two months later, Londoner Tony Payne plunged 50ft. to his death in the car park. The inquest is to be held at Haywards Heath next Tuesday.

The most recent accident was last month when a 21-year-old Norwegian crashed halfway down the steep slopes soon after take-off. He suffered head and back injuries.



Can someone supply the Evening Argus with some up-to-date photographs of hang-gliders and/or pilots because they appear to have material which is 10 years out of date?

Whirlpool of death

HANG GLIDER pilot Tony Payne died when he was caught in massive air turbulence at a Sussex beauty spot.

His glider was smashed into the ground by a wave-like effect which swept over the Devils Dyke Hotel, an inquest heard.

The 44-year-old graphic designer died almost instantly from severe head injuries after plunging into the car park behind the building.

A jury at Haywards Heath returned an accidental death verdict after hearing three eyewitnesses and an air crash expert describe the incident in June.

Department of Transport investigator Mr John Hunter said: "He entered an area of massive turbulence and when he lost control there was insufficient height for him to effect a recovery."

Mr Payne, of Tooting, London, was seen trying to land twice before the glider nosedived about 20ft. into the car park and hit a large concrete rubbish bin.

The impact would have been made worse by the glider catching the rim of the bin, added Mr Hunter.

Fellow Southern Hang Gliding Club member Mr Ron Steadman of Redhill, Surrey, said Mr Payne had been flying for more than eight years and

conditions on the day were fine for experienced gliders.

His first two landing attempts had been too high and when he tried to lose height on the third attempt the glider stalled and went straight into the ground.

Another club member, Mr Robert Schoofing of Seymour Road, Broadfield, Crawley, said the wind was from the north-west but gusting from the north and north-east.

One effect of the gusts was

to cause a "rotor" motion of the air like a wave over the hotel building, which caught the glider and threw it down.

Club safety officer Mr Paul Ray of Royal George Road, Burgess Hill, said in a statement read to the jury: "Being drawn into the rotor is like being pulled into a whirlpool."

But all the club members knew of the danger caused by the air currents round the hotel.

Gliding at Dyke is safe—pilot

by Ian Thomas

A **HANG-GLIDING** expert has hit back at a call for flying restrictions on Devil's Dyke, near Brighton.

Former airline captain Vince Hallam says the dangers of the sport are over-blown, despite a rash of accidents at the downland beauty spot this year.

Everyone who takes off at the Dyke is certified to fly by the British Hang-Gliding

Association.

Mr Hallam, a hang-gliding instructor, was reacting to Brighton councillor Brian Fitch's demands for limits on the number of "sky-sailors" using the popular recreation area.

Coun. Fitch, chairman of the Parks and Recreation Committee, is concerned about hang-gliding's poor safety record, with one pilot killed and two others injured there in the last eight months.

But Mr Hallam said the standards in hang-gliding were "extremely good" and it was less risky than many other sports.

He added: "It is only dangerous if the hang-gliders are flown stupidly."

And he denied claims that it posed dangers to the public at the Dyke, a mecca for walkers and picnickers.

Mr Hallam, who lives in Brighton, says signs should be put up warning people to watch out for hang-gliders.

Southern Hang-Gliding Club, of which he is a member, regularly monitors the Dyke to ensure all the pilots have approved flying certificates.

Wind rider's 2-way record

HANG GLIDER pilot Johnny Carr made a record-breaking long distance flight from Devils Dyke — without leaving Sussex.

The 37-year-old from Burgess Hill notched up 32.18 miles beginning and ending at the same spot for the British out-and-return record.

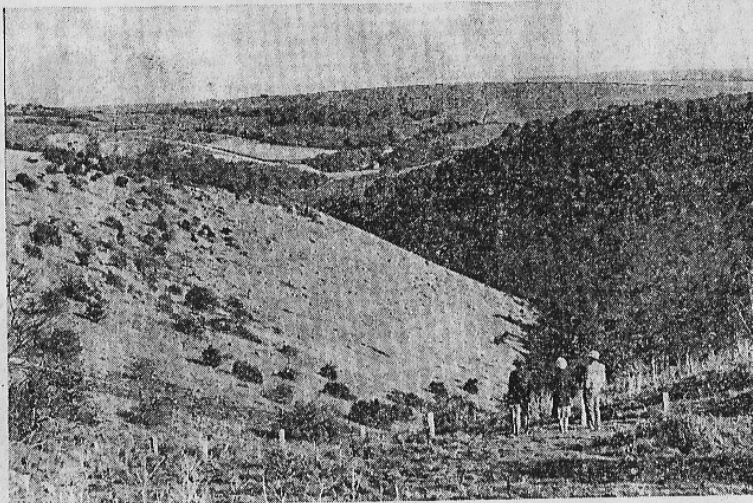
Hang glider pilots normally fly with the wind so the circular flight is a difficult feat because part of it is flown against the air currents.

"Conditions for the record were ideal so I went for it," said Johnny, a TV aerial fitter of Ferndale Road, who was British Hang Gliding Champion in 1981.

His route took him over Steyning and then to Ringmer and back across to The River Adur.



Rangers plan to patrol the Dyke



The majestic sweep of Devil's Dyke — patrols on the way?

A COUNCIL-RUN squad of park rangers could be patrolling the Devil's Dyke beauty area, near Brighton, by next year.

The move comes amid deepening concern about a lack of control over hang-glider pilots and other people thronging to the popular downland spot.

Brighton councillor Brian Fitch, chairman of the Parks and Recreation Committee, today revealed his plans to have the Dyke staffed with its

first force of green-uniformed rangers.

He doubts weather funds will be available in this year's budget, but hopes the scheme will go ahead in 1987.

Coun. Fitch said: "The park rangers would have a dual role to play in the management of the Dyke.

"As well as policing the area and ensuring it was safe, they would offer an information service and advice to people on how to use the countryside."

Brighton Council, which owns the Dyke, will be looking for grants from the Countryside Commission and other

bodies towards the staffing cost.

An advisory group is preparing a report for release later this year on the future of the South Downs, including the Dyke.

Sparked

Coun. Fitch sees the introduction of rangers as vitally important to the long-term operation of the area as a type of country park.

He hopes to win the cooperation of hang-glider pilots, who regularly use the Dyke, in the proposals.

A recent spate of flying accidents, including one fatal-

ity, sparked off a call by Coun. Fitch for restrictions on the numbers taking off there.

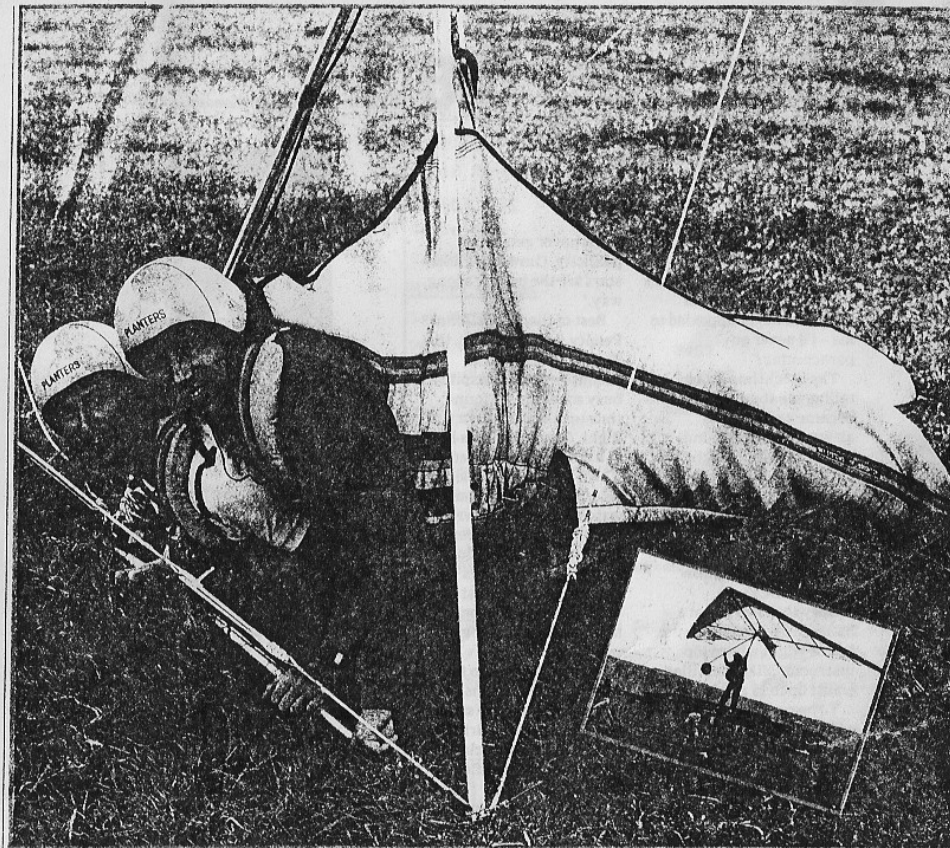
He also accuses the hang-glider enthusiasts of putting the public at risk and monopolising the parking area at the Dyke.

Coun. Fitch added: "We have to make the Dyke as safe as we can for the many people who use it."

He aims to enter into talks with the Southern Hang-Gliding Club about how to solve the present problems.

One idea is to put up notices warning walkers and picnickers to keep clear of the landing spots.

BACK PAGES BACK PAGES BACK PAGES BACK PAGES



I'm no hero but I'm glad I did it because it's the nearest I'll ever come to flying like a bird

says Gary Davies
(above with instructor Mike McMillan)

RADIO TIMES (continued)

Gary gets the hang of it

EVENING ARGUS, Monday, August 4, 1986-

'WHEN THE idea was suggested I wasn't too keen,' admits Radio 1's Gary Davies. 'Those kinds of sport had never appealed to me - I'd never go parachuting.'

The lunchtime DJ is telling me about the time he became a pilot of the airwaves, hang-gliding above the Isle of Wight.

Cameras were strapped to the machine during his maiden flight and you can see the results in this week's edition of The Saturday Picture Show (8.45 am BBC1).

Gary took lessons at a hang-gliding school on the Isle of Wight where top instructor Mike McMillan trains up to 15 pilots a week.

To begin with Gary was winched along at a height of about 20 feet. 'I've never been so frightened in my life before I took off,' says Gary, 'but as soon as I was airborne the fear went and it was wonderful, circling round the field.'

'I was flying free of the towrope and really getting the feel of the glider. And I had to be careful where I landed - there'd been lots of cows in the field earlier on!'

Instructor Mike says: 'Gary did very well - he'd make a good pilot. Britain leads the world in this sport,

but it never gets much publicity. Our hang-glider stars are the best by a long way.'

Best of them all is John Pendry from Brighton, the European and World Champion - and, despite his busy schedule, he found time to take Gary for a real flight, over 600 metres high in a double hang-glider.

'We were strapped side by side, and it was fantastic to watch John manoeuvring to find the thermal currents that would keep us aloft,' says Gary. 'The views were stunning, and it's just so quiet up there. The only noise was the rushing of the wind.'

Gary now hopes to find time for more lessons so that he can take the strict tests set up by the British Hang-Gliding Association and become a qualified pilot.

'It's not a dangerous sport if people keep to the rules,' he says, 'and from what I've seen, people who hang-glide are a great bunch. They're far from being nutters who leap from steep cliffs hoping they'll float down. There's a lot of skill - and they do pack a parachute!'

'I'm no hero but I'm glad I did it because it's the nearest I'll ever come to flying like a bird.'



● MICHEL CARNET

Carnet hangs in for new record

MICHEL CARNET, of Brighton, flew his hand glider 98.6 miles from Lewes to East Anglia, for which he will be claiming the new official British record.

Carnet completed the flight in three and a half hours, flying mostly as low as 3,500ft. in order to go around and avoid the Gatwick air space.

While flying over Tunbridge Wells just one mile ahead of Ian Carrington-Smith, another Brighton man, he heard a loud noise and found the Red Arrows flying in formation just 500ft. below as they headed for Brighton.

Michael took their photo as they passed by.

NATIONAL LEAGUE 1986

Results:

Position	Pilot	Points (max 6000)
1st	John Pendry	4813
2nd	Jess Flynn	4556
3rd	Robin Rhodes	4493
4th	<u>Johnny Carr</u>	4094
5th	Colin Lark	4079
6th	Colin Graham	3850
7th	<u>Michel Carnet</u>	3746
8th	Len Hull	3481
9th	Phil Huddleston	3457
10th	Bruce Goldsmith	3402
15th	<u>Dave Rusbridge</u>	3140

This makes John Pendry the British, European, and World Champion of Hang Gliding - a unique achievement in the sport. Well done, John.

Congratulations are also due to the other Club pilots (underlined above) who all performed well, particularly Johnny Carr who made yet another 'comeback' to finish 4th.

Once again the National League format has proved to be a superb training ground for those pilots who wish to fly competitively and our success rate over the past two seasons is probably only matched by British Athletics who have also been winning many of the top awards in their competitions.

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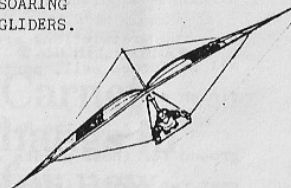
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AIRSPACE UPDATE

AERODROME TRAFFIC ZONE (ATZ)

All licensed aerodromes with two-way air to ground radio, aerodromes with an Air Traffic Control unit (ATC), and Military Aerodromes have an ATZ.

At the moment an ATZ covers a volume of air within a distance of 1½ nautical miles from the aerodrome boundary up to a height of 2000 ft AGL. Moves are afoot to increase the distance from the boundary to 3 nautical miles for large aerodromes.

It is illegal to enter an ATZ without permission. This can be gained either by two-way radio communication or by telephone prior to take-off. Some aerodromes require 24 hrs notice.

MILITARY AERODROME TRAFFIC ZONE (MATZ)

The purpose of a MATZ is to provide a volume of airspace within which increased protection may be given to aircraft in the critical stages of circuit, approach and climb out. Normally these zones comprise:

- The airspace within 5 nautical miles (nm) radius of the aerodrome from the surface to 3000 ft AGL.
- The airspace above has a 'stub' projecting from it having a length of 5 nm aligned with the main runway or final approach path, and a width of 4nm from 1000 ft AGL to 3000 ft AGL.

The dimensions of some MATZ vary slightly. Sometimes one MATZ may overlap another (e.g. Boscombe Down and Middle Wallop, north of Winchester). This airspace is then called a Combined Military Aerodrome Traffic Zone (CMATZ).

Although civil recognition of a Matz is not mandatory, within each MATZ is an ATZ (see above) and these rules apply. Most MATZ are operational Mon-Fri. However, some are operational 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week.

The MATZ's on the Procester XC route towards the Dyke, that is Kemble, Fairford, Abingdon, Benson and Odiham are operational Mon-Fri. Farnborough has lost its MATZ protection. At the moment there is one MATZ in the country which is activated by NOTAM (i.e. used rarely); this is Ethersfield in East Anglia.

The airspace within an operational Matz can be very congested and should be avoided, especially the 'stub'. A military pilot has a very high workload and when within the 'protection' of a MATZ he may well be concentrating more on his instruments than on keeping a good lookout.

Kevin Pickering
Airspace Officer.

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National Air Traffic Services
Hillingdon House
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Middlesex UB10 0RL

Telephone Uxbridge (0895) 57324
Telex 934725

Airmiss Reporting

The procedure for reporting airmisses is detailed in the UK Air Pilot RAC 3.1.9 Section 8 and summarised in Aeronautical Information Circular 20/1980. Airmiss reporting forms, CA 1094, are available at all CAA ATS Units, the Joint Airmiss Section and, for large supplies, from the CAA Form Store at Greville House, 37 Gratton Road, Cheltenham, Glos. GL50 2BN.

OC JAS Comments

You will notice as you read this edition of the Bulletin that all the airmiss incidents included were assessed by the JAWG as bearing either a possible or actual risk of collision. Let me quickly assure you that this is not indicative of a new trend in airmisses currently being reported; statistically only about 40% of all reported airmisses are classified by the JAWG in these two categories. Aspects of three of the incidents are worthy of special note. In the third incident you will see that a party of hang glider pilots did not NOTAM their activities until after an airmiss. Whilst there is no mandatory requirement to do so, it is patently good sense to let the rest of the flying fraternity know of such activities well in advance. The NOTAM service is quick, effective and free! An additional aid to flight safety is touched on in the fourth incident where mention is made of the facilities available to civil pilots from military radar units. Perhaps not all civil pilots are aware that when in transit they may use these units to enhance their safe and expeditious progress. Neither of the aforementioned facilities was available to the Hughes pilot in the seventh incident, however, and some of you may not be aware that line inspections and surveys were removed from Civil Aircraft Notification Procedure (CANP) in May 1984. Pilots involved in these operations now have to rely on the see and avoid principle.

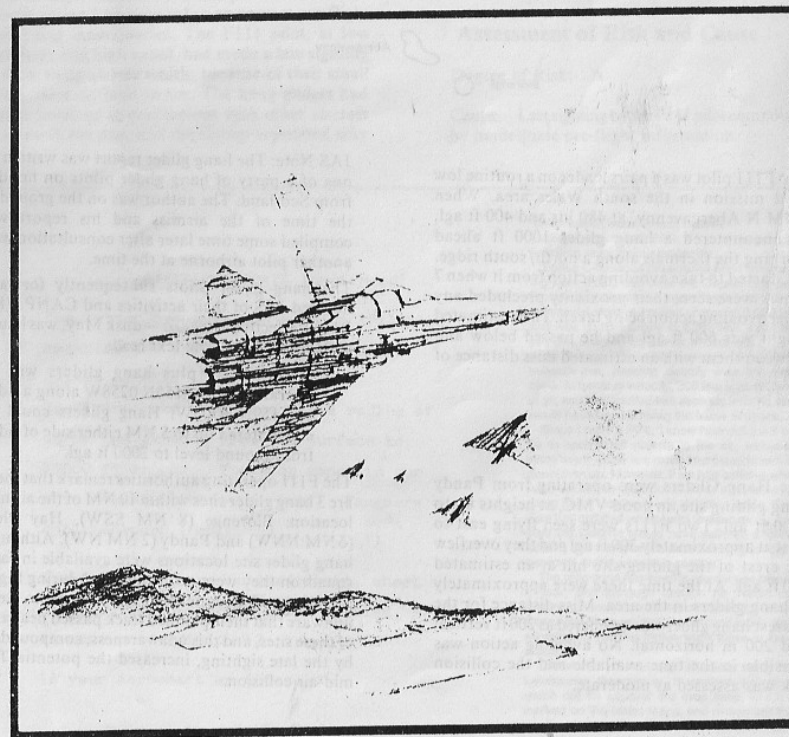
In the first airmiss of this bulletin a Tobago pilot, flying in the Farnborough area, was surprised by the sudden appearance of a Jaguar that passed

very close behind him. The Jaguar pilot, flying a GCA into Farnborough, had seen the Tobago and taken avoiding action, although there had been a possible risk of collision. Later the same month a Cherokee Arrow-type aircraft flew through the West Malling glider site just as a K21 glider had released from a cable launch. The glider took harsh avoiding action as the intruder passed close in front. Tracing action on the Cherokee was unsuccessful, however, but the Group concluded that there had been a possible risk of collision. In the third incident a pair of F111s operating at low level and high speed, flew through a group of hang gliders at the Pandy site and neither the hang glider nor F111 pilots had time to take avoiding action. It was fortuitous that no collision had occurred and the risk had been very real. In June a PA28, on a cross-country navigation exercise from Cambridge to Oxford, overflew a Phantom that was engaged in a GCA into Alconbury. The PA28 had not seen the Phantom who had been in a turn away from it, and the Group considered that there had been a possible risk of collision. Both pilots filed in the fifth incident, where a Be55 Baron overflew the Husbands Bosworth glider site and conflicted head-on with a Bocian glider that was thermalising in marginal IMC. Both pilots agreed on the small miss distances, and the Group concluded that there had been an actual risk of collision. Another head-on conflict, in poor weather conditions in the Stapleford area, occurred between a Bell 206 and a motor glider. Neither pilot saw the other

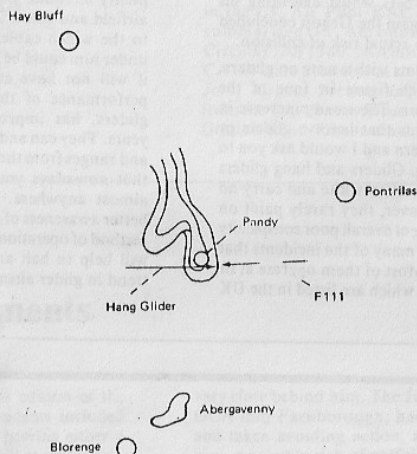
other aircraft until they were some 150 yds apart and both pilots took sharp avoiding action; the risk of collision had been high. In the final report a Hughes helicopter, on a gas pipeline inspection in the Leeming area, had to enter autorotation when a Tornado closed on him at low-level. The Tornado pilot pulled 5½G whilst executing his avoiding action and again the Group concluded that there had been an actual risk of collision.

I will close my comments with a note on gliders, various types of which figure in four of the incidents in this bulletin. The steady increase in the number of incidents that involve gliders or hang gliders is of concern and I would ask you to consider the following. Gliders and hang gliders are all relatively small, often white and carry no strobe lighting. Moreover, they rarely paint on radar and their consequent overall poor conspicuity is one of the factors in many of the incidents that they are involved in. Most of them operate at or from known locations which are listed in the UK

Air Pilot RAC 5-9-1 and 5-11-1. Many incidents occur as a result of pilots infringing these sites and therefore a knowledge of their location is an essential flight planning pre-requisite. If you should encounter gliders, remember that they have limited avoidance capability so give them plenty of room. Furthermore, a glider over the airfield and below 2000 ft could still be attached to the winch cable; any action you take to fly under him could be fatal for both of you. Finally, it will not have escaped your notice that the performance of these craft, particularly hang gliders, has improved dramatically in recent years. They can and do operate at greater heights and ranges from their launch sites and this means that nowadays you may expect to meet them almost anywhere. I suggest, therefore, that a better awareness of gliders and hang gliders, their method of operation and their particular problems will help to halt and perhaps reduce the rising trend in glider airmisses.



F111 Formation and Hang Gliders Pandy Site — May 1985



The F111 pilot was a pairs leader on a routine low level mission in the south Wales area. When 5NM N Abergavenny, at 480 kts and 400 ft agl, he encountered a hang glider 1000 ft ahead working the thermals along a north/south ridge. He started to take avoiding action from it when 7 others were seen; their proximity precluded any other avoiding action being taken. Their estimated height was 600 ft agl and he passed below and between them with an estimated miss distance of 500 ft.

The Hang Gliders were operating from Pandy hang gliding site, in good VMC, at heights up to 3500 ft agl. Two F111s were seen flying east to west at approximately 300 ft agl and they overflew the crest of the gliding-site hill at an estimated 100 ft agl. At the time there were approximately 20 hang gliders in the area. Miss distance for the nearest hang glider was estimated as 200 ft vertical and 200 m horizontal. No avoiding action was possible in the time available and the collision risk was assessed as moderate.

JAS Note: The hang glider report was written by one of a party of hang glider pilots on holiday from Scotland. The author was on the ground at the time of the airmis and his report was compiled some time later after consultation with another pilot airborne at the time.

The hang glider pilots subsequently formally notified AIS of their activities and CANP UKL B1459, effective 310900Z — dusk May, was issued at 310815Z May. The text read:

Warning: 50 plus hang gliders will be operating from 5150N 0258W along a ridge to 5159N 0305W. Hang gliders could be encountered up to 5 NM either side of ridge from ground level to 2000 ft agl.

The F111 operating authorities remark that there are 3 hang glider sites within 10NM of the airmis location: Bloreng (8 NM SSW), Hay Bluff (6NM NNW) and Pandy (2 NM NW). Although hang glider site locations were available in each squadron they were not being used during flight planning. Consequently, these aircrew were unaware that their planned track passed near any of these sites, and this unawareness, compounded by the late sighting, increased the potential for mid-air collision.

Although aircrews are not restricted from flying through hang glider sites, an awareness of their position would prompt better lookout. Aircrews were therefore briefed on this airmis during the June flying safety meeting and informed of the need to be aware of hang glider sites along planned routes. The Wing radar branch will have hang glider sites marked on low level route folders for each Wing and the Deputy Commander of Operations had ordered a set of ICAO 1:500000 maps, each with the major hang glider sites marked, for each squadron. The operating authorities recommend the AFCENT low flying charts are also marked with the major hang glider sites.

Summary of the JAWG Discussion

The Group noted the remarks of the F111 operating authorities and was pleased to see that swift action had been taken to correct pre-flight planning inadequacies. The F111 pilot, at low altitude and high speed, had made a late sighting of the hang gliders which, because of their small size, were difficult to see. The hang gliders had been involved in conflicts with other aircraft earlier in the day, and the Group wondered why

they had not asked for a NOTAM prior to their activities. LATCC recommended that if more than 5 intended to fly at any location they should use the Freephone (2230) to LATCC (Mil) to issue a NOTAM. The lack of a NOTAM and the inadequacies in the pre-flight planning by the F111 crew had undoubtedly contributed to the airmis.

Members commented that not all hang glider pilots belonged to the BHGA and would not, therefore, see the BHGA periodical 'Wings' which was used to promote general flight safety awareness.

In assessing the risk of collision the Group noted the F111 pilot's report that he was unable to take avoiding action after he had seen 7 more gliders. Members wondered how many more might have been airborne at the time that he did not see and considered that it had been fortuitous that there had been no collision. They therefore considered that there had been a definite risk of collision.

Assessment of Risk and Cause

Degree of Risk: A

Cause: Late sighting by the F111 pilot compounded by inadequate pre-flight information.

AIRSPACE UPDATE (continued)

The letter opposite was sent to 'Pilot' magazine and applies equally to us glider pilots.

Each parachute drop zone has a radius of 1½ nm and extends from the surface to 15000 ft approx. The drop zones in our area are at Chichester (two!), Tangmere and Lashenden (Headcorn).

The 1:500 000 aeronautical chart, sheet 2171 CD for Southern England & Wales, is now up to Edition 12.

Is your Aerochart up to date ?

Kevin Pickering.

Think about them falling bodies

Perhaps you might think it useful to print the following story in your magazine.

I am a C-licensed parachutist and I was jumping from 9,000 feet over the Capital School of Parachuting drop-zone near Stapleford. After a successful skydive I pulled at around 2,600 feet, and was under canopy at 2,300 feet. I am sure you can imagine my horror at seeing a red and white Cessna 172 or 182 not more than 1,300 feet beneath me, passing directly over the drop-zone. At terminal velocity, 300 feet is no distance at all, and had I pulled two seconds later he and I would have been sharing the same airspace.

Since I have a PPL, I know how difficult it can be to spot small objects in the air, especially since many pilots are more interested in looking down than up. However, if we had collided whilst I was still in free-fall, I doubt either of us would be doing much looking in any direction again. Even if we had collided whilst I was under canopy, I am sure the Cessna would have suffered a forced landing and I may or may not have been able to get down under a reserve canopy.

The drop zone has been in regular use now for a year, and although London Air Traffic can ensure we have clear airspace above 2,500 feet there have been several aircraft (and incidentally microlights) coming frighteningly close at lower altitudes.

Therefore, I would ask all pilots using the Lambourne Beacon or Stapleford airfield to watch out for us over the drop zone, which is marked on the latest maps, and remember that any incident could well hurt you as much as it hurts us.

A. W. Simons,
London N10.

Air Mail

Dear Ian,

I thought Southern Club members would like to know some interesting revelations from the public on hang gliding. The date is 31/8/86, the place: Devil's Dyke, conditions: wind northwesterly 2 - 4 mph. 25 gliders parked nose down waiting for the sky to work.

My girlfriend is sitting behind my glider listening to the spectators chatting: First Conversation (The Know All)
 Friend: " What are they waiting for ? "
 The Know All: " The wind has to be behind them to blow them off. "

2) Second Conversation (Husband & Wife)

Wife: " They hang from the middle of the glider & hold the bar with their hands. "
 Husband: " Don't be daft!!! "
 Wife: " Well, how do they stay on then ? "
 Husband: " They just hold on to that bar!!! "

3) Third Conversation (Spectator to Pilot)

" I was just telling my friend - you can't steer, can you ? You just go where the wind takes you. "
 And lastly, one very very old lady to another:
 " Why do they wear crash helmets ? "
 " Oh, that's to stop them crushing their nuts! "

So wonderful to know how clever we are.

Yours (with nuts intact)

Mark Johns.

Dear Editor,

Can the Club arrange a winter First Aid Course in the Brighton or London area ? We can't completely eliminate accidents, but quick resuscitation could make someone's day! I'll give a free PORTEX AIRWAY to anyone who learns how to use one.

Vince Hallam.

P.S. You can have one anyway for an SAE - and they're worth a couple of quid!
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 (eves) or 01-686-8251 (days)

Dear Editor,

Please publish my thanks to the Sites Officers for their work on Firlle. The moving of the fence, and better parking provisions were urgently needed for safety and for public relations. Good work!

Congratulations,

Vince Hallam.
