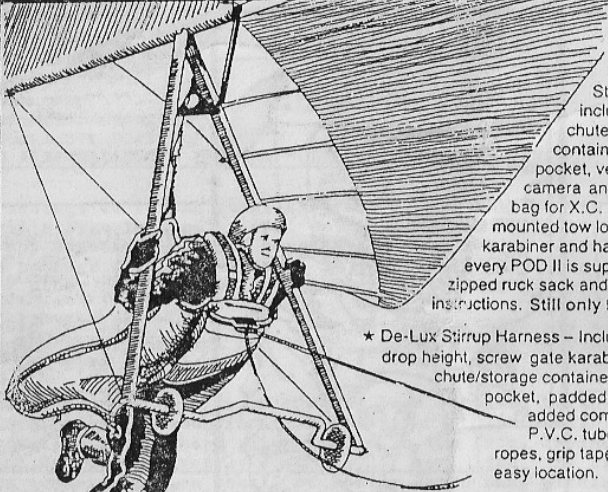


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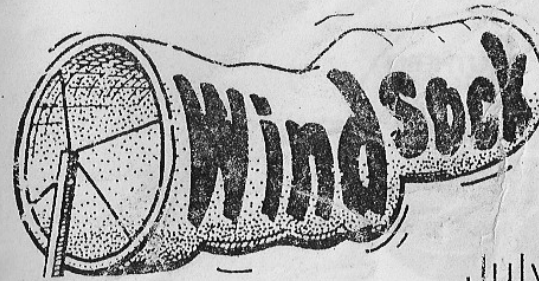
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July 86

New European Champion



John Pendry



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CHAIRMAN'S COMMENT

Well, what can you say? The BHGA sends four blokes out to the European Championships in Hungary, two of them from our Club, and they win not only the individual gold but the team gold as well! The standard of these guys' flying never ceases to amaze me - John Pendry 1st and Michel Carnet 4th. Congratulations, both of you.

Don't forget to send off your subs to join the Southern Tow Group based at Chalvington - only £10 for a year. And what potential we have got there - only three miles from the site is Mount Caburn from where Michel Carnet very recently flew 98 miles into East Anglia! That's put the area on the map, hasn't it? Michel is working out a series of triangles for Tow Members to fly from Chalvington. Believe me, that area WORKS.

Be seeing you in the sky sooner or later,

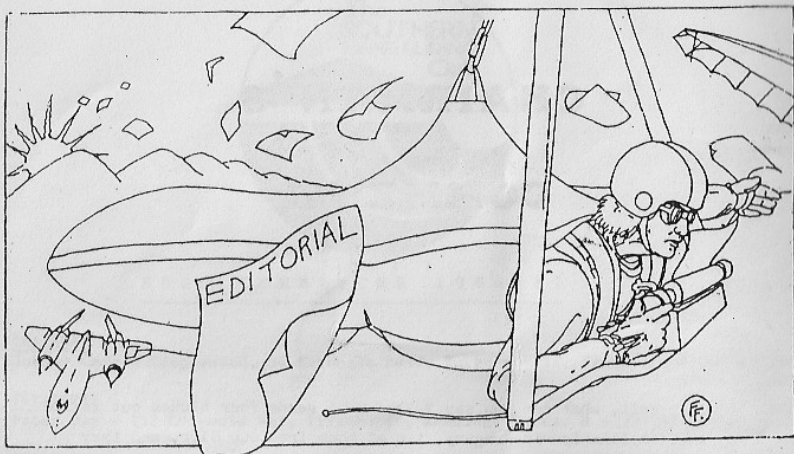
Johnny.

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.



Just over a year ago in WINDSOCK I wrote about a member of our Club becoming World Hang Gliding Champion. Well, now he is European Champion too, a feat never before achieved in the history of the sport. In fact John Pendry is well on the way to even greater distinction if he maintains his current position at the top of the National League. You could call that the 'Grand Slam'. Only time will tell, of course, and there will be plenty of obstacles in his way, not least two of his Clubmates Messrs. Carr and Carnet! Watch this space.....

More good news is that the British Team won the European Team event in Hungary by a convincing 5000 point margin: By all accounts it was an excellent competition, well organised and with some classic gliding weather. A new speed record around a 75 km triangle was established, although not officially.

The red flag for use in northerly rotor conditions at the Dyke is now ready and will be kept until further notice just inside the small "Private" marked gate to the left of the Cafeteria entrance. Would all Observers and other experienced pilots please make a note this and use their discretion as to when the flag should be flown. It is a simple matter of dropping the flagpole into a tube, and if you are the last to leave the Dyke it will only take a few seconds to take the flag down and store it away.

May I point out on the map of the Dyke printed in the last WINDSOCK (the one showing top landing areas and rotor off the pub buildings), that the area in the main north bowl marked "Landing area in northerlies (or westerlies) " should have read "Landing area in northerlies or NORTHwesterlies". The reason for this being that landing there in westerlies could encourage pilots to fly into or over the bowl and that is certainly not to be recommended, for reasons explained by Dave Clayton's article. Apologies for this oversight.

This edition sees the start of what I hope will be a regular slot on

Editorial (continued)

Airspace and our relationship with it and its regulations. There does seem to be a growing awareness amongst hang glider pilots of Airspace Rules; perhaps this is due to the publicity given it since the introduction of Towing. Next time you fly at the Dyke, why not drop into Shoreham Airport and buy yourself an Airspace map, or stop off at Biggin Hill Airport on the way down from London ?

Yours thermally,

Ian CS.

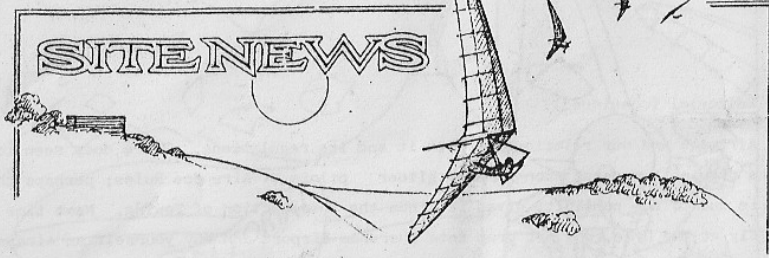
A CEREMONY AT THE DYKE

The late Tony Payne's wife, Carol, would like to express her thanks for all the kindness and consideration shown by those who helped, following her husband's accident at Devil's Dyke. On Tuesday 19th August, between 3 and 4 pm, there will be a short ceremony on the Devil's Dyke after which Tony's ashes will be scattered over the area. A photograph of Tony will also be hung in the pub, depicting him in his flying gear, as we well remember him. Members may attend.

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

	<u>Individual</u>	<u>pts</u>	<u>Team</u>	<u>pts</u>
1st	John Pendry	GB 5665	1st Great Britain	21248
2nd	Bob Calvert	GE 5491	2nd Austria	16041
3rd	Gerard Thevenot	F 5093	3rd West Germany	15489
4th	Michael Carnet	GE 5074	4th Switzerland	13483
5th	Jes Flynn	GE 5018	5th France	13476

This result out of a field of 84 pilots - Brilliant.



DYKE

THE CROPS ARE NOW BEING HARVESTED. YOU MAY LAND WERE THE CROP HAS BEEN COMPLETELY HARVESTED. HOWEVER IT WILL NOT BE LONG BEFORE A NEW CROP WILL BE REPLANTED ,SO MAKE THE MOST OF IT.

FIRLE

SOME GOOD NEWS, FIRLE ESTATE SAY THEY MAY PROVIDE US WITH A TOP CAR PARK . BAD NEWS IS THAT IT MAY COST US A LITTLE MORE.NEGOTIATIONS ARE STILL IN PROGRESS. ALSO THE FARMER IS WILLING TO HAVE THE BIG BOWL FENCE MOVED.HE WILL EVEN LET US MOVE IT,WERE WE LIKE.THE FARMER WILL PROVIDE THE EQUIPMENT. IF YOU CAN HELP PLEASE CONTACT ME A.S.A.P.C.B.

Sussex College of Hang Gliding,
49 Church Street,
Brighton.

23/7/86

Dear Editor,

I note with interest today of the reintroduction of the S.H.G.C. PILOT 'D' Rating. This is usually achieved after the Pilot 2 and 12 noon.

I and my pupils are fascinated to see the performance of some excellent pilots when they use the 'D' method. They can be seen some afternoons at the Dyke practising their skilled swoops and wobbles - sometimes in really difficult conditions.

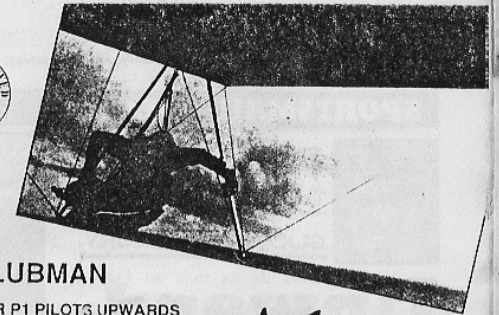
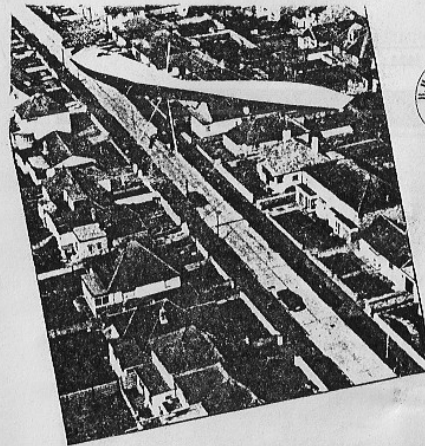
After a certain number of hours of such flying they do not need any advice or assistance - indeed they won't accept any. But please can the Club ensure that these flyers carry a large red flag with 'D' written clearly on it, thus enabling less experienced pilots to keep out of their way?

Yours sincerely,

Vince Hallam.

P.S. Is it possible to run a League of 'D' rated pilots? I understand the highest number of pts scored in one day stands at 7.

Ed.: Thanks for the letter, Vince, No, I don't think it would be possible to run a League for 'D' rated pilots - they wouldn't be capable of reading the rules, let alone flying a task, unless it involved their right arms only.



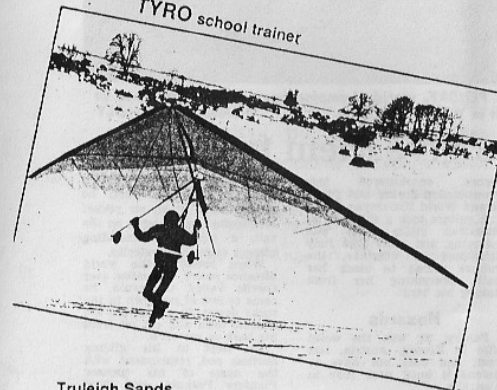
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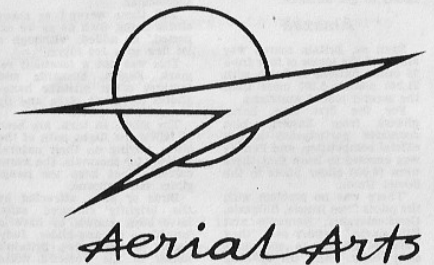
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SPORTSMAIL SPECIAL



**JOHN ROBERTS ON
THE MEN WHO ARE
GLIDING TO GLORY**

Upward, mobile, high flying Britons

BRITAIN may be struggling to keep pace with the best at football, cricket, tennis and other games played at ground level, but in the air we're untouchable.

This morning a team of six hang-glider pilots leaves for Canada to defend the American Cup, a competition second only to the world championships. The team, led by John Pendry, the world champion, has barely had time to make a dash home with medals from a triumph in the European championships, which ended in Hungary last weekend.

Pendry, the Birdman of Brighton, won the gold. Bob Calvert, from Blackburn, the silver, and Michel Carnet, who has resided in Brighton long enough to be excused a French accent, and Jes Flynn, of Abergavenny filled fourth and fifth positions.

Britain would have repeated their clean sweep of gold, silver and bronze three years ago had not Flynn been deprived of 500 points when a segment of the competition was scrapped because the majority of pilots failed to get airborne.

Amazed

Even so, Britain soared way ahead of the teams of four from 23 other nations to finish with 21,248 points—5,207 more than the second placed Austrians.

For the first time, hang-gliders from Eastern bloc countries participated in an official competition, and Pendry was amazed to learn that there were 10,000 glider pilots in the Soviet Union.

There was no problem with the pilots from Russia, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Yugoslavia, Pendry said, they were all allowed to communicate freely. And the opening



JOHN PENDRY, world champion hang glider, gets close to the soil in Yorkshire.
Picture: KEVIN HOLT

Only vultures give them trouble

and closing ceremonies, with all the top brass present, were spectacular.

"But there weren't as many starts flying with us as we expected," he added, "although a lot flew with Jes Flynn."

This was not a facetious remark. Eagles, buzzards and vultures often mistake hang-gliders for giant birds and fly alongside the pilots.

The pilots, in turn, are keen to follow the flight path of the birds, relying on their natural instinct for thermals, the warm currents that keep the hang-glider sail airborne.

Birds of prey, attracted by the brightly coloured sails, have been known to have a 'crash' on a hang-glider. Judy Leden, of Camberley, Britain's holder of the women's world

record, encountered this phenomenon during last year's Grand World Himalayan Rally.

A vulture took a shine to an American glider Judy was following, and every time Judy attempted to overtake, the vulture veered to block her path, preventing her from taking his bird.

Hazards

Pendry, 29, won the world title in Kossen, Austria, last year, and does not have to defend it until next year in Australia.

With qualified tuition, he maintains, the sport is safe, although there are hazards, such as turbulence caused by a Jumbo Jet cruising in the far distance.

His most dangerous moment was in Australia, when he turned turtle in an air pocket and found himself lying on the sail, a situation demanding utmost calm and dexterity.

When breaking the world distance record, 181 miles over Owens Valley, California, he came to rest at sundown in the rocky desert, 30 miles from the nearest town and cut off from his back-up car crew.

He slept in his gliding harness pod, resplendent with the name of his sponsor Flaners Peanuts, and next morning set off walking to town. As luck would have it, he met up with a couple of gold prospectors, dead miners for Walter Huston and Humphrey Bogart, in a pick-up truck.

AIRSPACE UPDATE

Okay all you aviators out there! How many of you have noticed that Michel Carnet's record breaking Flight to Deal appears to have infringed Special Rules Airspace? Unless he flew the last 20 odd miles at around 500' agl, he was well within the Manston Cross Channel Special Rules Area (1000' asl - 4500' asl over land).

I can only presume (due to the fact that nobody has contacted Andy Wood (Competitions) or myself demanding that Michel be shot or at least disqualified) that a) nobody has an Aeronautical Chart for the southeast of England (unthinkable!),

b) everybody has a soft spot for Michel and realises his enthusiasm may have got the better of him, so have let him off this time (also unthinkable!),

c) you all spend your spare time tucked up in bed reading "the Aeronautical Information Publication (Air pilot) CAP 32".

This publication goes into great detail (yawn!) about rules, regulations and procedures regarding specific SRA's, SRZ's, Danger Areas, MATZ'S etc. Section RAC 3-3-40 of the UK AIP (Air Pilot) CAP 32 deals with the Manston Cross Channel Special Rules Area and Special Rules Zone.

Of particular interest to us is Paragraph 2.3 . Previous paragraphs explain the rules and procedures to use when within the SRA, which usually makes it illegal for us glider pilots to enter. However, paragraph 2.3 states: "These Special Rules shall not apply to any glider which remains at least one mile horizontally and 1000 ft vertically from cloud, in a flight visibility of at least five nautical miles and outside that part of the Cross Channel Special Rules Airspace between the surface and 4500 ft ALT which falls within the area notified in sub-paragraph 1.2.11 as the Manston Cross Channel Special Rules Zone."

What it all means is that if we fly into Manston SRA we must remain within Visual Flight Rules. It really is very important that we stick to these Rules rigidly. The CAA would not hesitate in banning gliders (that would include our sailplane cousins) from the SRA if there was an incident.

So Michel, your Devil's Dyke XC Record is safe for the moment, but as I pen these words there are a couple of hundred SHGC members with their charts unfolded, working out XC routes into East Anglia!

Safe (and legal) Flying,

Kevin Pickering
Airspace Officer.

Editor: Thanks for the article, Kevin, but just after I received it news arrived that Michel has beaten everybody else to it by flying 98 miles from Mount Caburn to Sicklemere, a few miles south of Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk.

NOTAMS

Notams (NOTices To AirMen) are issued by the CAA and the National Air Traffic Services (NATS).

NOTAM A439: Free Fall Parachuting.

Parachuting now takes place at Tangmere Aerodrome, West Sussex. These loonies who insist on jumping out of perfectly serviceable aircraft will be free falling from as high as Flight Level 150 (15,000 ft approx).

So unless you want to be destroyed by a lump of meat, grissle and bone travelling at 120 mph, keep well away when on an XC in east or northeasterlies.

Legal requirements are: Do not enter area within a radius of 1 nautical mile of the centre of the aerodrome. Vertical limits: Surface - FL150.

NOTAM A444: "The Air Navigation (Restriction of Flying) (World Aerobatic Championships) Regulations 1986."

This Notam concerns all pilots flying XC from Frocester. From Aug 1st thro' to Aug 17th the World Aerobatic Championships will take place at the gliding and parachuting centre at South Cerney (between Kemble and Fairford MATZ), with a practice area inside Kemble ATZ (see Chart opposite). Do not fly within a radius of 1.5 nm (nautical miles) of South Cerney (surface - 4500ft) 1st - 17th August ("A" on chart).

Do not fly within a radius of 4 nm of South Cerney (surface - 5900ft) on 16th Aug ("B" on chart).

Do not fly within a radius of 1.5 nm of Kemble (SFC - 4500') 3rd - 6th Aug ("C").

NOTAM B300: Air Display and Free Fall Parachuting at Eastbourne, Friday 8th - Saturday 9th Aug. 2 nm radius of NS046- E00017. SFC - 5000ft.

NOTAM A388: Aeronautical Charts. The South East Aeronautical Chart 1:250 000 scale is now up to Edition 12.

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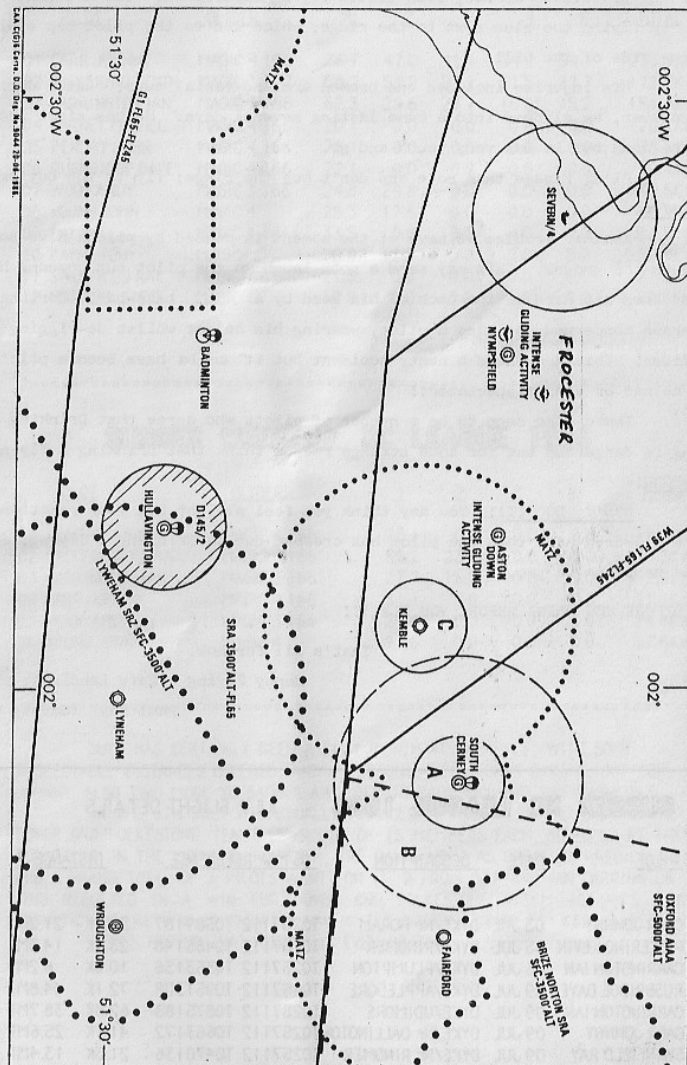
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APPENDIX TO NOTAM A444/1986

THE AIR NAVIGATIONAL (RESTRICTION OF FLYING) (WORLD AEROBATIC CHAMPIONSHIPS) REGULATIONS 1986

SAFETY REPORT

Last month at Devil's Dyke there was a very serious accident involving a visiting pilot from abroad, with little flying experience. The accident was caused by flying too slow next to the ridge, which led to the pilot tip stalling into the side of the hill.

His injuries included one broken arm and facial cuts. Later during the day, however, he slipped into a coma lasting several days. He has since recovered from the coma but it was very touch and go.

P1's: Please take note and don't hug the ridge; fly to the bottom - it's safer!

Another problem we have at the moment is caused by pilots dive-bombing people on the ground. This may seem a good laugh to the pilot but someone has already been hit hard on the back of his head by a base-bar. Fortunately the person concerned was also a pilot, wearing his helmet whilst de-rigging his own glider. This prevented a nasty accident but it could have been a pilot without a helmet or even a spectator!!

There also seem to be a number of pilots who agree that Drinking & Driving is dangerous but for some strange reason think that Drinking & Flying is OK. WRONG!

DON'T DO IT!! You may think you feel alright but your reactions will be slower. More than one pilot has crashed due to Drinking & Flying; don't let the next one be you.

THINK BEFORE YOU DRINK BEFORE YOU FLY.!!!

That's all for now.

Happy Flying & Safe Landings,

Paul Ray (Safety Officer).

SUSSEX XC LEAGUE 1986

JULY FLIGHT DETAILS

PILOT	DATE	DESCRIPTION	OS MAP REFERENCE	DISTANCE
CARR JOHNNY	03 JUL	DYKE/Nr HORAM	TQ257112 TQ589187	34.1K 21.2M1
PICKERING KEVIN	05 JUL	DYKE/RINGMER	TQ257112 TQ485148	23.1K 14.3M1
CARRINGTON IAN	06 JUL	DYKE/PLUMPTON	TQ257112 TQ353138	10.0K 6.2M1
RUSBRIDGE DAVE	09 JUL	DYKE/APPLEDORE	TQ257112 TQ951308	72.1K 44.8M1
CARRINGTON IAN	09 JUL	DYKE/UDIMORE	TQ257112 TQ875183	62.3K 38.7M1
CARR JOHNNY	09 JUL	DYKE/Nr DALLINGTON	TQ257112 TQ663172	41.1K 25.6M1
SWINFELD RAY	09 JUL	DYKE/Nr RINGMER	TQ257112 TQ470136	21.5K 13.4M1
CARR JOHNNY	17 JUL	DYKE/IVYCHURCH	TQ257112 TR027276	78.7K 48.9M1
PICKERING KEVIN	17 JUL	DYKE/HASTINGS	TQ257112 TQ844113	58.7K 36.5M1
RAY PAUL	17 JUL	DYKE/HEATHFIELD	TQ257112 TQ581197	33.5K 20.8M1
YOUNG JOHN	17 JUL	DYKE/WILMINGTON	TQ257112 TQ543048	29.3K 18.2M1
WOOD ANDY	17 JUL	DYKE/SELMESTON	TQ257112 TQ502072	24.8K 15.4M1
CARRINGTON IAN	17 JUL	DYKE/H.F.IEILD (O&R)	TQ257112 TQ195167	16.6K 10.3M1
CARR JOHNNY	23 JUL	DYKE/PEVENSEY	TQ257112 TQ654045	34.2K 21.2M1
CARRINGTON IAN	24 JUL	DYKE/WALDRON	TQ257112 TQ540199	29.6K 18.4M1

SUSSEX XC LEAGUE 1986

positions as at 31/07/86

PILOT	GLIDER	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
01 CARR JOHNNY	MAGIC 4 166	78.7	47.0	41.1	34.2	34.1	235.1Km
02 PICKERING KEVIN	MAGIC 3 177	58.7	51.2	23.1	21.5	17.7	172.2Km
03 CARRINGTON IAN	MAGIC 3 166	62.3	29.6	27.7	16.6*	15.2	151.4Km
04 CARNET MICHEL	MAGIC 4 166	120.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	120.1Km
05 PENDRY JOHN	MAGIC 4 166	78.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	78.1Km
06 RUSBRIDGE DAVE	MAGIC 4 166	72.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	72.1Km
07 WOOD ANDY	MAGIC 3 166	24.8	24.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	49.6Km
08 YOUNG JOHN	MAGIC 4	29.3	17.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	46.9Km
09 RAY PAUL	MAGIC 4 166	33.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.5Km
10 PAYNE TONY	MAGIC 1	20.9	12.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	32.9Km
11 SWINFELD RAY	MAGIC	21.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	21.5Km
12 MARNIER STEVE	MAGIC 1	12.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5Km

* out and return

SUSSEX WEEKEND XC LEAGUE 1986

PILOT	GLIDER	1	2	3	4	TOTAL
01 PENDRY JOHN	MAGIC 4 166	78.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	78.1Km
02 PICKERING KEVIN	MAGIC 3 166	51.2	23.1	0.0	0.0	74.3Km
03 CARRINGTON IAN	MAGIC 3 166	27.7	15.2	10.0	0.0	52.9Km
04 CARR JOHNNY	MAGIC 4 166	31.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	31.1Km
05 WOOD ANDY	MAGIC 3 166	24.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	24.8Km
06 YOUNG JOHN	MAGIC 4	17.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	17.6Km

JULY HAS CERTAINLY BEEN A BUSY MONTH AT THE DYKE, WITH SOME RESPECTABLE DISTANCES COVERED, AND A PERSONAL BEST FOR A DYKE FLIGHT FOR JOHNNY ALSO TWO MORE XC BADGES AWARDED TO PAUL RAY AND RAY SWINFELD.

ON THE 6TH JULY WE ACTUALLY MANAGED TO HOLD A COMPETITION AGAINST DOVER AND FOLKESTONE. TEAMS CONSISTED OF 15 MEMBERS EACH, SELECTED AS THEY TURNED UP IN THE MORNING HOWEVER, THE DAY WASN'T AS GREAT AS PREDICTED, AND A GRAND TOTAL OF 3 PILOTS WENT FOR IT, 2 FROM D&F AND IAN CARRINGTON. THIS RESULTED IN A WIN FOR DOVER AND FOLKESTONE, 13KM TO IAN'S 10KM PATHETIC! WHERE WAS I? CHEWING HAY IN THE BOTTOM FIELD! (?*&\$%!!)

HERES HOPING THAT AUGUST IS EVEN BETTER.

ANDY WOOD

REPORT ALL NEAR MISS ACCIDENTS



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DUNSTABLE

I know everyone hates those times it blows South westerly for weeks on end when high pressure gets established over the continent. It's not so bad in winter, when all you tend to get is drizzly muck, but in summer you can get some really beautiful thermic days. Once towing gets established this problem will be a thing of the past but until then - ever thought of Dunstable? It takes a W - S.W. you know! It's a long way from Brighton but if you live in London like me, and have never tried it before, read on.....

Dunstable is certainly not like the Dyke. In fact in comparison it's rubbish. However I had 1500' there last bank holiday and last year someone did 60 miles, so the potential is there. It's not an easy site - officially rated P2, and I certainly couldn't recommend any raw PI novice to fly there, but to anyone else, a good day there is a lot better than washing the car.

The main ridge is about 1/4 mile long, highest about 200ft tapering down to about 100ft and a 1 in 4 slope (no wonder I kept loosing height there!). However, at the highest end is a bowl which takes S.W. and on the last day I flew there the thermals were really blistering up it. If it's blowing a fairly fresh Westerly it's possible to ridge soar all the way round to Whipsnade. I've never done it but apparently you can even soar over the lion enclosure, 'thought I wouldn't fancy it (imagine hitting sudden heavy sink!).

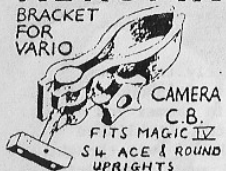
Top landing is not easy especially since Dunstable tends to be rough at the best of times. The first I would not recommend to anybody unless they are John Pendry or flying a bog rog. It's a small area (about 25 yds square) surrounded by bushes with a road and a tall hedge immediately behind. I have seen some horrendous top landings here - people nearly hitting passing cars (which zap past at up to 50 mph) and getting rotoed in behind the bushes. So don't try it. I know one guy who took thirteen (yes - 13) attempts to get down here!

The far more viable alternative is the flat area to the north of the bowl. It is also possible to take off again from this area. The main peril here is the bushes behind the landing area. There is a severe wind shear above them (the ground slopes away from the hill slightly) and they suck hang gliders like a magnet. If you get too far back and too low (and this can mean as much as 50 ft on a strong day) you've had it! Don't think you can pull on and fly through it - many bods have discovered the hard way. Every day I've flown here someone has hit the bushes (they're about 10 ft high) - don't let it be you. Besides, it's not easy to overshoot as I've noticed a particularly strong venturi effect over Dunstable. It often feels a lot stronger on top of the hill than it actually is. But if your venti says 25 mph + STAY ROOTED or you'll probably never want to fly again.

On the legal side, the hill is festooned with 'No Hang Gliding' signs. Forget them - a test case a few years ago proved these are not legally enforceable. All you have to pay is your £2 site fee. One thing you must never EVER do is bottom land in the gliding field directly below takeoff. If you do you will find yourself confronted by a marauding hoard of glider pilots who will either club you to death or take you prisoner (I reckon they've got cells in the clubhouse). The CFI there HATES hang gliders!

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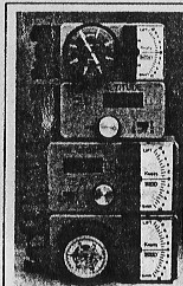
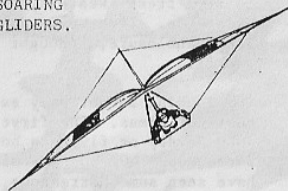
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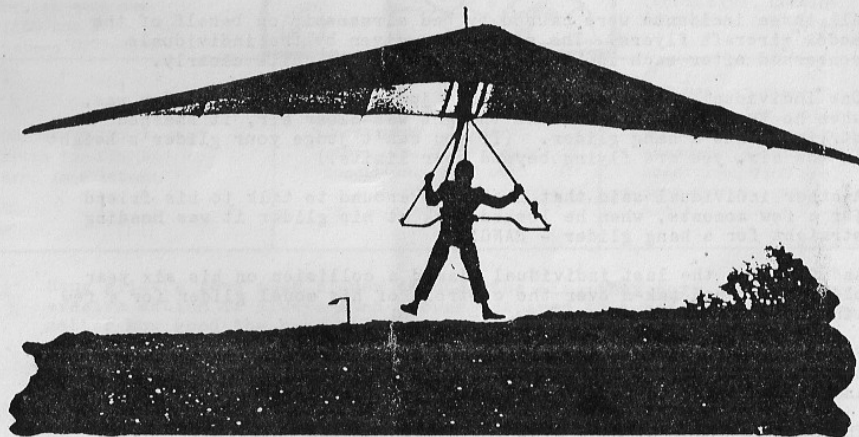
As regards XC potential, I got 1500 ft in a real boomer, looked down wind, bottled out and flew back to the ridge (mind you, I usually do this at the Dyke anyway). The view I got was one of an industrial wasteland with Luton airport in the distance. Best XC direction is S.W. (if it was W. you'd be at the Dyke anyway). There are two tall tower blocks off the the N.E. Stay north of these and you will avoid Luton airspace, so I'm told. Luton airport lies directly east of the ridge.

How to get there? That's probably the easiest bit. Take the M1, turn off at junction 5, left at 'T' junction towards Dunstable and Whipsnade. Straight on for 2 miles, turn left at the Whipsnade signpost, straight on for another couple of miles, then right at the crossroads where it says 'The Downs'. Parking is about 3/4 miles further up where you will see a bit of bare ground on the right of the road. Unload here, then drive back to one of the main carparks you have driven past and walk, or you will get a parking ticket (the police here don't seem to like hang gliders either - 'though they will not try to stop you flying, mainly 'cos they can't!).

Anyway, I hope this rather lengthy article proves of use to someone, 'though once towing gets established you might as well chuck it in the bin. Ridge soaring alone at Dunstable tends to be rather naff - the most I've had is 150 ft in a 18 - 20 mph wind. But it never sea-breezes!

Happy flying,

Richard Lever.





The
SOUTHERN
HANG GLIDING
Club

Jonathan Cattlin
SHGC Secretary
48c Broadgreen Avenue
West Croydon
Surrey
CRO 2ST

21st July 1986

Dear Mr. Beddington

MID AIR COLLISIONS BETWEEN MODEL AIRCRAFT AND HANG GLIDERS

My message is to the model aircraft flyers who use the South Downs, Devil's Dyke in particular. As I understand that they do not belong to any organised club, I hope that by publishing this letter in RCM&E, the message will get across. It should also be of interest to all your other readers who share the air with hang gliders.

Within the last few months there have been three mid air collisions between model aircraft and hang gliders, flying in ridge lift at Devil's Dyke in Sussex.

Amazingly, no serious injuries have been received by the hang glider pilots, although each incident was potentially fatal. If a model aircraft struck a hang glider pilot in the face, during flight, the pilot could quite easily lose his, or her, life. By expressing my deep concern now, on behalf of the Southern Hang Gliding Club, I hope that further incidents can be avoided.

All three incidents were caused by bad airmanship on behalf of the model aircraft flyers. The statements given by the individuals concerned after each incident demonstrate this quite clearly.

One individual said that he couldn't judge how high his glider was, when he turned it into what he thought was clear air, it smashed straight into a hang glider. (If you can't judge your glider's height in the air, you are flying beyond your limits.)

Another individual said that he turned around to talk to his friend for a few moments, when he looked back at his glider it was heading straight for a hang glider - BANG!

And finally, the last individual blamed a collision on his six year old son who had taken over the controls of his model glider for a few minutes!

For many years, both hang gliding and model aircraft flying have shared the ridge at Devil's Dyke. Both sports are exciting to participate in and are exciting to watch by the many spectators at Devil's Dyke.

The Southern Hang Gliding Club would like to see this relationship continue and appreciate that it is probably just a careless few who could spoil it for the rest.

- continued -

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SMALL ADDS



Hang gliders move much slower through the air, they turn slower and evasive action is always much slower compared to a model aircraft, no matter how good the hang glider pilot is.

Our safety standards are very high, we are extremely conscious of the RULES OF THE AIR. These rules and a good sense of airmanship should be observed by model aircraft flyers who operate in crowded airspace.

Enough said.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Cattlin
SHGC Secretary