

AIRTIME HAVE GONE

Soft



The new, soft Pod Lite harness 2.5kg including carabiner, hang loop and back pack.

It has a new tough zip velcro-ed into position and opened with a simple cord. There's also a 'Panic Pull' which will remove the zip completely in emergencies.

With all the usual features - radio and camera bases, internal storage bag, tow attachment loops, scuff pad, hang

loop, carabiner and back pack, this smooth, sculptured, soft harness is beautifully comfortable.

At £195.00* even the price is a soft touch.

What's special about the Pod Lite

- * It's soft
- * No boards, battens, tubes or foam
- * Super light 2.5kg
- * Smooth, sculptured shape
- * Packs really small
- * New tough zip plus 'Panic Pull' for - emergency removal
- * Scuff pad
- * Sculptured rear and £195 inc. hang loop, carabiner and back pack

THE POD PLUS

We couldn't improve on the overall comfort of the Pod II, but a sharp eye will notice the improved cut and

tailoring. It has a leather scuff pad - essential really, and the re-styled, faired container now gives access to the inside of the container flap, so you can store maps away in flight.

All the external seams have been reversed, giving a smoother, sleeker finish. Tow loop attachments are, of course, fitted as standard practice.

The Pod Plus is probably the finest harness you can buy and is still marvellous value at £210.00*

THE SOLAR WINGS ACE

This brilliant glider continues to impress experienced pilots and delivery times get subsequently longer. Book a test flight and order yours quickly if you don't want to get left behind, or should we say below, this season.

AIRTIME Softwear

Airtime Softwear, Portslade Station,
Portland Road, Hove, Sussex BN3 5SG
Telephone Brighton (0273) 424861

People are saying we've gone soft. That's because you won't find any boards, battens or tubes in our new harness.

It's soft - you may be glad of that if you have to take a less than perfect landing.

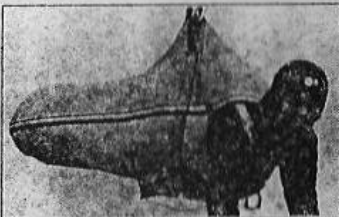
And it's light - just 2.5 kg including carabiner, hang loop and back pack. You'd certainly be glad of that going XC or even just walking to take-off.

And it packs down really small - into its own container, which is also big enough to take all your other gear.



Left: Scuff pads are fitted to Pod Lite and Pod Plus harnesses.

Right: The Pod Lite back pack, included in the price, will also take helmet, vario and gloves easily.



The Pod Plus is every bit as comfortable as before but clever pattern cutting now gives cleaner lines.



The Pod Lite's container is a neat, small back pack

See the full range of our products - phone for our new catalogue now Brighton (0273) 424861 24 hrs.



Feb/Mar 1987



John
Pendry
in
Venezuela
(see inside)

'Save
- a -
Life'
course
20th
March
RED CROSS
+

CLUB

A
G
M

16th
May

FOR SALE: Clubman 100
CFM, 2 hrs airtire,
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uprights £20. Old
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1987 TEE-SHIRTS £6.
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All proceeds to British
Hang Gliding Team Sponsor-
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Kent.

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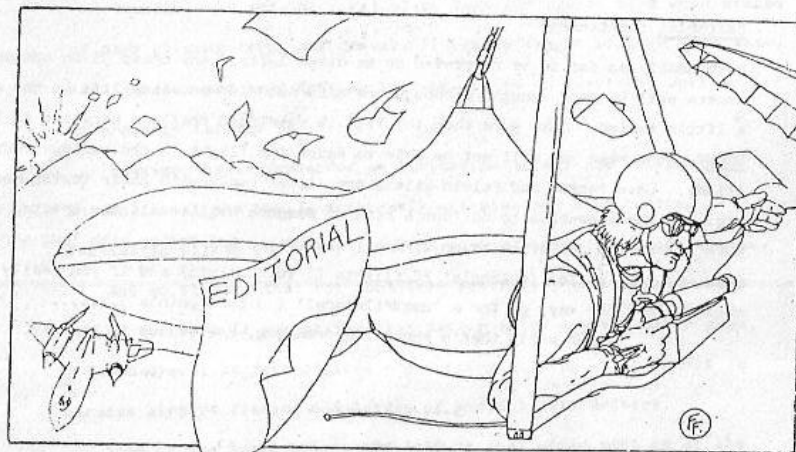
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Well, with Spring just around the corner I expect you are all very keen to get into the air and sample the first thermals. If you're not into thermal flying yet, don't worry, your first thermal will find you rather than the other way around! And when you do hook that first thermal you'll realise why the rest of us are nuts about thermal flying: there really is nothing like climbing out to cloud base in a steady 5 or 6 up.....

Having got high in a thermal what do you do? A number of options lie open to you:

- relax and enjoy the view (and the wonder of being high on a hang glider)
- look around and try to assess where the next 'good' cloud is; this is harder at cloudbase than at 500' below the base. Sample more local thermals.
- fly upwind as far as you feel is possible on your glider. (Then, in a year's time, fly the same task again and amaze yourself with your improved performance!)
- fly or drift, downwind. This will almost certainly commit you to an outlanding in an unfamiliar field; only try this option when you are confident about your ability to set up a landing approach into a new place. If necessary, practise spot landing in different fields when you 'go down' at the Dyke. (Grass fields only)

For those who are already into cross country there is the Sussex XC League (for flights from 1.11.86 to 31.10.87) and the Sussex Weekend XC League (for flights made on weekends and Bank Holidays). Rules for both these competitions are the same as for the National XC League except that entry is free and flights must be registered with Andy Wood (Competition Officer) within 1 week. Why not try doing some 'out & return' XC flights this summer? It's just as rewarding as Open Distance and even if you don't make it back to take-off, you won't

Editorial (continued)

have nearly as far to be retrieved or to hitch lifts. Any cheap 35 mm compact camera will be good enough, although one with autowind-on makes life in the air a little easier. Make sure when the film is developed that the negative is left UNCUT, otherwise you will not be able to enter the flight in the various competitions. Dave Perrin and Kelvin Wilson are almost ready with their towing courses etc. and the incentive to do 'out & return' flights will be all the greater once more pilots are qualified to go towing. And if you get fed up with 'out & returns', then why not go for 'triangle' XC flights (2 turn points) and if you really want to lead the way, go for a 'quadrilateral' (3 turn points).....

Oh well, that's enough daydreaming, see you up in the sky,

Ian OS.

Future Club Events

Friday 20th March : 'SAVE-A-LIFE' FIRST AID COURSE
Burgess Hill by The British Red Cross Society.

First Aid

SEE BELOW FOR DIRECTIONS

Saturday 2nd, May : 'Weather Interpretation & Cross Country Flying'
Devil's Dyke Cafe by experienced Club Pilots.

Saturday 16th May : ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Devil's Dyke Cafe



Directions for the British Red Cross Centre in Burgess Hill:

The address of our premises is 130 Lower Church Road. Our Centre is near the (only) permanent traffic lights on London Road which is the road from the A23 at Pyecombe, straight through Hassocks and into Burgess Hill, over a double mini roundabout and up to the traffic lights. At the lights, turn RIGHT and the Centre is 50 yards up on the LEFT. There is a Red Cross board on the wall and a fish/chip shop opposite!

Coming South on the A23, turn LEFT at the Little Chef at Hickstead and follow the road into Burgess Hill until the town name board "Burgess Hill" is seen. Turn RIGHT into Royal George Road with a church and cemetery on the Left. Continue on and at the traffic lights go over and look for the Red Cross board on the wall 50 yards up. From Burgess Hill (not Wivelsfield) Railway Station, turn LEFT down the hill and go straight down through the precinct to the church. Go to the left of the church and behind it is a park. Take the road on the left of the park as far as the Red Cross Centre with a fish/chip shop opposite.

Phone Jo Wood on 04446-6636 for any further details.

VENEZUELA

by John Bendry.

Venezuela is not the first place that springs to mind when dreams of hang gliding trips are dreamt. It evokes images of huge mountains, vast jungles and head hunting Indians and so is hurriedly written off as probably far too exciting.

However, having received an invitation to the 2nd Venezuelan International and having previously met some non head hunting Venezuelan pilots in Owens, the opportunity seemed too good to miss.

And so it was, that hot foot from Australia, not knowing which day of the week it was or for that matter which way was up or down, I found myself at four o'clock one morning sitting on my glider in Caracas airport fending off hordes of hopeful taxi drivers.

Some of the local pilots had told me they would meet me at the airport and after a short wait, sure enough they turned up, all wearing hang gliding T-shirts so that I'd spot them. Outside the airport it was still dark and the humid, pungent air suggested that it was going to be hot when the sun came up. A half hour drive took us up from the airport on the coast, 2000 feet or so, to Caracas city, where it was cooler and the sun was starting to rise, lighting up beautifully the 7000 feet mountains that surround the city. It looked great for flying right here but this wasn't where the competition was to be, so after my first Venezuelan breakfast we met up with Rick Rawlings, Chip Henly and several more Venezuelan pilots and drove out to La Victoria, the base for the competition an hour from Caracas.

The competition was to start the next day so although the weather looked good, the day was spent on glider assembly and gathering "information" on the area; "Watch out for the scorpions in this area, this is a wildlife park full of lions and tigers, we use that as a turn point so don't get there too low,... be careful of the ticks everywhere, and oh yes, mind the Columbians here".

"Columbians! I thought that was a nationality?" "It is" but

(continued page 15)

FLY WALES

XC SOARING WEEKENDS

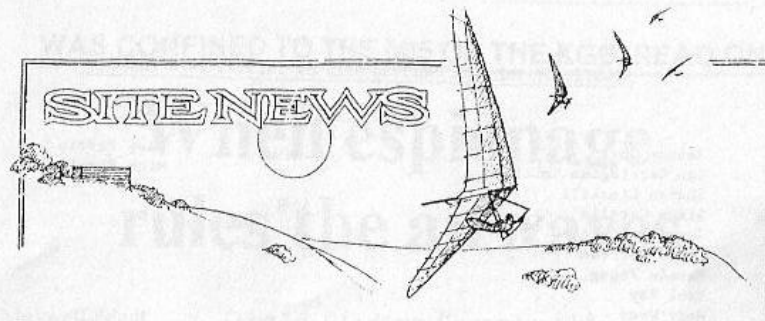
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PHONE CRAWLEY 0293 510267



STEYNING

AS MOST OF YOU KNOW THERE IS STILL SOME HASSLE FACTOR GOING ON AT STEYNING. IT SEEMS TO BE A LACK OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE FARMER AND THE TRAINING SCHOOL. PLEASE DO NOT FLY THERE AT THE MOMENT ,UNTIL WE HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO RECONTACT THE FARMER. WHEN ALL IS WELL A MESSAGE WILL BE POSTED .(SHOULD BE SOON)

GENERAL INFO.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS THE WEATHER IS ON THE "CHANGE" .THIS IS THE TIME WE HAVE NICKNAMED "THE SILLY SEASON"THATS MAINLY BECAUSE AFTER A LONG SPELL WITHOUT ANY"FLYING" WE ARE MORE PRONE TO MISTAKES. SO TAKE IT EASY.

FOR SALE: POD 2 (1ge), red/silver, three months old, £139.95. (Buying a PODlite). Contact Dennis at Aerial Arts, Poynings 256.

FOR SALE: Typhoon S4 Large, summer '84. Green & white, mylar 1/e, 8 undersurface battens, speedbar, £525 ono. Mark on 0273-832478.

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.

AT DEVIL'S DYKE

Johnny Carr
Ian Carrington Smith
Sharon Linskill
Simon Cattlin
Jonathan Cattlin
Chris Bartram
Martin Young
Paul Ray
Andy Wood

Dave Perrin
Mick Perrin

1. Jonathan Cattlin agreed to meet Peter Day (Club Treasurer) before the next AGM to sort out a few outstanding queries with the club accounts.
2. Johnny Carr agreed to attend the BHGA AGM at York racecourse on the 7th and 8th of March.
3. Voting slips for the BHGA AGM had not yet been received by club members - Simon Cattlin to contact BHGA and chase up.
4. Chris Bartram reported that there seems to be a "communication problem" between the club and the farmer who owns Steyning Bowl. Chris agreed to contact the farmer in due course to try and rectify the situation.
5. The CAA are now enforcing more legislation and regulations with regard to towing activities. A towing site registration form would be completed by Simon Cattlin and returned to the BHGA.
6. Andy Wood agreed to begin making arrangements with other clubs, so that inter-club competitions could be organised within the next few months.
7. The committee agreed that the "Airwave Challenge" final could be held at the Southern Club sites later on in the year.
8. The committee agreed that the Kent Parascending Club could use the Southern Club sites for a trial period of three months.
9. Mick Perrin agreed to construct a weatherproof club information board which would be situated on the outside wall of Devil's Dyke pub.
10. The next club social evening will be a Red Cross training session and will be held on Saturday 14th March (details in Windsock).
11. The date for the SHGC AGM has provisionally been set for Saturday 16th May at Devil's Dyke.
12. In order to help inexperienced pilots to identify club observers on the hill, so advice may be sought, a photo of all club observers will be obtained by Jonathan and included in the new club information board.
13. The new regulations for pilots visiting Devil's Dyke (as notified in February Wings!) shall apply until the club AGM in May. If unsuccessful, stricter regulations would be enforced by the committee.
14. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 7th April.
15. The meeting was closed.

WAS CONFINED TO THE MI5 OR THE KGB, READ ON

When espionage rules the airwaves

By Maxwell Fendt

"I think it is almost time we did Trish; I've got the Fiddler, the Baker, Bader and Mister Nasty with me - let's see them go first".

Quite. And the earth-bound team managers at the world championships listening to this radio transmission from a competitor are probably as much in the dark as you are - but it is all to do with winning.

Familiarity with the aircraft and manipulation of the controls are taken for granted. So taken that all these skills are equal how does one win? One of the innumerable ways - apart from the necessary flying skills - is spying.

Although the contestants are scored individually, team co-operation and support can come from various ploys. To find out what other countries' pilots are doing, it is common and legitimate to monitor the radio frequencies of other teams. Here, the British are at a disadvantage; almost every pilot understands and speaks English whereas the Britons', Dutch, Danish or Finnish is a bit rusty.

Counter-espionage involves, of course, as with any restricted information, the use of codes: names for reported position out on task, for other competitors and for true and "spoo" start times. This can lead to some strange transmissions, like the one in the opening paragraph.

This is hardly up to Enigma cryptology and it sometimes confuses the team itself. Much is, anyway, given away by the tone of voice: it is not much use adopting "black" for "good" and "white" for "bad" lift, say, if the pilot's voice is an octave

(World Gliding Championships, Australia).

higher than usual with excitement and in the background his audio climb-sink metre is screaming maximum ascent.

Some teams, though, are very open - almost careless - about giving commentary on their position, forgetting the ears of most of the other team managers and 108 pilots from 33 countries.

Spying apart, the championships are a test of character, judgement and above all consistency, in getting the best out of the weather.

Stopping to turn in a thermal - like soaring birds on lazy, hot summer day in Britain - is wasting precious time. These pilots avoid it whenever possible, preferring to travel along in a straight line close to the track to the next turning point.

In championships, though, this has to be almost second nature to allow competitors to keep their eyes on attention to the opposition and their tactics.

A gaggle of say five to 15 gliders, particularly in "blue" conditions (where lift is not marked by cumulus clouds because of the relative dryness of the air), will travel much faster collectively than one on its own, because of the wider collective search area. The glider pilot who leaves will often win the day because he can spot the group ahead, fly fast to catch it up in the certainty there is lift marked as available and, perhaps, by thus conserving some height in hand over the gaggle, race past to be first home.

No pilot likes to be a marker for others - leastways not for other countries' pilots. This leads to some strange cat and

mouse tactics at the start line (which is time photographed). Leading competitors record a start - they are allowed to re-start later - and go off down track only to double back in the hope of throwing off their followers.

This can lead to some very late-in-the-day starts. For example, on the first day, with tasks of nearly 500km, many pilots

started after 3pm; it was perhaps not surprising that this was the worst day for task completions, when only four gliders (in the Open, unlimited span class) finished, the others landing out for distance scores only.

Gliding is clearly a minority sport which presumably will never achieve the spectator interest of those which are accessible to television cameras throughout the match. German television, however, hit upon the idea of using a two-seat motor-assisted glider, with the engine mostly retracted, to photograph the German team.

Many objections were raised that this could unfairly assist the Germans by indicating the thermals or radioing additional information. Supporters of its presence said the television coverage must be good for gliding and that every facility should be extended; the German pilots themselves alleged that the television glider was a thorough nuisance and spoilt their concentration. Other team managers contended, like Mandy Rice-Davies, that "they would say that, wouldn't they?"

Such is the suspicious nature of man - and particularly world glider pilots.

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The BUG almost won its first competition last month, the Australian Masters, when Jess FLYNN failed on a photographic turn point, loosing enough points to be overtaken by Aussie Ricky DUNCAN.

Nevertheless, there were 9 BUGS flying in Australia, 50 hours each. Over 400 hours in radical and demanding conditions to come back with some feedback: "Brilliant", "Very good", "Great", "I like it so much, I'd like to buy the company", "I love it! but I need another one, I sold mine for gold."

Aerial Arts
Clubman C.F.X.

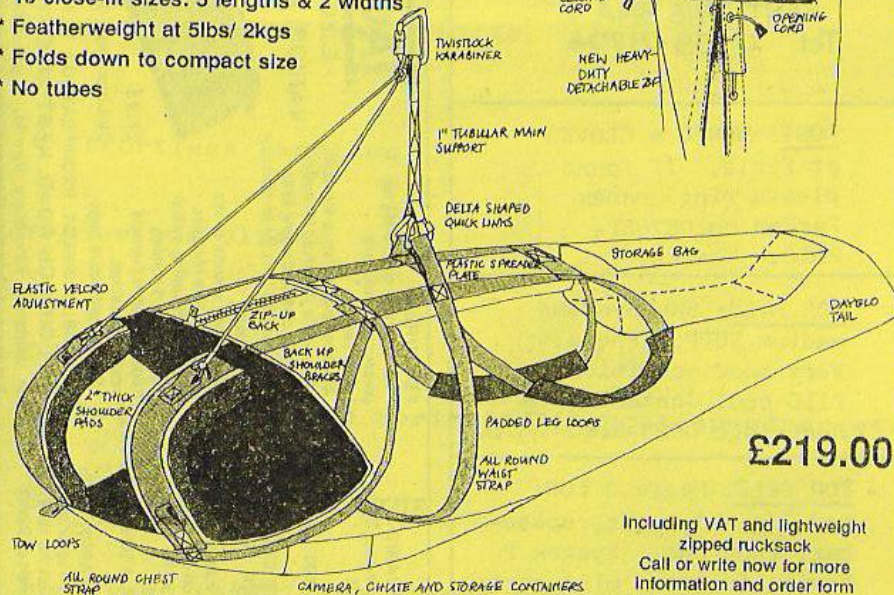
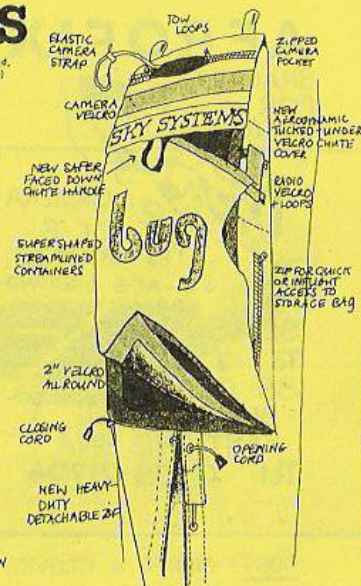


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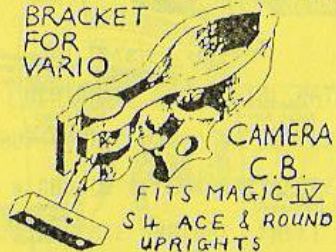
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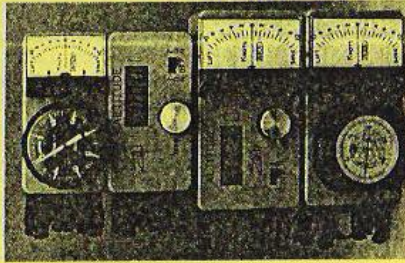
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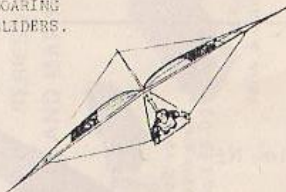
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Ring Simon Cattlin on

FOR SALE: Alphasud 1.5 Ti, NoT Nov '87. Good running order + Typhoon S 180, excellent condition. Both for £800. John Salmon 0689-54834.

FOR SALE: Clubman CFX 160 + harness & 2 spare uprights, excellent condition, recent complete inspection & service by Aerial Arts, very low air-time. Yellow & red, (for quick sale) £700. Phone Craig 047-47-5223. (evenings)

FOR SALE: Typhoon S4 166 Mylar 1/e, speed bar, white with red/white undersurface. Bag tatty, hence £500. Ring Leatherhead's answer to John

VELEZUELA (continued from page 7)

they throw rocks at anyone with a hang glider! Aaaa...h!!! "I wanna go home"!!!

But I didn't, and as usual the reality was nothing like the wind-up's.

The mountain used for the competition is about 3000 feet above the valley and bald topped, typical of the surrounding mountains, with a reasonable road to the top. The launch faced south and the wind was always from the east or north east. "No problem", the locals assured us, "just wait for some sun and it always cycles up the face!"

After waiting for a couple of hours on the first day, with a mainly overcast sky and quite a strong tailwind at times, this was seeming rather optimistic, but sure enough the clouds broke a little and the tailwind died. It never actually blew up the face, but it was enough to take off into and then hit some nice turbulent lee side lift.

This was typical everyday, taking off and then hanging on while you got bounced around. You certainly went up quickly and it made the rest of the flight seem smooth.

The first task was an out and return of about 100Km's and gave me the first real look at the country. The scenery was different to anywhere I'd been before. The mountains are in the majority bald, due to the Venezuelan pyromaniac. They just love burning things and don't bother putting the fires out unless they're endangering human life or property. The fires spread into the hills from sugar cane field burning and are just left to burn themselves out. Hence the previously forested mountains are now bald and either grassy or black. Great for thermal sources but it must be changing the whole climate, with so much less forest and such a smoky atmosphere.

(over)

Venezuela

We were flying the south side of the Aragua valley which runs west from Caracas. In the valley itself were a series of lakes ending in one huge lake that created its own micro-climate, with convergence lines abounding. The trick was always getting past the lake, further south of the lake the mountains were better and the thermals were unaffected by the stable air from the lake, but there were few roads and these certainly weren't on the designated retrieve route, so if you went down there you were in trouble. After the lake the mountains become smaller until you finally fly out onto totally flatland.

Nobody made the first task and it became obvious that it was always going to be very difficult to complete the goals, having to return to a landing in a venturi part of the valley.

If the flying was enjoyable the fun really started when you landed, within a couple of minutes you would be surrounded by loads of kids all babbling away in Spanish. On one occasion I landed not too far from launch (on the return leg) where many pilots had evidently landed before. As soon as I indicated I didn't mind, the kids started pulling battens out and rolling up the sail, when I'd finished packing the glider seven or eight of them lifted it up and carried it out of the field for me, the tallest being at least 3 feet. I wished I'd had my camera with me.

The second day brought better weather and open distance was called, unfortunately it O.D.'d after only about 50 Km's and everyone was brought down. I flew over a village called San Francisco, landed in a tiny village called Las Vegas and was driven to the nearest town (and phone!) by a lady called America, funny I thought I was in Venezuela!

A unique retrieve system is used by the Venezuelans where they rely primarily on radio contact to send drivers out to pick up the pilots. This works by having someone with a big aerial

Venezuela

positioned on top of a mountain (launch) co-ordinating pilots and drivers. Telephones are rare, there being normally only one or two in the large towns and quite often none in the smaller villages. This works amazingly well, on one occasion I was able to talk to launch whilst still in the air 150 Km away.

There were 35 pilots in the competition mainly from Venezuela and Columbia. In addition there were 4 Americans, 1 Argentinian and I was the only competitor from Europe. The standard of competition was not as high as in other parts of the world and it was Rick Rawlings who gave me the most problems, but the South Americans were pleased to see the foreign pilots, made us feel very welcome and were very keen to learn all they could from us. They have plans to continue the competition in future years and want to attract more foreign pilots.

There are only about 100 pilots in Venezuela and so have no manufacturers themselves. This makes gliders and equipment expensive and difficult to get for them. Most of the gliders were from America with UP gliders being predominant, especially since the UP team had competed there the year before. There were however a few Magics as well.

The third day looked great and open distance with a turn point was called. This was to keep everybody along the same sort of route to make retrieve easier. Unfortunately it meant that we had to fly close to the lake and it wasn't easy getting past. Once past however, the going got easier and there was a big main road to follow to the flatlands. I reached the flatlands about 6pm and managed to extend my distance a lot more than I expected in the silky smooth and bouyant evening air, landing just before sunset after 153 Km.

(over)

Venezuela

The next day was a rest day, something that I've always thought was a real mistake to do, but not here, the weather was so consistent that it was flyable for every day of the three weeks or so that I was there and by the end of the competition we were all glad we'd had a break in the middle.

One of the remarkable things of flying in this area was the number of Buzzards that were around, sometimes 20 or 30 in one thermal. They seemed to stay in relatively small areas just flying around in that particular area. You could fly with them and then pass by until you came to the next colony a few Km's further on. They were usually good for thermal spotting but the standard of flying varied considerably from one colony to another. There was one area in particular close to a place called Yuma, where the birds were noticeably bad at thermalling and you had to be careful not to rely on them.

The remaining days provided equally consistent weather and we had two more open distance days plus two triangle days. They were all very challenging and ended for me with a beautiful open distance flight of 132 Km. landing in a small clearing, just unable to reach the clear flatlands as sunset approached. The last hour had been spent thermalling in zero's and 1 up's in very smooth, calm air, drifting nowhere. The retrieve car with Rick Rawlings already in it was there as I landed and we spent the next hour drinking beer with the landowner in his garden, celebrating and soaking in the atmosphere. What a way to end a competition!

The next day was prize giving day and a great party was supplemented by some of the pilots who were also parachutists jumping out of a plane overhead and diving in.

After that I spent another 10 days playing tourist, looking at some of the islands and other beautiful and interesting places in Venezuela.

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