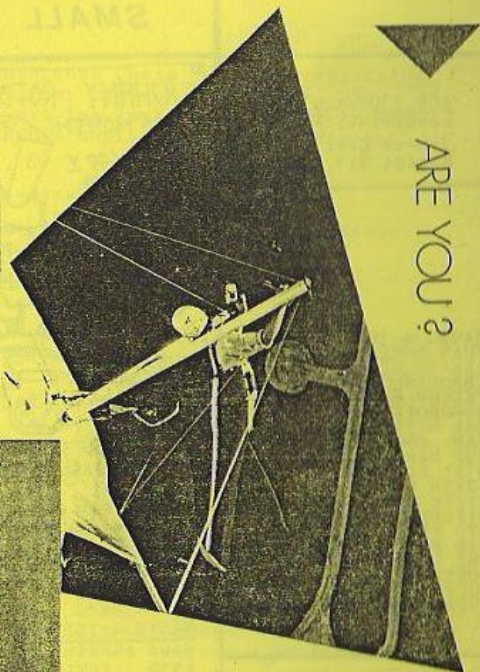


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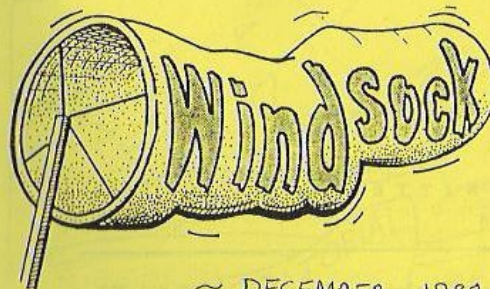


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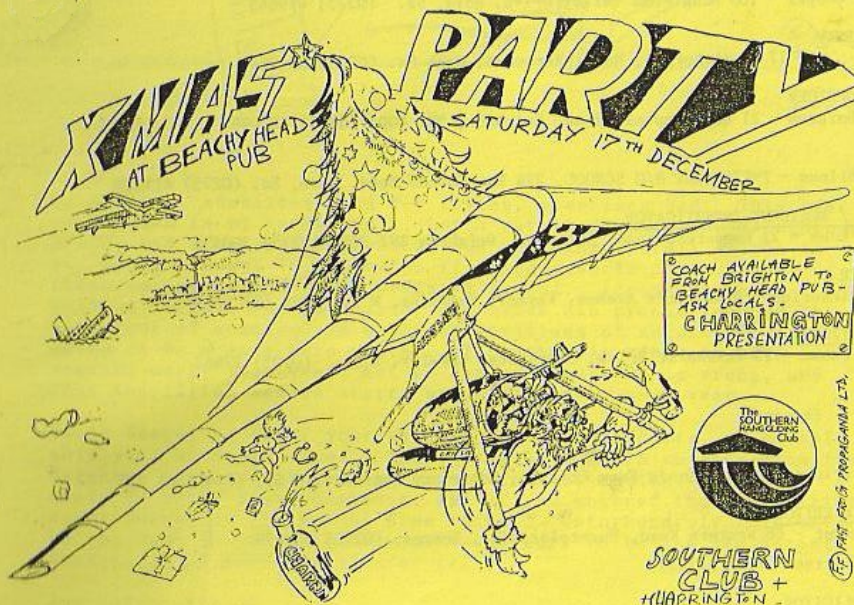
* Take advantage of our same day mail/phone order service (Access, Visa) when you need a PARACHUTE, VARIO, ALTI, OZEE, X/C BAG, MAP HOLDER, PITCHY, BAR MITTS, XC CRAZY "T" SHIRT, HELMET and much much more (see classified for details). Or if you are passing, drop in for a coffee, and a chat about your hang gliding needs. . .

Airtime, Portslade Station,
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Telephone Brighton 0273 424861.

AIRTIME



~ DECEMBER 1988 ~



COACH AVAILABLE FROM BRIGHTON TO BEACHY HEAD PUB - ASK LOCALS - CHARRINGTON PRESENTATION



SOUTHERN CLUB + HARRINGTON

© THE SOUTHERN HANG GLIDING CLUB

DON'T FORGET TO BOOK YOUR TICKETS FROM ANY OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS . ALSO SEE INSIDE ABOUT THE COACH THAT IS AVAILABLE REMEMBER THAT LAST YEARS PARTY WAS FULLY BOOKED AND THOSE THAT DID NOT GET THEIR TICKETS EARLY LOST OUT, SO RING NOW

S H G C C O M M I T T E E
1 9 8 8

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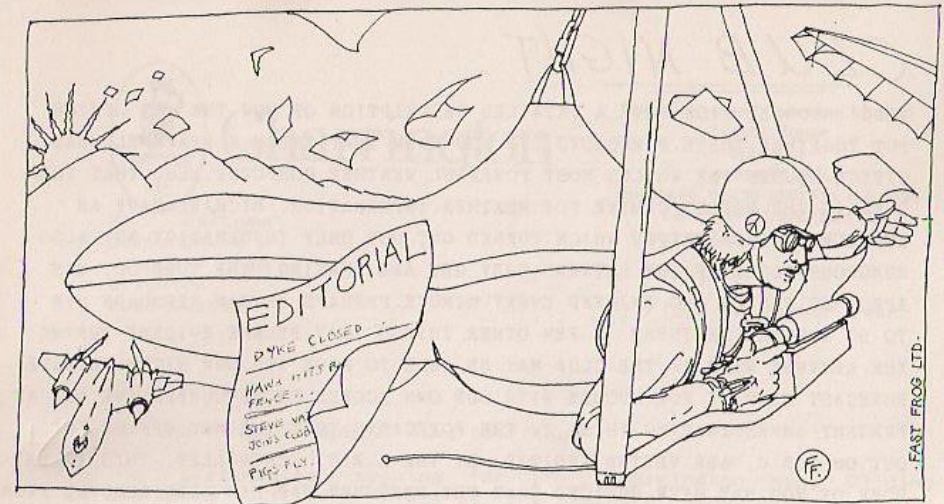
Chris Bartram - (see SITES)

CLUB SOLICITOR

Tony McLaren - Thomas Eggar & Son, 5 East Pallant, Chichester, Sussex.
H - (0243) 786111 W - (0243) 773457

PARAGLIDING REP

Brian Webb - 31 Highcliff Court, Rottingdean, East Sx. (0273) 34644



November... sometimes good for flying, sometimes bad. This year it was bad in my reckoning... Let's put it down to the Greenhouse Effect and stop using aerosols. Oh well the thermal season is not too far away: 10,000 miles if you're a world class pilot, or three months if you're an ordinary mortal. According to Mr William Foggitt the forecaster who bases his predictions on the behaviour of animals and other observations of nature, it is going to be a very hard winter. It certainly seems to have started early this year, but we can only hope he is wrong, and that the flying season starts unusually early next year...

Don't forget to order your tickets to the Xmas Party, to be held this year at Beachy Head. There will be a coach service from the Brighton area, so there's no excuse for not coming. Order early to avoid disappointment, and if you entered the competition, don't forget to claim your free ticket! Unfortunately this will be the last event until someone volunteers to be the new Social Secretary, so make the most of it!

Any volunteers???

See you in the sky. fly safe and warm..

Mark Fisher

PS : Happy Christmas, and a Merry new (flying) year to all our members. Take it easy

CLUB NIGHT

WELL, MICHAEL FISH GAVE A DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF HOW THE MET OFFICE PUT TOGETHER THESE FORECASTS. DID YOU KNOW THAT THE U.K. BRACKNELL HEAD OFFICE HOUSES THE WORLDS MOST POWERFUL WEATHER COMPUTER. ALSO THAT THE U.K. IS THE WORLDS CENTRE FOR WEATHER INFORMATION. MICHAEL GAVE AN EXCELLENT PRESENTATION WHICH TURNED OUT NOT ONLY INFORMATIVE BUT ALSO HUMOROUS. (SOME OF THE LETTERS THEY GET ARE AMAZING). THE TURN OUT WAS APPROX 82 PEOPLE WHO ENJOYED EVERY MINUTE. PERHAPS WE CAN PERSUADE HIM TO DO ANOTHER LECTURE?. A FEW OTHER THINGS THAT BECAME EVIDENT DURING THE LECTURE WERE 1/ THE CLUB MAY BE ABLE TO HAVE ITS OWN MICRO CLIMATE FORECAST SERVICE FOR SUSSEX WITH OUR OWN ACCESS PHONE NUMBER. (WE ARE AT PRESENT INVESTIGATING THIS) 2/ THE FORECASTS THAT THE MET OFFICE PUT OUT ON B.B.C. ARE VETTED (EDITED) BY THE B.B.C. CONTROLLER. THIS IS WHY SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED THAT THE PRESSURE MAP HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM THE 9.25PM FORECAST. ALSO THAT THE B.B.C. INTEND TO FURTHER LIMIT THE SERVICE. PLEASE NOTE THE LETTER TO TIM WILLIAMS IN THIS WINDSOCK.

CHRIS BARTRAM

PARTY NIGHT

COACH SERVICE.

IT IS INTENDED TO PROVIDE A COACH THAT WILL DEPART FROM BRIGHTON TRAIN STATION TO BEACHY HEAD PUB AND RETURN. THE SERVICE IS TO GIVE PEOPLE THE OPORTUNITY NOT TO DRINK AND DRIVE. THIS SERVICE IS BEING JOINTLY FINANCED BY CHARRINGTONS AND THE COST TO MEMBERS WILL ONLY BE £1-50 PER HEAD. HOWEVER NUMBERS ARE LIMITED SO IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO TAKE THE COACH, BOOK WITH ME NOW!!! I MUST KNOW BEFORE TUESDAY 13th DECEMBER. PHONE CHRIS BARTRAM..0273 682499

NOTE THAT THE COACH WILL LEAVE BRIGHTON STATION BY 7.00pm AND RETURN WHEN THE PARTY FINISHES.

PLEASE NOTE.. I MADE AN ERROR ON LAST MONTHS WINDSOCK. THE TICKETS THAT ARE FREE FOR PILOTS TAKING PART IN THE CHARRINGTONS CHALLENGE, DID NOT INCLUDE YOUR SPOUSE, SORRY



Charrington

Mr C. Bartram
Units 216 & H
Campbell Road
Brighton
East Sussex

Charrington and Company Limited
Anchor House
Mile End
London E1 4UL
Telephone: 01-790 1860 Fax ext: 3394
Telex: 341434 BASSCM G
Directors Office Fax: 01-791 2481

15th November 1988

Dear Chris,

RE: Charrington Hang Gliding Challenge

The presentation evening for the Charrington Hang Gliding Challenge will take place at the Southern Hang Gliding Clubs Christmas Party on Saturday 17th December at the Beachy Head Hotel, Beachy Head, Eastbourne.

As a participating pilot your entry will be free and in order to obtain your free ticket you must contact Johnny Carr at, Tiltershaw, North Common Road, Wiversfield Green, Sussex, or telephone him on 0444 64 217. You may invite guests to attend and may purchase further tickets from Johnny Carr at £6.00 each.

The price of the ticket includes a hot buffet and a disco., and the timetable for the evening is as follows:

8.00pm Guests arrive
8.00-10.00 buffet
11.00 presentation
Disco until 1.00am

We trust you will be able to join us on this presentation evening.

Yours sincerely,

Maureen Heffernan
Public Relations


NOTE, THIS LETTER FROM MAUREEN, GIVES
DETAILS OF CLUB PARTY, BUT YOU CAN
ALSO GET TICKETS FROM ALL COMMITTEE
MEMBERS.

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD:

HANG DRIVING-

THE DEADLIEST SPORT!

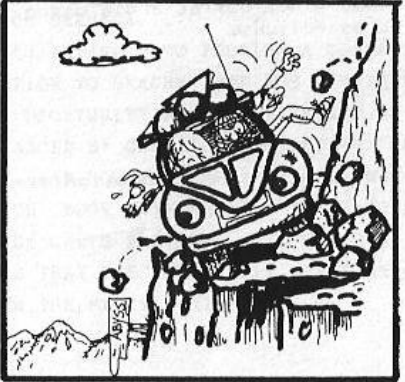
By BARBARA GRAHAM



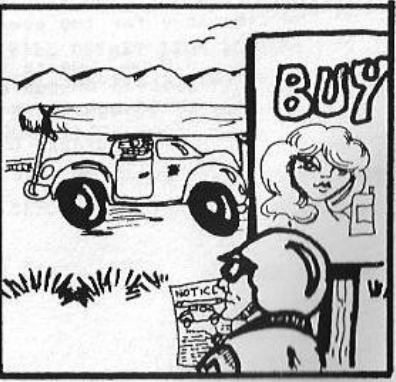
FOR YEARS, HANG GLIDING HAS BEEN CONSIDERED DANGEROUS. PEOPLE ARE CONFUSING "HANG GLIDING" WITH "HANG DRIVING," A HAZARDOUS SPORT DEVELOPED SIMULTANEOUSLY.



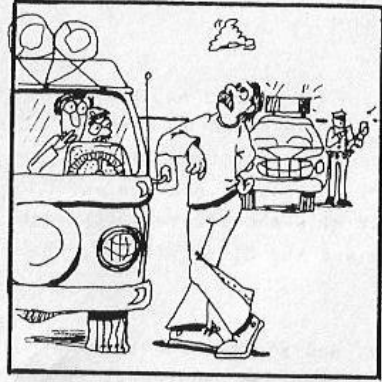
ON THE ROAD, THE MOST FEARSOME DRIVER IS THE PILOT. A SOARABLE DAY CAUSES HIM TO 'MINDLOCK'. HE IS EASILY DISTRACTED BY SMALL CUMIES AND SOARING REDTAILS.



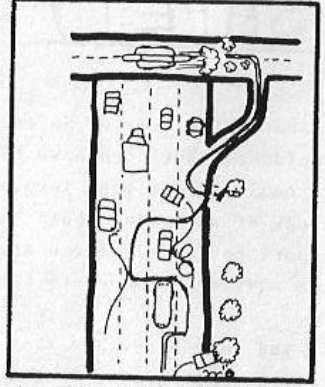
THESE COWARDLY CURS OFTEN DRAG "VOLUNTEERS" UP HAZARDOUS ROADS, ONLY TO FLY OFF THE TOP, LEAVING THE DRIVER (USUALLY A NEW DATE) TO STRUGGLE DOWN THE ROAD IN A VEHICLE WITH BAD BRAKES AND LOOSE CLUTCH.



LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES HAVE WISED UP, DISTRIBUTING BULLETINS TO ALL OFFICERS, THEY CONTAIN INFORMATION ON IDENTIFICATION, LOCATION AND HABITS OF THE NOTORIOUS "HAND DRIVERS."



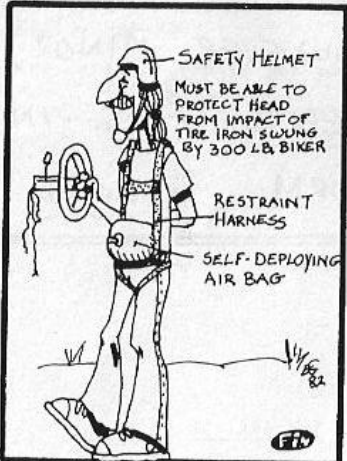
EVEN WHEN APPREHENDED, IT IS HARD TO GET THEIR ATTENTION.



AT CERTAIN RIDGE SITES, THE LOCALS BECOME CRAZED WHEN THE WIND BLOWS. SEE AND AVOID IS THE TICKET HERE.



OCCASIONALLY THE HANG DRIVER WILL CUT OFF THE WRONG PERSON. HIS ONLY HOPE THEN IS A SWIFT SET UP AND LAUNCH.



FINALLY, THE NTSB HAS FOCUSED ITS ATTENTION TO HANG DRIVING. ABOVE, WE SEE SOME OF THE SAFETY GEAR THAT MAY BECOME MANDATORY.

SAFETY

Since taking over as Safety Officer, I have heard of several accidents, but none have been reported. I want this changed, as it could affect your insurance cover. Also if I can see any areas of potential danger which early Pl's should avoid (through Report patterns), I can advise Eddie and the Sites officer, who can advise newcomers to the club.

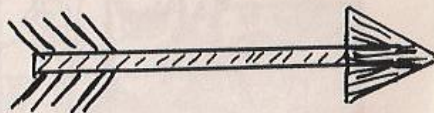
If you take a serious view of safety, and you all should, and return this form to me, it will help with the management of the Club and disputes if we are armed with facts and figures.

Please help me to help you.

ROD LEES.

ANY ACCIDENT,
(HOWEVER MINOR)

PLEASE FILL IN THE
FORM + SEND TO ROD!!!



[YOU KNOW IT
MAKES SENSE]

NEW ARRIVAL

Congratulations to Gordon and Pam Harris on the birth of their daughter on 29 November. Welcome to the World, Kate (or whatever they decide to call you)... see you on the Hill!!...

ACCIDENT REPORT.

To be sent to the Safety Officer for ALL accidents/incidents.

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE:

CLUB MEMBERSHIP NO:

DATE:

TIME:

SITE:

BRIEF DETAILS:

(Include flight details, equipment, names
of any witnesses, and damage to third party)

RETURN TO:

RODNEY LEES
22 HEMPSTEAD ROAD
SALTDEAN
BRIGHTON
BN2 8QD

PHONE:

0273 300328

INCIDENT AT BEACHY HEAD - 22 October

Last Windsock we published a news cutting from the Sun about a hang gliding accident at Beachy Head. After much investigation Rodney Lees, our new Safety Officer has traced the pilot involved and received a letter of apology...

It appears that two pilots from another club came down to Beachy Head having never flown there before. Without seeking a site briefing from a local pilot, one of them advised the other one, who was a novice, to take off and head off down the cliffs to the lighthouse... To make matters worse, the wind was off to the south east...

The result of this was that he couldn't get back, and went down on the rocks. A rescue helicopter was called out and the pilot was taken off to hospital with a broken finger. The glider was also damaged.

SHGC members all know (don't they??) that the cliffs (and top landing) are P2 rated, and that novices should only fly the Bowl. So, if you see anyone on any of our sites who does not seem to know the rules, give them a site briefing whether they ask or not... it could save a nasty accident. It could also prevent us losing a site.

Secret US fighter unveiled



STEALTH... The oddly-shaped fighter unveiled by the US Air Force

THE US Air Force has unveiled its secret Stealth fighter seven years after development began, with claims that the Soviet Union has nothing to match it.

Following the official unveiling of the programme, the defence ministry announced that the first oddly-shaped F-117A flew in 1981 and that 32 of the planes have been produced and deployed at a secret Nevada base, flying only at night, since 1983.

The Pentagon released a

photograph of the V-shaped aircraft with a split tail and said the aircraft, two fighter jets were built by Lockheed Corp under a super-secret "black programme".

Interest

The Air Force refused to provide even the dimensions of the plane, but defence officials said its shape and composite construction materials are designed to absorb radar signals or reflect a confusing picture to Soviet radar operators.

Signs in the clouds

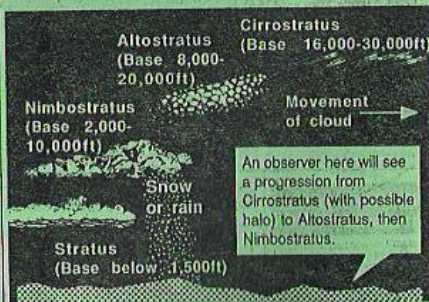
By Dick File,
London Weather Centre

FOR professional weather observers, overcast sky seems to present a problem. How can the height of the cloud base be estimated?

With much practice and experience, it gradually becomes easier to recognise the signs that indicate high cloud: the lack of detail, the relative lack of movement of the cloud sheet, the very slow pace of change of the appearance of the whole sky. An estimation of cloud base is not the result of one snapshot judgment. Rather, it is a matter of continuous monitoring and assessment.

As a textbook warm front approaches, a halo may be seen around the sun indicating the cirrostratus cloud, then the cloud thickens further and the sun becomes watery and indistinct. The cloud is, by now, altostratus with a base about 10,000 to 16,000 feet above ground. Sun or moon can be seen as it through ground glass.

If the sequence is following the textbook, then rain will be less than four hours away. As the progressive lowering of the cloud base continues, precipitation starts to fall. (Precipitation is a catch-all word that covers snow,



Cloud levels and an approaching warm front

rain, drizzle, etc.) Frequently snow will be falling from the cloud, even in spring or autumn, but will melt before reaching the ground.

By the time the cloud base has lowered from 10,000 to perhaps 5,000 feet and the rain has become moderate, the cloud will be described as nimbostratus (ie rain-bearing layer cloud).

Now we introduce the last of the four straightforward layer clouds — stratus. Its base is usually 1,000 feet or less above ground. Where there are hills or mountains it shrouds their heads in a grey

blanket of water droplets, aptly described as hill fog.

Detested by pilots in light aircraft who fly by eye, stratus is a fascinating cloud to watch. It can be seen on breezy days racing across the sky, which in itself is an indication of its low altitude. It may occur in moist airstreams when there is no rain around, or when fog lifts into low cloud. Of all the areas in the British Isles, it is the western hills and peaks that see the most frequent stratus, blotting out the top of tall buildings, television masts or the local hill.

Rotor Rooters

Students attempt to build a human-powered helicopter

In the early 1490's Leonardo da Vinci outlined his version of a human-powered helicopter: a contraption topped by a helical propeller carved out of wood. It will not work. Nearly half a millennium later a team of budding engineers armed with computers and lightweight synthetic materials have come up with a new design. It does not work either—yet.

The students at the California Polytechnic State University hope to break this frontier in flight soon. Cal Poly's so-called da Vinci Project was born in 1981, soon after the American Helicopter Society established the \$25,000 Igor I. Sikorsky Prize for builders of the first human-powered helicopter. Since then the project has consumed \$100,000 in donations—as well as free computer time, materials and advice from several aerospace companies—and countless hours of students' time.

A spokesman for the helicopter society says the da Vinci Project is "unquestionably" the front-runner among several contenders (including a retired aeronautical engineer and fruit farmer in Oregon) for the Sikorsky prize. "I don't know about that," says William B. Patterson, the project's faculty adviser from the start, "but we are certainly the most dogged and determined."

The group has evolved as students graduate and as interest flares and subsides, but its hopes still rest on a design that was chosen in the first year after extensive theoretical studies. The craft consists of a stationary cycle topped by a giant rotor with a propeller on each tip. The drive mechanism is somewhat indirect. As the pilot pedals, he rotates a spool that

takes up polyethylene string wound around the shafts of the propellers, causing them to spin and in turn to push the rotor around. The pilot pedals until the string breaks (a common mishap) or comes to its end, which takes about five minutes.

The students found out early that the machine cannot be tested outdoors; the slightest breeze blows it over. Tests have taken place in the Cal Poly gym and, more recently, in a hangar at a McDonnell Douglas plant. Years of tests and modifications failed to get a hop out of a craft whose rotor was 102 feet wide. Last year the students revamped the machine and gave it a new, 140-foot-wide rotor made of carbon fiber and plastic foam. During a test in November a guy wire snapped and both propellers were smashed. The students replaced the propellers, designed a new guy-wire system and ran another test in the spring.

During the initial run the machine teetered and skidded so wildly that several participants grabbed on to its frame. Suspecting they might have kept the craft from lifting off, they decided "just to let it do what it wanted" in the next run, Scott Larwood, a senior who manages the project, recalls. As the cyclist pedaled furiously, the craft abruptly keeled over, snapping off a rotor blade.

The team hopes to redesign the rotor this summer and retest the craft in the fall. The students have apparently lowered their sights as a result of their setbacks. "The craft we have now we don't believe will win the Sikorsky prize," Larwood says, noting that to win the prize a craft must rise 10 feet into the air as well as hovering for a full minute. "We just want to hover," he says. "That would still be a world record."

—J.H.

Top ten tips for glider overhaul

TRIED AND TESTED

(taken from the north Yorks
HGC newsletter)

There comes a time in the life of each and every pilot when we decide to renovate our faithful aircraft in preparation for the busy year ahead. The more organised among you will of course have done this during the long winter months, but for newcomers to the sport, who have perhaps just bought a somewhat tired wing and are eager to get it sorted and get airborne, here are a few tips on how to do the job with a minimum of tools and a maximum of domestic disruption....

Firstly the sail should be taken from the airframe, if possible without the use of a bread-knife or the wife's best scissors. There is a correct way of removing the sail from most gliders but the method is a secret to the highly respected Masonic Guild of Sail Makers and is therefore absent from the instruction manual — so don't bother looking! Trial and error, mostly error, will hopefully show you the way.

My own patented technique involved sucking the nose over the neighbour's fence to impale it on a post, followed by pulling at the sail from the rear. This undoubtedly produces results, albeit not very useful ones — I pulled the fence down. This didn't really matter as most fences are ugly and unsightly anyway, but the flattened sweetpeas caused my wife to make a few remarks that could not be said 'with flowers'.



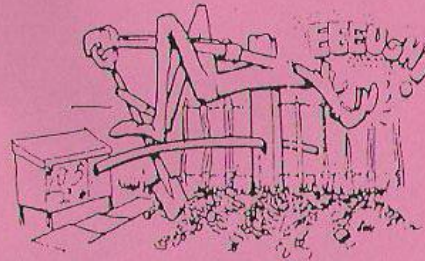
Use a frying pan or good saucepan to beat out the dirt....

Next, the mud must be removed from the sail, so I suggest that you put the fabric into the washing machine. Set it for fast coloureds with bio-wash and a suds spin. If you don't own a washing machine put it in the sink or bath and tread it like a Frenchman at

CONTRIBUTIONS: These are always welcome. Please write clearly, or if possible, type single spaced on A4. Please enclose SAE if any material is to be returned. Send to Mark Fisher (address at front of Windsock). If writing an article, a small photo of you would be useful.

Advertising: Members ads are free. All commercial ads are charged as follows: 1/6 page £12 per year; 1/3 page £22 per year; Full page £5 per issue, or £45 per year.

VIENS EXPRESSED IN WINDSOCK ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE SHGC COMMITTEE OR THE EDITORS.



By subtle pulling, pushing, levering and wellying, ease out the kink...

grape harvest time. (This operation is best done while the wife is out shopping.)

Do not, however, stand in the sink as it may crack the porcelain and, more importantly, tear the sail. If you must use the sink make sure you have a frying pan or a good saucepan handy to beat out the dirt. Once cleaned, it should be spread over the lawn to dry, or if the weather is inclement it can be spread over the lounge by careful use of picture hooks. This allows it to dry thoroughly so that you can inspect it for holes.

The carpet will soak up the drips if you use the indoor method. If you don't own a carpet, and you won't if you are trendy like me, you will probably have floor boards showing in which case the drips will help clean the floor, as well as leaving that pleasant textured finish which all properties of character display.

Now we come to the nitty-gritty — the frame strip down. This is best done on the stairs where the aircraft can be placed full length and you can work sitting in comfort regardless of the weather. Some basic tools are necessary, my personal choice being the bread-knife, a pair of pliers and the boys' bicycle spanners. When the frame is in pieces, clean it with a new bath towel; you will find butter or WD 40 a great help in this operation. Don't forget to scrape all the brown areas with a bread-knife until they shine.

Put the screws, nuts and bolts somewhere safe. Again, the butter dish is handy as they stick in place and the butter won't harm the metal. (But please remember to scrape the dirt off the butter afterwards, as kids with stomach ache are a major distraction when the serious business of fettling is under way).

At this time it might be also be advisable to straighten the bread-knife with a hammer and fix the vacuum cleaner so that it blows instead of sucking. Having done this, blow out the various tubes and then blow the dirt around the house until it thins out and vanishes. This method is indispensable as everyone admires a clean and efficient craftsman.

Next, examine the tubing. If you find a bend then the following little trick will prove mind-bogglingly useful. Find a hole in the fence (the one on the other side, that's still standing) push in the tube to a point near the bend and then by use of subtle pulling,

pushing levering and wellying, ease out the kink.

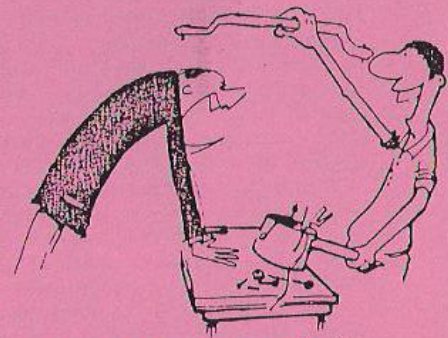
Wires need careful treatment too, so soak them in oily water in a large saucepan. I have been told that my wires are 'marine quality' so water must be good for them. Anyway, if they are used in sailing dinghies then they are good enough for. After all, you don't hear of many dinghies crashing.

The little eye things at the end of the wires do tend to pop out, but fear not, by judicious use of the bread-knife and a hammer they can be replaced. Put the wires back on the aircraft more or less where they came from and, should you find one too long, a swift dekho in the boy's Scout manual will demonstrate the wonders of a sheepshank.

Personally I can't see anything wrong in this procedure but if those highly technical tips in Windsock are anything to go on, then knots are frowned upon; you must be your own judge. I do believe however, that much of this maintenance should be carried out after your wife has gone to bed with a headache. I may be old-fashioned, but I reckon precision engineering is a man's work.

Finally, knowing that you have done a grand job, put the pieces together and stand back to admire an aircraft that looks like new. Don't worry if you have a few odds and ends left over — this is quite normal. Just put the bits into the large saucepan (you didn't wash it up, did you?) and take them together with your aircraft to the nearest dealer.

After he has got over the initial shock of seeing your aircraft in immaculate condition he will probably sneak in a trick question, usually 'What the bloody hell have we got here?'. He really wants to



'What the bloody hell have we got here?'

know your maintenance secrets, so bear with him and try and be helpful; professional jealousy is a cross we craftsmen have to bear.

All that's left then is to find a check pilot. Now in my experience they are a funny lot, never at home when you ring, always so reluctant when you meet them on the hill and always on holiday when you call round. Can't understand it....



Hang-gliders have the security of tether ropes to steady them on their debut flights.

Steps towards easy gliding

TONY GEARING is carried away by his first experience of hang-gliding.

This was not how I had imagined it would be. Flying like a bird I was not. A mere few feet above the ground, I was suspended beneath a training glider tethered to ropes held by my instructor and fellow learners. I felt less like a bird than a kite.

There was a good reason for this. Hang-gliding is a dangerous sport, as my instructor Eddie Bilous, of the Brighton-based Free Flight hang-gliding school, kept repeating. In the matter-of-fact way that some ex-soldiers talk about death, he told of hang-gliders being sucked up into clouds and reappearing as blocks of ice, of nearly drowning himself after a cliff-edge take-off turned into a sea dive, and of a friend dying in his arms after a mid-air collision with a model aeroplane. As if the point needed rubbing in, he did some quick calculations and estimated that between two and five of the 6,000 hang-gliding enthusiasts in this country are killed every year.

These statistics are an improvement on the fledgling days of the sport — when hang-gliders were made of "bamboo and bin liners" — but safety remains a reassuring obsession with hang-gliding instructors. On a two-day introductory course my only real fear was falling flat on my face in a cowpat.

Cowpats were in plentiful supply on the grassy field on Devil's Dyke, near Brighton, East Sussex, where we assembled the glider pre-take-off. After SWANKING — checking the glider's sail, wires, air-frame (made from the same aluminium as Concorde), nuts 'n' bolts and something forgettably technical beginning with "k" — we ran down the slope pulling the first victim-cum-pilot strapped in beneath the assembly.

Running down the hill — and, more exhaustingly, carrying the glider back — took up far more of the first day than actual flying. But the few moments airborne in between, however, more than compensated.

The second day was a blow-out. Or, to be more accurate, "blown out" — too windy to fly. The tempera-

mental British weather blows out about half the hang-gliding days in a year, but many clubs, like this one, will postpone lessons to a later date at no extra cost. A few days later I resumed my training on another South Downs slope more suitable to the northerlies then blowing.

Experienced hang-gliders become experts at judging the weather. Eddie, who has been hang-gliding for eight years and running his own school for four, could sense changes in the weather — and I mean this as a compliment — like an animal. Neither the cloud configuration nor the temperature had to change for him to call it a day because bad weather was on the way. He could smell it.

After the inelegant hop, skip and jumps of the first day, the 'second' day offered more opportunity to notch up flying time. By this stage I did not resent being 'tethered'. Taking off from 20 feet up the slope, the advantages became all too apparent. My glider lurched violently to the right (it all happened too fast to be frightened) and another trainee — an air hostess — holding the left wingtip rope brought me back under control.

Despite this setback, I did progress to doing "ground hops" — short flights within spitting distance of the ground below — almost unaided. The first step in this process was to take-off without my fellow trainees holding on to the glider.

The instructor holding onto the nose rope. On my final go — each pupil averaged about eight or nine "flights" a day — he too let go, almost without warning, and I was left to glide a few feet on my own. It was like cycling for the first time without stabilisers.

After two days' training I was still nowhere near ready to go "soaring", as the enthusiasts describe *real* up-and-away hang-gliding. It takes most people five to ten days intensive flying to qualify for a basic pilot's licence, which entitles the holder to go flying without an instructor.

Hang-gliders cost between £1,000 to £2,000 to buy new — a few hundred pounds less second-hand —

and membership of one of the 30-plus clubs around the country averages at about £10 a year. Once qualified 'brush-up' lessons are usually covered by the membership fee.

FACTFILE

Learning to hang-glide costs about £30 (£35 in the more expensive South-east) at one of the 19 schools listed below. The schools are licensed by the British Hang Gliding Association (Cranfield Airfield, Beds, 0234-731 688) to which pupils also have to pay membership. This is £6.50 for two days or £13 for four months and includes magazines, a handbook and third party insurance. Personal accident insurance can be arranged through the schools at extra cost. During training, schools cover the cost of any damage to gliders.

Abergavenny SkySports, 36 Hatherleigh Road, Abergavenny, Gwent (0873-6112).
Alcester Mercia Hang Gliding School, Charter House, 45 High St, Alcester, Warwickshire (0759-764 460).

Ashbourne Peak School of Hang Gliding, The Elms, Weaton, Nr Ashbourne, Derbyshire DE6 2AF (033 527 257).
Barby Moor Northern Hang Gliding Centre, Dunvegan Lodge, Front St, Barby Moor, Yorks YO4 5EB (0759-304 404).

Beeston Flexwing Training, Shelland, Chapel Lane, Beeston, Norfolk PE32 2NG (0225-701 602).

Biggin Hill Skyriders BHG School, 15 St Mary's Green, Biggin Hill, Kent TN16 3RB (0955-73996).

Brighton Sussex College of Hang Gliding, 49 Church St, Brighton, Sussex BN1 3LE (0273-609 925).

Cairwell Hang Gliding School, Cairwell Mountain, Brecon, Aberdeenshire AB3 5XS (03383-331).

Crickhowell The Welsh Hang Gliding Centre, 1c High St, Powys NP8 1BD (0873-810 091).

Edinburgh Lamond Hang Gliding School, 45 Clarendon Terrace, Revellston, Edinburgh (0753-21222).

Hereford Hiway Flight Training, Longtown, Hereford HR2 0LE (0873-87266).

Hove Free Flight Hang Gliding School, 274 New Church Rd, Hove, Sussex BN3 4EB (0273-412 239).

Huddersfield Pennine Hang Gliding School, 1 Maglin Ave, Salendine Nook, Huddersfield, W Yorks HD3 3GP (0484-641 306).

Isle of Wight Hang Gliding School, Tansell Farmhouse, Aston, Yarmouth PO41 0YJ (0983-754 042).

Leek Peak Flight Ltd, Macclesfield Road, Leek, Staffs ST13 5LD (0538-381 659).

Marborough Wiltshire Hang Gliding Centre, The Old Barn, Rhys Lane, Lockeridge, Wilt SN8 4EE (0672-86555).

Morpeth Windford, 2/3 Home Farm Cottages, Sawland, Morpeth, Northumberland (0670-87774).

Plymouth Devon School of Hang Gliding, 1 Doveclade Road, Beacon Park, Plymouth, Devon PL2 2RR (0752-364 405).

Sowerby Northern School of Hang Gliding, Clough House, Boulder Clough, Sowerby, W Yorks HX6 1NJ (0422-834 989).

LETTERS

Crowding on the ground at Firle and Beachy Head

At Firle recently, some of us were parking our gliders too far back only leaving a very short space between the fence and the track in which to land. Obviously near the car park end it was the worst, but it did extend a long way along the top, making it quite tricky especially when it got a bit lighter.

This would have been very much worse for a low experience pilot -- somewhat unfair I think. We should all try to make it easier and safer for everybody, it is no big problem to park forwards, or better still to leave a continuous strip for overshoots. (A necessity at Beachy Head).

Not only this, but also leaving rigged gliders standing in front of the landing approach paths must produce nasty rotors for people to fly through. Please keep them flat.

PETE ROLINSON

Haloes with a warning

Dick Fife,
London Weather Centre

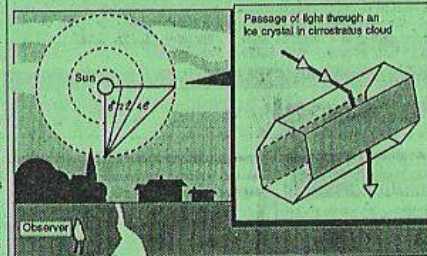
A HALO around the sun or moon is one of the better predictors visible in the sky. It is a much more common sight than might be supposed but may only last for a few minutes.

There are at least three sizes of halo. The most common is of 22 radius, though 8 and 46 haloes have also been seen. The halo is formed by the light from the sun being bent (refracted) twice as it passes through hexagonal ice prisms.

Usually the halo looks whitish but the colours of the rainbow may be faintly seen, with red on the inside. To give an idea of the diameter of what is usually a perfect circle around the sun or moon, one can hold out a large book or magazine at arm's length. The book will blot out the sun, but the halo will still be completely visible.

If you wish to measure or take photographs of the phenomenon, it is safer for your eyes to restrict yourself to haloes around the moon.

Unfortunately for observers there is another phenomenon, the corona, which can be confused with the halo. Coronae are usually only distinguishable around the



A typical halo and the ice crystals that cause it.

moon and include a brownish ring with the field inside the ring coloured a bright bluish-white. They are typically a good deal smaller than the usual halo with a radius of only five degrees.

A halo is definite evidence of hexagonal ice prisms of a type and length commonly associated with cirrostratus cloud, usually at a height of 20,000 feet or so. When seen over Britain, cirrostratus cloud is often a sign of an approaching warm front. The cloud may be expected to thicken and lower towards the surface, with rain starting to fall as the cloud thickens and changes its character. Thus the halo may be used for

predicting rain (or possibly snow) in perhaps five to 10 hours.

Of all the weather-watcher's signs in the sky, this is my personal favourite — though it is not always reliable. In summer, particularly, the approaching front may weaken.

Alternatively, the halo may be caused by a patch of cirrus cloud rather than the uniform sheet of cirrostratus that heralds a classic warm front.

But when haloes are coupled with a falling barometer, an increasingly southerly wind and a progressive thickening of cloud from the west, we can be more confident of the approach of rain.

The Brighton Air Races

Preamble

Brighton has for many years been the centre for a large hang-gliding community. It's little wonder that this is so when you consider the fact that it is a prosperous town with a good size population and has flying sites for all wind directions within easy reach. It is also close enough to London to make it easy for pilots from there to come and fly in Brighton.

What is suprising is that there has never been a hang-gliding competition of any size in Brighton.

The Brighton Air Races are proposed because of the unique advantages that Brighton has for making a competition attractive to participants and spectators alike, as well as offering unique media coverage opportunities. This should make the event attractive both to sponsors as well as to the Southern Hang Gliding Club who would be bound to receive a considerable boost from such an event.

Competition Format

The competition should be of a one-on-one format. This means that in each round the field is split into pairs of pilots who launch simultaneously and compete directly against one another.

The pairings for the first round are made by a combination of seeding and random selection. The pairings for the following rounds are based on results. i.e. pilots with equal numbers of wins and losses fly against each other.

The advantages of this format are considerable:-

First of all it allows a relatively high number of competitors on even small sites, since the field is launched in pairs and does not require everyone to be in the air at the same time.

Secondly it allows flying in a much wider range of weather conditions. If there is no wind, duration and spot can be called. If there is wind but no thermals, a ridge race can be called etc. etc. The type of task is not as important as simply flying itself since the only requirement is to beat your opponent in whatever task it may be. The only weather conditions that can ruin the competition are continuous gales. There is always a chance of this in Britain but

in Brighton the chances of this are less than anywhere else in the country.

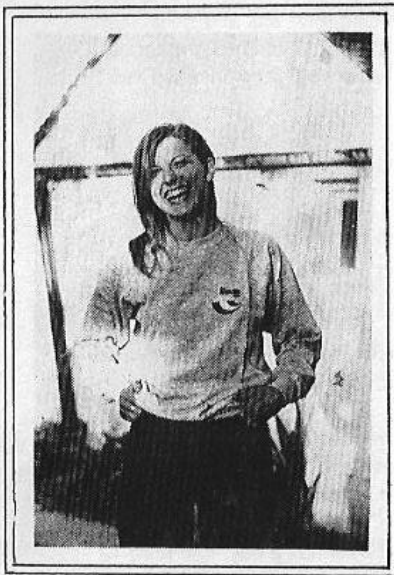
Thirdly it provides an easily understandable format for spectators be they actually there or watching on television. In every pairing, in every round, there will be a winner. Any particular pair can be followed and focused on and will provide a winner. This can provide extremely exciting viewing, two pilots pitting their wits and skills against each other, the tension and excitement becomes greater as the competition reaches it's climax. Anyone who has witnessed this sort of competition will never forget it!

Competition details

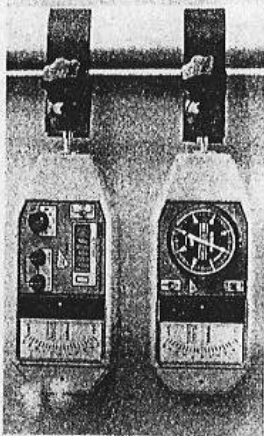
Time period:-	6 days, starting on a Tuesday, ending on a Sunday.
Time of year:-	Summer, possibly to tie in with the Brighton Festival. If not, May or August.
No. of competitors:-	32 max. in advanced class, 24 max. in intermediate class. Overall winner in each class after 4 rounds.
No. of rounds:-	Aim for at least 2 rounds a day, therefore 12 rounds, depending on weather. The more rounds, the more valid the result.
Competition base:-	Should be based at hotel/pub in central Brighton for easy communications.

THE ABOVE NOTES ARE PART OF A PROPOSAL BY JOHN PENDRY FOR NEXT YEARS CHARITY COMPETITION TO BE SPONSORED BY CHARRINGTONS AGAIN.
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or dealer's: Simon White, Andy Buchan, Penrhine Hang Gliding Centre, Flight Gear, Len Hull, Freeflight, Airwave, Cloudbase, Air Supplies,
Welsh Hang Gliding Centre, Mick Fawcett, Richcroft Engineering. Please add £2.50 p/p and £1.10 for Clamp if required. State Glider type.

Cloudbase

A I R S P O R T S

MICROLIGHT FLYING IN SUSSEX

The Southern Hang Gliding Club area has always had more than its fair share of manufacturers of Hang Gliders and Microlight aircraft and the associated equipment. At one time there were three Microlight manufacturers within gliding distance from the Dyke. Sadly those three are now gone but a new manufacturer has emerged in the Arial Arts factory and there are two successful Hang Glider accessory manufacturers as well. The SHGC area has also had a large number of Hang Gliding schools over the years, which have produced many of the Worlds best pilots, but for some unknown reason there has never been a Microlight school anywhere in Sussex. With a constant interest and reasonably high level of Microlight activity in the area there has always been a demand for training which could never be filled. Cloudbase Airsports intend to change all that by creating a Microlight club based around the Brighton area and offer full training, sales and service of the most up to date Microlights and accessories.

Some of the longer standing members of the club (I was going to say older members) will recognise the name Keith Reynolds; thats me. Although I say it myself I used to be fairly usefull on one of those Hang Glider thingys but all I seem to fly these days are Microlights. I am responsible for the formation of Cloudbase Airsports and I am the Chief Flying Instructor. Initialy I intend to operate a very low key club over the winter months so that I spend time organising sites etc. However I am in a position to take on students right away so If there are any of you out there that have always yearned to have a go at Microlighting then just give me a call.

I'm sure there are many SHGC members that have had frustrating days sat on the hill with over £2000 worth of kit all rigged and ready but never getting airborne. During your constant heavenly gaze you will see lots of different types of aircraft fly past only adding to your frustration, and in the months to come one of those aircraft will be mine. But you don't have to sit there any longer thinking that powered flight is beyond your means because Microlights offer affordable aviation for everyone. For less than the price of the average family car you could own the latest 2 seat Microlight. Then the next time you want to go cross country you can fly to the Isle of Wight have a cup of tea and a bacon sarny and then fly back again, and share the experience with a friend. The whole concept of microlights is to be able to pack it all up and take it home the same as Hang Gliding. It is possible to be rigged and ready to fly from the car roof and small trailer in less than 30 minutes, I've seen a lot of Hang Glider pilots take longer than that and then not even fly.

So if your fed up with spending long hours and spending lots of money trying to get airborne and not succeeding then it could be well worth your while giving me a call the next time the wind insists on only blowing up the Dyke at 3 mph. or is a classic thermally day but its south west. If you would like further information on trial lessons and courses then look for the advert in this and future copies of Windssock.

Cloudbase Airsports Limited, 19 Lockwood Crescent,
Woodingdean, Brighton, East Sussex, BN2 6UH.

Telephone 0273 33896

Directors: K.J. Reynolds, L.T. Whitam.

SAFETY MATTERS

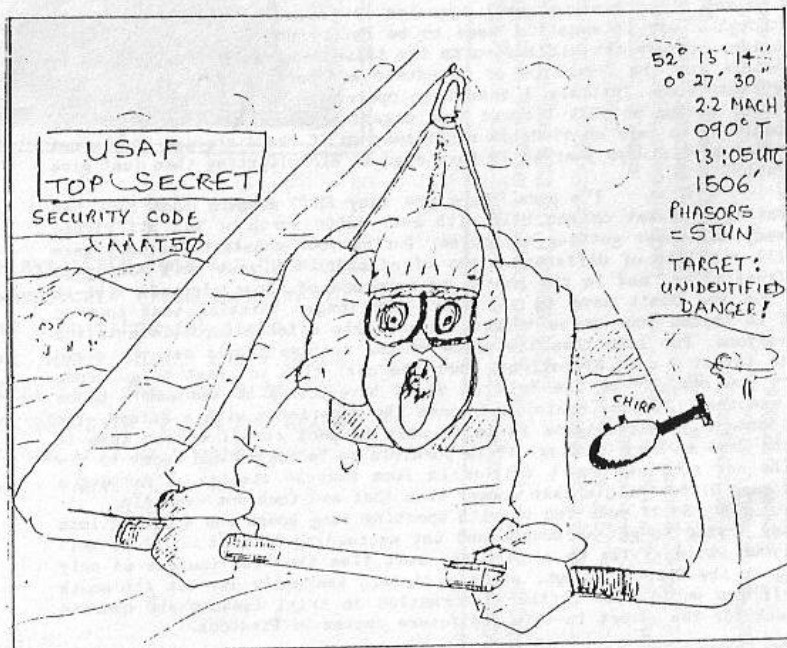
The picture reproduced below is a digitally-enhanced Terrain-Following Radar image, and was retrieved from the "Black Box" flight data recorder recovered intact following last week's tragic and mysterious mid-week mid-air collision involving the new improved and totally invisible US 'Stealth' fighter bomber, now based at RAF Lemling.

Following extensive enquiries by the Military Low Level Tactical Planning Cell, it was found that despite the abundant use of fluorescent day-glo colour schemes on the hang glider pilot's variometer dial and pod harness go-faster stripes, the true cause of the accident was that **NO PHONE CALLS WERE RECEIVED ON**

FREEPHONE 2230

OR

0677 23401



TIM WILLIAMS
WINGS
TREFENTER
ABERYSTWYTH
DYFED
SY23 4HJ

DEAR TIM,

I AM WRITING ABOUT SOME CHANGES THAT ARE TAKING PLACE IN THE MET OFFICE FORECAST PRESENTATIONS ON B.B.C., LAST WEEK WE HAD A WEATHER FORECAST PRESENTER TO OUR CLUB MEETING. HE DESCRIBED IN SOME DETAIL ABOUT THE FORECASTING THEY DO. ONE POINT THAT BECAME OBVIOUS IS THAT THE EXACT PRESENTATION IS CONTROLLED BY THE B.B.C. HEAD MAN. IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THIS PRESENTATION IS ABOUT TO BE REDUCED DRAMATICALLY. THIS HAS ALREADY BECOME OBVIOUS ON THE 9.25pm FORECAST, THEY NOW OMIT THE PRESSURE MAP, WHICH TO US IS VITAL. THE ONLY RECOURSE WE HAVE IS TO WRITE PERSONALLY TO

PAUL FOX
CONTROLLER

B B C TV
WOOD LANE
W12 7RJ

COULD YOU PLEASE PUT THIS IN WINGS URGENTLY, DECISIONS ABOUT THE CHANGES ARE TO BE IMPLIMENTED END OF DECEMBER. ALL CONCERNED PILOTS MUST WRITE NOW TO SAVE THE SITUATION.

I TRUST YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DO THIS .

YOURS SINCERELY

CHRIS BARTRAM

ALL CLUB MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE THE ABOVE LETTER TO TIM.
YOU MUST WRITE IN NOW. DON'T DELAY!!

GRAPEVINE

By MUCKRAKER

Credit is due to the safety conscious Chris Jones for reporting himself to Muckraker for his latest blunder.... Chris, who once took off at Ager without his leg loops, was flying around all afternoon at the Dyke with his newly packed parachute not connected to the harness...

Rumour has it that the high price of the new Magic Kiss issue to the difficulty they are having in removing the words Enterprise Foil from the sails...

It is reported that a certain "Spanish" pilot of the SHGC recently decided to land in the small paddock emergency only landing area despite the presence of several flat and one fully rigged glider... Cutting a swathe through the general public, he made an abrupt and fairly ungraceful landing and proceeded to start shouting at the other pilot for "causing" an accident...

Meanwhile, Tintin and "Fatima" are grinding their teeth as they have to train parapunters on the last decent flying day of the year....

Rumour has it that the Wessex club whose victory in the 1987 Airwave Challenge caused them to adopt the modest handle "The Mighty Wessex" are now rather sheepishly admitting that Pride comes before a Fall.....

The North Yorks Club are meanwhile adopting a more realistic name for next years team..."The North Yorks Upright Crushers" due to the fact that they lost the semi final and broke five uprights between four of them.....

Ben Humphrys having unwittingly renamed his magazine with the same title as the Mercian Club's "Soar Points" has now opted for the snappy title "Right Up".. Hmm... (He says it's a pun..)

RUMOR HAS IT THAT A CERTAIN INSTRUCTOR THAT HAS DISAGREED WITH PARAGLIDING, NOW WANTS TO DO A COURSE IN IT !!!!

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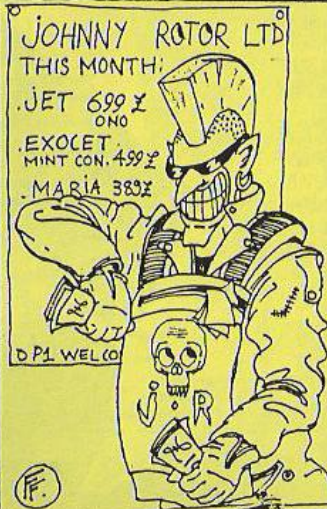
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