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WINDSOCK

THE JOURNAL OF THE SOUTHERN HANG GLIDING CLUB

JANUARY 1993

Free to SHGC Members

IN THIS ISSUE- *Bernie's Top Tips -*
IAN de HAAN's Feelings - Muckraker's New Year Fun -
'93 agm details!
IRWYN's "ANUS HORRIBILIS"
Johnny's Ankle
Site News
and more...

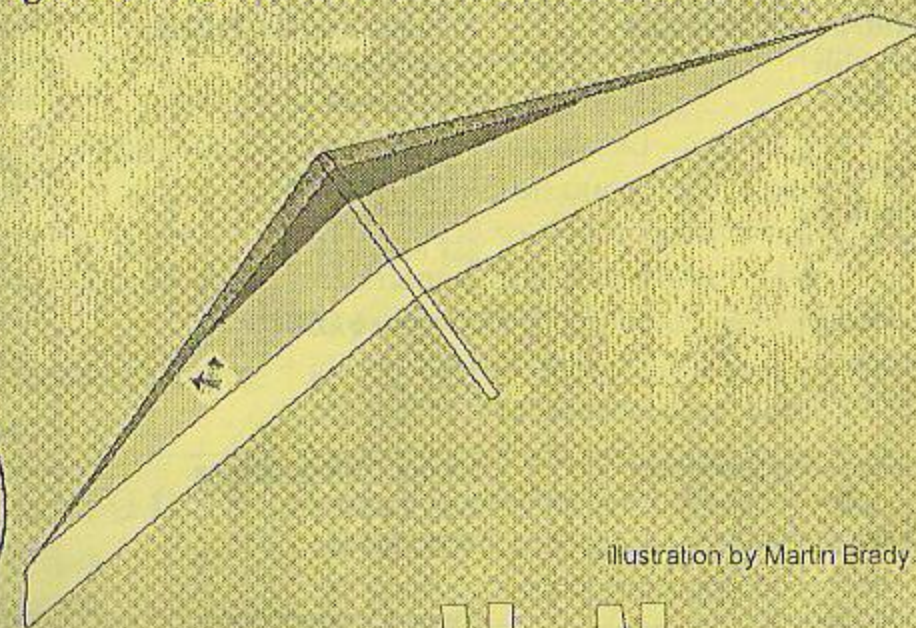


Illustration by Martin Brady

safe flying in

1993

paragliding

hang gliding



**THE SOUTHERN
HANG GLIDING CLUB**
P.O. BOX 1359,
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PLEASE NOTE:

The CLIFFS (not the bowl)
AT BEACHY HEAD ARE STILL
CLOSED FOR SHGC -
The peregrine falcons have
started breeding...

Devil's Dyke
Weather Machine:
0273 857002

**Advertising
Display Rates:**

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Small Ads:

Small ads are free to members or £2 to non-members. They will appear in the mag for 3 issues before being removed.

Cheques or postal orders should be made payable to the Southern Hang Gliding Club, and sent in with your copy.

SHGC Committee Meetings:

Committee Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of every month at the Devil's Dyke Hotel.



The SHGC supports the aims and ideals of the British Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association

BHGA

READERS PLEASE NOTE:

- Contents of this magazine *MAY NOT* be reproduced without the EXPRESS consent of the SHGC Committee and/or author, in any form whatever.
- The views expressed in articles, letters, etc. in Windsock are not necessarily those of the SHGC, the Windsock Editor, or the SHGC Committee.

"Editorial"

by Ian DeHaan



Hello everyone!

I hope that you all had a very good Christmas. The flying has been much better just recently starting on Christmas eve, with some very good flying on Christmas day at Firlle!

I know, as I was there with two other people.

Great lift up to cloud base and flying to the trig point from the bowl!

All this on Christmas Day, what a treat!

Let's hope that the flying for the new year will be better than last.

Happy New Year to you all and safe flying.
xxx - Ian

Congratulations!

To SHGC members
Lisa & Steve Brewer.

A baby girl - Jasmine Emily, wing
loading 7lb 9oz.

Latest design and colours - pink with
brown hair and blue eyes!
Already generating her own thermals.

HELMET STICKERS

Will members please note that the stickers which you are issued with are designed to be stuck on your HELMET. Please comply with this requirement - it makes it a lot easier for committee members and marshalls to recognise who is and isn't a member of the club. Don't just leave them at home, in your wallet or in your car - stick 'em on your helmet! (It also helps marshalls to know your names and appear very knowledgeable about the membership!)

Chairman's Letter

by Johnny Carr



Well, here we are again, another new year and I'm sure we're all hoping for a better one than last. I had a short flight at the Dyke in December and that's my first flight since I broke my ankle in August. I am looking forward to some good flying in 1993 (Steve Cook - look out).

Looking further ahead - are we going to see the Swift on our sites this year? I really hope so. I thoroughly enjoyed Ben Ashmans article in the December Skywings. As the development of such gliders comes along it opens up realistic possibilities of aero-towing. I believe that towing by winch will come in to its own more this year, as our hills get more congested it seems a good alternative to hill soaring. Marshalling the busy sites is good, and it's a solution to overcrowding the sky but if a saturation point comes (and I hope it doesn't) sitting around all day waiting for a slot to fly wouldn't be much fun. I must not sound pessimistic as it hasn't come near to that yet. All I am trying to say is don't bury your head in the sand and support the towing program that will be put into operation this year. If our club members come to our towing meetings and show a positive response, it's not out of the question for the club to purchase a winch - but the interest has to be there first.

**Happy flying to you
all in 1993.**

Design Copyright Kino 1992!

Paragliding Tips and Questions

by The Masked Man

As hang glider pilot who learnt to paraglide, rather than the other way round, there are still a number of things that mystify me about paragliding, and one feels bound to ask, though the aspects of this august organ (Magazine to you, nothing to do with lams meat and two veg).

Often, when I watch pilots packing their canopies they fold them up then start to roll them from the leading edge, and then they get to the trailing edge to find large amounts of air trapped in the canopy which they then have to squeeze out. This air ends up being forced through a non porous material, totally against the design brief of the canopy. Isn't this a bad idea??

I think the canopy should be rolled from the trailing edge. Comments from Windsock Towers please. "Touching Cloudbase" the book illustrates a way of packing to avoid this problem.

The other thing that always amazes me is the number of people who ground handle in the take off area with no intention of flying. On a crowded site 'tis is the easiest way to pee everybody off. Why does it still happen??? Practising ground handling may be done on flat piece of ground anywhere, not on the only flyable site for 100 miles.

Lastly, the old chestnut of scratching hang gliders. When it gets light and scratchy and all the hang gliders are scratching to top land its got to be worth slope landing and forgoing a couple of minutes flying to allow a fellow pilot to gain enough height to top land. As soon as he/she does have that height they will top land and be grateful as opposed to the 1 hour haul from the bottom landing field

and another hang glider pilot going home cursing paragliding. The other thing is that in the tight melee you are more likely to get hang glider wake turbulence, not pleasant if close.

Whilst I'm on my hobby horse and you're all making gestures reminiscent of a Zoo Keeper washing an elephants trunk, why is it that a number of people (from both flying disciplines) on light wind days having had hours of flying are unable to come down to allow others to fly. I took my canopy to Caburn in a westerly when only a short part of the ridge was flyable and watched while a number of people racked up a lot of airtime while the rest of us watched from the deck, knowing that there wasn't enough space for one more canopy. The more unselfish we are, the less marshalling we'll need. Still, co-operation has been good in 1992. Here's to more of the same in 1993!!

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY!!

AGM

This year the Annual General Meeting of the SHGC will be held at the DYKE PUB on SATURDAY 13 MARCH 1993.

Your Committee are currently compiling the proposals for the AGM. These must be sent to the Secretary, in writing, before Monday 8th February.

Proposals will not be accepted from the floor on the night. Proposals received will be published in the next Windsock, before the AGM (also see Tim Cox's proposal elsewhere in this issue). Let's hear your views/opinions - if you do want to change something, make a proposal, and come along and vote at

your AGM.

TOP TIPS with Bernie

HG Pilots:

If you constantly overshoot the Paddock, assure yourself of a good solid landing by staying well behind the trees on approach. Hopefully the wind will drop a bit so you hit the field, but worst case, you'll get a bent leading edge in the trees.

PG Pilots:

A good trick to get your own back on nasty HG pilots is to dawdle along in front of take-off. If you've really got it going, 4 or 5 of you can take it in shifts to stop it looking too obvious. Thanks to Messrs. Jehu and Watts for that one!

HG Pilots:

A handy trick to remember for those well mushed landings is to tuck a 5ft pronged stick of bamboo in your harness on take-off. When you land, you can mush even better than before by hooking the stick on the base bar and pushing out to full extent. If you are flying in Africa then sugar cane makes an ideal alternative to bamboo, and is often a little cheaper to purchase...

PG Pilots:

A neat competition for "Happy Hour" is to see how many "Red Ribbons" you can grab from passing Novice HG pilots in the 30 minutes they're up, that's if they can take-off of course!!

HG Pilots:

Express your disappointment at being the runner-up in the "Bent Upright" award, by busting another one within a week of receiving it, thus proving that the winner of the trophy is a rank amateur, and not worthy of the prize. Thanks Rude Kid, we'll bear it in mind!!

PG Pilots:

If there's a chance of being dragged back on take-off, make sure there is something soft to fall on if you do. Cow's excrement is an excellent choice, and in many cases will greatly improve your appearance as well.

HG Pilots:

If you no longer need those very large wheels on your glider you can stop people taking the pi** out of you by making a sort of golf-trolley with them for carrying your glider...

HG Pilots:

If its getting too crowded in the air, try having a "domino" contest with the Paragliders. Find a PG with a few below him and dive down hard just in front of him... A First Aid kit can come in handy when trying this one, if the PGs don't need it, you certainly will!

All Pilots:

Find out how many members there are in the club by being the last one to renew your subscription and hence get the highest membership number...

Devil's Dyke Marshalling Rota - the latest version.

PLEASE ENSURE THAT IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND ON YOUR ALLOTTED DAY THAT ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO COVER YOUR DUTIES...

Date	Forename	Surname	TelHome	TelWork
09/01/93	Peter	Banner	0306 884588	-
09/01/93	Ian	Barnes	-	-
09/01/93	Ernest	Bayliss	081 390 7891	081 942 2233
10/01/93	Peter	Bemon	0903 245447	0903 245447
10/01/93	John	Benfield	081 857 5351	071 938 9498
10/01/93	Chris	Bere	0273 452370	0860 400747
16/01/93	Martin	Brady	0444 233346	0273 745318
16/01/93	Eddie	Bilous	0273 411239	-
16/01/93	Ken	Besfor	081 651 4573	-
17/01/93	Bill	Blunt	0342 810928	-
17/01/93	Stephen	Boalch	0304 374901	0304 361396
17/01/93	Mark	Blackledge	071 231 5384	071 437 6136
23/01/93	Charles	Blackburn	081 840 1875	071 324 8325
23/01/93	Richard	Bonwick	0892 655754	0892 655754
23/01/93	Joao Carlos	Borges	0273 202893	0273 642256
24/01/93	Lisa	Brewer	0403 710739	-
24/01/93	Steve	Brewer	0403 710739	-
24/01/93	Michael	Broadbent	0424 210951	-
30/01/93	Arthur	Brooker	-	0322 66550
30/01/93	Charles	Brockis	04834 27218	-
30/01/93	Sue	Brooks	0273 834984	0444 451881 ex 356
31/01/93	Chris	Bryson	0425 272535	-
31/01/93	Chris	Brough	081 671 0663	-
31/01/93	David	Brown	0403 54469	0403 210345
06/02/93	Adrian	Caple	081 660 0824	-
06/02/93	Peter	Bruce	081 689 2613	-
06/02/93	Duncan	Caird	-	071 867 7362
07/02/93	Johnny	Carr	044484 217	-
07/02/93	Michel	Carnet	0860 667874	0273 857700
07/02/93	Andy	Chad	-	071 712 6825
13/02/93	Bernard	Clifford	081 948 5536	071 873 3000 ex 3601
13/02/93	John	Clements	0227 70803	-
13/02/93	Clive	Chippendale	081 878 1081	-
14/02/93	David	Cole	081 868 0905	-
14/02/93	Steven	Cook	0903 725724	-
14/02/93	Andrew	Cooper	0903 850831	-
20/02/93	Tim	Cox	0273 671214	0273 609925/685689
20/02/93	Jerry	Cooper	081 674 9427	-
20/02/93	Graham	Cooper	0634 842 853	0372 222688
21/02/93	Francis	Cracknell	081 568 4184	-
21/02/93	Tim	Day	071 701 9313	071 387 7050 ex 2747
21/02/93	Russell	Crowley	06898 73873	06898 73873
27/02/93	Rob	Croad	081 641 6193	0737 370 370 ex 6413
27/02/93	Sue	Day	0883 349845	-
27/02/93	Tony	Crowley	-	-
28/02/93	Dave	Perrin	0273 600450	0273 424861
28/02/93	Ian	Dehaan	0737 762895	-
28/02/93	David	Drake	081 508 9019	081 529 3501
06/03/93	Amanda	Elias	0483 755101	-
06/03/93	Warwick	Dufour	081 677 5858	-
06/03/93	John	Elkins	04027 51310	-
07/03/93	Ben	Forrester	0903 695200	0903 47171
07/03/93	Andrew	Elphinston	0737 240719	0763 71976
07/03/93	Ken	Fox	0753 866139	-
13/03/93	Vanya	Gant	-	-
13/03/93	Robert	Gastman	081 722 8855	071 636 2294
13/03/93	Paul	Gardiner	0444 881 387	-
14/03/93	Nigel	Gibson	081 890 7476	-
14/03/93	David	Goepel	0273 419645	-
14/03/93	Frank	Golding	0273 305636	-
20/03/93	Kim	Gouldstone	081 715 4706	071 233 0288
20/03/93	Paul	Goodyear	-	-
20/03/93	Damian	Gordon	-	-
21/03/93	Harry	Greene	071 482 4927	-
21/03/93	Paul	Gurling	081 764 8301	081 750 0380
21/03/93	Ian	Gravatt	071 733 5259	071 924 1282
27/03/93	James	Gurney	0483 768719	0483 740958
27/03/93	Neil	Hallsforth	081 395 6046	-
27/03/93	Alexander	Hammond	0978 851381	-
28/03/93	Bernard	Hanning	081 908 1549	-
28/03/93	Jim	Hardiman	081 311 0683	-

Devil's Dyke Marshalling Rota - the latest version.

PLEASE ENSURE THAT IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND ON YOUR ALLOTTED DAY THAT ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO COVER YOUR DUTIES...

Date	Forename	Surname	TelHome	TelWork
28/03/93	Jerry	Hansen	0273 461783	-
03/04/93	Les	Hedges	081 847 1815	-
03/04/93	Liz	Johnston	0273 556160	-
03/04/93	Ron	Harrington	0252 625246	0420 86616
04/04/93	Anthony	Hobden	0273 473467	-
04/04/93	Bernie	Hewing	071 737 4849	081 986 3123
04/04/93	Keith	Henson	-	-
10/04/93	Albert	Holder	0273 514383	0273 513818
10/04/93	Robin	Hooper	071 978 8664	-
10/04/93	Eddie	Horsfield	081 657 93076	fax 081 689 2076
11/04/93	Patrick	Houston	0323 440331	929 0951
11/04/93	Rob	Howe	081 748 0735	081 746 1700
11/04/93	John	Hutcherson	081 810 5050	081 879 3252
17/04/93	Colin	James	081 399 6278	071 753 5881
17/04/93	Andrew	Jackson	081 524 4944	071 939 0267
17/04/93	Inike	Jansen	081 390 3076	-
18/04/93	Nigel	Jarvis	0883 349845	-
18/04/93	Vicky	Jones	0424 222630	0424 32281 ex 320
18/04/93	Inwyn	Jehu	0903 723884	-
24/04/93	Andrew	Keyte	081 464 3355	-
24/04/93	Ian	Jenkins	-	0980 630351
24/04/93	Neil	Kinnear	081 697 1363	-
25/04/93	Fionn	Kennedy	0273 858221	-
25/04/93	Robert	Kelly	081 755 2592	0836 533410
25/04/93	Kelvin	Kincaid	0483 426653	0276 71617
01/05/93	Stephen	Langridge	Balcombe 811731	Cranley 532875
01/05/93	Nick	Langford	081 541 1376	-
01/05/93	John	Leggoit	081 657 0725	081 318 7511
02/05/93	Owen	Leigh	081 946 2552	071 236 8000 ex 2286
02/05/93	Robert	Klee	081 543 2646	081 950 2985
02/05/93	Amanda	Lansbury	081 470 0986	-
08/05/93	Richard	Lewis	0273 417465	-
08/05/93	John	Lovell	081 689 0926	-
08/05/93	Simon	Lewis	0372 363009	-
09/05/93	Antony	Lucchesi	0474 812106	0892 669295
09/05/93	Simon	Lyon	081 693 2366	0293 612 648
09/05/93	Edward	Lockhart	071 673 6827	-
15/05/93	Alison	Maddock	081 341 3383	-
15/05/93	Philip	Maillardet	09592 3742	-
15/05/93	Stephen	Marnier	0273 770166	0293 654749
16/05/93	David	Matthews	0273 604752	061 797 6000
16/05/93	Janet	McGill	0279 876327	07 248 4444 ex 2083
16/05/93	Ian	Maskell	0273 540755	-
22/05/93	Bob	Middleton	0843 596126	-
22/05/93	Mike	Millwood	0273 400372	0273 857700
22/05/93	Stephen	Millson	081 675 7062	0860 236470
23/05/93	Gary	Cook	-	0273 857700
23/05/93	William	Morris	081 648 0255	-
23/05/93	Brian	Milton	071 263 5475	-
29/05/93	David	Morrison	0342 716701	-
29/05/93	Alan	Mortimer	0424 434879	0424 853481
29/05/93	Christopher	Morley	0273 588578	-
30/05/93	John	Moss	081 644 6504	071 228 8551
30/05/93	Steven	Murray	081 977 9907	071 934 7071
30/05/93	David	News	071 622 1501	081 305 1505
05/06/93	Peter	Myers	0273 687336	-
05/06/93	Hugo	Nottidge	081 994 7187	071 827 2681
05/06/93	Tim	Oakley	081 868 3824	0753 34655 ex 2249
06/06/93	Paul	Osborn	081 462 2833	0689 825771 ex 431
06/06/93	Stewart	Park	081 644 0300	081 680 3655
06/06/93	Colin	Paine	0903 60468	-
12/06/93	Graham	Parslow	0737 243834	0372 222336
12/06/93	Graham	Parker	0992 812910	-
12/06/93	Martin	Pepper	0732 454424	071 425 8167
13/06/93	Kevin	Peckering	0273 846319	095781 561
13/06/93	Tony	Parsons	0737 760435	-
13/06/93	Richard	Perkes	081 977 3838	-
19/06/93	Nicholas	Preston	081 871 1858	071 387 7050 ex 5324
19/06/93	Jonathan	Pritchard	081 698 8942	-
19/06/93	Clive	Pritchard	081 671 5206	-

Your Letters - keep them coming, folks! This is your magazine - let us publish your comments, opinions, articles, opinions, photographs, etc.

WeatherMachine Blues and Black Saturday

Dear Sir,

Please publish the following in Windssock:

My name was missing from the recent list of Club Coaches as I suspect were several others.

I am always willing to help anyone learn the fly on the bush technique - phone 0342 716006.

I apologise to members that the weather station has been out of order for a few days several times in the last two months. I try to do

maintenance at this time of year when it is least used. I have replaced the anemometer bearing which wore out after 3.5 years. The pole then had to come down again for a faulty diode in the new anemometer. I try to do repairs as quickly as possible but the pole can only come down on a dry calm day. The computer has been replaced again after a power supply failed. This was probably due to being on the same ring main as a faulty ice machine at the Dyke. I have moved it to another supply. It became redundant to answer the phone for a while but is OK again after the adjustment. Please remember it runs 17 hours a day 7 days a week in all weathers. All parts and maintenance for only £420 p.a. and it gets 1000-2000 calls per month.

As to "Black Day" 17/10/92. I told you so! I took one look and went to the Downs Club's westerly site. This, along with all our sites, remains closed to Southern Club members, except by invitation, as we have no club insurance. This is because our registration with the BHPA is still being blocked by your committee. I hope you are satisfied that they are serving your interests and you are not satisfied tell them!

I am sure that the number of hang glider pilots who have dropped out of the club this year is horrendous.

I publicly repeat my request, acceded to at the last AGM, for information regarding renewals by members of hang + para pilots to be available for members at the next AGM

- yours sincerely John Charlton

The Southern Hang Gliding Club would like to publicly repeat it's offer of integrating the Downs Club sites within the SHGC, along with a guarantee of these sites remaining hang gliding only. This would give you and your fellow members immediate insurance.

The membership figures are currently (as of 9.1.93) for a membership of 362

Hang gliding: 150

Paragliding: 186

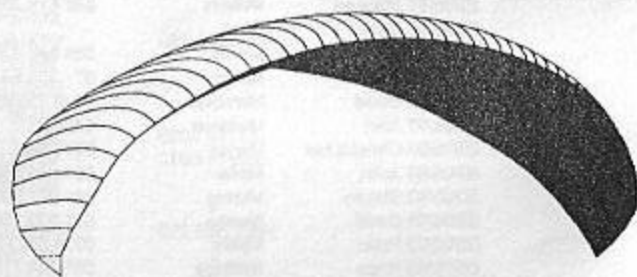
Both: 26

We have experienced a "dropout" of approx 100 members in 1993 - almost exactly 50/50 hang glider and paraglider pilots. Usually the "dropout" averages 60-70 per year. We believe that the increased "dropout" last year is mostly due to the tedious politics which we all hope are over.

These figures obviously depend on the application/renewal forms being sent back accurately filled in, with no spoiled sections or blanks. As I am sure you can imagine, some of the forms arrive improperly filled in, so we can't be 100% accurate.

Final figures (which will obviously change slightly) will be available, as per your request, at the AGM.

NB. The Southern Hang Gliding Club pursues no policy of "excluding" members of the Downs Club from joining it.



Black Saturday (again)

Having read Pete Rolinson's letter regarding the intensity of flying at the Dyke on the 17th October, I would like to make a few personal observations.

It certainly did get very busy for a while. This arose from an unfortunate set of circumstances, namely conditions deteriorating while Johnny Carr, who was marshalling, was some distance from the main launch gate. He took a while to get back and close it due to his ankle being in plaster.

So there was a problem. But remember that not only are we all new to running the marshalling system, but are setting a precedent. We will undoubtedly need to make changes as a result of our experiences.

So what can we learn from this incident?

Firstly, the presence of a marshal does not exempt pilots from using their own judgement as to when it is safe to launch. Secondly, if it becomes overcrowded and a gate is unmanned (even marshals need comfort breaks) then stand-in and close it. Thirdly, the marshal cannot be expected to predict what will be happening in five minutes time. Where conditions worsen and it becomes overcrowded then use your loaves. Fly out from the hill where there is more room even if this results in a bottom landing - that's just too bad.

We've implemented the marshalling system but still have a lot to learn. It's not going to be perfect immediately so please be patient. By learning from our experiences and using our common sense we ought to be able to improve on what we already have. Any constructive suggestions will always be welcomed by the committee.

Myself, I'm convinced that without the marshalling, the likelihood of a mid-air would have been very much higher that day. I was also very grateful for the hang gliding only session that it provided.

- Martin Brady (Secretary)

HANG GLIDING TOW WEEKEND!

It is hoped to organise a hang gliding tow weekend in late February.

Will tow qualified hang glider pilots, people interested in learning how to tow hang gliders, and people seeking a tow endorsement, please contact MARTIN BRADY on 0444 23346.

The weekend depends on your interest - so get your names down now!

F E E L I N G S

by Ian de Haan

I was talking to some other paraglider pilots at Beachy Head when the topic of conversation turned to nerves during flight.

I was describing how when flying high above the cliffs at Beachy I felt very vulnerable and always looked at the harness webbing, stitching, lines etc. and hoped that they never come undone or snapped in flight leaving me plummeting down to earth.

At this point a severe calming of the nerves by logical thinking (?) calms me down. Howard then said that he had similar feelings when flying high and wondered if he was the only person to feel like this - in fact it would appear that many pilots feel like this when flying particularly high. One friend of mine, when flying in Spain for the first time described how he kept talking to himself trying to calm himself down whilst screaming up in a thermal at 10 up and accelerating, saying that he was more than just a tad nervous about what was happening to him. After a few flights like this he got used to the experience and it did not bother him after this, but, one girlfriend of the party used a different approach. They used two way radios to keep in contact, when the girlfriend was thermalling in a massive thermal was describing the amazing experience etc. when the vario suddenly indicates 12+ up. She then immediately started screaming her head off, nearly deafened the party all earwiggling the ground radio causing slight injury because they all reeled back so fast from the screams coming from the radio! When she landed she described the flight as the best of her life ???

A NOT SO REGULAR STORY OF A DAY IN THE LEAGUE

by JOHNNY CARR

Here we are on our way to the League final in France. It's blowing a gale at Folkestone harbour and the SeaCat is going nowhere. We are told we can get on a Hovercraft from Dover so off we go. Before we leave I make a last minute call to Yvonne Jukes to arrange my insurance, in case of an accident (you never know, do you)?

I travelled with Spanish Joe, Tammy, Dave Draper, Kay Simpson and Monique. We had a good journey down and met a fellow relic from the early seventies, Tony Beresford and his family. We had a little chat and off we drove into the night.

We arrived at Lagagne to find the previous few days had been rather windy, but we had high hopes that the weather would turn favourable for us. After a couple of days it did just that. The day before the competition started I spent with Dave Draper skying out all over the area. We flew north to Beomont and east to the hills by the dam at La Saulce. On the way back we encountered convergence which had special features - there was a wall of cloud that started about 500' below me and extended to about 1000' above with a tunnel that was completely clear, I couldn't resist flying through it. I felt excited and wondered what it must feel like for surfers going through wave tunnels, fantastic. Before we landed Dave, myself and another pilot whose name escapes me had some great fun playing in the sky trying to catch a map that had fallen from a glider and had got trapped in the convergence. Dave and I had a couple of attempts, each missing it by inches before our other companion caught on his third attempt, (We would have had it on our next attempt, wouldn't we Dave). We landed at the camp site and reflected on what a great days flying we'd had. We packed up our gliders and went to pick up Kay who didn't quite make it back.

So the competition started: conditions weren't the best that Lagagne can offer, but it was well flyable every day. I was feeling good about my flying and was hoping to do well in this League. I hadn't bombed out so far and was feeling confident - until task 14. The task was to fly south west to Barret Le Bass then on to Noyers Sur Jabron, and take a photo of the bridge over the river then north to Claret and back to Lagrand - a 78km course. Cloudbase was 9,800' that day, and you needed all of it for the first leg which was into wind. Most pilots found themselves getting thrashed about in the turbulent lee side thermals off ridges south of Barret Le Bass. A gaggle of us eventually got up and cleared the next ridge with a couple of hundred feet to spare.

It was pretty crowded in the gaggle I was in, so I decided to leave and go to where 3 other gliders were going

up, as I got there they cleared off - "charming" I thought, as I wondered if was the after-shave I was wearing. I was not going to follow them being 500' lower. The route they took looked like a long glide with no landing areas from my altitude. I felt the safest option was to go back, wondering why the hell I left a thermal that was going up ok in the first place. The terrain is flat-topped grass covered slopes in amongst rocky ravines and definitely no landing areas. I saw Alan Barnes had landed on the flat top area and assumed he had hiked out to get a retrieve, I couldn't bring myself to land there, as in front was a nice hill about 300' high, covered in long grass. I figured that if I stayed in the air I still might get a thermal out, if not I will do a fly on the wall and accept that I blew it. Guess what? The thermal never came, and I left it to the last second, turned at the hill with loads of speed on skimming across the grass, as I am climbing up the A frame getting ready for the flare of the century I see an outcrop of rock I hadn't noticed right in my path. I am too low to manoeuvre round it, all I can do is hope that when I flare out I might end up the other side of it. No such luck - I ended up hitting it with my right ankle, and as I couldn't run through it, my ankle broke. The glider landed perfectly on my shoulder.

Without radios, no one would have suspected I had broken my ankle. I knew it had broken because my foot felt like a lead weight wobbling about on the end of my leg. Thanks to my radio I was able to tell the other League pilots that my ankle was broken. I told Dave Draper that it was a waste of time getting an ambulance to me and to get a helicopter. Liz Ward received the message in her car while following Trevor's progress, and quickly contacted the emergency services. I shared a couple of jokes with Peter Harvey, Dave Draper and Mike Stevens - they thought it was a good idea to keep in contact because the pain was getting worse and there was a risk that I might pass out. Peter was so concerned he wanted me to tell him about the Chedder Gorge thermal over again, that reminds me did I tell you that one? Once upon a time in the Chedder Gorge... No, I'll tell you on the hill sometime.

The chopper took about an hour to arrive and I was in considerable pain. Eventually, I could hear the deep dull sound of the blades, on the horizon I could see it getting bigger and bigger as it approached. I had been sheltering under my glider from the heat of the sun and knew I had to get clear of it in case the helicopter down draft blew the glider away. The pain was unbearable as I shuffled clear, out of the shade. I swore to myself - the slightest movement was excruciating.

The helicopter dropped the paramedic off near me and then flew to the top of the next bowl. The medics put all my kit together and I left the sail ties and XC bag for whoever was in a position to pack my glider away after the task had finished. Incidentally the glider came through all this totally unscathed. The medics put my leg in a blow up bag and carried me to the helicopter, which had manoeuvred to a more suitable position. I have always wanted a flight in a helicopter but not in these circumstances. It seemed to go slower than I had imagined it would. I was curious to see how it would react as it flew over some fantastic thermal generators on the way to Gap hospital. The weirdest thing about the whole flight was flying low over the town of Gap. I was still in hang gliding mode - I was looking down and thinking "but there is nowhere to land if the engine cuts out". I was trying to imagine being in that situation in a hang glider, it was too scary to contemplate.

We arrived at the helipad on the roof of the hospital and I was met by porters with a stretcher. I said thanks and goodbye to the helicopter medics and was wheeled into a lift and down to the examination room. I was wired up to a drip and wheeled to the x-ray department where it is confirmed that the ball joint in my ankle had come out of the socket and a bone was broken. The doctor asked me, (in broken English) to point my toes toward my chest. He said it might go back in its socket, (yeah oh yeah I thought). I could hear the sound of bones grinding, (a bit like someone scrunching a handful of marbles) until I could stand the pain no more. A further x-ray proved that the ball joint had only partly gone back and that I would have to be put to sleep for the final setting. I didn't argue. They must have put something in the drip system because I opened my eyes and it was done. I was thinking that wasn't so bad, then the doctor told me I would see the surgeon in the morning - surgeon I thought. Yes I was told they are going to put some pins and wire in my ankle. Thoughts of pain, scars, bones being drilled all go through my mind but I guessed it was for the best.

Spanish Joe and Tammy were my first visitors and I can tell you, it was really nice to see them. Tammy did some translating, and was able to tell me what was going on.

The next day came after a restless night, and the nurse shaved my leg, (ok girls contain yourselves) and the anaesthetist tells me I am going to have an epidural, I nearly said, I have a broken ankle, I'm not about to have a baby, but I didn't think he would understand as he couldn't speak English and I couldn't speak French.

So I get this epidural - it's an injection into the base of the spine and in a few seconds I lose all sensation in my legs and I'm completely paralysed. No matter how much willpower I muster, I have no control over my legs. AJ

continued on page 12.....

MUCKRAKER

new year editor's special

GALORE!

Whilst at Beachy Head on the 30 December 1992 enjoying one of the best days of the year flying at the cliffs, Chris Bere (having already twisted his lines into a complete birds nest which were professionally unwound at a work shop for him) proceeds to land and let his canopy turn a complete somersault without noticing, and once again wraps up all his lines by trying to untangle the mess. Fortunately for Chris some kind, benevolent person untangles his mega birds nest in seconds for him. While this is being done for him, he maintains it has never happened to him before. Will he ever learn?????????

.....
Talking of telekenesis, Michel Carnet was saying how he goes jogging early every morning, but no one has ever witnessed this amazing site, it is therefore believed that he imagines this. (The time when you dream the most is just before waking up). *What!* - Ed
And talking of MC, there is a vicious rumour going around that he bought a round of drinks at the Dyke pub just before Christmas, but as there is no hard proof of this i.e. photographic evidence or witnesses willing to come forward we will have to wait patiently until next time.

.....
De Haan (1). Is there any truth to the rumour that our glorious editor, the flying dutchman himself Ian de Haan has been seen descending from "cloudbase" several times with his chest straps undone. His excuse is the oldest in the book - he blames the badly-made harness for undoing itself. *Hmmm.*

De Haan (2). After doing his harness up again and trying to fly his new canopy for a second time, he devised a novel method of getting it to stay done up. This involved rolling around in a pile of animal excrement until the buckles stuck shut. Witnesses claim that his new "super wing" is still covered in brown kack stains, thus further devaluing his canopy, and giving a new meaning to the phrase "Hot Ship".

Johnny's Ankle -

the nightmare continues (from page 11)

The surgeon put up a screen to ensure that I couldn't see what was going on. The first thing I heard was the sound of metal objects hitting against each other, like rummaging around the knife drawer in the kitchen to select the appropriate weapon. I can hear drilling and banging but I can't feel a thing. A few minutes later the cover comes down and I can see my ankle, all plastered up with what looks like two Chinese lanterns hanging from my toes, I believe they were to drain surplus blood from the wound. I was told I had to stay in hospital till Tuesday 25th of August.

I was flown home care of British Airways club class, and was privileged to be in the cockpit as we landed at Heathrow. The pilot knew a paraglider pilot who used to be a member of the SHGC.

I would like to thank Joe and Tammy, Jess and Angela, Jim and Paula, also Mr Hull junior who came to see me and a Thames valley flier Ian and Ursula who were passing through and heard about me and popped in, I thought that was nice.

Thanks to Dave, Peter, Jess and Mike for talking to me during the task it helped to take my mind off the injury. thanks to Liz for setting up the emergency services and to Len and Dave for packing my glider up for me, it's nice to have real friends.

The one thing you could easily forget reading this article is the cost of all this rescue and medical attention. It would have cost a fortune for helicopter rescue, ankle operation, a week in a French hospital and 90 minute drive to Marseille Airport in an ambulance taxi, plus the air travel back to England.

The moral of the story is **don't go abroad without adequate insurance.**

I phoned Yvonne Jukes in the Skywings magazine and its the best value £26 I've ever spent.

SMALL ADS:

Send small ads in to the ed. - they appear for 3 Windsock editions.

Free to Southern Hang Gliding Club Members, non-members £2 for 3 insertions.

FOR SALE: P/G

FALHAWK APEX MR 120 (large): green. Immaculate - the top performer with tuck resistance and easy handling. Must sell, as bankrupt! £1,400 : offers? Call (0273) 604051 (eves). (2)

EDEL ZX RACER immaculate medium in white; 5 hrs airtime. Accelerator kit, 4-riser system. List price £2,200 sell for £1,400 to experienced XC pilot. Outflies everything need next size down as losing weight. Tel. Ed 0273 411239. (3)

EDEL APOLLO. Suit pilot 45-65 k. Ideal from beginner to intermediate. Stable, big ears, b-line and a trendy pink design. You have probably seen me flying above you on the Southern sites! Good condition, only 20 hours airtime hence £850 ono. Tel. Nigel on 0825-768657. (2)

AIRWAVE BLACK MAGIC 24 with paradise 1 harness. ACPUL/Guteseigel Grade 1. £650 ono. Also ACE spares. Tel. Steve 0622 36219. (3)

FALHAWK NEO medium. I'll give you a better chance to persuade me to sell this safe canopy. Here's my real 'phone number. 0737 760435. Make me an offer I can't refuse - Tony. (3)



Speaking of telekinisis: Michel Carnet (see Muckraker at left), becomes excited at the prospect of the Swift coming to the UK

VOODOO 26. Yellow/white. 10 months old. Very good condition. Less than 50 hrs., £1,500 ono. or £1,650 with custom SAS harness and backplate. Call Dave Perrin on 0273-600450. (2)

PRO-DESIGN CORRADO pink. Med - 60-90 kg pilot weight. Good condition. Less than 10 hrs. Excellent 1st canopy, Guteseigel, intermediate performance - very stable. £750 ono. Call Laurence on 081-6728199 or 0714103347. (2)

FALHAWK NEO. Small, yellow. 30 hrs. use. Excellent condition, with Sky Systems Flightstyle harness. £700 ono. Tel: 081 906 1640. (3)

LOST

The log book and armbands for Beachy Head. Anyone got any ideas? Confidential information to the committee, please.

SITUATION VACANT

The Club needs a Public Relations officer - anyone interested in filling this post, please apply in writing to the Committee, or come along to the next Committee Meeting on Thursday 11th February at Devil's Dyke (upstairs)

FOR SALE: H/G

SOLAR WINGS S4 180 TYPHOON. Recent service. Registered fly two up intermediate glider for heavy pilot. £425 ono. Tel: 081 644 6137. (3)

SMALL RUMOUR (CofA). Remarkable performance + easy handling excellent condition. Admired colours. Stored indoors - wheels. £1,200 ono. Call Paul on 0293 775021 pm. (3)

MAGIC IV 160. V.B. + aero-wheels. Top condition, low airtime. Very bright colours. £650. Also harness, vario and altimeter available. Tel. 081 644 6137. (3)

GENERAL

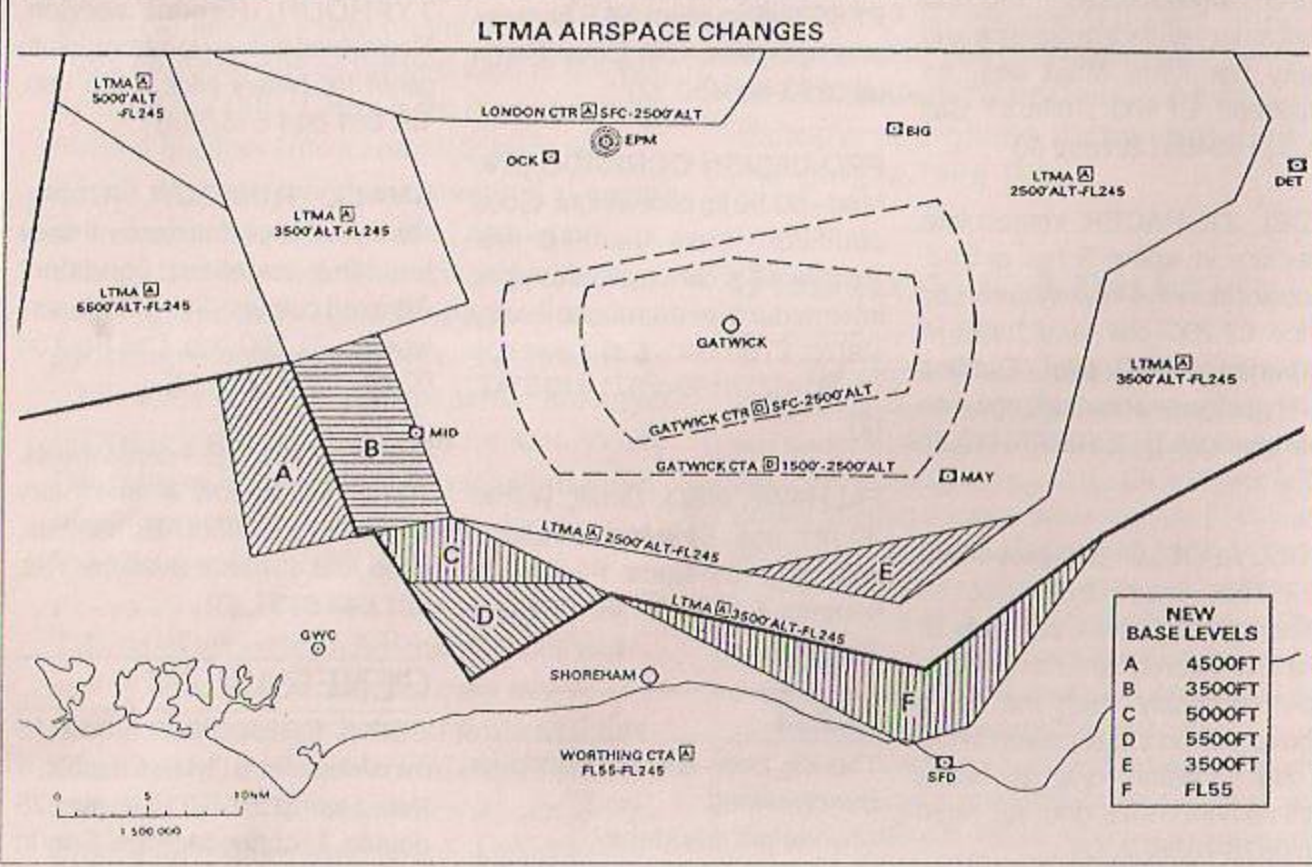
BED & BREAKFAST. about 15 mins' drive from Dyke. 1 double, 1 twin, 1 single. B&B £15 single £25 double. T+coffee facilities. Stay in local pilot's home and OD on paragliding! Good pub within walking distance for cheap evening meals. Tel: 0403 710739. (2)

COMPLETE Quality Hi-Fi System comprising: DUAL CS5000 Record Turntable - PD-4100 CD Player - F-223 Tuner - GR-331 Graphic EQ - A-333 Amplifier - PIONEER CT-443 Cassette Deck - EAGLE Speakers. All as new, still with boxes & instructions. £600.00 the lot. Phone (0273) 604051 - (evenings) (2)

Found at Beachy Head on 3rd January. A waxed cotton jacket (believed to belong to a hang glider pilot as there is a webbing hang loop in the pocket) and a dark blue duffle bag. Contact Greg Leveridge (daytime: 0525-718877 ext 258, evenings: 0923-264686). 13

Airspace Changes...

As promised in last month's Windsock, a map of the new airspace changes which affect our sites. Please note that a more accurate map showing the exact location of our sites will be forthcoming. For more exact details, consult the new airspace map which should be published early this year.



SITE NEWS!

UNTIL JUNE, we have access to a bottom landing at **FIRLE**.

At the bottom of the Quarry, to the west of the road - as close as possible to the track (this minimised carrying time, too). This lasts until **JUNE**, when a £10 fine will apply until after harvest time.

After the harvest is safely gathered in, your Committee are hopefully in a position to negotiate a permanent bottom landing strip.

Black Saturday Revisited

by Irwyn Jehu

Firstly, I must thank PA Rawlinson for his letter to Windsock about the behaviour of pilots on "Black Saturday" (17-10-92), and of course also thank Ian and Johnny for Marshalling. In common with the other 300 members of our Club, I watched the forecast on Friday the 16th which predicted a light north westerly and the possibility of thermal activity. A chance for the last XC of the season?

Anyway, about a hundred or so of us turned up at the Dyke, and Ian collected a fortune in site and belated membership fees. In the event, most of us flew, some even enjoyed themselves and one lucky so and so got away. It was a grand day for meeting old friends and exchanging yarns about the summer's flying, plans for the winter and for next summer (which must be better). It was in fact a day to share with other members of the Club - my only regret is that we didn't have the tickets ready to sell for the Christmas bash.

- AND NOW FOR SOME ADVICE -

On busy days, be prepared to share your pleasure.

Read the site rules - Where to park!!!

How and when to transit the paddock!!! Where to rig and rest your glider!!!

On arrival, check in with the marshall, who will

1. Acquaint you with how the day has developed, let you know of any likely slots for particular classes of pilot or type of wing.
 2. Familiarise you with the location of launch gates, landing areas and preferred flight patterns.
 3. Listen to your particular requests (eg. *I've got a Swift on my roofrack and I don't want to fly with these Kisses and things 'cause they are too slow and too dangerous*).
 4. Take the site fee for your boyfriend.
- Before rigging, walk the site and assess the days true flying potential.

Next, have your photograph taken discussing your conclusions with John Pendry, Richard Carter, Mark Turner, Ali Syrett, Bruce Goldsmith, etc. (*Editor's note - if it's Bruce, make sure you take the day site fee first*). Whatever you do, don't get too serious - remember that this is a day out with your friends, and you only get a day like this once or twice a year!

Should you consider it safe to fly - check your knowledge of air law by answering these simple questions...

1. You are flying with the ridge on your right, with a glider coming towards you at a slightly lower level... As you converge, the lower glider climbs to meet you. What actions must you take?
2. You are safely overtaking a slower glider on the inside with the ridge on your left. Another glider safely ahead turns earlier than you expected and flies at you with the ridge on their right. What actions must you take?
3. The person you are watching as a "wind dummy" stumbles into a thermal. What height must you allow them to gain above launch to permit safe vertical separation in thermic turbulence before you can take off into the same thermal?
4. Air Law obliges you to fly in a predictable fashion.
 - a) define "predictable".
 - b) to whom must it be "predictable".
 - c) How far into the future must your flight pattern be "predictable".

Should you think that this is simply too much hassle, there is another answer to overcrowding! Competing at Bassano, I enjoyed an Air Start with 150 pilots in one thermal. Most of us wheeled around each other with whoops of delight for over an hour while we waited for the gate to open. I had prolapsed disks in my back, and had been up half the night sewing my harness and repacking my reserve after a landing "Anus Horribiles" the day before. It's not TRAFFIC DENSITY that is the problem, but PILOT DENSITY. Such days as Black Saturday should be limited to League Pilots who's work prevents them from flying midweek.

PROPOSAL FOR THE 1993 AGM: A PAID CLUB OFFICER

We are now a large and active Club, and we need to be well organised to meet the challenges to our sites and airspace.

I propose that the best way to do this is to employ a Club Officer whose responsibilities would be to protect our sites, liaise with farmers, collect memberships, etc.

This could be a part time post.

This person would be paid to take care of our interests - he or she would have the time to talk to farmers and other interested parties.

Their wages would be more than covered by the extra memberships, site fees, etc. collected.

Obviously, this person would work with the elected Committee.

Amongst the more obvious tasks, they could also fund raise (Sports Council, etc.), look out for sites to buy or lease, etc.

Members of the SHGC would have someone always on hand for advice.

I would like this to be widely discussed before the AGM - make your views known.

- Tim Cox



PRINTED HERE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP'S PERUSAL ARE THE MINUTES OF THE 1992 A.G.M.

Of the SHGC

These will be ratified by the members at the 1993 AGM

Date of meeting:	28th March 1992
Time:	7.00 p.m.
Venue:	Broadbridge Heath Sports Centre
Committee:	Johnny Carr (Chairman/President) M. Brady (Secretary) M. Woodhams (Schools Liaison) A. Turner (Sites) A. Lucchesi (Home Competitions) N. Gibson (Site Control) A. Caple (Hang Gliding Coach) A. Shaw (BAPC Liaison) C. Bartram (Editor, Windsock/ Membership Secretary) P. Day (Treasurer) O. Elliott-Webb (Social Secretary) T. Cox (Airspace) M. Carnet (Safety/Towing) K. Pickering (Away Competitions) D. Evans (Honorary Member) E. Bilous

Apologies:

- 1 **INTRODUCTION:** J. Carr opened the meeting by circulating a members signing-in book.
- 2 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** J. Carr proposed that the minutes of the previous AGM be approved. Seconded by M. Woodhams. Carried unanimously.

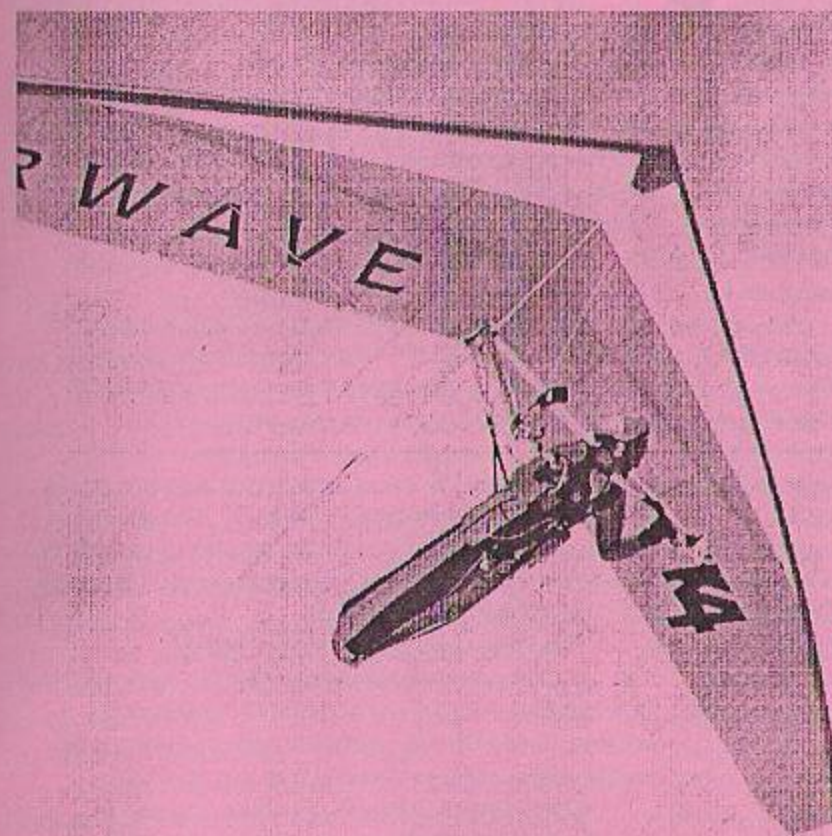
3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

3.1 Introduction

J. Carr expressed his heartfelt sympathy to Andy Shaw and his family and friends following the loss of his brother Mick, also to the family and friends of David Haydock who had been killed in an accident in Morocco.

3.2 Goals for the Year

- a) To Secure A Bottom Landing At Firle
In fact, two landing areas have been obtained. One already in use and one to be made available in the near future.
- b) To Introduce Marshalling At The Dyke
This was to prevent potentially dangerous overcrowding and to allow low airtime pilots clear airspace in which to develop their skills. The Chairman was pleased to announce that the system was in operation and working successfully. He added, however, that the scheme was desperately short of volunteers and circulated a form giving members the opportunity to sign up.
- c) To Improve The Site At Ditchling
A lot of work has been done to clear scrub at the site.



J. Carr thanked K. Pickering for his assistance. Also, a larger bottom landing area has been negotiated for use when the crop has been harvested.

d) To Unite The Club

The Chairman expressed the view that major advances had been made with a balanced committee, and having changed the constitution to reflect the presence of paragliding. He stated that schools liaison is also important and that a good working relationship with the schools is essential to the Club.

3.3 Other Activities

The Chairman reported that he had worked closely on sites with A. Turner who would provide more details in his own report. He did mention, however, that a licensed agreement for High & Over had been achieved with the National Trust, who had acquired the site.

A barbecue had been held at J. Carr's house in September. Diane, his wife, and Tony and Peggy Turner were thanked for all the effort they had put into this event.

The Christmas Bash had also been organised by the Chairman (the Social Secretary was otherwise engaged performing maternal duties!). Although the venue was a little small, the occasion went OK. Sue Brooks was thanked for organising the trophies and Oriole Elliott-Webb the raffle.

3.4 Committee

The Chairman introduced the Committee and thanked them for the hard work put in over the year. A number of officers had resigned during the year; Nigel Ward who had emigrated to Canada, Jo Cattlin who had taken a job in Northern Ireland, Eddie Bilous and Mark Johns who both had other commitments. Dave Williamson was the only committee member to have resigned over a disagreement. J. Carr expressed regret at this and thanked him for his contribution, performing the most onerous job in the Club, namely Windsock Editor.

3.5 Negative Aspects

Although the year could be considered to be a positive one for the Club, the Chairman reported a number of less favourable aspects.

a) Combination Lock At Firle

A number of locks have been purchased by the Club only to have them stolen. The culprit may well be a Club member, since knowledge of the combination would have been necessary to remove the last lock. If any members have any information, would they please notify the Committee.

b) Car Break-In's

Again at Firle, a number of hang gliding Club members had their cars broken in to. There is no specific evidence to suggest that a Club member was responsible for this. Any information would be appreciated. The police are also interested.

c) Horse Riders

A complaint was received from the Mid-Sussex Area Bridleways group about horses being frightened by hang gliding/paragliding activities. This was all the more serious as it came via Brighton Council. Mrs Dabbs who had filed the complaint, attended the following committee meeting and seemed happy with the outcome. Members were reminded that they should maintain an awareness of the presence of horses at all times since they are easily frightened and a serious accident could result from

thoughtless actions.

d) Fulking Parish Council

A complaint had been received from Mr. Harris about paragliders slope landing between the Dyke and Truleigh. J. Carr had contacted Mr. Harris and the problem resolved. Members were thanked for their co-operation and reminded that landings were not permitted between the 2 sites.

e) Weather Machine

This had been quite costly for the Club and was out of action for some time. However, it would be of great benefit if it worked correctly. J. Charlton said he would speak about the matter later in the meeting.

f) Fence At Ditchling

A fence had been placed across the NE launch at Ditchling. Unfortunately, the Club does not have official use of the site and so were not notified (it was included in the Sites Guide because pilots do use the site albeit on a limited basis and there are certain hazards to be avoided). Nevertheless, the Committee will endeavour to get the fence moved.

g) Downs Club

The Committee feel that the formation of another Club in the heart of our area is prejudicial to our interests and not necessary. The Southern Hang Gliding Club has, therefore, opposed the registration of the Downs Club with the BHGA. J. Carr read a letter sent to the Downs Club explaining the Club's stance and offering to guarantee that Plumpton would be preserved for the exclusive use of hang glider pilots. J. Carr emphasised that this offer was still open.

h) Volunteer Marshals

The Chairman said that the marshalling scheme had been very successfully implemented but expressed disappointment at the lack of volunteers. A list was passed round for members to sign. J. Carr emphasised that common sense was required for the job, not significant flying ability or experience.

i) Free Loaders

Pilots are still regularly flying Club sites who are not members and who do not pay day membership. It should not be exclusively down to the Committee to identify free loaders. Point them out to committee members who can get the day membership fee.

3.6 Positive Aspects

The Chairman then summarised successes and achievements during the year.

a) Marshalling

As previously mentioned, the implementation of a marshalling system was a great success. The system worked well on the day of the AGM. Paraglider pilots were thanked for co-operating by clearing the air to give hang glider pilots some airtime to themselves.

As experience is gained, it will be fine tuned. More volunteers are always welcome.

b) Club Unity

This has improved significantly despite minority opposition.

c) Schools Sites

The relationship between the Club and local schools has improved to such an extent that a number of schools sites have been offered for use by Club members. For example, Andy Shaw has very kindly made the site at Rodmell available.

d) Bottom Landings at Firlie

There is now an official bottom landing and there will shortly be a second.

e) Bottom Landing at Ditchling

An additional, flatter field is available when not in crop.

f) High and Over

The site has been protected for use by the Club following its purchase by the National Trust. The Trust also resited a fence at the Club's request.

g) Towing

A successful hang gliding towing course was held in November. More events are planned and successful flying is expected off the winch during 1992.

h) Sites Guide

An up to date and excellently-produced Sites Guide has been issued.

i) Competition Successes/Records

There have been notable successes by Club members. Judy Leden has gained the women's world triangle record and has become women's world hang gliding champion for the second time. Ali Syrett has become the British Paragliding champion.

j) Larry Tudor Lecture

This was very well attended.

It was mentioned, however, that Larry's equipment had been stolen in south Wales. In addition to new Wills Wing harnesses, this included a computer containing all Larry's flight data. Judy Leden has further details.

In conclusion, the Chairman said that whilst he believed in editorial freedom, he hoped to see more flying and less politics in next year's Windsock. This sentiment was roundly applauded by the members. He also reminded the meeting that the Club still required a paragliding coach.

4. OFFICERS' REPORTS

4.1 Club Hang Gliding Coach (A. Caple)

A. Caple said his main objectives were to promote the Club Coaching Scheme and to improve the skill of all members. Windsock was now being sent to schools as an incentive for existing student pilots to join the Club.

Club lectures and exams were being planned.

A. Caple was seeking to arrange a 2-day Club Coaching Course with Bob Harrison if enough people were interested. A minimum of 10 people would be required. A parachute packing evening was arranged for the following weekend.

4.2 Sites Control Officer (N. Gibson)

A number of complaints had been received from paragliding members because Newhaven was pilot level only. However, due to the difficulty of the site and to accidents which had already occurred, it was proposed to leave the existing rules in place. There is an underlying problem arising from the BAPC Coaching Scheme that is

preventing pilots from improving their qualifications. This does not provide a case for lowering the requirements for flying the site, however.

The Southern Hang Gliding Club is now a BAPC Club.

J. Charlton asked whether anything was being done about slope landings at Mount Caburn. J. Carr said that the situation had been resolved.

S. Uzochukwu said that the BAPC coaching scheme was too onerous for volunteers to manage and that the BAPC should be contacted to this effect.

D. Williamson suggested amending the Sites Guide following the erection of the fence at Ditchling. J. Carr said the subject of Ditchling would be discussed at the next committee meeting.

Concern was expressed at the number of lectures required for pilots to gain qualifications. It was stated that a lecture is scheduled for April 25th. However, attendance at these events in the past has been poor. If enough people attend then more lectures will be held.

On the subject of Newhaven, J. Carr restated that it is not a site on which to learn. The subject would be discussed at the next committee meeting. It was suggested that use of the site should be based on flying hours rather than pilot rating.

4.3 Schools Liaison Officer (M. Woodhams)

M. Woodhams circulated copies of his report.

Peter Williams (Hayling) is no longer trading and Peter Bemon (Purple Haze) has just registered.

Relations with the schools are harmonious thanks largely to the efforts of Johnny Carr.

One complaint was that the schools had not been providing photocopies of their training logs to support payment for use of club sites. These are required to enable the amounts received to be checked.

In answer to a question from John Charlton, M. Woodhams said that a year had been allowed for the scheme to be established. Deregistration will now be considered for schools who do not comply. J. Charlton expressed the view that money received from schools seemed low. M. Woodhams pointed out that some has been paid direct to P. Day.

4.4 BAPC Liaison Officer (A. Shaw)

The BAPC Safety and Training Committee are aware of the problems expressed earlier in the meeting and are addressing them. New handbooks are to be issued shortly.

The F1/F2 qualifications are no longer valid. Pilots who have not already done so will need to transfer to the new scheme (at no cost). A. Shaw will organise transfers if requested.

Now the SHGC is a member of the BAPC, it will receive bulletins direct. The Club's BAPC number will be placed in Windsock, enabling members to transfer their BAPC registration from their existing club or school to the SHGC if they wish to do so.

In answer to a question from J. Charlton it was stated that the annual cost to the Club of BAPC membership is £132. The Club had contacted the BAPC expressing its

dissatisfaction with the arrangement. The decision had been made to join nevertheless, since the committee was mandated to do so at the previous AGM.

4.5 Treasurer (P. Day)

P. Day explained that expenditure had been steadily increasing. A statement of the Club's financial situation was circulated.

It was explained that, when previously investigated, all banks/building societies would charge for the Club's account. P. Day was asked to make further enquiries.

£90 had been paid to the Club for crop landings. In response to the point that this seemed rather low bearing in mind £60 had been collected in one day, it was stated that most fines are paid direct to the farmer.

A. Whitmarsh suggested co-ordinating the membership/financial year with the AGM so that the financial statement reflects all income received for the year.

For the benefit of those who do not know him, J. Carr mentioned that Peter was a founder member of the Southern Hang Gliding Club.

4.6 Membership Secretary/Windsock Editor (C. Bartram)

Membership is currently at record levels (432). This is largely attributable to the efforts of people encouraging pilots to join. If required, committee members have membership forms available on the hill.

The computer-based system is running smoothly.

It may be necessary to change the P.O. Box as the Burgess Hill facility is being withdrawn.

An increase in membership fees was under consideration, the amount to be decided.

C. Bartram stated that his aim as editor, was to produce an informative newsletter - presentable, readable and humorous.

J. Charlton asked for the proportion of hang gliding and paragliding renewals to be presented at the next AGM.

B. Milton suggested sending questionnaires to non-renewals around November/December.

N. Russ suggested publishing membership forms in Windsock. C. Bartram said that copies were available in the Dyke Hotel and had been sent to the schools.

M. Carnet questioned whether Windsock should be published monthly. O. Elliott-Webb said longer intervals would not allow sufficient time for the notification of social events. M. Broadbent suggested issuing single sheets for socials, site guide updates and safety bulletins.

A. Whitmarsh suggested appointing a news editor to help C. Bartram.

4.7 Airspace Officer (T. Cox)

T. Cox reported there were to be some VMC changes. Details will be placed in Windsock.

Members were reminded that an airmap is required before going XC. 40 of the previous version had been purchased and sold.

4.8 Sites (A. Turner)

a) Beachy Head - Generally a good year. There was a potential problem on the southerly take-off but the warden was under a misunderstanding.

The flags had been vandalised. These were replaced

by courtesy of Andy Shaw and Harley.

b) Firlie: A permanent bottom landing is available in the easterly bowl. An alternative landing area is available when the crop is not in. This will become permanent in 1993.

c) High & Over: Since taking over the site, the National Trust are providing a better site than before. Scrub clearance will be taking place in due course.

A rail will be required to enable gliders to be carried over the fence between the top landing area and take-off.

d) Dyke: There has been no movement regarding the purchase of the northerly bowl. Farmer Williams is not currently interested in selling, and has rejected the valuation of £35,000. However, the Club has been given first refusal should he be prepared to sell.

The bottom landing rules have changed and will be published. A strip was acquired at an annual cost of £500. The club may get the pimple field back at some later date.

J. Hayler asked if it would be possible to buy land at the bottom. This has been investigated and there is no likelihood of being able to this.

J. Charlton asked if it was known what Farmer Williams would be prepared to accept. A. Turner replied that he had been asked but was not prepared to state a figure. However, it was intimated that the figure might be in the region of £85,000. J. Carr said an offer of £50,000 by the National Trust had already been rejected.

e) Ditchling: The bottom landing has been extended when crops are not in.

4.9 Social Secretary (O. Elliott-Webb)

O. Elliot-Webb apologised for the recent lack of events due to her having had a baby. Forthcoming events were parachute packing (4th April). Volunteers were requested to help with the repacking. An XC lecture was scheduled for the 25th April and a video night was planned for later in the year. Help would be required for the Christmas Party. S. Brooks offered to organise the trophies.

The Chairman emphasised that, while it was the intention of the Club to hold a number of lectures each year, these would only be continued so long as the levels of attendance justifies them.

4.10 Towing Representative (M. Carnet)

A successful hang gliding event was held at the Dyke at which 10 pilots gained tow endorsements. However, there is a shortage of qualified hang gliding winchmen.

If there is demand, Sky Systems will provide the facilities. M. Carnet pointed out that towing is a group activity and everybody needs to contribute to the operation.

The hang gliding members present were canvassed to identify the degree of interest in towing. About 30 indicated they would be interested.

4.11 Safety (M. Carnet); M. Carnet said that members do not need a form to report an accident/incident. He often hears rumours but needs facts for it to be of use.

Overcrowding continues to be a problem. This can be alleviated by hang glider and paraglider pilots understanding each others type of flying. Two mid-air collisions between hang gliders and paragliders had occurred, fortunately without injury. The most significant paragliding safety

problems are due to deflations. Most hang gliding problems occur during landings.

A particular cause for concern was the conditions in which people were flying including under CuNb's.

The marshalling system which had recently come into operation was working well. As well as the obvious safety benefits, the Club is seen to be responsible by others.

D. Williamson asked about the mid-air between Tony Callow and a paraglider pilot. M. Carnet had tried to contact him but without success.

There had been no incidents involving the public or modellers. J. Carr pointed out that pilots had been infringing the modellers' bowl. The site rules should be adhered to irrespective of whether models are flying.

4.12 Away Comps (K. Pickering)

As K. Pickering had been unable to attend, J. Carr said that a message would be published in Windsock.

5. **ELECTION OF NEW COMMITTEE**

At this point, the committee stood down.

J. Carr explained that the entire committee was willing to stand for another year. As the position of Chairman was contested by J. Charlton, he and J. Carr addressed the members before the vote was taken.

John Charlton, who was seconded by Dave Williamson, said that during his period as Chairman (the previous year) he had negotiated Mount Caburn for the Club and had defended hang gliding interests. He had also controlled the schools use of Club sites and claimed to have initiated the idea of introducing marshalling. He expressed his disappointment at the lack of progress regarding the purchase of land at the Dyke and stated that, if elected, he would pursue alternative means of funding. He had negotiated the use of a number of private sites for hang gliding and had contacted landowners on the Kingston ridge and at Box Hill. He was disappointed that no alternative sites suitable for paragliding had been negotiated by the Club. If elected, J. Charlton said he would support the interests of hang glider and paraglider pilots but, in the interests of safety, felt that segregation was necessary.

J. Carr, seconded by A. Lucchesi, said that his year as chairman had been mostly successful. He expressed his belief that hang glider and paraglider pilots shared the same dreams and feelings about flight and have an equal right to fly. At the previous AGM he had felt it necessary to challenge J. Charlton for the position of chairman because Charlton represented a group of hang glider pilots who did not want to fly with paragliders and would defend the interests of hang glider pilots to the detriment of paraglider pilots. J. Carr would represent equally all the members who elected him be they hang glider or paraglider pilots. J. Carr also saw the formation of an alternative hang gliding club by J. Charlton (the Downs Club) as an act of disloyalty towards the Southern Hang Gliding Club. He read out a letter from the Southern Hang Gliding Club to the Downs Club which he felt demonstrated that the SHGC was doing everything in its power to accommodate the wishes of the Downs Club members, thus negating the need for a separate Club. J. Carr also read out an agreement allowing slope

landings at Mount Caburn in designated areas.

In supporting J. Charlton, D. Williamson said that his only interest was in contributing towards the membership of the Club and in flying.

The results of the election were as follows :-

J. Charlton 5 votes/J. Carr 73 votes/ 4 abstentions

J. Carr said that the politics that had been very much in evidence on the past year should now be put aside.

It was stated that there was a need for a Club paragliding coach. This person should ideally not be a member of another Club. I. Jehu was elected (seconded by L. Batten, 4 votes against and 3 abstentions).

None of the other posts were contested.

6. **CAPITAL RESERVE FUND**

T. Cox put the following proposal to the meeting :- "The Southern Hang Gliding Club set aside 20% of all income from Club membership annual subscriptions in order to finance a capital reserve fund to purchase flying sites."

To support this proposal, T. Cox said that the Club needed to think ahead and to make its future more secure. Also, with farmers needing the money and land prices being low, this may present opportunities for the Club. Subscriptions would need to be increased to raise the necessary funds.

M. Woodhams spoke against the motion saying that it was not affordable [it was estimated that initial membership would have to be increased to £50 and renewals to £45].

The motion, seconded by S. Swanton, was accepted (7 votes against).

7. **PARAGLIDING AT THE DYKE**

J. Charlton put the following proposal to the meeting: "All paragliding at Devil's Dyke should cease and the site be designated hang gliding only on the grounds of flight safety."

The motion was defeated (3 votes in favour, 3 abstentions).

8. **HOME COMPETITIONS OFFICER'S REPORT**

(A. Lucchesi): The Alexandra Rose Day Appeal raised £620. It is intended to repeat this competition.

9. **DOWN'S CLUB REGISTRATION with BHGA**

J. Charlton proposed the following motion :- "The Southern Hang Gliding Club should cease blocking the Downs Club's application for registration with the BHGA."

This was seconded by D. Williamson.

J. Charlton said he was prepared to respect the principals of site sovereignty. J. Carr felt that the formation of another Club within the Southern Hang Gliding Club area is, nevertheless, a threat.

The motion was defeated by 57 votes to 19.

10. **WEATHER STATION**

J. Charlton proposed that the Club pay for use of the weather station for another year at the same price. The motion was carried (3 votes against).

11. **VISITOR'S SITE FEES**

M. Broadbent proposed that visitors fees should be put up in line with basic membership fees, i.e. from £2 to £3. This was seconded by Ron Harrington.

Carried unanimously.

THE MEETING CLOSED AT 11:45 P.M.

MINUTES OF THE SHGC COMMITTEE MEETING, 2nd December 1992

Present : J. Carr, M. Carnet, A. Caple, A. Turner, I. de Haan, F. Kennedy, A. Lucchesi, K. Pickering, G. Cook, M. Brady, T. Cox, I. Jehu
Apologies : N. Gibson, M. Woodhams
In Attendance: R. Crowley

1. **Minutes From Previous Meeting**

8.3: Mark Watts and Dave Jones have been seen instructing on as well as flying on Club sites while not being Club members.

2. **Matters Arising**

2.1 Markers at Caburn

The site rules are now on display.

2.2 Acquisition of Flares

K. Pickering is hoping to receive some additional flare guns in the very near future.

2.3 Receipt Books

These were passed to committee members at the meeting.

2.4 Sites Guide

N. Gibson will communicate comments to M. Woodhams outside the meeting.

2.5 Xmas Bash

Unfortunately, not many tickets had been sold.

About 40 people were known to be going. I de Haan said he was proposing to use Windsock to solicit comments from the members as to what social events they would like to have.

2.6 Club Trophies

The best hang gliding newcomer is Salvatore Marano. Most improved hang glider pilot is John O'Neil.

2.7 PR Officer

The vacancy will appear in Windsock.

2.8 Xmas Gifts For Local Schools.

It was decided to shelve the idea for this year.

2.9 Use of Club Sites By The Green Dragons

Serious concern was expressed that no revenue has been received from the Green Dragons. It is known that they have been training at Ditchling and High & Over.

The whole structure of the relationship between the schools and the Club will be reviewed at the next AGM when the situation will be resolved.

2.10 Raffle Prizes for Xmas Bash: A. Caple very generously offered a trip in a private aircraft.

2.11 Bradwell Edge Fighting Fund

M. Carnet will present a cheque from the Club for £100 at the inaugural general meeting of the BHPA.

2.12 Xmas Bash Tickets: These have been produced.

2.13 Windsock for the Dyke: I. de Haan has contacted Trekking in respect of their offer to provide a free windsock.

continued on page 23.....

COACHING

Working on the principle that you don't have to be sick to get better, your Committee has decided to encourage wider use of the Club Coaches. Paraglider pilots have not previously had the support of a coaching scheme, as it was new to the BAPC prior to amalgamation, so this innovation is particularly aimed at them.

The purpose of the Coaching Scheme is to help all pilots to improve by sharing knowledge and offering advice.

To do this, each member is invited to meet the Club Coaches at the Dyke hotel on any evening of the monthly Committee Meeting. This is usually the first Wednesday in the month, although February's meeting will be on the 11th (Thursday).

Please complete the form below (a photocopy will do if you don't want to cut up your super soaraway windsock) - you can give it to the Coach, with whom you will be able to discuss arrangements for yourself personally or as a member of a group.

SHGC COACHING REGISTRATION

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ BHPA Qualification: _____

Present Glider: _____ Glider Colour: _____

SHGC MEMBER No: _____

Coaching Interest (please tick):

General Flying on Club sites: _____ Studying for Pilot exam: _____

Thermalling and XC flight: _____ Advanced Pilot exam: _____

S.I.V. (instability exercises): _____ Competitions (any level): _____



SITE NEWS - URGENT SITE NEWS - URGENT BEACHY HEAD CLIFFS

All members please note: The Cliffs at Beachy Head (not the bowl - see your site guide, page BH03) ARE EFFECTIVELY CLOSED FROM JANUARY 1st until June/July. This is necessary due to the request/order of The Warden and the local authorities. We will notify you when the cliffs re-open.

The reason is the nesting of Peregrine Falcons along the cliffs.

Although the breeding season of the birds actually starts a little later than January, we must abide by this decision. Note - this only applies to flying THE CLIFFS - we can still fly THE BOWL, as long as the flags are out and rules obeyed, etc.

Minutes continued from page 21...

3. Schools Training At Firle

J. Carr had asked Russ Crowley along to the meeting to provide clarification of his arrangements with the farmer for use of Firle for training. Russ explained that he no longer had an arrangement with the farmer for bottom landings and that use of the site was totally under the auspices of the Club. He uses Club sites for the final stages of training.

J. Carr pointed out that it is the Club's policy to work with schools so long as they don't work against the Club.

A. Turner said he had hoped to have an additional field beneath the quarry set aside for bottom landings.

F. Kennedy will talk to Mr. Will Hole to negotiate for the consequent loss of crop.

A. Turner said that Firle Estates only permit 2 schools to use the site. Other schools have been seen using it for training. It was agreed that this is unfair to those schools who do abide by the rules.

In order to ensure that there is no doubt, M. Woodhams will write to the schools reiterating which sites they may and may not use, as follows:-

Devil's Dyke	OK for all registered schools
High & Over	OK for all registered schools
Mount Caburn	OK for all registered schools
Ditchling	OK for all registered schools
Firle	Hang gliding tuition by Russ Crowley and Tim Cox only
Newhaven	No training
Beachy Head	No training
Steyning	Eddie Bilous exclusive

4. Brighton Council Meeting

In spite of the apparently satisfactory outcome of the meeting with the Mid-Sussex Council, there is to be a separate meeting with Brighton Council as the result of their being approached by a local horse riding lobby. It will take place at 10.30 9th December in Hove Town Hall. Paul Milmore has offered to attend.

A. Turner and M. Carnet will represent the Club at the meeting.

5. Officers' Reports

5.1 Membership Secretary (G. Cook)

An up to date membership list was distributed. There are currently 345 members.

5.2 Away Comps. (K. Pickering)

The largest air festival ever staged in the south of England is due to take place in the Eastbourne area between the 5th and 9th August 1993. Around 150,000 visitors are expected. There will be opportunities for hang gliding and paragliding demonstrations, possibly using some kind of towing - winch, tow boat or aerotowing.

The BHPA will be involved. It was agreed that the SHGC would definitely like to become involved.

5.3 Airspace (T. Cox)

A map depicting the revised airspace will be published in Windsock before the next XC season. T. Cox and K. Pickering will liaise.

Details of the CAA facility for automatically issuing new versions of air maps will be published in Windsock.

5.4 Home Comps (A. Lucchesi)

In spite of a number of attempts to complete it, the 1992 competition with the TVHGC has had to be carried over to the following year because of poor weather.

5.5 Windsock (I. de Haan)

I de Haan will use Windsock to organise and report on social events. The publication deadline for committee business will be one week after the monthly meeting.

The Secretary will send the corrected minutes from the previous meeting to I. de Haan on diskette for publication in the next issue of Windsock.

5.6 A. Turner (Sites)

a) High & Over

In accordance with the current agreement, the National Trust will want a log of flying days.

Since the Club may be paying for days on which the site is used by the Green Dragons, M. Woodhams will ask the school for a copy of its training log for the year.

b) Beachy Head

A bag has been supplied at Beachy Head for holding the various items of equipment.

The subject of flags and procedures will be an agenda item at the next meeting.

Due to nesting birds, flying the cliffs must cease from 1st January. Flying in the bowl may continue. A. Turner was authorised to purchase Christmas gifts for the landowners/farmers as a token of thanks.

5.7 Hang Gliding Coach (A. Caple)

A successful coaching course was held the previous weekend. More Thames Valley than Southern members were present.

A. Caple suggested organising a safety evening.

Since attendance at/interest in lectures tends to be poor, A. Caple offered to give private tuition to pilots who are interested.

M. Carnet suggested organising Club nights, each concentrating on a specific topic with speakers etc.

IF THE ACCOMODATION IS AVAILABLE, THE 1993 AGM WILL BE HELD ON THE 13TH MARCH.

5.8 Towing (M. Carnet)

The U.K. tug is almost certified with the C.A.A.

The British Towing Open will be held on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd May.

5.9 Secretary (M.Brady)

The first draft of the minutes of the 1992 AGM were distributed to the committee who should return their comment at the next monthly meeting, and the minutes will be published in January Windsock.

5.10 Chairman (J. Carr)

An international local government conference is to be held locally in March 1993. Paul Milmore has asked the SHGC to become involved in a demonstration of outdoor activities. It will involve the press and could be good publicity for the Club.

6. Date Of Next Meeting

Wednesday 6th January, Devil's Dyke Hotel

Glenda Slag's Pilot profiles:

No. 1 - JOHNNY CARR

Number one in this fantastic new humorous series takes all the new members around who's who in the Southern Club or on the Committee and introduces you to them. Tells you all their little secrets and lets you know what they're really like!

So its obvious to start with the First ever member of the Southern Club, one Johnny Carr. Became famous in the mid seventies when there were site difficulties by laying out his wallet in a field and soaring it.

Became world famous in 1979 by rounding a pylon in the World Championship the wrong way on the last day and giving the World crown to one Rich Pfeiffer. Tells everyone he is the sleeping partner in Sky Systems. Gets cross when people point out they wouldn't like to sleep with Michel Carnet. He's also the one in nearly every seventies film about hang gliding film wearing the ridiculous flares. Often seen on the hill trying to extract performance from an UP TRX. Pink pigs at 3,000ft are more likely. Remembers Hang Gliding in the pre John Pendry era. Holds the British out and return record. Has had his photo in 28 of the last 36 month's worth of Windsock. Can find a rock on a slope with his eyes shut. Spent most of the eighties writing articles to Wings entitled "Michel Carnet the unsung hero."

Glenda Slag's Pilot Profiles:

No. 2 - MONSIEUR LE CARNET

Michel Carnet runs (if you can call it that) Sky Systems. Flies and sells paragliders but used to, long ago before the dawn of time, fly hang gliders.

Spent most of the seventies at Steyning Bowl scrounging other peoples gliders. Erroneously thinks he became famous when he won the British Hang Gliding Championships twice (oh yes it's true). Actually became famous in the Ben Ashman strip "The Yellow Baron" as Michel the French Onion Seller. Lands in the Paddock and excuses his behaviour by saying "This canopy, she 'as the glide of a 'ang glider." Is rumoured to have bought a round of drinks at the Christmas Party in 1992 but no photographic evidence exists. Has a large cabinet full of trophies which visiting low airtimers think are for hang and para comps but most of which are the Southern Club MCP(Male Chauvinist Pig) of the Year Awards. Brought paragliding to the South Downs. Once held (with Robbie Whittall) the British Parascending?? record. But it was 1988, and the previous record was a top to bottom off Lords Seat. Once wrote a controversial article about the Southern Club in Skywings. Has been on the Southern Club committee for ages. Will one day fly a hang glider again.

Glenda Slag's Pilot Profiles:

No. 3 - TONY "WILD BOY" LUCHESSI

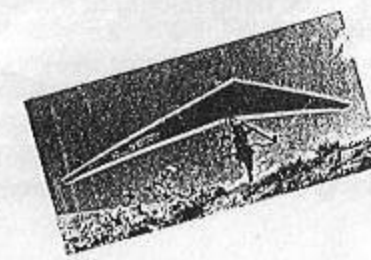
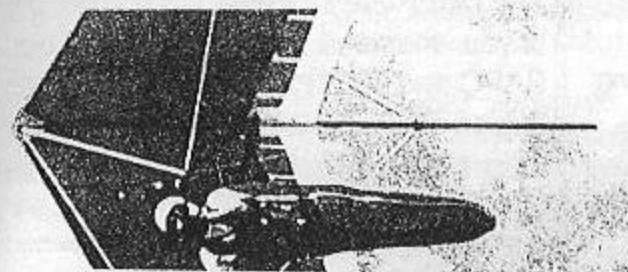
Tony Luchessi needs no introduction. If you don't know him you are not a flying member of the SHGC. Sells Santanas of the amazing glide angle fame. Runs local comps. Spends most his time in the bottom landing field looking after his purple -MYLAR MEANIE- K2. Intends to fly the League on an APCO SANTANA FRC. (Cue applause!) Has been banned from every pub, camp site and Little Chef in Wales. Gave up paragliding after flying a Paratech P3. Leader of the so called WILD BOYS.

Glenda Slag's Pilot Profiles:

No. 4 - STEVE COOK

Christened "Nappy Rash" by Mandy Keepax (she who must be obeyed). Wants to be a WILD BOY when he grows up. Dashing conversation and witty repartee are Steve's speciality. Flies a Red Apco Santana and is TonyWild Boy's secret weapon in the Santana sales push in England. Has joined the elite Dyke to Deal XC brigade. Always goes XC when Tony goes down (90% of the time). Only joined the SHGC recently after he realised that his XC's wouldn't win him any prizes if he didn't. Once cut his nose off using nose wires on a small Rumour. In the League this year on an APCO SANTANA Cue applause! hmmm.

Next month.... Steve OzeeSuitookwu and Ian de Haan bend over and spread 'em for Glenda



*Interview with British Paragliding Champion Richard Carter

by Gary Cook

GC: When and where did you actually learn to paraglide?

RC: In September 1987. I was studying at Sheffield Polytechnic at the time, and went for a two day weekend course with Peak Paragliding. Geoff Birtles and Gerald Williams were teaching then, and Ron Fawcett was a trainee instructor! I couldn't afford a glider at the time, but I was hooked already. I didn't do anything else for about a year. In the Alps the following summer, I got my first glider - a half knackered Brizair 10. I came back to England and repaired it myself on a borrowed sewing machine! Then I went out flying in Derbyshire... Once I was blown over the back of Lord's Seat - a big spine back ridge. I went round the rotor three times like a ping pong ball in a tombola before I hit the ground. In retrospect, I got away with murder several times - and I also became notorious in Derbyshire! I kept bumping into Geoff in the Peaks. One day he asked me if I had a licence - I said no, so he signed me up for my F1 and later on for my F2. Then I was away again to Chamonix for the winter, where I flew mostly from Plan Praz and also the Aguilles de Midi, with one solo attempt from the summit of Mont Blanc. I couldn't make it off the top, and had to walk down a couple of thousand feet. By March that year I had seen locals thermalling, and I got really inspired and ambitious for a bit more than my usual top to bottom flights.

When I got back to the UK after that winter, the selection camp for the British team was being held at Merthyr. I went along hoping to meet some of the best UK pilots and maybe pick their brains. I didn't really think I could get into a team or anything, I just wanted to meet some good fliers. It rained the whole weekend, all we did was talk... A year later, also at Merthyr, the British Nationals was held - I went along again - with a borrowed ITV Aries - to see what was happening. I was really envious of Andy Napolitan, Michel Carnet, Nigel Page, Squeaky Higham and Ali Syrett. They all knew how to thermal and I didn't! That was the day that really inspired me to find out everything I could about soaring. I got hold of all the hang gliding and sailplaning books that I could - I was determined to get up there with the rest of them.

That winter, back in the Alps, I put into practice most of the theory that I had learned, and it all seemed to come together - I was suddenly able to fly XC and soar properly...

GC: At what stage did you think that you were capable and ready to try and make the big time?

RC: In 1990, paragliders were allowed to compete at the Bassano competition for the first time. I made a private entry, and went along - 4 days later I finished 4th. Robbie Whittall won it that year, but I knew now that I could do it too... After that I went on to Fiesch, where there were even more big names, and I came in 14th. That was probably a more realistic result, although the tasks were humungous by any standard I had previously flown to.

GC: You've broken the British UK Local record 5 times now. What's your secret?

RC: After Fiesch I returned to the UK and broke it for the first time with a 47km flight. That day I deliberately tried a different tactic and it paid off. At cloudbase the clouds were incredibly thin - maybe only 100ft deep. I stayed with it and stayed with it, and carried on circling even in 1-downs. Eventually I was back down to 500ft AGL, when it picked back up again into an average 5-up, and I was back at base. Until then I had always glided off as soon as I got to cloudbase - and then gone down. Maybe I'd picked that up from reading gliding books and not appreciated the different search capabilities. It was a big change for me to waffle around and let the wind do the work.

GC: Apart from the obvious like winning championships and getting records - what kind of aims and ambitions have you got in paragliding?

RC: I'd like to fly in New Mexico - the only problem is that the season is more or less the same as the European season - it's a problem to make that choice now that I compete. I'd like to go to Brazil, too - Governadore Valladares sounds good - especially when it's being pronounced by Jacques Valente's Brazilian girlfriend! Hopefully there should be a competition there soon, but I don't think it actually counts towards anything - it's not on the World Cup circuit yet. They have put a bid in for '94, though...

What I'd really like to do is to secure a sponsorship deal of some kind and just fly for a living.

GC: What has been your best moment while you have been flying?

RC: There are lots, really. The first time I got above take off in the Alps. The first time I went over 5km cross-country from Hope Brink is one I'll always remember.

GC: And the worst?

RC: Definitely in Verbier in 1990 - it was the Lucky Strike competition. I had my only serious accident there - I span in and hit a small cliff. I woke up in Sion hospital and it became apparent that I wasn't going to fly for some time. That was probably my worst moment.

GC: You got into the British hang gliding league this year with just your paragliding flights - would you ever pursue hang gliding to the detriment of paragliding?

RC: At present, no. I'm not that well known in the hang gliding scene. I doubt if anyone would really want to sponsor me to fly in the hang gliding league. I'm really looking at this year being a learning experience for me in hang gliding. I would like to do just what I did in

The BHPA are interested to find out if any of you who used to be members of both the BAPC and the BHGA are still receiving two copies of Skywings. If you are, please let them know at the BHPA office, and save the association a bit of money!

paragliding - to learn well from the more experienced league pilots.

GC: Are you going to fly the HG league on a paraglider?

RC: I've seriously thought about it! On some light wind days I could definitely be at a small advantage on my Katana. I don't really know - we'll see.

GC: What do you think about the way paragliding has changed since you started?

RC: It's ten times better all round - as regards training, we're turning out pilots now instead of just giving people a thrill ride going top to bottom. Training nowadays is really good compared to the old days - the standard of instruction is a lot better - instructors are pilots themselves these days, and can thermal instead of just sled riding. As far as safety goes, the certification of gliders can only be a positive move. Speaking for high-performance gliders, in the last couple of years the handling qualities have definitely improved, and we've improved the overall speed, glide and sink. Advances seem to be slow at the moment, but I wouldn't be surprised if there are major things to come... single surfaces, inflatables, who knows?

It's now far more acceptable for good pilots to fly a so-called "intermediate" wing. There's no longer an attitude that difficult handling must equal high performance - and that's got to be a good thing.

GC: What do you look for in a good paraglider? Why do you fly the UP Katana?

RC: I look for what's performing well on the International Circuit. I listen to all the gossip about all the different models. I try and sort out the hype from the facts, and then get a test flight on the ones that interest me. Now I'll be looking specifically at the handling qualities. Some high-performance gliders have atrocious handling characteristics, and there's no way I'd like to get thrashed on some of them! In spring '92, after a winter of trials, I ended up flying a UP Katana in Japan. I was loaned the Katana to use in the coming season, and I've since been lucky enough to get a sponsorship deal as well. I've stuck with the Katana ever since - I'm convinced that it's the best canopy going at the moment, and I will be flying it again in the '93 season.

GC: Tell us about the record flight you just did in South Africa:

RC: The morning of the big flight we were at Vryburg. The weather looked promising, with cumulus peppering the sky by 11am. The surface wind was maybe 30km/h from the north west. I operated the winch for Judy (Leden) - on her hang glider - she got away at about 1pm, and I quickly got ready.

My first tow resulted in an outlanding about 1km from the airfield, after following zero sink. Just after 2pm I was back on the tow, releasing straight into an average 600fpm climb. This topped out about 30km from Vryburg. A dust devil showed me where I ought to be. Back to cloudbase at 13,000ft AGL, giving me a maximum altitude of 17,340 ft ASL. It was the only time I would get this high. I was using oxygen whenever I was above 13,000ft - before I went out to SA, I had added an extra zip to the seat pocket of my new Sky Systems SAS2 harness to allow me to take an oxygen bottle aloft. I raced down the sunny (northern) side of a small Cu-Nim, always making sure that there was space to escape to the north if it was necessary as I could hear thunder crashing and see lightning flashing in the cloud. Behind me was a gust front, revealing itself as it lifted the soil from the fields. I eventually found a small, scrappy area of lift. There was now no sunshine around, as the large CuNims to the west and south-west were blotting out all the direct light. I was surprised to find that I was drifting back to the west as I climbed. The lift dissipated after I had gained about 1,000ft, and I began to glide back east. I finally landed in the field that I had picked the thermal off 15 minutes earlier!

The total distance was 217.3km, covered in 4 hours 14 minutes - an average ground speed of 51km/h (an average ground speed in the UK is about 25km/h).

I have submitted this flight for an official British National Distance Record (this is the FAI record for the longest distance flown by a British National anywhere). I have also submitted it to the FAI to claim Diamond Distance and Height Gain, which have only been awarded once before to a paraglider pilot - Urs Haari.

GC: So what do you really think of winching and flatland flying?

RC: Winching allows you to fly in much stronger winds than would be safe to use on the hill. For example on a flatland area a 15mph wind would be nearer 30mph on top of a hill. In these circumstances, it may be safe to launch from the flatland based winch, but not safe on the hill. For distance flying, this means that once you're aloft, you've got a higher average ground speed, and a big distance becomes a matter of duration. If you stay up for 6 hours, you've gone a long way!

One thing that really impressed me in South Africa was that the average success rate for pilots to get away from the tow was about one in three - at times we had 5 or 6 gliders climbing away from the airfield at once. The average turn-round on tows was under ten minutes, depending on how the line fell, and if the next pilot was ready and waiting - as always with winching that's the most frustrating thing when the winch is ready and the next pilot isn't.

Another thing about winching which may not be so obvious is that you have no hill or lee-side effects to worry about, and you're usually not in crowded airspace. This could mean that pilots are able to get to grips with thermals earlier in their flying career, without worrying about other people or hills getting in the way.

GC: Give us a few words of wisdom:

RC: As soon as you think you're getting good, you're getting close to an accident. I've seen a lot of pilots start to get confident and lose their fear... and within a few months they end up having a serious accident. Time and time again I've seen this happen - even to myself! So - take your time, be careful and make sure it's not you next!

And remember - size is important after all.