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WINDSOCK

March 1999

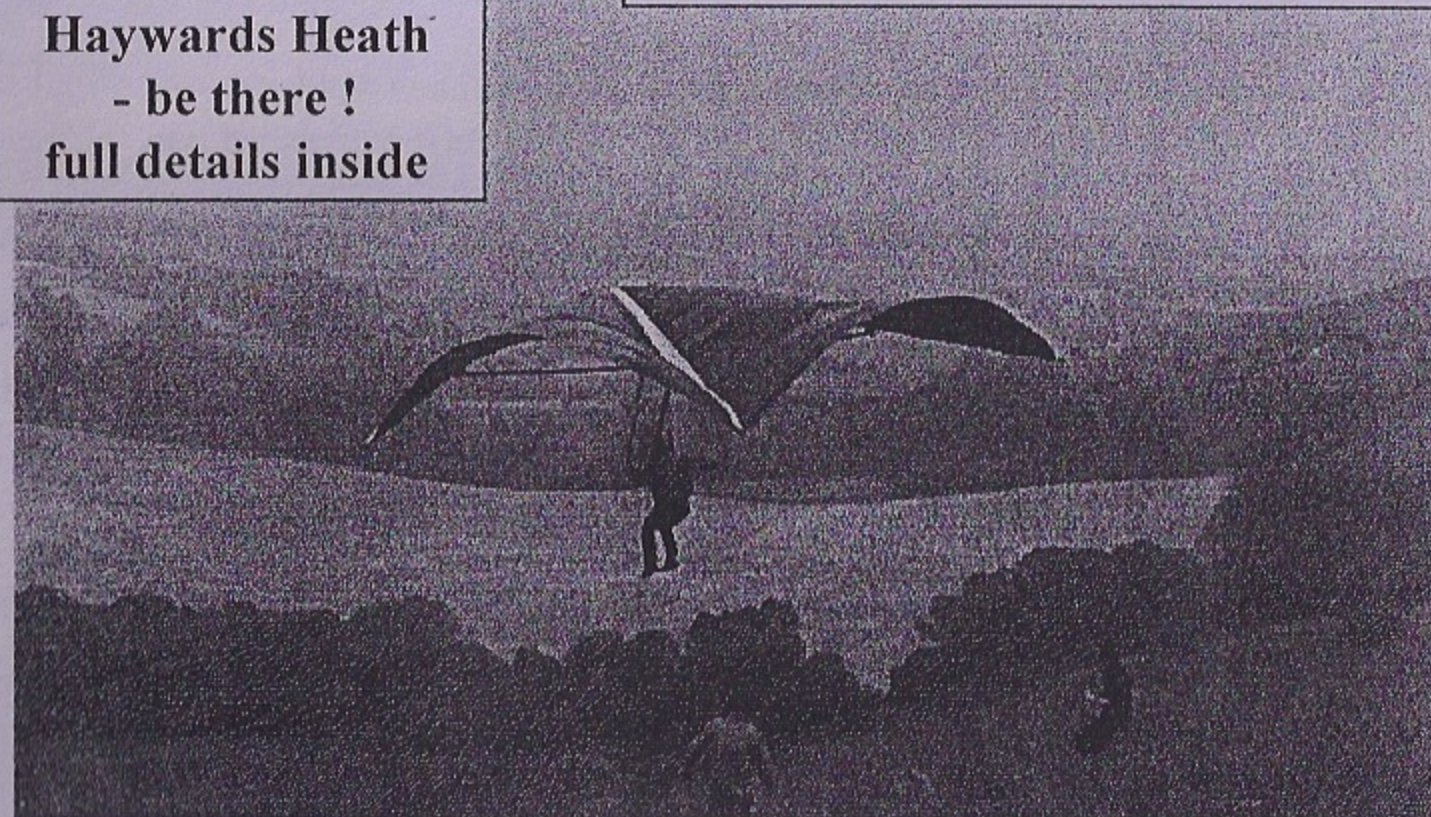
The Journal of the Southern Hang Gliding Club

1999 AGM

20 March
Haywards Heath
- be there !
full details inside

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Ditchling Beacon, 1972

first footlaunched flight in South-East England

but who is it?

INSIDE THIS BUMPER ISSUE:

AGM NEWS : COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

FLYING THE SEA BREEZE FRONT

ADVENTURES OF AN APPRENTICE SKYGOD

Chairman's Letter

Well at the end of this month the clocks go forward onto "British Summertime". Whoever decided that it should start in March, must have been a raving nutter, or an estate agent hoping to boost sales. (Apologies to those members who are nutters or those of you who are indeed estate agents, mind you if I was one of the latter I would not let it be known). Hopefully the start of B.S.T will signal the coming of the long awaited warm weather, glorious sunshine, those big lazy thermals, the epic cross country flights, the friendly banter between H.G's & P.G's, the hillside companionship etc etc...

What on earth is he going on about, I hear you all mutter. He's obviously lost it completely or has not got much to say this month. The latter I fear is true, however I thought it was better to start my letter this way than just to write "Ain't got much to say this month, see you all at the AGM".

Which does indeed bring me to the AGM this month. Do not forget that before the AGM we are having a 'meet the BHPA exec' session starting at 4 p.m. until 6 p.m.. This could be your chance to get your photo in "Skywings". From 6 p.m. until 7 p.m. there will be a buffet paid for by the club. At 7 p.m. the AGM will start. See you there.

- Paul.

P.S. If there is anyone out there with the flair to organise social events etc please come forward at the AGM we desperately need you.

WELCOME TO THE APRIL WINDSOCK

We hope you enjoy this issue of Windsock. We have had to carry a lot of material over to next time - including three of the promised features! We have simply been overwhelmed by material, so thanks to everybody who has contributed. Thanks also to everyone who has made encouraging comments - either in writing or in person - it's appreciated. Tremendous thanks also to Gary Cook for desktop publishing and for the website design. Next time we will print membership listings, coach photographs and the first of a series of technical tips from Tim King.

CONTRIBUTIONS

- 1) E-mail or Floppy Disk. Only small graphics/photos can be accepted - as either .gif or .jpg attachments. For articles, Microsoft Word is fine, but we accept .txt, .rtf, works, etc.
- 2) Typewritten in large clear characters for scanning in *if you must*.
- 3) Smaller items such as notices and ads may be handwritten.

Contributions may be edited unless the author declares "all or nothing at all".

POST to SHGC, PO BOX 1359, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 4AS

E-MAIL to windsock@shgc.demon.co.uk

WINDSOCK DEADLINE - First of the month - *first come first served!*

Items may be published on the Website as soon as they are processed.

SHGC WHO'S WHO

President	Johnny Carr	01444 471137	johnnycarr@tillershaw.prestel.co.uk
Chairman	Paul Coidan	01953 688266	paul.coidan@tesco.net
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Sites Liaison	Finn Kennedy	01273 858221	finn.kennedy@which.net
	Sue Brooks	01273 857163	
Sites Control	Will Greenwood		will.greenwood@btinternet.com
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Chief PG Coach	Trevor McLoughlin	07771 664279	tjmcl@cix.co.uk
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Competitions PG			
Competitions HG	Ozzi Haines	01273 418293	

COACHES PG

Steve Brewer	01403 710739
Adam Goodsell	01273 730782
Jerry Hansen	01273 461783
Jim Hardiman	0181 311 0683
John Lancaster	01273813482
Dave Lewis	01273 589787
Michael Lockerbie	0181 690 3638
Jon Munro	01793852483
Barry Philpott	01444 482225
Simon Oliphant	0171 476 5490
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Mandy Sharpe	01273 589787
Stewart Swanton	01273 732219

COACHES HG

Richard Arthur	0181 744 3159
Martin Brady	01444 233346
Will Greenwood	01273 477388
Rowan Gilpin	01444 242239
Ozzi Haines	01273 415293
Chris Jones	0181 579 2830
Kelvin Kincaid	01483 428653
Dave Matthews	01273 857163
Ron Richardson	01689 856723
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BN1 4QX

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www.shgc.demon.co.uk

WINDSOCK EDITOR:

Stewart Owen
01798 831402

windsock@shgc.demon.co.uk

'99 Committee Elections

All committee posts are up for grabs at the AGM. Below is a list of committee positions, with the name of current holder, and if s/he is willing to carry on for another year. Should any of you feel that you would like to get involved in the running of the club and would like to be voted onto the committee then get yourself proposed and seconded either in writing or on the night of the AGM; job descriptions for some posts appear elsewhere in this issue...

We desperately need a "Social Secretary" to organise social events. We have not had one for the past year.

Committee Position	Current Holder	Willing To Stand Again	Notes
Chairman	Paul Coidan	Yes	
Secretary	Brian Brunswick	Yes	
Treasurer	Peter Day	Yes	
Membership Secretary	Dave Mathews	Yes	see note 1
Safety Officer	Dave Massie	Yes	
Sites Liason Officer	Sue Brooks	Yes	see note 2
Sites Liason Officer	Finn Kennedy	No	
Schools Liason Officer	Adam Goodsell	No	
Sites Control Officer	Will Greenwood	Yes	
Chief Hang Gliding Coach	John O'Neill	No	
Chief Paragliding Coach	Trevor McLoughlin	Yes	see note 3
Airspace Officer	Michel Carnet	Yes	
Competitions Officer	Ozzi Haines	Yes	see note 4
Hang Gliding Competitions Officer	Mike Millwood	No	
Paragliding Windsock Editor	Stewart Owen	Yes	
Social Secretary	Vacant		

NOTE 1: If re-elected to this position, it will be Dave's final year.

NOTE 2: If re-elected to this position, it will be Sue's last year.

NOTE 3: Also willing to do Chief Hang Gliding Coach as he is bi-wingual

NOTE 4: Also willing to do Chief Hang Gliding Coach

Nominations with proposer and seconder either in writing to the clubs PO box or via e-mail to the Club President, Johnny Carr whose e-mail address is johnnycarr@tillershaw.prestel.co.uk, or Club Chairman, Paul Coidan whose e-mail address is paul.coidan@tesco.net

Alternatively, get yourself proposed and seconded on the night of the AGM.

1999 AGM / Meet The BHPA Exec

20th March 1999

Venue: Claire Hall
Perrymount Road
Haywards Heath,
West Sussex.

Timetable: 4.00pm - 6.00pm - Meet the BHPA Exec
6.00 pm - 7.00 pm - Club Sponsored buffet
7.00pm - 10.30 pm - The AGM

If you have any proposals for the AGM, please pass them onto a committee member or post them to the club address, which is
The Southern Hang Gliding Club, PO Box 1359, Brighton, East Sussex.
BN2 4AS

Note ! All proposals must be seconded.

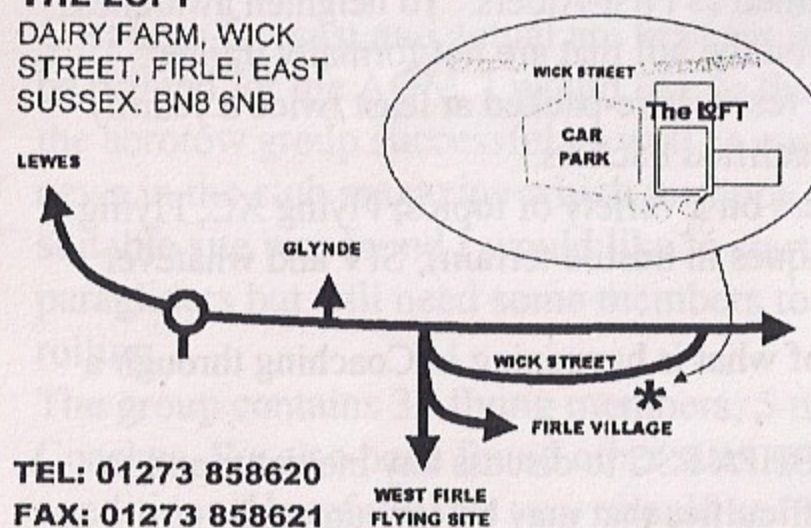
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Chairman's Job Description

by Paul Coidan

The job of Club Chairman is not exactly an odious task and at times can be somewhat enjoyable. The main task is to chair the monthly committee meetings in an effort to try and be the steering force behind a load of drunken bums, (with the exception of Sue), who are making policy decisions in respect to the running of the club on the members' behalf. The position also means that you are the front man / initial contact for the club when dealing with the BHPA, the press, the National Trust and anyone else who wants to contact or complain to the club.

In addition, the current chairman is also the person listed in "Skywings" as the club contact; although this is not an obligatory part of the job, the current Chairman feels that the two go hand in hand. It does mean however that you receive a number of enquiries with respect to new pilots / visiting pilots wanting to join the club or fly its sites.

Chief Coach Objective

by Trevor McLoughlin

This is my intended objective for this year if I retain my position as PG CC.

1. Continue Pilot lectures as and when required. Hopefully, two series per year.
2. Establish a semi-formal coaching structure in order to:
 - a) Encourage new Club Pilots to go to the hill with a Coach so that they will feel less insecure.
 - b) Have a quarterly meeting for Coaches, to discuss problems and any new ideas.
 - c) Make Coaches easily recognisable and more approachable on the hill.
 - d) Encourage more people to join the coaching team and once qualified, progress on to becoming Senior Coaches.
3. To get as many pilots as possible trained as First-Aiders. To heighten awareness of first-aid procedures in those people on the hill that are not formally trained.
4. To encourage all pilots to have their reserves re-packed at least twice a year by having regular re-pack sessions with qualified Packers.
5. To organise lectures by guest speakers on a variety of topics; Flying XC, Flying Abroad, Meteorology, Survival (techniques in hostile terrain), SIV and whatever else anyone requests.
6. To keep the membership informed of what is happening in Coaching through a regular column in Windsock.
7. To keep in regular contact with the BHPA FSC to discuss any incidents and to establish new ideas and discuss any difficulties that may be encountered.
8. To encourage, inspire & educate pilots of all levels in as many ways as possible.

Sites Officer's Report

Name: Will Greenwood; ratings: AP, SAC (HG) Tug; Yrs. Flying : 4
As your club rep I have taken over a well organised position with most of the sites unchanged for many years. However this position will change with the National Trust's Site Agreement which will need careful negotiations, which I have already taken part in. The club should also look into possible purchases of land if the matter should arise.

This year I have seen to the matter of line reflectors put on the cables below Mt. Caburn to make them more visible to pilots, landing in the bottom field. Also I have found a new bottom landing site for Firle, since the old area was taken away by a change in agricultural policy. Answering phone calls and questions from non members who need information to fly our sites.

The job of sites officer is to deal with any matter relating to club sites and to liaise with the local land owners throughout the year, not just when things go wrong, they prefer to deal with someone they know rather than a name and number. It is also my job to listen to any comments from club members and deal with their enquiries via the committee, also mean having to deal with the press, television or any another media service.

Aerotow Report

Having started the group with Ron Richardson I can report that the group has started well with 125 tows to date, having started in May and Approved by the BHPA in June when we started towing. The group has the facility to train pilots in aerotowing and tugging this was done by its members at their cost. The tug is run by the members each paying an annual fee and a small charge for each tow so it is self funding and regulated by the group's founder members.

Cost both forecast and actual are kept for inspection by the group, copies will be printed for the AGM. I would like to thank all those who have helped make the aerotow group successful as well as enjoyable. We also regularly publish news in the club magazine which we hope adds to the club "scene". If a suitable site was found I would like to start a winching group for the paragliders but will need some members to come forward to help start the ball rolling.

The group contains 35 flying members, 5 tug pilots and 2 Senior aerotow Coaches. We also have found other sites to fly from depending on weather conditions. Hopefully this year should see the full potential of aerotowing and help the club win the XC League again.

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Airspace monthly quiz: Win a free SHGC membership!

You launch on an XC flight from N50°52.4' W0°20.6' on a day with 1013.2 mb atmospheric pressure:

- 1/ What is the launch site?
- 2/ Up to which altitude may you fly around the launch site?

You fly to turnpoint #1 at N50°57.7' W0°52':

- 3/ Where is it?
- 4/ Are you allowed to land there?
- 5/ What type of aircraft are you likely to see there?

Assuming you get there in a straight line from launch:

- 6/ What is the maximum altitude allowed somewhere along that leg?
- 7/ What is the lowest altitude on that leg at which you may have to leave good lift in order to remain clear of controlled airspace?

You then fly to turnpoint #2 at N51°16.6' E0°11':

- 8/ Where is it?
- 9/ Are you allowed to land there?

Your final leg takes you to N50°51.6' E0°3.1':

- 10/ Are you allowed to land there?
- 11/ What is the lowest altitude on that leg at which you have to leave good lift in order to remain clear of controlled airspace?
- 12/ What is the maximum altitude allowed somewhere along that leg?
- 13/ What is the shortest distance flown around this course without entering controlled airspace (to nearest km)?

Answers on a postcard to Sky Systems or by email: michel@skysystems.co.uk

The first correct entry pulled out of the bag at the AGM by the Chairman will win a free 1-year SHGC membership, but only if the winner is present.

Answers to last month's quiz:

Question: You are low, thermalling on an XC flight and the wind is pushing you towards a MATZ. What should you do?

Answer: A MATZ is a Military Air Traffic Zone and indicates that there may be intense traffic which one may choose to stay clear of, especially on week days. The dimensions of a MATZ are 5nm radius and 3,000' height. You are allowed to fly within a MATZ but you must stay clear of the airfield's ATZ which has a 2,000' height and up to 2.5nm radius.

Question: You have just thermalled over the mountain top and are now gliding in the next valley which has a much colder airmass. Do you expect your QNH-set altimeter to over-read or to under-read?

Answer: You are now flying in a much denser airmass and the pressure level is now lower. Your QNH-set altimeter now over-reads, you are lower than indicated.

Question: It is soarable on the Dyke late evening with a full moon. How late can you fly?

Answer: Up to 30 minutes after the official sunset time.

NOTAMS: Please put the following dates in your diary. Remember that there is an increase of aerial activity in Sussex when there is an airshow, as many aircraft transit to and from venues.

June 18-20 1999: Goodwood Festival of Speed Air Displays

August 19-22 1999: Eastbourne Airshow

September 4-5 1999: Shoreham RAFA Airshow

PILOT PORTRAIT: DAVID WATTS

talks to the editor

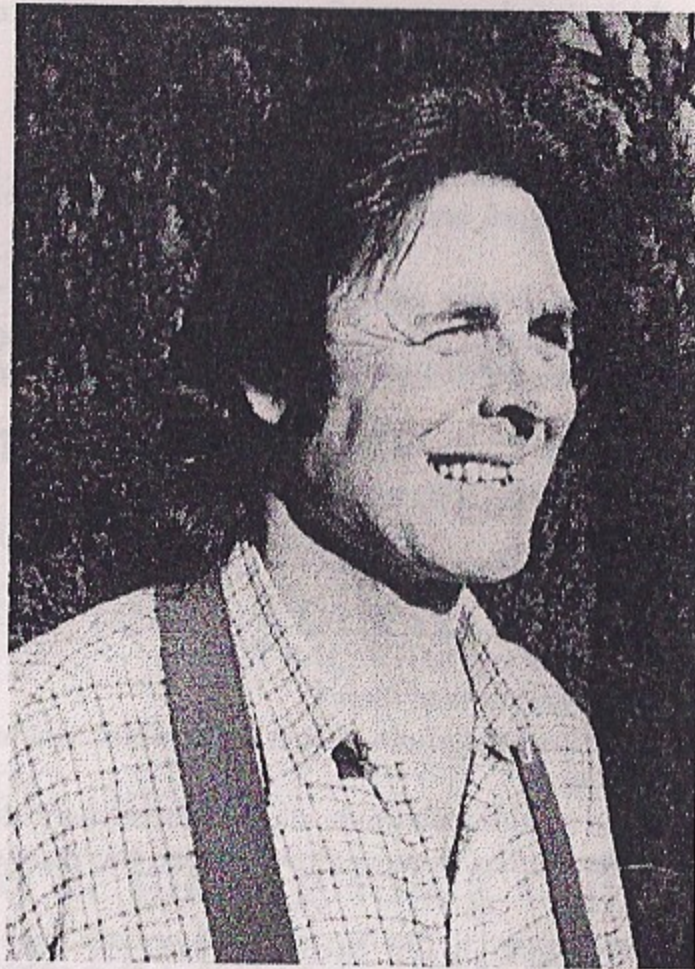
He is possibly the most colourful and intriguing figure on the hill, although he's never there very long, because he has the uncanny knack of taking off and staying up, higher than the pack; if only two or three pilots get away from the hill, David Watts will be one of them. His airtime far exceeds that of any other footlaunch pilot.

"I stopped logging twenty odd years ago," he says, "when I got to 2,000 hours."

This man was flying the South Downs before anybody else. There was no club, no Association, no Certificates of Airworthiness - because there weren't any gliders. As a child in Aden, where his father rose to become Assistant High Commissioner, David was fascinated by flight, and was forever making and modifying model aircraft.

Early in 1972, using as a base some plans he'd received from the USA, he designed and built the first hang glider to be seen in the South. He used heavy gauge black plastic sheet, aluminium sailboat masts, and scaffolding clips.

We all remember how we felt doing our first top-to-bottom - exhilarated and nervous, but reassured by the security of the gliders and the experience of the instructors.



27 years ago, David Watts stood on Ditchling Beacon with an untried structure, surrounded by bemused walkers whose only knowledge of such endeavour was watching old film of early aviators plummeting to their deaths.

"Who is he?", asked one.

"He's a local farmer, I think", came the reply.

"Well, farmer maybe" said somebody, "but he's mad."

So the mad farmer took off and flew into legend, making the first footlaunched flight in SE England.

From then on, he had found his *metier*. Every flyable evening, after eight hours of hard outdoor work, David Watts would make six or eight top-to-bottom flights, carrying the 70 pound "Black Bat" back up on his shoulders, learning how to fly the hard way. As the activity developed, he flew higher and further, especially when he built his Quicksilver. At the end of the seventies, having lost some of his original sites, because of overcrowding and increasing bureaucracy, he gave up hang gliding and took up microlighting. Another reason he gives for his change is the limitation imposed upon hang glider development by the class 1 and 2 divisions.

"If we hadn't been restricted to weight-shift only for competitions then glider design would have been much further advanced," he maintains, and expounds his radical proposals for a hang glider that could come out of a bag yet rival the Swift.

He has many a hair-raising and entertaining tale to tell of his early days, and of his adventures with microlights; he has had his share of accident and injury, and has spent some time in hospital with serious injuries. In 1990 he broke his back and after long treatment he was told that he'd walk with a caliper for a year at least.

"That was no good to me," says David, "so I decided differently and I was walking normally after a month."

By this time, his elder son, Mark had been bitten by the flying bug; he'd done some tandem flights with his Dad - at Plumpton, and in Ireland on a single surface Sigma built by Ian Grayland. So he decided to learn to paraglide - with a school. Then one day in 1991, on a hill in Scotland, Mark strapped his Dad into a harness, inflated the glider and threw him off.

"So I started learning to fly one of these things," says David, "and it was Mark who taught me.!"

The next flight was at Caburn - "I borrowed a Voodoo and managed to inflate it and take off. Everybody else was going down, but I was able to soar"

David's ground handling wasn't too good - "I just wanted to fly, not mess about on the ground, so I used to get Mark to sort the bloody strings out for me and I'd take off. I had to learn eventually, though."

From then, David Watts hasn't looked back and has become one of the most consistent XC pilots in the country. Mark admires his father for his determination and his patience; they get on well, too - "He's more like a brother than a dad," says Mark.

Typically, he has studied the important XC art of getting a ride back - "He's a great flier," says 'Ghandi', "but if he could fly as well as he hitch-hikes, he'd be world champion!"

He has inspired several people to fly,

including Mike Millwood, who, when he was on the combine harvester, used to be buzzed by David's microlight - "That's when it all started for me!"

Flying is the focus of David's existence:-

"I don't make appointments to see people in case it's flyable, and I don't believe anyone should make appointments to fly - which is why I don't do competitions."

His is the art of being in the right place at the right time - "The window of opportunity for an XC flight can be very narrow, especially using sea breeze convergence, when it can be only 15 seconds. It's only in the last few years I've understood it."

Unlike his son ("Mark's a million times better than me, he can cope with any conditions, and use them to his advantage.") David does not enjoy turbulent conditions. He prefers to fly as slowly as possible in light winds and weaker thermals- "You learn to anticipate and to maximise every little bit of lift. It's the most difficult and the most rewarding flying there is."

Because of this, David is unhappy about the ban on competition wings, partly since he believes it will restrict development, but mostly because he's spent years learning to fly one "so that I don't have to fly in crowded conditions -by staying higher than the rest." He acknowledges the safety aspects when flying abroad in strong

summer thermals, but believes that using a comp wing is acceptable in weaker British conditions. "Good 'performance' canopies are few and far between," he thinks, and he doesn't know what to buy in that range. Incidentally, he considers that the best time to buy a new glider is in the autumn, so as to learn to fly it in the more stable air of winter.



David Watts earns his living as a grounds maintenance contractor, and has a satisfied clientele who know they can rely on him, although they may not know exactly when he'll turn up! In 1990 he "ran away from home" to live in a van; he and Diana haven't slept in a house for three years. His only conventional base is a plot of land where he spends some time (and where he and Diana have hosted three club bashes). He has no regrets.

He is unconventional in other ways, too. He refused to do a 'pilot profile' for Skywings. He won't wear a helmet because of the extra weight through his neck to his spine especially in

whiplash situations, and because it limits his appreciation of the air. He takes a perverse pleasure in his red boiler suit and how much cheaper it was than a fancy outfit at ten times the price. Michel Carnet says of him that because of this, and because he can "act the comedian", he is often underrated. Ian Grayland, the first pilot to fly the Newhaven cliffs, has known David from the early days-

"He's not a man to be stopped by what looks impossible to others, through sheer bloody-minded determination. He is a very complex character."

If that complexity, determination, and potential had been recognised and nurtured while he was at school, who can say what he might have achieved? As George Bernard Shaw said, "All progress is due to unreasonable men."

He has an inquiring, imaginative, and inventive mind, and is extremely knowledgeable about the history of flight and about the weather. His favourite books are on aircraft and birds, and he enjoys music from the Baroque period. He does not suffer fools gladly, and is wittily scathing about people in positions of responsibility who should be seen to know better, particularly with reference to air law and collision avoidance. He does, however, welcome new pilots who have been well taught and who share his passion for learning how to fly as well as possible. He thinks it's a pity that

schools push people through so quickly, without, in his view, a proper practical training in air law.

He'd like to see more recognition for people who put in the effort and who do improve,- "We need more cups and competitions to spread the rewards around and not have the same names every time. For example, we could have a league for the over fifties -and Mark couldn't win it!"

David Watts is, unbelievably, 51 years old; he is blessed with looking a lot less, although wear and tear over the fun-filled years have taken their internal toll. He is intensely proud of both his sons- Mark of international reputation, and Paul who has only recently decided to take up paragliding- and of his four grandchildren.

His hopes for the future are to draw his pension for as long as possible, together with his devoted partner, Diana; to see the long overdue development of the hang glider; and that when he's in a wheelchair he'll still be launched into the element where he's happiest.

David 'Mad Farmer' Watts is a maverick, a one-off, a true pioneer, who has maintained his passion and his dreams from his youth, and who has enriched the lives of those around him. I'll keep my helmet on, but I take my hat off to him.

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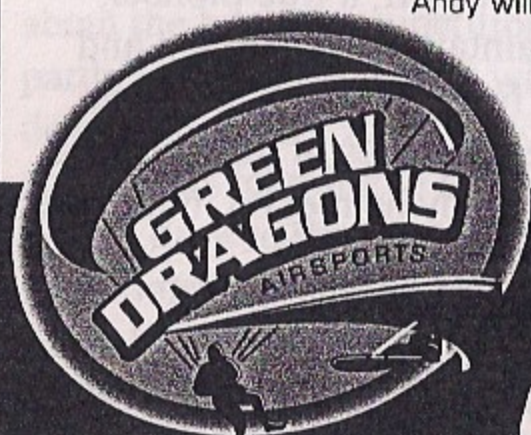
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AEROTOW NEWS

from **WILL GREENWOOD**

What a difference a week can make! Cold conditions dried the ground up and we towed on Saturday 13th February. Nothing remarkable in that unless you were one of a handful of pilots who were thermalling near Lewes up to 3000ft in the 1-up's that the town and a large bale fire provided! I watched enviously from the tug as Ron, Justin, Dave, Martin, Ozzi and Ian drifted around. A new trainee tug pilot with a lot of Pegasus XL time found that towing was not as easy as it looked, however practice makes perfect and I'm sure we will succeed with him.

Again the trolley was used and proved invaluable especially when a new member turned up to do his first tows, should have seen the smile on his face! Eventually Ron came down and Justin Needham gave me a tow, on Ron's new Avian Comp. Model. The tow was fine until

the weak link decided to let go on its own accord at 1500ft! Luckily the large fire was still going and I joined Dave Matthews and wafted around for 30mins. - very satisfying considering the time of year and it was nearly 3pm.

While we were all having fun Martin Brady was busy making a video of the group's activities which will be shown at the AGM, so you can have a laugh at our expense! The video will also be useful as a training aid, as Martin did air to air shots of a tow showing the correct position to be in behind the tug. I've had a preview and was impressed with the end result - well done Martin, and I'll see you at the Premiere (AGM). Finally a note to group members that renewals will be in April '99 and will be £70.00 payable to the Southern Hang Gliding Club; cheques should be given to Will. The cut-off date will be 1st May '99 - so you have been warned!

Fly Safely, Will.



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NOTICE TO PARAGLIDER PILOTS

Courtesy to horse riders

This is a long established bridle way frequently used by riders. Its use by paragliders seriously restricts its use by horse riders. Many horses are very frightened by paragliders; there have been at least 2 accidents along this ridge in the last 12 months. We could lose the use of the site.

SO PLEASE REMEMBER

1. LOOK OUT FOR RIDERS ALL THE TIME.
2. IF ON THE GROUND DEFLATE YOUR CANOPY AND LET OTHERS KNOW ABOUT THE RIDER.
3. WHEN IN THE AIR, FLY AWAY FROM HORSES (you pose less of a threat if you are receding)
4. NEVER FLY TOWARDS OR OVER A HORSE WHEN BELOW 500FT.

INFORMATION FOR RIDERS

If you want to check if this site is likely to be used by paragliders on a given day, you could phone one of the local schools on 01273 858108 or 01273 858170 they should be able to say if a site is likely to be used. This hill is only flown in N- NW. winds of less than 18mph. Any incidents should be reported to one of the above nos.

Will Greenwood Sites Officer
F.D.Kennedy SHGC. Sites liaison.

OPINION Stewart Owen

LATE NEWS
ALSO ENCLOSED WITH THIS
ISSUE - THE BHPA "CRASH
DRILL" BOOKLET - PRINTED
MINUS COVER FOR ECONOMY

At the Committee Meeting I raised the question of first aid training. As a result of discussion, it has been decided to offer a weekend course (see "Sticks and Stones" in this issue).

In Skywings of September 1998, I wrote of my concerns about rescue services in Spain, where I've had to help with three major accidents.

I've had to deal with other accidents in the UK, from cuts and bruises and line burns to broken legs and head injuries.

As a Mountain Leader, I am required to hold a current First Aid Certificate, and I've done specialized training in coping with severe injuries in remote places. Since taking up flying, unfortunately, I've had more need of that training.

Even at a busy site, we cannot assume that someone else will take on the responsibility; the nearest person to an incident - halfway down the hill, half a mile along the ridge - should be prepared to provide immediate first aid.

Knowing what to do (and what not to do) in the first few minutes after an accident is literally vital. It is also crucial to be able to manage the scene of an accident, and to co-ordinate rescue services.

Quite simply, I believe that everyone should have up-to-date first aid training, especially participants in a high risk sport.

It is bad enough dealing with injuries; it is dreadful when someone dies; it would be unbearable to know you might have made a difference, if only you'd known how.

Hang Gliding Competition Officer's Report

My Name is Ozzie, and as the title suggests, I run the hang gliding competitions for the Club.

There are four main events in the Club's yearly cycle.

The Airwave Challenge which is for the Club Pilot who would like to start competition flying and going XC.

Then there are the three Club Leagues which anyone with Pilot rating or above can enter Cross-Countries into.

Being competitions officer is a real "Breeze" and anyone can do it, so if you would like a go please do not hesitate to volunteer. - Ozzie

COACHING by Trevor McLoughlin

PG Tandem Flying

I don't know how many of you are members of the Thames Valley Club, but they have a good scheme running for the training of wannabe tandem pilots or for tandem pilots to take up friends.

Basically, they applied to the lottery people for some money, got lucky and were awarded some. With it, they bought two tandem set ups (gliders, harnesses, reserves, flying suits and boots).

I've mentioned this at the committee meeting and it was agreed it would be worthwhile checking into it.

However, before I do anything I need to know what you the members think of the idea. The objective is for the club to have at least one tandem rig that could be hired (for a nominal fee for insurance purposes). This will enable new tandem pilots to be trained and also allow members to fly with tandem rated pilots in order to improve their own flying skills (like thermalling techniques and maybe even cross country skills). Personally, I think tandem flying is a great way to learn. Let's face it, if you learn to fly any other aircraft you have your instructor with you. A point worth mentioning here is that only instructor rated tandem pilots will be allowed to let their passengers take control.

If you feel strongly one way or the

other, would you please let me know by letter or email what you think. Please don't telephone me about it. Once I've had some feedback, I'll put it to the committee again to see where we go from there.

Photo Winge

Well, I still haven't had photos from the majority of coaches, so I can only assume most of you don't want to continue coaching within the club. I can't understand this as there are a lot of good people out there doing some great coaching, but it seems nobody wants to get it organised properly. I've had calls from several people in praise of some of our coaches and the wonderful work they're doing. But I can't do this job without your support, guys - please help me to help you.

I've got enough photos together to put into Windsock as you can see, but what about the rest of you? Go on, I dare you. Send me a picture.

Coach Cup

As I've had such great support (sic!), I thought it might be an idea to have a Coaching Cup awarded to the most popular coach at the end of each year. This would be awarded by votes, so if anyone would like to volunteer to collect those votes please let me know. I will donate the trophy myself.

What Do You Want?

That's you, yes. What can I do for you? What would you like to see going on within the club? My plans at the moment are to try and get some more talks/lectures organised. I'd like to get a weather God (maybe Tom Bradbury?) to come and give us a talk. I'll be talking to a couple of our top pilots soon to see if they will give us a talk on their amazing cross country skills. Watch this space! I'd also like to try and organise a parachute re-packing session at some time soon (before the season starts) too.

Please, do put pen to paper. I don't care if you scribble on the back of a fag packet or on a chewing gum wrapper while you're sat on the hill waiting for the wind to drop, but please do let me know what I can do for you.

Lecture

Thursday's lecture on Flight Theory went ahead as planned. There were a couple of people who were not able to turn up due to unforeseen problems and work commitments, but they were good enough to let me know. A couple of others joined us who hadn't attended the last one. So with all seats filled, we went ahead. I only noticed one bit of 'head nodding', so it looked like most people managed to stay awake.

John Barratt kindly joined us and

helped to cover the stuff I'm not too familiar with, especially with respect to hang gliders. Many thanks John, much appreciated.

The next one is in the same place on Thursday 25th March. The subject will be meteorology, which should be fun. See you there.

Trevor McLoughlin
229 Barking Road
East Ham
London
E6 1LB
Tel 07771 664 279

Dear Windsock,

What is Trevor McLoughlin trying to say when he publishes these statistics? I'm confused.... Is the BHPA now recognising a new elite rating, above that of Advanced Pilot, to be known as "Girl"? or are these 29 people hanging around the hill to be regarded as some inferior subgroup outside the Pilot Rating Scheme?

Why show the number of girls and not the number of plonkers? That would be far more useful!

Sue MacGregor - (APt) (CC) (G).

Sticks & Stones May Break My Bones

The club is planning to run a first aid course over a weekend. The idea being that should there be an accident on the hill there will always be somebody within the club who is competent enough to carry out first aid until the ambulance service / paramedics arrive. To enable us to plan the event, would anyone who is interested in attending the course please contact Dave Massie, Club Safety Officer.

- Paul Coidan

Meet The BHPA Exec

As you all know there is a "Meet The BHPA Exec" meeting being run in conjunction with the AGM which of course is open to all members.

In last months "Windsock" a request went out to you the members for questions you would like to ask the Exec during this meeting. The total of questions coming from you the members reached a grand total of zero. However at this month's meeting, your committee drew up on your behalf, a list of subjects it felt you the members would like discussed during this session. Please come along and join in the discussion, it is your chance to have your say.

The subject listing is as follows.

The BHPA and its infrastructure - Pilot Exams And Pilot Rating System
National Sites Guide - Paraglider Rating re DHV - Skywings - BHPA Administration Costs

The asking of technical questions to the BHPA office - Info Page on website - Hang Glider training re dual aero towing - National Trust Agreement - De-commercialisation of Hang Gliding schools to allow club teaching - Pilot accidents abroad - Motorised HG's & PG's - Insurance - Why do you have to attend a first aid course for your pilot rating for HG's and not PG's?

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On Companionship

Paragliding and hang gliding hold many attractions.

For instance, there's the sheer joy of getting airborne again after days, perhaps weeks, of unsuitable weather. That wonderful moment that makes up for all the previous days of frustration and leaves you feeling that it's all been well worth the wait.

Then there is the uninterrupted view of Mother Earth when you've got to cloud base, the sun is shining, the thermals are booming and life is just marvellous.

The fresh air, the scent of fresh grass and flowers and the splendid views across the Downs, surely among the most beautiful of sights to be seen in England on a Spring morning, all add to the attractions of free flying.

For me, however, there is one element of our sport which transcends all of these - the companionship, humour and unstinting helpfulness of fellow flyers.

I recently had an accident at Firle, when my concerted attempt to shoulder-butt the planet aside resulted in my coming into clear second place. In these circumstances everyone rallies round and lends a hand. My thanks go to all who helped me on the day, not least Bob Brown who stayed with my car for several hours to make sure my kit wasn't 'half-inched'. When I returned to flying in early January, it was a joy to meet all of my friends again and hear so many cheerful greetings. Then there's the assistance and encouragement that is always available. I greatly value the generous help and advice given freely by fellow pilots, many with much more experience than I but who are always ready to give a little of their time to help out. You really do meet the nicest people on the hill.

Here's to a great Summer season!!!

Mel Quick

Summary of the March SHGC Committee meeting

In the lack of any replies from members, the committee prepared a list of issues of interest likely to be presented to the BHPA exec. A lack of complaints was interpreted as implying strong support for Stewart's last Windsock - the committee was certainly impressed.

Committee discussed desire to improve first aid awareness in the club. Dave Massie was asked to investigate a St Johns Ambulance course.

Johnny was checking that the buffet at the AGM will be vegetarian friendly. Finn was reportedly making good progress with the new sites guide - parts to be put on the web site when available.

Schools are to be reminded that they should be renewing site use agreement at the AGM.

Photos of coaches have still not been volunteered. Trevor had used some pictures from the website, and now has 8PG+12HG photos.

Recent accident at the Dyke - Ross Adamson broke arm.

Concern about how to encourage prompt membership renewals - maybe publish list of lapsed members.

Proper running of AGM - committee to prepare job description speeches, Paul to have proper agenda and list of posts to check on. Also suggested that it might be nice to accept volunteers to organize single events, instead of an entire social secretary.

FLYING THE SEA BREEZE FRONT

by Richard Lever

Know the feeling when you're stuck on the hill, the wind is well off, everyone else seems to have gone XC and it's about to sea-breeze? On Friday June 12th I was sitting on the Dyke in a state of apathy, dejection and general failure.

It was nearly 2pm and the satisfaction of having survived all of 20 minutes without going down was wearing a bit thin. The sea-breeze front close behind threatened the end to yet another day of futile map-posing (I really am an XC pilot you know) and feeble excuses for not doing what everyone else seemed to have done.

Just when it all seemed over, the wind swung back on. Dave Williamson launched and managed to connect with weak lift. Realising it was now or never, I followed and soon there were six of us thrashing around in rough thermal fragments chewed up by the westerly wind.

As luck would have it fifteen minutes of this left me at two grand faced with a short glide to what looked like the mother of all convergence lines. As a mere mortal I had up till now flown sea-breeze fronts only in my dreams, so with a sense of trepidation (and hopes of 70+ miles without having to circle) I pulled on speed, aimed at a good-looking patch of dangly bits (!) and.....flew straight through it. I turned round for another

go and the same thing happened - nothing. Maybe sea breeze fronts only work if you're Steve Cook. Faced with the realisation that this one didn't have my name on it, I resolved to at least fly along it in hope.

Such a defined convergence line of course has to produce lift somewhere, so ten minutes later saw me at 3000 feet in a steady 6-up, circling in and out of a vast wall of cloud that seemed to stretch to the ionosphere (this cannot be real!). The next 15 miles involved short glides along the front in 0-2 down followed by climbs up the cloud bank, all the time at 3000-4000 feet asl. I noticed that other gliders approaching from the west were gaining on me quite rapidly. Also a yellow paraglider off to the east seemed to be getting further away. This goes to show that a true skygod would motor along this front with bar to knees and only a complete wuss would keep circling.

North of Firlie the worst thing happened - the front disappeared. I clung to the end of it in a state of shock, then noticed a few dangly bits off to the north. I went for these, hit lift, turned round and saw the front right behind me. Amazing! This carried on all the way past Heathfield, with the breeze following and forming behind. At one point it formed into two fronts, one behind the other. Great towers and pinnacles of cloud rose up and flying round these was just simply awesome.

Approaching Bewl Water the front finally disappeared. Back to normal XC mode. After working a number of relatively weak thermals, a glide towards some active-looking clouds to the north gave me a strong climb to cloudbase and a further glide towards Tenterden. I could see both the South Kent coast and the Thames Estuary with the land in between tapering off into the distant haze. This was so incredible, and as I marvelled at the view I realised that some serious mileage could now be on the cards.

Why is it that just when you're on the verge of glory, when you know that this is now your best XC ever and you can almost see the famous North Foreland golf course twinkling in the distance, why is it that something has to happen to snatch disaster from the jaws of victory?

Up till now I'd been pushing inland with each glide, steadily working my way north away from the coast. I now had a choice between active clouds further to the north and a blue sky to the east with just one rather sorry looking cumulus making the only shadow on the ground. Why did that one cumulus have such a magnetic appeal?

Of course all the sorry looking cumulus produced was the certainty of a final glide into the blue and a landing on the cricket pitch at Woodchurch. This final part of the flight seemed to be over

so quickly and as I set off home I could still see those epic-looking clouds to the north. Why had I flown east? Because..... it's further away from the Dyke!

In hindsight it was nearly 5 O'clock when I landed, so I don't think Deal, Margate or whatever was really on the cards. I'm sure, though, that a bit more rational thinking could have turned a 45 miler into a very respectable 60. It just goes to show how one simple (though rather fundamental!) error can so easily put you on the deck.

Several weeks later I was back at two grand over the Dyke. And what was there lurking just a short glide away? Here we go again!

This time the front produced instant lift and a good climb up the side till I was circling around in the wispy bits on top. The trouble was that it was rather a small front, but still, the famous dangly bits were starting to form over Ditchling. I pulled on speed and set off for the cloud only to watch it fade away. By the time I got there nothing was left except still air. I spent the next ten minutes frantically chasing bits of what I considered to be sea breeze before my vario finally settled on a constant 4-down - I'd somehow blown it and was now in sea air.

This time it was a straight glide to Lewes. It just goes to show how unpredictable sea breezes can be!

AIRWAVE CHALLENGE 1999

This year's event will be aimed very much at teams. Clubs will be encouraged to enter as many teams as possible. Whilst still having overall individual Champions for hang gliding and paragliding as in previous years (who will gain entry into the Hang Gliding League and British Paragliding Nationals), the main emphasis will be on the winning teams. We will also be encouraging a Dual flying competition.

The overall aim of the Airwave Challenge is to find the British Club Champions and to encourage inter-club competition of hang glider and paraglider pilots, whilst at the same time transferring flying skills and knowledge from pilots who compete at a National level into the clubs. This latter objective is why each team this year can have **one** member who is a current League or Nationals pilot. This is not to make the competition competitive, but to make it educational for us all. It is run as a fun event with a variety of tasks from open XC, goal races with turnpoints and spot landings.

The tasks are run on trust, without the use of cameras. Clubs enter a team consisting of 4-6 pilots for each discipline. In the case of tandem pilots who wish to participate, one pair (Pilot, Co pilot) will be deemed as a team and tandem paragliding and hang gliding teams will compete alongside for the tandem title. Tandem pilots can be current League and Nationals pilots.

To enter the 1999 Airwave British Club Challenge, hang glider pilots should phone **Ozzie - 01273 418293** to reserve themselves a spot.

Entry into the Southern Clubs Teams is open to all club pilots and above, as long as you are a current club member you are welcome to join in but you **MUST PHONE** to reserve your place.

I will also be looking for a couple of League Pilots to volunteer, not necessarily the same pilot for each round.

Ozzie

Adventures of an Apprentice Skygod - First Competition Success!

Jeff McCall recalls one of his moments of glory

After a brilliant fortnight flying in Morzine, France, and my first British Open, I returned to UK with my thoughts directed towards the final round of the 1998 BPC in the Peak District. I had learnt so much in France and my confidence in my new glider, a Freex Spark, was soaring (excuse the pun!). I had agreed to take the family with me to Derbyshire for the weekend of the competition, a pleasure I never expected to experience again after the wind and rain that was the 1997 Paramania Fly-in. This time however, we were booked into a nice little B&B in Hope, rather than my flying tent.

My hopes of getting a decent overall placing in the BPC had been dashed months earlier, when I achieved a miserable 3km dash over the back in the strong winds at Snowdonia. Things didn't get any better on the first day of competition in the Peaks. We all spent a scratchy day on a small ridge under a very low cloudbase. It was so close to the tops at times, it brought new meaning to the expression "walking around with your head in the clouds". A few desperate souls tried to stay up, only managing about 1km along the ridge.

The weather on Sunday promised much better, and by the time I arrived at the mid-day briefing, there was an expectant buzz amongst the pilots. The task was set for a race to goal via a turn point a few

kilometres along the ridge. The launch window opened and was greeted by the usual massed launch. I had learned in France that if anyone was staying up when the window opened I should be in the air. However, nobody had explained this to my glider, which promptly decided to drag me on a tour of the launch instead. Finally, on my third attempt (who said I suffered from pre-competition nerves?) we were both airborne, with me wondering where the lead gaggle had gone. I hung about at take-off for a bit, gaining enough height to clear the first obstacle, a line of trees that swept up the ridge about ½ km further along. The sky was starting to work and regular small thermals were developing well. I soon began my ridge run, eventually reaching Mam Tor, which had become a PG staging post for a large proportion of the field. By the time I got there, there was no sign of the lead gaggle. Assuming I'd blown my chances, I decided to relax and just enjoy the flight. From this point up to the turn point, the ridge was less steep. It was clear from the few PGs floundering low down on the ridge that good height was needed to reach the turn point. This would be easier said than done, as anyone who showed the slightest signs of having found some lift was immediately pounced upon by the eager throng, making it nigh on impossible for anyone to climb out. Conditions also became very scratchy at times. As a result, I found myself very low at one point.

So low in fact, that some pilots above me

on the ridge were giving up and landing on the slope to avoid going down. I decided that I didn't want the embarrassment of only one reaching the car park so I dug deep and worked every bit of lift. Those hours skimming the grassy ridge next to Mount Caburn paid their dividends, and I was soon back amongst the throng.

It took me a while to work out what was happening with the thermals, as the usual tactic of flying out front to find a climb before being attacked by the masses didn't seem to be working. Despite the relatively light wind, the thermals appeared to be leaning at quite an angle. This meant you had to fly well over the back to get a consistent climb. No one else seemed to keen to try this, or perhaps they hadn't worked it out? Once I did, I found a good climb in clear air and headed for base. Once I was happy with my height gain, I led the charge along the ridge to the turn point. At the base of the ridge, and about halfway to the turn point was a small rectangular plantation of trees.

This had obviously decided to behave like a classic thermal trigger, and on reaching it I found another good thermal. I decided to top-up height, but was soon pulling big ears to stay out of the clouds. A glider below me set off first for the turn point, and I raced after him.

Quickly round the turn point, and I was soon heading back for the well developed thermal by the plantation. The lower glider was still ahead, but began turning as soon as he reached the edge of the thermal rather than continuing on to the stronger lift at its core. That was his big mistake, as I found the core and rapidly began climbing, slowly drifting

over the back. When he realised, he straightened up and joined me, but was by this time some distance below. Then for some reason, he left the lift and headed back to the front of the ridge. So there I was, circling over the back alone, and wondering why none of the others had taken the opportunity of getting away. Across the other side of the valley I could see two distinct gullies, both facing into wind. I decided that one of these would be my best chance of finding my next climb so glided towards them. However, my glide across the valley was so good, I arrived above the top on the other side and found a weak thermal to circle in whilst I decided what to do next. Beyond the ridge was yet another valley, running roughly parallel to the first. The other side was almost all in shade, apart from one spur that was glowing so brightly in the sun it was if it was calling to me like a siren. I didn't need asking twice, and immediately headed off towards it.

The trip across this next valley was not as forgiving as the first, and I was losing height quickly. I arrived quite low at the spur, and quickly identified a suitable landing spot next to a road. At this point I very nearly gave in by switching to landing mode. However, I immediately connected with weak lift at the base of the spur, and stayed with it until it reached the top of the ridge and began to develop. I was soon climbing again in a good thermal, and this is when I made what must have been my only mistake of the flight.

I checked my GPS and found that I was some way to the right of the track from the turn point to the goal field. I knew that if I stayed drifting with the thermal, it would take me further to the right of

track. I was conscious of the fact that I needed to land close to this track to score the best distance points, so began to consider my options. In the direction of the goal field, the valley I had just crossed opened into a 'Y' shape with two dead-end valleys. The one to the left had lots of exposed rock and looked the best bet. Then I noticed another glider in the distance, flying just above the ridge on the right side of my chosen valley. So what did I do? I left the lift that's what! Looking back, I can't quite believe I did it. I wasn't in 'racing mode', as I was convinced that the lead gaggle must have made goal by now, so I shouldn't have! Anyway I did, and headed towards the other glider, probably fooled into believing that, as another pilot was there, it must have been a good decision.

The valley was still very 'sinky', and the sky was starting to shut down. I reached the point where the valley branched off, and then saw the other pilot sink-out. "I don't believe it!" I thought, in classic Victor Meldrew style. I just had enough height to clear the spur separating the two branches of the valley and headed off to the one on the right instead. With not a whiff of lift to be found I set off on my final glide up the valley and landed on a slope. I had really enjoyed the flight, it had been a good challenge and I was very pleased with myself. Before packing away, I sat and studied my GPS. I was only 5km short of the goal field and was very satisfied indeed.

As I'd come in to land I'd spotted another glider on the same slope about

400 metres further along. He arrived shortly and helped me pack away. He was a local pilot flying in the Airwave challenge, and knew the way back to the nearest road, which was nice! As we talked he was quite certain that no other paragliders had passed him, and it began to look as though we might have had a result! We got a lift back to Hope from a chap who'd been sitting in the goal field, who said that no one had made goal. When I got to check-in it soon became apparent that the lead gaggle had raced themselves into the ground before the first turn point, which is where most of the field ended up. Would you Adam'n Eve it? I had won my first comp!

Freeflight/ Purple Haze New Northwest Site

Freeflight has acquired a new site to the south of Steyning bowl. This site is for training only and can only be used by Freeflight and Purple Haze. The reason I have to point this out is that there has been a complaint of a flyer using the private North West site. I was surprised to hear this as the Dyke was blown out for paragliders. He/she was flying on 6th March alone, according to the witness they started when it was light and flew into the late hours of the afternoon. The Pilot should know the rules about flying alone and flying after dark in direct flight line of Shoreham airport will only bring problems to our sport, please do not do this again (It better not be one of my students!)

Rob Chisholm, CFI Freeflight

Tel. 0958 440519

Lanzarote, January, Airworks Trip

10 Paragliding enthusiasts, 2 retrieve vehicles, all the gear, and... Gustave. Tim King arranged the whole thing, he should be held solely responsible. Litigants should address all actions to him... or Gustave.

It was a great week with flying on 5 out of the 7 days, mainly in strongish winds, never north westerly unfortunately so we didn't get to fly the famous ridge at Fumara. There were many other sites and we were ably transported and guided by Tim... and Gustave.

Big soft thermals, smooth air and my old Xyon, finally all agreed to take me to cloudbase, great fun and valuable experience, as was the discovery that it is possible to "cropspray" in flight, even with my bad back.

Good food (T-bone steaks that could feed a family of four), good accommodation (with pool, restaurant and Karaoke). Good company thanks to Freddy (capt'n caveman) and all the lads from Par Avion, I had a good time and can really recommend the island, the trip with Airworks, and even... Gustave.

- John Lancaster

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Spain - Hotel California, Oct 99	Spain - Lanzarote, Nov/Dec/Jan. 99/2000
Chamonix - Flyers Lodge, Feb/March 2000	France - Peisey Nancroix, March/April 2000

Too much snow for a ski trip this winter! No problem, leave it until later in the season and come fly/ski with us at **Peisey Nancroix** in the French Alps. There are still a few places left - April 10th £440.

Costa-Del-Sol in May. Sun, sea, sand, mountains and thermals. Just £250 per week, so we expect this trip to **Hotel California** to sell out quickly. Includes B/B accommodation, car hire and fly guiding - all you have to do is get there.

The **SIV** trip to **Annecy** in July will happen if there is enough demand. So, if you feel the need to do an SIV, whether for the first time or because it's been a long time, then give me a call.

The annual **St-Hilaire Film Festival** - in the Massif de Chartreuse near Grenoble - a must for all pilots. Stunning scenery, electric atmosphere electric and amazing flying. We are offering a trip staying in St-Hilaire and flying in the area for the week before and then chilling for the four-day festival (or you can fly if you wish). Let me know if you are interested.

- Dave Perrin

NOTICE BOARD

LA MOUETTE TOPLESS

C of A; good condition, and very good handling. £2,300 ono. Darren, 01273 733916 or 0410413112

FOUND at the Dyke

on Wednesday 17th February, 'Airworks' one metre windsock without pole or swivel. Call Graham, 01903 783830

XC Holidays

This year I intend to take long weekends off to go flying in South or mid Wales, or the Peaks, with the aims of going cross country and to talk XC flying. If anyone is interested - HG or PG please phone - Ozzie, 01273 418293.

Probe Harness & Metamorfosi Reserve

Excellent condition probe paragliding harness with regularly-repacked 18-gore (large) Metamorfosi mounted (may split). £675 ono. Call Gary on 01273 277151

Airwave Reggae 30 (large). Certified weight 90-120 Kg; 12As Less than 5 hours airtime and recently serviced. Rap harness (with backplate) and Apco Mayday 18 reserve (brand new). Ideal first wing for the larger man. £1100 ono. Tel David 0181-658 8539

Java Comp

Mylar 150 (topless) in excellent condition all round, keel modified for Mosquito power Harness, flew me into the league as highest placed non placed league pilot in the National X.C League! £2500 Tel Will 01273 477388 to arrange a demo.

Tuesday Gathering

The Abergavenny Arms, Rodmell (south of Lewes), hosts the Flying Chessboard - a regular pub night for anyone in the Lewes area on a Tuesday evening: join Ozzi Haines for a drink, a chat or a game of chess...

Pod Plus HG Harness

with 16 gore metamorfosi chute. vgc. 200 hrs use. Extra camera/radio pockets. £250. Tel: 0181 767 7897

EDEL ENERGY XL, great XC glider, like new, 30 hours, speed system, trimtabs, bargain at £750 neg. Can arrange delivery for test flight. Reach Rob on 0181 743 9058 or robert.wheals@bt.com

Java Comp 150 (topless) very good condition only 8 months old, matrix sail, blue/ pink undersurface, as used in last year's Europeans; must sell £2600 ONO my new one has just arrived.

Ron Richardson 01689.856723
Davron@btinternet.com

Windsock

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