

Spring Thermals to you all, from...



The Official Magazine of



April 2004

Still under the same old Management...



Editorial

Hello Again,

That's right, I'm still here editing your trusty Windsock. Thanks to those of you who attended the AGM, sat and listened to me justify my position and voted me in again for another season.

I mentioned at the AGM that I'm looking for a Paragliding Editor for Windsock. It's been fun writing and sharing this stuff with you, but as a member of the hang gliding minority, I sometimes think I could do more to represent the views of the rest of us. Although I wasn't exactly inundated with offers of help, I know there are a few regular contributors out there that could make a big difference here (you know who you are). The purpose of the Paragliding Editor would be to tap into the PG community and bring some topical insight to the magazine and to ensure that more of the things that PG pilots want to read about are published. If you're interested in undertaking this lofty responsibility, drop me an email at the address below.

Other than that, the SHGC website underwent a few changes recently. The site now allows you to update your own details, whilst keeping all of your details visible only to you. The content is also much easier to maintain now and different members will be able to take ownership of certain content and keep it up to date (e.g. comps, Aerotow etc). If you haven't done so already, you'll need to register on the site and set yourself a password – this is all explained on page 31.

Anyway, now that the UK flying season is getting underway, I expect to have more items than I can possibly publish for May's issue. Please prove me right and send 'em all into:

nick.cresswell@ntlworld.com

or:

NICK CRESSWELL
3B EAST DULWICH GROVE
LONDON SE22 8PW

Bye..

NICK

Chairman's Letter

The 30th AGM went well, rather well, in fact.

I was (very pleasantly) surprised that the six posts vacant were all snapped up, and we even had a vote on one. Thanks to all who turned up, and especial thanks to our new committee members:

Peter Campbell Treasurer
Jack Chapman membership
Ian Grayland Safety
Tim King Coaching
John Lancaster Sites
June Sage XC tables

Overcrowding is becoming a big issue on our sites. It always has been, of course, but it seems to be getting worse. On Easter Sunday I counted 66 canopies laid out in the bowl at Bo Peep. Lots more were still in their bags, and plenty more near the hang glider take-off. Not to mention a few hang gliders... One of the subjects that came up at the AGM was the issue of non-members flying our sites. As you will see from the above figures, what we don't need are more pilots, especially those who are not paying for the privilege. They're occupying air space desperately needed for our members.

So this year, we will INSIST that you wear your helmet stickers on your helmets, please, and we will challenge anyone not wearing one. Please, no excuses about the glue melting your helmet, just stick the thing on, and fly in peace. Sue Brooks and Dave Smith have been doing sterling work chasing the non-members, but they shouldn't have to do it single-handed. Please back them up when recalcitrant flyers refuse to pay up. Unless, of course, you feel that you're happy on the ground watching them fly.

Ok, rant over - let's go flying...

Regards
Dave

Officials Corner

SHGC AGM 27th March 2004

Summary

- The 30th AGM went well, bringing in several new enthusiastic committee members.
- The new DD marshalling scheme works well, but could be used more often.
- Club Finances are sound, we've been adding extra to the site fund.
- Membership has been stable
- Cost of sites is increasing, but relationships are good. We still need to exercise care though.
- Concern about danger to flying at the Dyke from the Shoreham airport expansion scheme.
- Social events have gone well, except for concerns about the food. These are being addressed.
- The new Windsock editor Nick Cresswell is rousinglly supported.
- The tragic fatal accident to Rowena Ellis this summer seems not to have changed the attitude on safety - there are still too many avoidable incidents and flying in unreasonable situations.
- We welcome new members to the committee
- Treasurer - Peter Campbell
- Membership - Jack Chapman
- Sites Officer - John Lancaster
- Coaching - Tim King
- Safety - Ian Grayland
- XC league - June Sage
- The proposal "Visitor fee should be £5 a day instead of £5 a weekend" was passed with a 2:1 majority.
- The proposal "Pilots must be a member when they do their XC league flights" was passed with none against.
- Thanks to Chris Joel who has been doing the club meetings at Seaford.

Welcome

The meeting opened at 7.15pm and Dave Massie welcomed people to the 30th AGM, and introduced President Johnny Carr to say a few words.

Johnny spoke about how it was nearly 30 years since the SHGC was formed - and how great it was to see it growing and flying accepted as a sport. It wasn't always this way - various organisations would rather we didn't exist. Now with a few hundred members we have credibility and respect and can get site agreements. However, we must stick together as threats to our existence are never far away.

Recently the club email forum was started - Johnny found some of it a bit offensive to the committee - We've lost 2 important committee members (resignations following the Firlle/Bo Peep etc Flame War). As regards name changing - Johnny was worried about the possibility of losing site agreements through the change. Re Firlle/Bo peep, no real worries about it either way - only issue is emergency services. (Ian Greyland :- problems have happened with that) Sorry about a bit of a contentious speech, wishing everyone a successful year.

Apologies for Absence

Michel Carnet – recently resigned

Will Greenwood – needed at home at the last minute

Andy Kirkland – work commitments

Simon – recently resigned

Carlo – running a PG trip in Spain

Approval of Minutes of Previous AGM

Treasurer's report: pie chart is "only indicative" rather than "misleading".

Brian had only printed the summary for everyone; full minutes had been posted on the forum and were available in a dozen copies.

Minutes approved, none against.

Officers' Reports

These are summaries of the verbal reports. Several people also produced very detailed printed reports that were handed out to those attending the AGM.

Dave Massie - Chairman

The 2nd year in office has been quite interesting, with prima donnas to be kept apart and trying to help us be more of a club rather than a licence to fly. Is has been getting a little better that way. The Forum seems quite a good thing overall, not needing control. This year we've had the new Devils Dyke marshalling scheme - the old one never really worked. The new one was not used much, but has been useful when it has. We could use it a little more on crowded days. Anybody can use it - just become a marshal.

Winching group is half happening - Dave Perrot has been slowly pushing it, maybe slight wobble with loss of Michel - perhaps people could help push that.

Windsock has vastly improved thanks to Nick. New sites guide is almost there. (Might have to chance site names:-)

Big overcrowding problem, at meeting of other clubs - the others are often astonished at our size.

Non-members flying - holding people up, Dave Smith/Sue Brooks doing a good job, but awful lot of people not supporting them. Perhaps we can get people to wear their helmet stickers more. (Floor - suggest availability of extra stickers for those with 2 helmets).

Martin Brady – Treasurer (standing down)

Martin drew attention to a few points in the accounts. Of the membership subscriptions of £23k, £600 was additional donations. Against the agreement that 20% of subs should be put away to wards the site purchase fund, with £5500 needed, we actually put away £8000 despite extra payments. Sites has included payments in advance for Caburn. Windsock expenses were down, and no advertising revenue. Trophy bill still to come in. Will sold the old Aerotow tug for a very good price well so the net balance of the Aerotow group is in the black already. Membership secretary turnover has got the schools licence income missed - (Dave has taken over as Schools Liaison, will be fixing). Beachy not yet cashed the cheque.

Martin is standing down after 5 years, and received a well-earned round of applause for his work for the club.

Simon Goodwin – Membership (resigned)

Membership remained stable, with 549 members (vs 542 last year.) 150 new people have joined; 90 joined recently qualified; 60 experienced. 126 PG only, 6 biwingual, 18 HG -- Lots of beginner PG pilots that means. Of whole club 80% PGs. All known flyers appear to hold BHPA membership. Number of non-members flying is probably quite small. Additional thanks to Dave Smith, and thanks to all others who have helped.

Nigel Barrett – Sites (standing down)

Nigel took over half way through the year when Teresa stood down. It was a stressed year getting it together again. Nigel produced a 3 page report of all the sites. Not a lot of complaints this year. However, two complaints from Lord Gage because they had to call shoots off with people flying. They had forgot to notify Nigel of the dates the second time, so we didn't get into trouble. Suggestion that they should put up a large sign really, but they were worried there might be objectors to the shoot within the club.

Costs - this year quite an increase, especially Caburn, gone from £400 to £800. Issue about council tax for the car park- before it wasn't official, now its included. Nigel has been going for longer licences, managed to get 3 years for Caburn. First increase for 10 years; Firle-Bo Peep gone up by £100; High and Over renegotiated.

Firle Bo-Peep has produced an extra bill for something that wasn't payed a few years ago - the person is hard to get hold of, the club has payed the amount to keep them happy, but still trying to investigate it. Caburn west is the other side of the bowl above Airworks.

Nigel will be standing down again.

NT trying to get a licence for DD, we are fighting it since historical situation, DaveM found some legalities about it. Also NT bought Ditchling from the farmer, same people has High and Over, not yet paid, but eventually it will have to be paid for.

Dave - Council assured that we wouldn't have to pay for it - and 30 years means we have legal rights for it. Also NT act says they must open communal land for leisure, and cannot charge for something free before they acquired the land. At Southern Clubs BHPA meeting asked Adrian Bishop to find out what our legal rights actually are. Always loads of different NT offices to deal with. H&O actually called "Frog Firle"! Tried this a few years ago too. They dangled a licence for Newtimber as a new site if we licence DD. When owner game Newtimber, covenant said no air sports though.

New sites - there are no real new sites that we don't have a history with. Too many bodies to go through - just underlines that we should take real care of the sites that we have. New site behind Firle still proceeding slowly though.

No comments about erosion on Caburn. Local land ownership article for Windsock.

Beachy head bird issue has now got lots of evidence to resist it for next renewal. Head of Hawk and Owl Trust has given info that they breed in Blasting Quarries.

Dyke purchase on hold a because of the potential expansion of Shoreham.

Nigel thanked everyone for all their help in the past - he hopes he's standing down for real this year!

Neil Brennan-Wright & Dave Burgess- Social and PG Competitions

The Christmas party was organised after Christmas to make it less stressful - it went quite well, only the food was disappointing. There are problems getting a venue, most places don't want over 30 people, and want to do their own food. For the summer do, we are intending to do something at the bottom on Caburn with our own food organised, maybe a catering contractor. One of the people living there is very pro-PG too. Also people at bottom of Caburn training slope (Phil Norris) may allow us to use a barn. Or maybe do it not at a flying site at all - avoid upsetting people at a site.

British Clubs Competition - last year there was lots of bad weather, and we eventually got to the semi finals, and lost on a couple of points. Didn't really get in on the bad weather spot landing comps properly. We have entered two Teams this year, one entirely of Daves!

Aiming to arrange more club weekends to go to other venues this weekend. Also looking for input on other events.

Half moon summer do was OK, but again late-comers didn't get food. They did it very efficiently though. Half the problem was that the chef wanted to finish early. It was very good from a family point of view - appreciated by those with young children. Maybe it could be OK as long as conditions for getting food are published.

Could keep numbers up by subsidising from the club membership fee. Also have 2/3 months notice of the events.

Aerotow - Will Greenwood

Johnny reported for Will. The Aerotow is going well. The new tug is operational, though currently undergoing some engine maintenance. Should be operational again in the first week of April.

Windsock & Website – Nick Cresswell & Andy Kirkland

Nick started the year as sub-editor, but picked it up in October after the five-month hiatus and has done well - thanks for all the encouraging comments (receiving rapturous applause from the room too). Only slight concern about being a HG and missing a PG voice. Appeal for more PG stories. Looking to recruit a PG editor to make it more relevant and inviting any comments on what's missing that should be included.

Postal dispatch of Windsock is now done by the printers, which will make the task of handing over the editorship at a later date much easier.

Nick has done a lot of work on the back-end of the Website, getting the database side of it operational so that people can access and update their own details. Members will be able to register as a user on the site, giving them access to some of the more sensitive content. More details in this issue of Windsock. There will be scope for members to take ownership of more of the content as well - things like safety and NOTAMS and competitions can be maintained.

Considering placing the forum inside the Website, so to restrict it to members only – feedback welcome.

Quality problems on Windsock have been addressed and resolved.

Always short of content - please write anything!

Coaching

Trevor left the area part-way through the year and thanks to Carlo for picking up where he left off.

Safety & Airspace- Michel Carnet (resigned)

Michel's report covered the fatal accident of Rowena Ellis, and was salutary about the many other incidents during the year.

He highlighted casual attitude of some members towards mid-air collisions, the over use of advanced gliders and flying in rough conditions. We have also had several avoidable accidents with pilots attempting aerobatic manoeuvres for SIV practice. All the classic incidents are still prolific as well.

He reminded people that any incident warrants filling in a report to the BHPA - forms are available from the schools and the BHPA Website - please do this to make your future flying safer!

There was a general discussion about ways to avoid mid-airs - should committee be more pro-active in asking questions afterwards. ***Address at the next committee meeting*** A resounding voice vote for bringing people in front of the committee. This hasn't happened in "living" memory - perhaps it should become a policy. Johnny called for show of hands and this was passed easily. The committee now has a mandate to do this.

Competitions – Paul Cryer (absent)

HG - nothing happened much last year. It needs someone to drag the team together and with the time available to pull the team - trouble is that the real comps people tend to be away in the summer. Rules allow one Nationals pilot and a bunch of amateurs. Paul Cryer is the officer at the moment, Johnny also offered to talk with him, and perhaps support this.

Secretary - Brian Brunswick

Brian thanked the rest of the committee as usual for keeping his job simple. He also put in a few words about the ease with which electronic communication leads to misunderstandings and heightened emotions - flame wars are not just an SHGC thing!

Election of new Committee

Proposers and Seconders are in parentheses followed by the vote result.

Chairman - Dave Massie (SS, RD) none against.

Treasurer - Peter Campbell (MB, NH) none against.

Membership - Jack Chapman (Nick, Steve Purdy) none against.

Sites Officer - Windy John Lancaster (absent) (Chris Drayton, Simon Steel) none against.

Social - Dave Burgess + Neil Brennan-Wright (JC, SS) none against.

Aerotow - Will Greenwood (absent) (DM, DB) none against.

Windsock - Nick Cresswell (BB, MB) none against.

Website - Andy Kirkland (absent) (DM, NC) none against.

Coaching - Tim King (SS, Nigel) vs Carlo Borsatino (absent) (Steve, Chris) Tim won by 24 to 7.

Safety - Ian Greyland (DM, SS) none against.

PG Comps, Schools liaison - Neil Brennan-Wright + Dave Burgess (DM, DR) none against.

HG Comps - Paul Cryer helped by Johnny (MB, ?) none against.

Secretary - Brian Brunswick (JC, Neil) none against.

XC league - June Sage (DM, Nigel) none against.

Proposals

** John Stevens: Visitor fee should be £5 a day instead of £5 a weekend. Foreign nationals get free flying. Reason - to encourage more people to join the club.

There was a general discussion about whether we want to encourage more visitors. Some clubs have members only sites. Suggestion of a members only time of the year. It's difficult to judge numbers of visitors from the accounts because they aren't being paid in separately. It was said that we want people to contact us and obey site rules more than income - but this wasn't generally agreed. More concern about local non-members. The £5 for the weekend has been an unofficial largely discretionary thing anyway.

There was a vote on £5 a day strictly enforced - it was passed by a 2 to 1ish vote of the meeting.

Discussion continued - it's difficult to know what to do about the rogue flyers though. Perhaps make the Dyke members only to clarify the rules. The problem is with people that are friends with the members already flying. Perhaps we should be making names public. Problem with schools instructors too. Name and shame worked well a few years ago. Quite a lot of support. It was agreed that this will reappear in Windsack.

** John Stevens - To make members renew promptly, XC tables should only allow entries from members.

It's already supposed to be that way, it just needs enforcing. Dave was doing the league pro tem last year, and apologised for missing this check.

There was a vote on "Pilots must be a member when they do the flights". (People do get one month's leeway before their membership lapses though.) It was passed with none against.

Any Other Business

There was thanks to Chris Joel who has been doing the club meetings at Seaford.

Close

The meeting finished at 9:40, after which we retired to the Bar.

See you next year.

SKY SYSTEMS LTD

66 Woodbourne Avenue, Brighton BN1 8EJ

Tel: 01273 556695 E: office@skysystems.co.uk

ALPINE FLYING & ST. HILAIRE FESTIVAL Our 2004 Alpine Visit : 13-20 September

Alpine adventures for thermal-hungry CP's and upwards - guiding, retrieves, B&B accommodation - a great holiday with the added attraction of a visit to the St. Hilaire Masquerade flying festival and film festival - one of the highlights of the paragliding calendar.
GREECE IN OCTOBER! Earmark a couple of lovely autumn weeks for our return to the Mount Olympus area, for great flying, companionship, and great fun... *details on our website*

PARAMOTORING - we can advise on the suitability of your existing wing for powered flight, and also help you to achieve the BHPA "FLPA" rating. Prices for ADVENTURE paramotor units start at just £3299, as an add-on to an existing wing. Adventure's own Speedoo and X-Presso wings are available from £1599 as dedicated paramotor canopies.



We stock kites by ozone :
the LITTLE DEVIL traction kite from £166, the IMP Trainer/Kid's kite for just £54



UPGRADING?

We can offer **great deals** on **part-exchange** for your old **DHV-1 glider**. If you are looking to upgrade, give us a call to discuss your requirements. We are also able to offer part-exchange deals on **all kinds** of harnesses, from beginner to advanced. **Bring 'em in!**

NOW IN STOCK :
GRADIENT GOLDEN AIRWAVE SPORT 2

Our showroom is open from **9.00 to 5.30, Monday to Saturday**. We are situated *en-route* from Devil's Dyke to Mount Caburn or Bo Peep - drop down from the A27 on the Ditchling Road heading into Brighton, then turn right into Woodbourne Avenue...

www.skysystems.co.uk

Equipment

One step Forward and two steps Back

By Nick Cresswell

How to spend ALL of your money without ruining your flying!

There's nothing like a new glider to add a bit of excitement to the 'off' season. Having recently moved up to a topless flex-wing, I thought I'd share some of my thoughts and experiences of upgrading my wing with some tips and guidance for anyone considering doing the same.

In February this year, I swapped a bunch of money for a new Airborne Climax2. I'd had my eye on a new glider for sometime and the Climax seemed to satisfy a number of criteria, but more about those later. The Climax is the third glider I've owned and the first topless (model) I've had the pleasure of!

Changing your glider can be a big deal for many reasons. Sometimes these reasons are financial and sometimes they are based on confidence, especially if you've been flying a particular wing for sometime. An intermediate wing, such as the first one that you own is usually very forgiving, allowing you some scope for error as you learn to turn efficiently, locate lift and land reasonably accurately. My first wing, a Pacific Airwave Vision gave me all of those things. It was reassuringly light in pitch and roll, landed nice and slowly and gave me a good twenty hours of pleasant soaring. I had my first taste of thermalling in this glider, during which time, my confidence boomed.

So why did I ever give up my intermediate wing? Good question. There are many reasons why people change gliders. Some people believe a better performance wing will get them to the top of the stack, whilst some believe a new wing will introduce new challenges - and then some feel that their current wing is preventing them from progressing in some way. Without criticising anyone's reason for buying new gear, I'll simply say that I first upgraded because I felt my current wing was holding my flying back. Although easy to fly etc, my plucky intermediate glider was a bit slow and I was finding myself getting pinned back in high winds and a bit short of glide when trying to



get to the next thermal.

Back then (and indeed now), I still considered myself a learner, so rather than part with thousands of pounds for a new wing, I scouted around for a good second hand one. This turned out to be an Airborne Shark, a high-performance king-posed glider from around 1997. Reasonable condition and very cheap - perfect! The first thing I noticed when I flew it was how much more on-the-ball I had to be to control it. My old intermediate could easily be made to turn at any speed, but with the Shark, this ease seemed much more dependent on airspeed. This didn't seem too much of a problem as I bumbled along the ridges of the south-downs, but on my next trip to France, flying in thermic conditions, I was in for a real shock.

I must've spent an hour scratching around the take-off at Anney trying to get away. Paragliders and other HGs were sailing off and up, whilst I shamefully struggled to maintain a few hundred feet above the take-off. My confidence took an enormous battering that day and I landed feeling depressed and embarrassed; I even considered jacking it all in. The real problem was that my turns just weren't efficient. Every time I tried to turn back into lift, I lost height, either because I was flying too slowly or I was fighting the glider. I thought about my previous year's flying in Anney on my Intermediate and how much better it had seemed to be. I thought that maybe I'd changed glider too early. Even if this was true, I had to do something about it and I wasn't about to take a backward step.

Accepting that there was a lot more to this Flying business than I'd previously thought, I bought a book. Performance Flying by Dennis Pagen still enjoys prime position on my coffee table and I refer to it regularly. Reading the Author's insights into controlled turns, handling characteristics and all of that good stuff really helped me to deconstruct what I was doing. Armed with a better

understanding of how my actions in the air affected my overall performance, I began to tweak and tune-out many of the bad habits I had accumulated in twenty hours on an intermediate wing.

The next forty or fifty hours spent on my Shark represented a phase of enormous improvement. Efficient and controlled turns were becoming instinctive, landings were improving all the time and I was gaining confidence to try new things or to push-the-envelope - as is the cliché. However, the one thing that really helped to consolidate all of these things was learning to Aerotow. During a tow-launch, everything happens much faster and you're called upon to apply each skill with much more precision, tenacity and control.

So things seemed to be going well. My thermalling technique was improving, I could control the glider at speed much better, I hadn't broken an upright in over a year and I was really enjoying my flying. But I felt something was missing.

During that particular flying season, I became conscious of some limitations to my flying that I could attribute to my glider. This was mainly to do with my glide between thermals. Although I could soar up to respectable altitudes, I was falling behind some of my peers in the hunt for the next piece of lift. Having recently got my first UK XC under my belt, I began to look at new gliders with a view to maximising my distance potential and to stay up there with the gaggle.

Time for a new glider then! At this point in my development, I felt I could move onto a topless glider with plenty of objectivity and without naive optimism of my previous transition. So was I being foolish? I *hoped* not!

I'd tried the Climax2 on Aerotow at Swanbrough at the end of last season. I knew I could fly it, land it and even tow with it, but I still had no idea whether it would improve my flying. One thing was clear though - and that was the enormous difference in glide performance. People had often remarked to me that with newer wings, pulling the bar back doesn't result in a big loss of glide. The glider certainly picks up speed, but I'm guessing that the polar curve of newer topless wings is much flatter than with older designs. Later that year I tried three or four other topless examples but plumped for the Climax for the following reasons:

- It looks nice (most important is that!)
- It's easy to land as it has a large flare-window

- Flex wing tips give it a slightly shorter packing length (fits in my flat)
- I got to test it on the hill and on tow and found it agreeable in both contexts
- Peer approval (lots of positive comments from other pilots)
- Very keenly priced compared with other gliders in it's class
- Good spares availability in the UK
- A trustworthy UK sales source

Without providing an exhaustive list, it's easy to see that many reasons for buying a particular wing are not related to its flying characteristics.

I've had the Climax for two months and managed to rack up about six hours. Not bad, given the weather of 2004 so far. Those first few hours have been all about getting to know it's handling and it's quirks. It feels different from the Shark in three ways. Firstly it's obvious that it glides better. A quick glance at the vario shows this as one pulls on speed. Secondly, it's much lighter in pitch, which makes turning quite interesting as my first tendency was to push the bar right out in a turn (wrong move). Finally, it's roll characteristics are quite lively; initiating a turn in the Climax begins with the glider rolling slowly then suddenly before you know it it's banked right up. At first I thought the glider had a strong tendency to high-side, but as I've learned to anticipate the change in roll-rate, I find I can catch it at just the right point and initiate some very slick turns without the need to high-side.

It's very early days and my current assessment just scratches the surface of what there is to learn. Still, I hope this has given some other pilots a few insights into the reasons and decisions one encounters as they continue to upgrade their wings.

Safe Flying.

Attention ALL Members

The Devil's Dyke Marshalling System

Area Definitions

- The Main Area, in front of the Dyke Pub and car park
- The Hang Gliding Paddock, between the fence and the old brick ruin
- The Modellers' Bowl
- The Bowl
- Fulking Hill
- The Bottom Landing area

Why a marshalling system?

- Devil's Dyke is a popular and very busy flying site.
- Overcrowding and risk of collision.
- Restricting launching is the only workable way to control numbers in the air.
- Nominated marshalls as used in the past could not always be relied on to turn up.
- Every member is now a marshall.

How does it work?

The Dyke Marshalling system was introduced in May 2003 and can be used every day of the week. It revolves around restricting launching from the main area only, in a modular and flexible way to suit traffic and flying conditions as they develop.

Marshals are not rostered anymore. Instead, members present on the hill take it in turns to wear up to three bright yellow waistcoats.

There is a hinged white board combined with a windssock pole that can be moved around. This is called the Marshalling Post.

Coloured windssocks are used in the same way as traffic lights:

Green Windssock - Free for all, same as no windssock.

Amber Windssock - Launching in the main area is only permitted to the right (North-East) of the Marshalling Post. The rest of the main area is purely for landing.

Red Windssock – No launching from anywhere in the red area

Notes

Marshals can switch between windssocks to regulate overcrowding as is deemed necessary. They can also move the Marshalling Post to the left or right as required, or forward if it is windy.

In the Amber mode, launching pilots will only have traffic on their left and have the choice to either go straight out unhindered or to turn left to join the ridge soaring circuit. Soaring pilots must avoid flying in front of the restricted launch.

HGs or red ribbons can request dedicated periods which will be announced on the board, for which the Marshals restrict launching to reduce the numbers airborne.

When the Red windssock is showing, there will be NO launching from the Main Area, but pilots are free to launch and land in the bowl, on Fulking Hill or along towards Truleigh Hill, but must avoid flying in front of both the main area and the HG Paddock.

Fulking Hill is not an official Club site and although the odd landing there is tolerated, we must try to avoid launching from there. The same applies to the whole Northerly ridge, until you reach Truleigh Hill.

HGs are always allowed to launch and land in the HG paddock. PGs are reminded that they cannot relaunch from the HG paddock and that they should only transit in front of it, leaving a clear HG landing overshoot.

Do not fly in the Modellers' Bowl even when no models are being flown.

Right hand 360s only below 1,500' amsl. It is bad airmanship to thermal low through busy ridge soaring traffic and to expect others to give way.

A large white X-shape in the front of the main area is the signal for immediate landing, probably because of an incoming rescue helicopter. Pilots must bottom land if top landing is busy or difficult.

Whenever Club Coaches are present on weekends, there will be an 11:00 briefing by the Marshalling Post for those who want to attend. Weather conditions can be discussed as well as any advice for red ribbons, new members, Notams, XC potential, words of wisdom etc... Small groups may decide to move to other less crowded sites such as West Firle, Ditchling or Truleigh Hill.

Conclusion

This marshalling system relies heavily on airmanship from ALL members to make it work. Anyone can be a Marshal and by taking turns no one should lose out – together, we can make the Dyke a safer place to fly!

Away

Annecy Sky Systems Trip, 15-22 September 2003

Written & Compiled by Malcolm Lamming

Pics by Malcolm Lamming, Dave Hairs, Irwyn Hehu and from <http://www.coupe-icare.org/indexuk.php> (click "Concours photos", "Voir", "VOIR LES SELECTIONS").

Part 2

(The maquerade described in Feb Windssock was later in the week). The holiday really started at Col de la Forclaz on the evening of Monday 15th Sept. This take-off is at 4000 feet, west-facing, at the south-east end of lake Annecy:



All I managed was a delayed top to bottom, while Michel Carnet on an Ozone Peak DHV1 and Kingsley Wood on some yellow/blue canopy went up and up.

(Kingsley Wood, a South African who now lives, works and flies in Seattle, Washington state (see www.seattleparagliding.com), arrived early with real American John Hawk who went home after the weekend. Apparently there are only 6000 paragliders in the USA. Perhaps the BHPA should encourage regime change. They flew the Saleve on the Saturday (see punishment-for-failure-is-death launch site webcam at www.paradelta.ch/live/webcam.php). Bottom landing closest to cable-car is easy to find - right between motorway, railway and power lines (to be fair, there are other more benign bottom landings, on both French and Swiss sides of the border - so you can make an in-flight decision whether to abort a smuggling trip).

We went back to Col de la Forclaz on Tuesday afternoon, when the west-facing slopes had heated up again in the continuous sunshine. After failing to gain any height on the Monday, tried flying closer to the trees and rock faces, about half a wingspan away I suppose. This worked, but was pushing my luck, Kingsley pointed out an instructor in Washington had a serious accident flying like this when the side of the wing closer to the cliff collapsed, so he veered into the rock-face before having time to correct, snagged some lines, and swung into the cliff face at some speed.

My outward flight roughly follows the blue line on the photo. I used the Rocher du Roux overhanging cliff just to my right of take-off to get to 5300 feet, and thought about how much height I would lose jumping the 2k gap north to Lanfonnet. Decided to find out. It was indeed down all the way, hit other side below tree line at about 4500 feet, mostly concentrating on places to land in the dense forest at this point, but encouraged by the way all the leaves were waving in the wind. The lift really was ground-hugging, I hit no lift until I was 50 feet away from it, then it only took about 4 beats to rise above the tree line, all the way up the Lanfonnet cliff, and above the top of it at 5800 feet. Surprised by how thin the "cliff" was, more of a bread-knife, and slightly cautious about being "blown" behind it into "rotor", before realising there was no horizontal wind to blow me there, no rotor, it was all just up.

Air quite bumpy higher up, two medium tucks, maybe was getting tired and not flying actively enough, maybe just not good enough to begin with, move out into valley, but here air both bumpy and 400-600 feet/min down, presumably replacing the air I had used to get up. Retreat to devil I know at Lanfonnet, continue 1k north to Dents de Lanfon (see end of blue line on photo in direction of arrow, paragliders had landed on the col there to picnic) where air even more bumpy. Turn back, all the way back to take-off (though considerably above it), bottom land Doussard village (roughly directly below the position of the glider in the photo who is taking the photo). Apparently Kingsley went on past Dents de Lanfon but came down in middle of jumping next gap to Mont Baret. He has about 300 hours (I had 50 at this point), I ask him if collapses become less frightening. He says "It never gets any easier".

That evening at Maison du Moulin, we learnt about Irwyn's unfortunate accident in spring 2003 at Interlaken in Switzerland. The photo opposite shows him moments before impact on the valley floor.

As a result, Irwyn currently has a metal bridge between two of his vertebrae, taking all pressure off the broken one between them while it heals. He had an ASI (you can see the trailing probe), it recorded 96kph max, although it could have been affected by the crash. As for Irwyn's lessons learnt from the impact, his advice was "Don't fly in bad air, and don't carry large rigid objects". Irwyn now claims to have lap-dancing lessons every morning, by which I assume he means physiotherapy.



As a result, Irwyn has had to cut back his flying, doing simple top-to-bottoms like the one on the last page from Aiguille du Midi in Chamonix at 12500 feet. He did this on 17th September. Around a week later, he did it again, with an inconvenient but thin layer of cloud between him and the valley bottom, shown below from inside it.





We did not fly from Aiguille du Midi, but instead from the much safer Planpraz launch below the summer snowline at the first cable-car stop at 7600 feet. We mostly came for view and gentle flight down. I got all of 55 feet above take-off.

Irwyn, in his characteristic blunt style, mentioned the following advice when he sent me the photos: "There's nothing really scary about flying from the Aiguille du Midi but you must have good technique. Two guys died between these two photos when they fluffed their take-off. There are the effects of altitude to contend with as well as deepish snow. As always it's worth having someone along who knows what they are doing."

As reported in November 2003 edition of Skywings, the two guys were New Zealander Pete Groundsell and Briton Paul McLeod.

As further demonstration of the potential dangers of mountain flying, even at this less thermally energetic time of year, while the flight down from Planpraz was smooth enough, the valley wind at the bottom (the only type of horizontal wind we met all week) had increased enough to make the trees wave around quite a lot, but was constrained to perhaps the bottom 200-400 feet. It is important to find (a) where, for this particular 5 minutes, is upwind of landing field?, and (b) to do most of the final descending there. One of our party, Alex, was deceived by the low windspeed higher up, did one 360 too many and realised he wouldn't make it, tried in a hurry to land in an other clearing in woods downwind, and broke his wrist. He said that distance perception through his bi-focal glasses was also a contributory factor.

We rapidly got Alex to the excellent Chamonix hospital, and Dave Hairs kindly stayed with him while we went back to the landing field to gather up the rest of the group except Kingsley, who had apparently wandered off saying something about beer. We found him emerging from a building with the sign "MBC", which I had noticed earlier but

vaguely assumed was some sort of local radio station, I had made the mental association with the real "Middle-East Broadcasting Corporation", so maybe this was "Music Broadcast Chamonix". It turned out to be "Micro-Brasserie Chamonix" ("brasserie" = brewery). Kingsley had very sociably brought a couple of family-size coke bottles full of its beer with him, which after the events of the day really hit the spot. Alex is now safely back in England with his wife, and reports he can probably fly again in January.

Irwyn and Joan bought Maison du Moulin in 1997, in the normal way with a mortgage from a French bank. The bank offered a rate of interest of, I don't know, 4%, but was at pains to say that the interest rate could not rise by more than 1% a year. Irwyn asked "How can you possibly promise that?" The French banker shrugged, indicated the owned-mortgaged masses around him with his upturned palms, and said dismissively "They'd burn the bank down."

The www.maison-du-moulin.co.uk website has detailed maps of long xcs that have been done around lake Annecy, showing where the lift is at what time of day. Below is the shortest one.



...to be continued if absolutely necessary

(ed: oh, but it is Malcolm)

Large Black Clouds

Why would anyone have wanted to fly at the Dyke on Sunday 7th, or anywhere else in Sussex that day?

Could it be because of Wendy Windblows? Nowadays you see some members' decisions based purely on numbers spelt out by a robotic female voice. I have even seen someone on top of the Dyke dialling Wendy on their mobile phone to get a reading to decide whether it is on or not (ed: guilty as charged your honor)!!

Could it be because of their handheld windmeters? Is wind-speed the only factor to take into account?

Could it be that there were not enough clues in the sky? Our ancestors would have probably believed that the Gods were really peed off today and virgins would have been sacrificed (ed: if you can find one on the Dyke on a Sunday - sorry)!

I would advise some of our members to learn at least one Latin word:

"Cumulonimbus"

- Sounds a bit like cunnilingus
- Not compatible with any aviation, leave alone pg or hg
- Looks like this: <http://www.chitambo.com/clouds/cloudshtml/calvus.html>
- Abbreviation "CB"

The wise pilot did not was te a journey and stayed at home. After all, this is why God invented the Playstation!

When signs in the sky are confusing or misleading, aviation forecasts are a good place to find out about CBs:

<http://www.thehangar.co.uk/metars/index.php> - select Shoreham

When the BBC forecast shows a white cloud with both sunshine and a black rain drop, then this is a clue to very unstable airmass prone to CBs. A snowflake or a lightning symbol is an even bigger clue.

Convection early in the morning is a bad sign.

There is no substitute to learning about meteorology and/or Latin (ed: or cunnilingus surely – sorry again)!

Summary of Latin lesson #1:

Cumulonimbus = BAD
Cumulus = GOOD
Cunnilingus = GOOD

Please be careful

MICHEL CARNET

You don't have to be Mad to fly here...

On Saturday on the Dyke (which dodgem-car event I watched from a Boeing from Toulouse to Gatwick), I was reminded of an experiment on rats reported by New Scientist magazine, where a closed cave-and-tunnel system had increasingly more rats introduced to it. At first everything was OK, rat tribes respected their boundaries. But once the rat density got beyond a certain point (we are talking a crowded Saturday on Oxford Street), aggression became spontaneous - two rats see each other and they fight.

My grandfather was shot down by a German conscript in 1917/1918. Someone who was actually trying to kill him, on purpose not by accident. His injuries were treated by a German doctor, with whom he made friends and maintained a correspondence for years afterwards. One leg became 6 inches shorter than the other. My grandfather was presented a medal by Prince Charles not long before his death.

So now we live in a free country.

Was it worth it?

When I fly DD I scoot off towards Truleigh ASAP. I don't personally accept that if it is too crowded then I should not take off. This is the British Rail approach. If I don't get to fly then I will eat an other neighbour. I do think that we should increase capacity, especially if we lose DD to Shoreham ATZ in 3 years.

You don't get freedom for free.

As I may have mentioned in the past, I love you all.

Malcolm Lamming (mammal just like rats are).

p.s. I don't wish to devalue the word "love", so tangential as this may seem, if anyone has photos of mugs (yes coffee mugs, tea cups, related paraphernalia, especially yellow ones with blue flowers with red centres on) in unusual/special surroundings, including in-flight, then please send them to me. If you have seen the film "Amelie", where a garden gnome goes walkabout, or just if you have been in love, then you will understand (unless you're like my neighbours, in which case you know what will happen).

Take care out there

MALCOLM LAMMING

An Ode to Springtime

The rapid increase in temperature will cause heavy rain and strong winds. My lawn will resemble a rain forest. The birds will be twittering away at some un-godly hour in the morning and wake me up long before my brain was designed to function. They will with uncanny accuracy cover my car with their droppings, so that I will be unable to tell which is the outside or the inside.

My boss has decided to banish me to the flat lands of Cambridgeshire for best part of the spring. This is his attempt to curb my habit of going on afternoon site visits as soon as the clocks are put forward.

On the afternoons I do manage to escape from work, the sea breeze will undoubtedly kick in one second after I have checked the wind machine. And if I do get it right, I will have the pleasure of flying with hoards of people, most of whom look like they are trying to follow a bearing on a magnetic compass at the north pole!

If that was not enough, there are those things called thermals to deal with. Best avoided in my opinion as they cause an increase in the wash load when you get home and all that buttock clenching can't be good for you.

ROLL ON THE WINTER!

Jack Chapman

Sport Adventura

French Pyrenees

Sport Adventura

Thermic Flying & XC Guiding to a big range of sites Private Swimming Pool

Airport Pick up Bed, Breakfast & Evening Meal

Transport & Retrieves

Southern Club Members Week
5th-12th June only 250 Euros

We fly with the Griffons, enjoy great weather all year round, eat well everyday, and never tire of the spectacular scenery

We want to take you to the best places in the Pyrenees so that you can enjoy it too...

All Other Weeks €350

www.Sport-Adventura.com
Tel: 00 33 561 95 14 77

Sport Adventura

Sport Adventura

The Ever Popular Brighton Run

Personally I (sky-blue/white/sky-blue Airwave wing) set out at about 10:30, made Saltdean gap by skin of my teeth, would have made commiseration gestures to sole bombed-out pilot (with long dark slightly frizzy hair) on (sunny) beach but was kinda busy, sorry.



Successfully waved to around 3 pilots who had already made marina and were coming back, crossed marina wall at around 11:20, where it was turbulent and lift gave up on me, or more precisely a bulldozer was too close to me for me to hug cliff as closely as I would have liked, bombed out on beach. Probably would have done without bulldozer, but what is it doing working on Sunday? This would never happen in France.

Walked east a mile, just past roundabout near St. Dunstons building, found small take-off ridge between fence and road not subject to turbulence, room for one medium mistake before being blown onto road. Took off first attempt, really no turbulence, flew most of way back to Newhaven, high above Saltdean gap. Wind at Newhaven looked now too west so went back west-wards for more air time. Bombed out on sunny beach after failure to cross Saltdean gap this second time, was not alone, sunshine and waves rather idyllic.



Walked up to study aerology of west-facing slope on cliffs to east of Saltdean gap for potential launch. These studies were interpreted by two passing pilots (Dave Massie + A N Other) as attempts to launch. Now I know how it feels to be Johnathan Livingston Seagull (author Johnathan Bach). Thank you very much Dave + ANO for this, I realise you were trying to keep me alive in the absence of the same apparent desire in myself. Wind appeared to be laminar and consistently up slope at ground level, rather than wildly varying as it usually is at the top of a cliff, but both of two inflations had wing crumpling up above 10 feet, so came to conclusion flow was not laminar today, which I guess you already knew. Just trying to adapt, improvise and overcome.



So I am still not a Brighton runner, but I understand quite a few other pilots are after today. Respect.

Malcolm Lamming.



Announcement from the London Wing

Hi,

The usual reminder to all London based pilots:

It is nearly the end of the month and despite the crap weather there are still paradinking (and hang-drinking?) opportunities available! You are all invited to the London Wing meeting on Monday (the 23rd of February) starting at 7.30pm, although some of us will be in the bar earlier :-).

We will have the usual beer and chat and a Q & A session - any volunteers to give a talk either this month or in the future?

The meeting is at Blue Posts in Newman Street, near Tottenham Court Road tube - it is an excellent venue (a large room over the pub with its own bar).

Future meetings will be on the last Monday of every month (except December, when there isn't one), so book the following dates in your diaries:

- 26th April 2004
 - 31st May 2004
- etc.

The full address is:

The Blue Posts
81 Newman St,
W1
near Tottenham Court Road
Tel: 020 7637 8958

2004 Competition Calendar

Discipline	Date	Event	Location	Contact
Accuracy	17 - 18 Apr	Sky Lincs (PC)	N Luffenham	Ann Underwood - 01964 543883
HG	1/2/3 May	British HG Open	Yorkshire Dales (t.b.c.)	Class 1 and 5 John Aldridge
HG	28 May - 1 Jun	Mid-Wales/Long Mynd Open (Open HG Series)	t.b.c.	John Aldridge
Accuracy	29 - 31 May	Green Dragons - Euro Cup (PP)	Woldingham	Andy Shaw - 01883 652666
HG	13 - 19 Jun	Class 1 National Championship	Milleau	John Aldridge
HG	27 Jun - 3 Jul	Inter Services Championship	Crickhowell, SE Wales	Dave Fenwick
PG	11 - 17 Jul	Inter Services Championship	Crickhowell, SE Wales	Dave Fenwick
Accuracy	24 - 25 Jun	Birdwings Summer Fun (PC)	South Cerney	Arthur Bentley
Accuracy	28 - 30 Aug	Accuracy Nationals (PC)	t.b.c	Derek Godfrey
HG	27 - 31 Aug	Black Mountains Open (Open Series)	Crickhowell, SE Wales (t.b.c.)	John Aldridge

Note: Only Confirmed events are shown above. For a full listing of planned events for 2004, please visit: <http://www.bhpa.co.uk> and select the Competitions item from the margin-menu.

Enter flight in the SHGC Hang Gliding or Paragliding XC leagues

You must be a paid-up member of the SHGC in order to log an xc flight
Rules and other information overleaf

BHPA Number	Name
Address	Phone No (preferably mobile)
Type of Glider Paraglider Dual Paraglider Hang Glider Dual Hang Glider	
Glider Make (manufacturer's name)	Glider Model (name and size)
Type of Flight Open distanced Flight to declared goal Dog-leg Out and return FAI Triangle Non-FAI Triangle Failed Triangle Competition Task	Type of Launch Hill Winch Aero-tow
	Take off time
	Duration of Flight

Launch and Landing

	Launch details	Landing details
Location		
Grid Ref		
Witness		
Address		
Phone		
Validation		

Additional Turnpoints (for out and returns, triangles, or dog-leg)

	Start and Goal	Turnpoint 1	Turnpoint 2
Location			
Grid Ref			

Send completed forms to June Sage, Gaterounds Farm, Newdigate, Dorking, Surrey RH5 5AJ
or june@gaterounds.co.uk

If you do not receive confirmation of your flight within 2 weeks text me on 0 77 66 525 789

See overleaf for Rules.....

Rules of the SHGC Hang Gliding and Paragliding XC Leagues

Entry to the SHGC XC league is open to all paid-up members of the SHGC. All Flights (except for the Martini League) must start from a SHGC site by hill, tow or aero-launch. Flights must be flown for the majority of the time out of ridge lift. Flights must be flown in the 12 month period between 1 November and 31 October. Pilots must personally submit their flight details within one calendar month. Although all of a pilot's flights are recorded only the 6 best flights count. The league is open to all classes of hang gliders and paragliders. When more than one glider is used, the wing with the most distance is listed. Dual gliders are allowed but only the pilot in command scores. Take off and landing witnesses are recommended, in order to prove a flight when challenged. Witnesses are NOT allowed for turnpoints. It is the pilot's responsibility to provide GPS evidence of turnpoints (the tracklog is only valid while it remains on the GPS – DO NOT DOWNLOAD IT TO A PC as this will not be allowable as evidence). More than one entry may be possible from a single flight, as long as each entry has its separate complete sequence GPS track. Ordnance Survey co-ordinates in the form "AB123456" are required for the launch/start points, any turnpoints and the landing/finish points (nothing else will do!). When reading OS co-ordinates from GPS, ensure the Datum is set to "OS grid" or "British grid", rather than the default "WGS84". Pilots who fly xc beneath airspace with a lower limit below 2,500ft must submit altitude data (barograph trace or 3D tracklog) for their flight to be valid. Tracklogs must be submitted within one month of the flight concerned. All flights must comply with current airspace regulations and restrictions. Pilots crossing Class-D airspace must send a letter explaining how they negotiated authorised access with a photocopied map of flight track with relevant altitudes. Cheating will result in public disqualification. Pilots wishing to protest another pilot's poor airmanship or cheating should do so within one month of the flight concerned. The SHGC Committee members are the final referees.

Permissible types of flight

Open Distance - flights will score straight-line distance from start point to the end point.

Flight to Goal - similar to Open Distance but the goal must be declared by the pilot prior to launch.

Dog-legs - commence at a start point, go round a turnpoint and carry on to the end point. The turnpoint is permitted to allow pilots to avoid airspace, or make a substantial change in direction for some other valid reason.

Out & Returns - commence at a start point, go round a turnpoint, and end at the original start point (coordinates of start and goal are identical). If start/goal point is different to launch/landing points, flight distance is distance from start, to turnpoint and back.

FAI Triangles - commence at a start point, go round two turnpoints, and return to original start point (coordinates of start and goal are identical). The triangle must conform to FAI 28% rule (shortest leg of the triangle must be at least 28% of total distance around triangle). If start/goal is different to the launch/landing points flight distance is distance from start, around the turnpoints and back.

Flat Triangle - a triangular flight as above, except it does not conform to the FAI 28% rule.

Failed Triangle - an attempt at a triangular flight where the pilot fails to make it back to the start point.

Score is distance from start around turnpoints and back towards finish.

Competition Tasks - flights around a number of turnpoints and on to a declared goal. Attracts the same multiplier as goal flights. If pilot fails to make goal total distance achieved is scored as for Open Distance.

Multipliers for Different Flight Types

Open distance, Dog-legs, Failed Triangle, Competition (goal not reached)	Total distance x 1
Flight to Goal, Competition Tasks	Total distance x 1.25
Out & Return, Flat Triangle	Total distance x 2
Pre-declared Out & Return, Pre-declared Flat Triangle	Total distance x 2.5
FAI Triangle	Total distance x 3
Pre-declared FAI Triangle	Total distance x 3.75

The SHGC Hang Gliding and Paragliding xc leagues

Sussex League	All flights from SHGC sites
Sussex Weekend League	As above but on a weekend or Bank holiday (these flights will also be entered in the Sussex League)
Martini League	Flights from any site in the UK

African Adventure

Winching in De Aar & Other Stuff

By Paul Penning



I wasn't quite sure what the whole winching thang was all about. Seen a few debates on the SHGC forum but that was just about as far as my knowledge went. Always thought the whole concept was a bit odd and I suppose I was also a bit apprehensive about the thought of being hoisted into the air while still attached to terra firma.

I heard about the SAN Flatland Challenge comp in De Aar on a South African forum and decided that it was time for me to find out what it was all about.

A friend's mother needed her Japanese import driven to Pretoria (SA) from Swakopmund, Namibia. Perfect. Their route: Swakopmund - Pretoria; Distance: 1800 km. My route: Swakopmund - Porterville - De Aar - Pretoria. Distance: 3000km. After a bit of negotiating they agreed to my detour.

I made arrangements with the people in De Aar for the conversion two weeks before the comp started. All sorted.

I packed the 4x4 and hit the road. My plan: Drive like hell until nightfall. Night driving can be risky, as animals tend to migrate towards the roads when it is dark. Hitting a Koedoe (it's a big buck with big twirly horns) at speed will, if you are very lucky only mean a new car. I eventually stopped after the SA border in a little town called Springbok some 12hours & 1300km later. I was pretty tired so headed for a quick dinner & then bed. Not so. The locals managed to convince me, under duress of course, to sample Springbok at night. I left the next morning with a "moerse"¹ headache. 4 hours later I was in Porterville.

I spent three days there flying two. Managing a 25km and a 45km XC. The last day was blown out so 10 of us went on a sightseeing drive through the beautiful Cedarberg Mountains via the town of Ceres (where the fruit juice comes from). Lots of childhood memories for me.

The next day as reluctantly as ever, I left Porterville and headed for Potties B&B in De Aar where Des and Arnold Pansi reside. Two English-German speaking ex-Airwave employees now living in the middle of the Karoo - go figure. "Die paar"² from De Aar operate the local PG airfield. Basically it is an unmanned light aircraft airstrip with a runway for every wind direction.

The B&B was comfy, en-suite with TV and kettle etc. It had a real a real European flavour, bar the swimming pool.

My conversion day saw friendly cu's in the distance towards the east, nil wind in the morning and a blue day around De Aar. "We'll have you sorted before lunch time," boasted Arnie. "Just have to fit the winch before we go". Fit the winch?? I'd winched as passenger on a sailplane near Banbury before and so in my minds eye I saw a big drum at the end of the airstrip far away from where I would clip in... A small but very tidy little device powered by a windscreen wiper motor that hooked onto the back of a "bakkie"³ was apparently all that was required. "Mmmm" I thought.

A thorough briefing before I clipped in to make sure I understood the whole process. It seemed that the most important thing was to keep ones glider square to the first few feet of line. "What

about lock-outs" I asked. "They can be a problem especially on static winches but I'll be watching you all the time and I will correct with the bakkie from the ground if things go that way". On my third winch they did (I still seem to have difficulty in telling my left from my right) and he did as promised. No worries.

The first winch was just to get use to the whole process. I am more comfortable with reverse so Des held the line to one side so that I could launch without any line tension. Inflate, turn and off I went. "A little left"... "A little right"... "Stay square" crackled Arnold's instructions over the radio as I got lifted towards the big blue sky. I released about 150m above the ground. Normal flying resumed. Well sort of... It was odd; there was no ridge, hill or mountain to contend with. Zero rotor, nothing to climb over, nothing to get blown over or fly into BUT also nothing to scratch along until you found something to help you up.

It quickly dawned on me that the trick to winching had actually very little to do with the launching process. It seemed that the key was the moment of release. I discussed this with Des & Arnold who told me that there were basically two strategies: Either release inside a thermal or stay on-line and get as high as you can and then start searching.

My morning conversion consisted of four more winches. Two forward and two reverse, assisted and unassisted. They explained why I needed to be able to do all the combinations: Forward for nil and strong winds and reverse for the middle of the road type stuff. "Yeah but we reverse launch in strong winds all the time in the UK. You can't do forward in strong winds" I commented. Arnold simply smiled and said: "wait for the comp..."

Forward launch involves resisting the line-pull until you cannot hold it anymore. Then go. You're air borne before you know it.

Reverse under tension in wind is slightly trickier as you cannot under-run the glider. You have a ¾ ton bakkie anchoring and trying to turn you at the same time.

I was sorted. Now all I had to do was to figure out how to get up from a ridge-less flat surface. "Don't worry," said Arnold "the comp will sort you".

The next day saw strong winds so I decided to leave for Pretoria a day early. I had a car to deliver. Whilst driving the remaining 800km my mind digested the events of the day before. I was amazed at how little stress winching created compared to ridge launches. It was something I

would never have expected.

Dropped the car off in Pretoria, saw my folks, did a bit of work, partied with some old (and new) friends and tied up with Newhaven locals Steve and Miranda for a two day trip to Rustenburg for flying and R&R. We stayed in a 4 sleeper self-catering chalet on a game farm close to take-off with a club-house, pool and a friendly but very inquisitive ostrich.

Plans for flying were quashed. It seemed that the South was paying the price for the record-breaking summer in Europe. I cannot remember seeing South Africa this green. Anyway, Instead of flying we went to a nearby game reserve for a spot of game viewing. Elephant, Rhino, Hippopotamus, Giraffe, a few warthog, loads of birds and a few species of buck took us to end of our Rustenburg adventure.

Steve, Miranda and sister were on their way to Cape Town via the Kwazulu Natal coastline and I had a comp to get to.

I arranged a lift down to De-Aar with three members of the Cloud-Busters flying clan. We managed to squeeze a 7-hour trip into a nineteen-hour journey. A spur of the moment "lets go sailplane flying for the day" delayed us a tad.

Sunday was a practice day. Karel Koster on his Avax flew the furthest, just short of his elusive maiden 100km. While he was preparing to launch I finally understood what windy meant and why Arnold smiled during my conversion. 4 People were holding the glider down as the thermals rocketed past!

The comp itself was classified as a FAI Cat 3 competition and is reputedly the 1st official winching comp in the world. That aside it had a definite British Paragliding Cup feel to it with the exception that some of SA's top dogs were also allowed to fly. 30 odd pilots entered the comp. Rupert Dodds and Simon Headford represented Britain.

The comp worked like this: Three launch gates and three bakkies at the ready. You could have as many winches as you liked providing that you landed within a 5km radius of the airstrip. However, you could not win on re-launch. You could only equal the furthest distance flown by a pilot getting away on his 1st winch.

If you landed near one of the main roads within the 5km radius, recovery would pick you up and cart you back. What a pleasure.

1: Moerse [muhrr sa!] = Very Big - taken from "Fresh Air Sites Guide" - Greg Hamerton

2: Paar [paahr] = Couple

3: Bakkie = Pick-up

The comp ran over 5 days with 5 tasks set and scored. The furthest distances were flown during the last task. An open distance, elapsed time race along two recovery axes. Nevil Hulett won

the day with a distance of 155km. Simon Heaford flew the furthest for the UK doing 122km earning him 3rd place. I ended up in joint seventh with a distance of 92km taking just over 2h30min.

Overall Results:

1. Nevil Hulett
2. Francois De Villiers
3. Karel Koster

Rupert Dodds ended in 6th place, me in 7th and Simon a bit lower down the order.

Flying De Aar in March is mainly downwind dash stuff with climbs starting at sub 1 m/s low down gradually increasing to 6 m/s and then slowly vanishing to zero again on blue days. Height gains ranged from 1500 to 2500m during the comp week.

Flying in high season (December, January) according to Arnold is "hold onto your socks" time. His advice for peak season flying: Bring a safe glider.

Nightlife was tremendously entertaining, ranging from hypnosis shows to drumming sessions to braai's to late night head shaving parties. Lots of laughing, loads of fun, excellent flying and beautiful landscapes; It was a real hoot.

Arnold summarised the event on one of SA's forums as follows:

"Well after 7 days flying, 7 days of drinking, 7 days winching, 5 days scoring, 6 days of providing breakfast & today washing linen...its all over."

I now have another favorite flying site in South Africa. The list is getting longer and longer...

Fly Safe,

Paul Penning



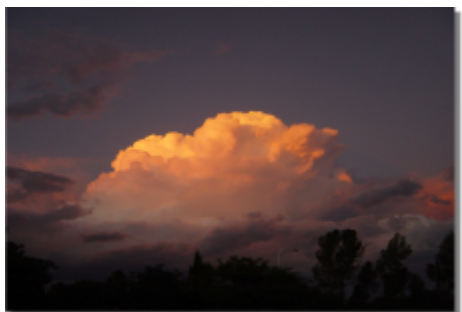
The winch on the back of the "Bakkie"



Porterville from the air



Rhino-spotting in Rustenburg



African Skies

Changes to the SHGC Website

The SHGC website has undergone a number of recent changes.

These include changes to the way the content is managed, the way members gain access to special content and how members keep their own details up to date. The reasons for these changes include:

- To make the content easier to update
- Spread the job of maintaining content among a number of people
- Manage our members' information more effectively

The most noticeable difference for each member is that each of you now has your own login name – which is the same as your SHGC number. So if your SHGC number is 6666, then your login name will be 6666.

You will also need a password. If you haven't done so already, you'll need to go to the site and register as a user in order to set your password. This is quite straightforward and a set of instructions are included below :

1. Go to www.shgc.org.uk and click on Register in the blue margin.
2. Enter Your First Name, Last Name and SHGC number in full, then click search
3. If your details are recognised, click on the link that says "This is me-Proceed".
4. View your details and change any inaccurate information. Click Save if you make any changes.
5. Click on the Address tab and check your address details. If you make any changes, click Save.
6. Click on the User Account tab and enter a password of your choice. Click Save.
7. You can now login to the site at any time by clicking on Member's Login in the blue margin.

Thanks

Andy Kirkland & Nick Cresswell (SHGC Webmasters)

PG Coaching



Tim King

Hi,

For those who don't know me I have been voted in as your new chief club coach. Here's a bit of background. I first flew micro lights in 1986, hangies in 1988 and then took up paragliding in '89.

I have been teaching paragliding full time from 1990 to the present. I now run a school called Flight Culture which is based in the South East and John Welch runs the Dorset branch in the south west. We specialise in overseas training courses, paragliding guiding tours and personal training from beginner upwards. You may well have read my 'how to be a better pilot' column in Skywings so if you see me on the hill, please feel free to ask about any problems you may be having on these subjects or any other.

The club coaching evenings will still be going ahead on the last Thursday of the month, presently at Seaford. Thanks to Chris Joel for organising some of the speakers. This month's talk will commence with Ian Grayland bestowing some of his intimate knowledge of the quirks of Beachy Head. I will be looking at trying to recruit more club coaches into the club environment. You can be helpful on the hill even if its just to educate new members about site rules and as your knowledge grows, so you can impart this onto others. Send me an email if you are interested in coaching - from any level.

I am running some educational residential paragliding courses to the Dune du Pyla in France in June and August. I will be there the week before my courses start, so if any SHGC members would like a subsidised guided week (10hrs airtime +) let me know and we can get a club week together - also useful if you are thinking of becoming a club coach or are already one.

The cumimbs and wind have been in abundance this last month, with some pilots taking unnecessary risks. We must not underestimate the power of these beasts. Many pilots have died or nearly died as a result of gust fronts or excessive altitude or turbulence that is associated with these storm clouds - so don't fly when they are about - simple as that. It's good to see a few people practising their ground handling skills on the hill. I have noticed Dave Smith working hard at these skills and I have noticed a massive improvement as a result of his efforts. I'm sure Dave now feels more confident on the ground and in the air - keep it up.

See you on the hill.

Tim King

Classifieds

Sellers Note: Any advertisements submitted will appear in the next available issue and will only be considered with valid SHGC and BHPA membership numbers (yes, we do check both lists). Repeat submission are available *only* if requested. Please submit any advertising material or repeat requests to the address(es) shown in the editor's section at the start of this magazine.

Buyers Note: The Southern Hang Gliding Cub accepts no responsibility or liability for the condition or price of any item shown or any incident arising from the purchase and/or use of any item featured in this section. (ed:- just so you know)

---||---

Stealth race harness: c/w side-mounted Apco Mayday 18HG chute. Would suit pilot around 6 feet tall. Chute has owner's manual and re-pack history. - £400 ono. Contact Clive Belbin on 020-8681-8693 (H), 0780-126-1468 (M) or email clivebelbin@beeb.net

Moyes SX4 (<100 hours): with owner's manual and batten profile USHGA CofA £1275 as is/£1400 stripped. Contact Clive Belbin on 020-8681-8693 (H), 0780-126-1468 (M) or email clivebelbin@beeb.net

Airwave Magic Kiss (quite nice): BHPA CofA with owner's manual £225 as is/£350 stripped. Contact Clive Belbin on 020-8681-8693 (H), 0780-126-1468 (M) or email clivebelbin@beeb.net

Airwave Magic Kiss (tatty): BHPA CofA £175 as is/£300 stripped. Contact Clive Belbin on 020-8681-8693 (H), 0780-126-1468 (M) or email clivebelbin@beeb.net

Solar Wings Ace 160 RX: BHPA CofA with owner's manual and batten profile - £125 as is/£250 stripped. Contact Clive Belbin on 020-8681-8693 (H), 0780-126-1468 (M) or email clivebelbin@beeb.net

Simba 2 medium 85-105 kg all up (Best flown heavy): Yellow with white under. Nicely tuned by present owner. Standard microlines and series 2 risers with trimmers. Tough and durable siliconised Gelvenor fabric. Stable and well-damped to fly. £799 ono e-mail: ian.grayland@orange.net, or or 07977 910645

Sup Air -Bump Air Back Protection 17cm: Sup Air -Bump Air Back Protection 17cm Cost new £90 for sale at £35. Does not fit new harness. Will arrange delivery with buyer. Good condition Contact: 07973192813 or j.taylor@etoncollege.org.uk

Xyon, 95-130: £150. Steve U, 01622 736219 or 07973 713120.

Wanted - Sky systems "SAS2" or "Probe" Harness . Also Classic UP flying suit any condition (they've been discontinued for about 5 years). Ian Merrylees (0208 9927624) OR ian.merrylees@bbc.co.uk

Medium Allegra: £400 Yellow vgc. Ian Merrylees (0208 9927624) OR ian.merrylees@bbc.co.uk

Davron Bullet HG harness: Red/yellow vgc suits slim(ish) pilot 5' 7" - 5'10". Comfortable and steamlined, and it used to fit me a treat till I went on the pies. £110 ono. Contact Richard Lever 01628 824926.

Windtech Ambar (85-105kg all-up). DHV 1-2: Excellent intermediate, suitable first wing, or for more experienced pilot looking for wing with high safety. Great for thermalling & XC flying! Lovely handling. 30 hours. VGC. £950 ono. 01273 84 67 22 nancy@nancylicious.force9.co.uk

