

Summer's here & so is Windssock...



The Official Magazine of



June 2004

Editorial



Hello Everybody,

I hope everyone's season is getting under way nicely. Personally, I've seen a number of recent social engagements drop out of my diary when I've discovered it's been flyable – and that is a good thing, right?!

So if you're wondering where May's issue well, sorry. Despite the season picking up pace nicely, very few of you seem to have done anything that you think anyone else is interested in – or that you're willing to write about anyway. The editorial process here at sock HQ is quite simple. When there's enough accumulated material to write a magazine with, I write the magazine. No material, no magazine. So if you want an issue each month, contribute something and the chances are there'll be one!

Apologies also to anyone who has received a defective copy of their beloved 'sock. As we 'contract out' the riveting task of printing and dispatch, I haven't carried any spare copies – that is, until now. If you believe your Windsock to be any way defective (other than the lack of material in it, that is), post it back to me at the address below and I will post you a new copy. Please remember that to enjoy this top-notch level of customer service (!!), you MUST post me the defective copy.

Anyway, that's enough from me. Send your stories, pictures, articles, gripes, gossip and anything else vaguely related to free flying to:

nick.cresswell@ntlworld.com

or:

NICK CRESSWELL
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See ya'

NICK

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"Windtech are acquiring a reputation for building well-constructed gliders with very good handling" "head and shoulders above the rest" "an exceptionally accomplished all-rounder" "so much more... than just very good performance figures" - *Skywings Magazine, UK.*

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"The manufacturing finish is beautiful" - *Aerial Magazine, France.*

"safety and performance... that would have been hard to imagine a few years ago." - *Noel Whitral, UK.*

"state-of-the-art, cutting-edge" - *Bob Drury, Cross Country Magazine, UK.*

"very beautiful sail-making" "a somewhat excellent glide" "a jewel of precision and pleasure" "I love it!" "great precision" - *Parapente Magazine, France.*

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Officials Corner

SHGC Committee meeting Wednesday 5th May 2004

Summary

- The Dyke Wind Machine has now been fixed.
- Club pledging £1000 to the Shining Tor Appeal.
- Chris Bere is taking over as Sites Officer; Thanks to John for his brief stint, and continuing help.
- Lots of crowding and problems at Caburn - respect the site rules, park avoiding blocking the cottages, don't climb fences! We will start a marshalling system similar to the new Dyke one
- Neil is thinking about organising mini-bus trips to Wales etc. Interested?
- Club coaches to get identifiable club sweat-shirts.

Windsack/Forum Items

- A welcome for Chris Bere.
- Caburn issues.
- Is there a Summer BBQ date yet?

Members Present

Dave Massie, Brian Brunswick, Peter Campbell, Dave Burgess, Ian Grayland, Neil Brennan-Wright, Johnny Carr, John Lancaster, Chris Bere

Apologies

Jack Chapman, Tim King, Will Greenwood.

Approval of minutes

Approved.

Spelt: Ian Grayland.

Matters Arising

You cannot have a PO Box redirected to another postal district, so we would need an address in Lewes to redirect it to. Claim is that Lewes post=box would be a Brighton postcode anyway.

Dyke wind machine has been fixed.

Chairman – Dave

Jack has processed 160 new members so far – he is on top of the worst of the work, there isn't really any way for others to help him. Michel has sent us a letter raising some concerns about overcrowding & safety.

Treasurer - Peter.

The Shining Tor appeal has come to light – we need a decision on what to pledge. We agreed to pledge a £1000. Dave will contact them.

All the mandate forms have been signed and sent off, Peter has only just got them back, so it will still be the end of next week probably. Martin could still sign stuff, but there is nothing urgent at the moment?

Sites – John/Chris is taking over.

There are a few license fees that are due sooner than the other sites fees, the Eastbourne council one already late.

We need to organise paying the farmers promptly this year, it would be nice to get the cheques ready to take around with Chris taking over

Need to confirm the permission to cut the trees at West Firl, before we start.

A dog has been spooked by an over-flying paraglider at Caburn, and incurred a large vet's bill, perhaps we should suggest that he should claim on the BHPA insurance. The farmer is a very generous chap, he never even mentioned it or complained.

Sat/Sun were horrendously crowded at Caburn, we must get some marshaling. Members were climbing over fences not at the stiles. Also there is the question of damage to the landing field by 4x4s driving across it. We need to avoid paying for it as a car park because it would become ratable, but we really should approach him to offer more for the landing field.

John is still investigating softly new sites: SW behind long man, other side of Caburn, sites down near Jebberton. John will keep going with this.

Paramotor sites – John has several fields scattered around and would like to get it under club auspices. Committee was entirely happy with that, John will ask Nick to set up a paramotor email list, John will probably become the paramotor liaison on the committee.

Caburn use by schools – the farmer is asking people to stop parking outside the cottages, and also to stop the hangers on, especially with dogs being in the landing field. He would like to reduce the number of people in the landing field. This is Steve Purdy's school? Chris and Tim King spoke to the farmer, Phil Norris, who owns the cottages and the training field. He has felt that he hasn't had spoken contact with the club for years – Chris wants to go and meet farmers generally regularly before the committee meetings to get concerns. The farmer wants us to install 2 or 3 new stiles, since the one he put in has got damaged. The suggestion is that Purdy should pay the same as whatever we increase the site fee too (he has sort of agreed that), to cover the extra cost of the training field. It's not that we haven't spoken to him, but maybe not about the site fees. We pay £800 total for Caburn at the moment, Chris has a meeting with the Lord lined up.

Neil will Liaise with Steve Purdy to talk to the farmer. The club is willing to pay for the stiles, but we need to get the school use sorted out. The club is the part of the site above the fence line. We are also asked not to over-fly the trees at the far end, because of spooking cows, but it would be nice to pay enough to cover that. We will marshal it on busy days from now on – we need to get the regular guys to do that though.

Social - Dave and Neil

At the Half Moon, the chap involved has changed. They will only allow us a fire if we remove turf. They do not have a marquee any more. No music past 10:30. They don't want to let us do food... We think its now knocked out as a possibility.

Johnny's wife offered to allow it in Johnny's place provided that we get porta-loos and avoid her getting involved in the food! There is about 3 acres there, it has been really good in the past. It would allow us to do a BBQ and people bring their own food. Neil is trying to line up some actual Slade band members as well! There would need to be a clean up party afterwards. It only needs to avoid a time when Johnny is away.

Chairman, Johnny

Marshalling, in theory it's to make life easier, but at the moment Johnny is not seeing any marshalling happening at all. People are perhaps scared to ask for it – However: Ian hasn't seen much need for it so far this year – its been more of a problem at Caburn

Schools invoices – Neil needs the actual info in order to do this.

Chris Pearson is checking NOTAMS as airspace officer for us.

Michel's letter has a lot of sense in it. We should observe and disqualify people that are infringing airspace.

Safety etc., Ian

Ian needs membership forms – the should still be on the website.

We need more sites, especially SW, NW, ESE in that order.

There's no news on Dave Perrot buying the winch from Michel, though we approved it last time. Neil suggests an encouragement letter to him.

What do we want from local councils? Ian is collecting ideas that we should be lobbying about:

Expansion assistance. Parking assistance. Change our perception from a nuisance to an attraction. (Eg High and Over parking improvement) Help on dealing with the NT. Lewes district council has a Cultural Strategy document, they don't even know that we exist, we should get ourselves onto it as bringing money into the area. We need to be more vocal, more visible. (How about more signs at sites? Problem has always been permissions to stick them up. Now wanted at Caburn.) Countryside stewardship – we are out there observing. Landscaping launch areas – ramps? Council were willing to do it at Seaford head. How about Hewhaven? Tree and Scrub clearance with the easterlies around Eastbourne. (Babylon Down – Foxholes brown?) Notice boards, Windssocks, Wind machines.

Ian is working on an overall map of the area marked up for historical sites etc, and information about them.

Neil was organising Welsh trips, Ian wonders about doing organised transport with a mini-bus etc? It would take people off our sites. People would probably pay happily. Mini-bus needs a special driver to get though.

66 gliders open at West Firle bank holiday Monday.

Fence climbing – the people need talking to seriously. Windssock. We'll put signs along by the cottages and get the stiles done ASAP. On cost, the club pays for the top bit, but we should ask the schools to pay for any increase in the cost of the bottom field.

Beachy Head – overdue to meet with them, Dave Massie has amassed a file on anti-Peregrin Falcon information ready to present to them. Probably it needs a good precis of the arguments, with the full reports attached. Dave Pierce is the warden, Mike Smith is his boss. We should get it through before the council administration changes. (June?) Ian recommends approaching Mike Smith (“Countryside manager”) first.

Neil - Idea – say members only on the Dyke, push others over to Ditchling Beacon? Not really enough of a solution?

Windssocks for marshaling Caburn, ask Mark to make up some more like the Dyke ones.

--||--

A Word on Membership

Hello

By the end of May, I had processed all the renewals that were received; 350 of them! Sorry about the delay for the early renewals, but I was sent to the flat-lands to work. That leaves 200 outstanding. That's about 10 evenings work for me. So please return them as soon as possible as I would like to get these done so that I may get a life again and even go flying, instead of being surrounded by paper work.

If Dave Massie's scheme was to free up some space on the hills by keeping me off of them, then it has worked.

So this is the plan:

At the end of June, anyone flying without a sticker on their helmet will be charged a fiver. No excuses like it's in the post, you should have done it earlier! So either pay up, or get off our hills so that the paid up members can enjoy their flying in less crowded conditions. There are plenty of new flyers coming to replace you.

I will now reserve a large space in the next edition of Windssock for the 'We say goodbye to' column.

Thanks

Jack Chapman – Membership Secretary

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CP - now what! - D-aviation club coaching scheme:

Just passed or about to pass your CP or been CP for sometime but the flying hours seem as illusive as ever - or perhaps you're just rusty or had a lay off? Busy club sites can be tricky but you probably don't want to return to school. Informal coaching here and abroad could be the way forward. We know the sites, we know the local weather, we are flexible, we have lots of experience and we have the time. Want more airtime? - call us and discuss what YOU need.

Guided Trips for 2004.

Algodonales:August 28th to 4th September 2004.....Our Spring trip to Algodonales was a great success, so much so that everyone demanded a return trip later in the year.

Of course I was obliged to agree and change our trips calendar to add another trip to sunny southern Spain. By late August or early Sept the hottest part of the summer should be past, but still hot and settled enough to offer excellent thermalling and cross country conditions. The trip is primarily aimed at introducing pilots to cross country flying and/or developing X/C flying skills. The trip is also suitable for pilots who have a few!! hours and want an introduction to thermal mountain flying. Algodonales is known for its good X/C potential and is therefore suitable for pilots who already have good thermalling skills and X/C experience but would like some company and local knowledge.....book early cos places are limited. Cost includes shared apartment accommodation, car hire, transfers to and from Malaga airport, minibus transport to sites and for those long retrieves! Plus fly guiding on the ground and in the air from BHPA senior instructor/s and local X/C guru 'Senore Baz'.....£430.

Lanzarote:..... Join us for our sixth year of winter sun, fun, and flying. Suitable for all levels of pilot from EP upwards - finish your CP tasks - expand your soaring and thermalling skills - go XC or fly 20km along the 2000' Famara ridge - and back! We offer guiding to all levels, luxury villa accommodation, breakfast and car hire....Dec 2nd - 9th & 9th - 16th...£430.

Need A New Glider, Reserve or Harness?

To complement our club coaching service D-aviation are now offering a 'on the hill' paragliding equipment sales service. If you are looking to upgrade your harness, reserve or renew your wing give us a call to discuss your options and arrange a demo. We can bring equipment to you on the hill to view, discuss or test fly. We are impartial, experienced and there 'on the hill'. We are not tied to a particular manufacturer, which means that we can talk frankly, and honestly, give our opinion about the products available and therefore find and supply the right buy for you.....P/X possible plus free coaching with all new glider sales, if needed.

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Local Knowledge

Understanding Beachy

By Ian Grayland – SHGC Safety Officer

Adapted from Ian's recent Seaford lecture

The most significant thing about Beachy Head is that it is coastal, that is to say it has sea at the bottom. This is not a joke; it really does make all the difference! Primarily, this raises the importance of temperature above most other factors and generally results in the need for relatively cold air to get good flying conditions.

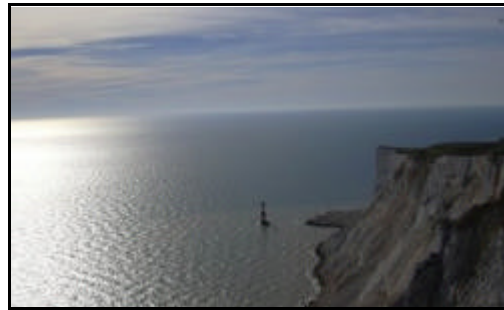
Take a typical inland site. Say it's just about slope-soarable early in the day. As the sun heats the ground the lapse rate improves with the air being heated from the bottom up. Thermals start in a shallow, superadiabatic layer, which gradually deepens as the thermals get bigger and the inversion layer steadily rises; typically until the peak heating of the day.

On the coast we have the reverse effect of daily heating. On a day-to-day basis, the sun doesn't warm the sea much at all. Water is a good conductor of heat and there's a whole load of it so soak the heat up, so the sea is not warmed much by the air either. If the air is warmer than the sea, the cold water from the bottom sucks the heat out of it, thus degrading the lapse rate. Therefore you generally need relatively cold air and warm sea to get a flyable lapse rate.

Since the sun does warm the air, the lapse rate is usually best at the onset of soaring conditions and generally deteriorates progressively during the day. The lift dies off and it may become unsoarable. Then the air cools down relative to the sea as the sun descends, the lapse rate improves and it gets soarable again ('magic' evening lift).

The illustration on the following page shows airflow over a vertical cliff edge with (a) good lapse rate and (b) poor lapse rate.

The true story is rather more complex than this,



often due to the hot cliff and very hot beach when the tide is out, also particularly due to cross-winds and inversion height.

Inversions and poor lapse rates encourage stratification of the air. The geostrophic wind cannot get down to ground level because of the temperature barrier, any more than the air you are trying to fly in can get up over that cliff.

Low inversion and wind-shear problems:

i. low inversion - say 1000 ft or less

The wind is all 'up there' above the inversion and out of reach. Occasionally a bit of sink, wave or inter-layer turbulence brings gusts of this real wind down to flying level. These gusts may be from a considerably different direction than the wind you have been soaring in.

ii. very low inversion - 500 ft or less

The wind will be constantly switching between the 'real' wind and the slowed, relatively dead air below the inversion. The windssock will be switching violently and there will be severe turbulence.

A very low inversion also leads to the formation of a pool of relatively dead air piled up against beachy, with the real wind pushed up over the top. You get light wind at take-off, with a strong wind reading on the Beddingham wind machine. On other days you get a good soarable breeze at take-off, yet below the footpath there is absolutely nothing, and a fair amount of turbulence in-between. It all depends on the height of the inversion and the degree of stratification.

And whatabout pressure? So called 'low pressure' and 'high pressure' flying conditions can't really be established with a barometer. You have to look at the pressure, the synoptic chart for the day and the air out to sea and esp over Hastings and Newhaven.

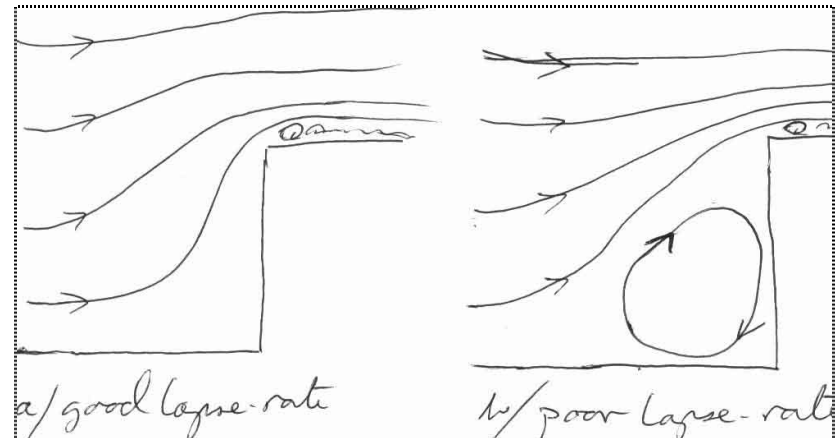
Basically, if you're in air that is sinking, warming and rotating clockwise then its high pressure and if you're in air that is rising, cooling and rotating anticlockwise then its low pressure.

Unfortunately, I don't log days on which I don't fly so I have rather limited log data, but here is a recent excellent example of very bad air:

Wed 31 March. The local forecast apparently was for sunshine and light south easterly winds, luring a handful of optimists to Beachy. The pressure was low, 1008mb. The temperature was 14-16 degrees. It was blue, sunny, hazy and very pleasant. The wind was 10-12mph and straight on - To quote one of the pilots standing with me on take-off: 'ideal conditions for paragliding'

But: The real forecast was for 20kts SSE at 1000ft and there was also a weak warm front approaching (due ~3pm). The wind on take-off was gusty at times and veering and backing about 30-45deg. The haze over Hastings was a clearly visible indicator of the low inversion. There were models flying - and occasionally falling out of the sky. Dave Massie flew for several minutes.....and survived.....

What to look for? First, get a proper forecast. In the absence of other gliders, watch birds or models flying. Stand at the take-off and use your body to feel the wind. Is the wind constant in both speed and direction, or is it gusty and veering and backing all over the place? After 10 minutes or so, do you need to zip up your jacket and put your gloves on, or is it 'pleasantly' warm? Look out to sea and over at Hastings and figure out the extent and height of any inversion. Have a walk down the



slope and see if the air is rising up the face in roughly the same direction as on take-off. If it all looks good so far, pull up your canopy and feel the air. If the canopy is tucking and collapsing all over the place, put it back in the bag. If your wing is sitting dead steady overhead for some minutes, give it a go.

What to do when it all goes bad? Don't fly right out over the middle of the bowl. The bigger your ground clearance the bigger the updraughts and downdraughts will be.

Stay right back on the ridge. The venturi will work in your favour. OK the wind speed will be a little higher and horizontal gusts may be bigger, but the vertical component will be dramatically reduced. Set up a landing approach immediately.

Site usage stats: There are typically 20 good flying days a year of which 6 are on the cliffs and

2 or 3 are amazingly good, typically in January. The bulk of the bowl flying takes place in summer, mostly May, August and September. Unfortunately most of it is not very good. I don't mean that there are no good days in the summer, just that they are rare.

Good days in Spring: April 2nd, 20th and April 11th a year ago. All of these had cold air and excellent flying conditions.

Good days coming up: not many!

Safe Flying,

Ian

Local Meetings

Local Meetings:

Club meetings are periodically held at venues in and around Sussex. These usually feature lectures by key members of our club, covering topics from meteorology & airmanship to travelling to international sites and competition flying.

Local meetings are held at The Wellington, Steyne Road, Seaford. They are always on the last Thursday of the month excluding December.

This months meeting, May 27:

Your Chief Coach Mr Tim King presents 'The Sea Breeze'. What causes it, how it affects us and most importantly, how to fly it! Come along for his presentation and a Q and A session.

Next Month, June 24:

I dont know if he remembers, but your beloved Chairman Mr Dave Massie, late one night in a pub in South Wales volunteered to continue the series of lectures on flying our local sites. This month, Mt Caburn.



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A Cautionary Tale

Taken from the SHGC Forum: 24th May 2004 – By Peter Impey

I hesitate to post this, partly because I'm not completely blameless and - in retrospect - could have been a bit quicker off the mark and handled things differently, but I thought I'd shelve any potential embarrassment and share a problem I had on Sunday afternoon with you all.

Things started quite well - I eventually managed to climb out from Firle, getting up to just over 3000ft drifting back on the breeze, then decided to try and follow the convergence towards the north west and - who knows - log a modest XC. Probably didn't boot out enough to the north and kept stopping to top up on some useful climbs, but ended up about 2000ft above South Heighton when I managed to fly through the convergence (and got a bit of a kicking on the way) and realised that I was now in sea air. Oh well, I thought, sled ride time - let's see how far I can get. Flew over the Ouse, south of Piddinghoe towards the Downs behind Peacehaven, landing options OK with my eye on a field - pasture, no stock, on top of the hill. Field in front had some sheep in and, as I flew over this, I realised my glide angle wasn't enough to get me into the next field (power lines complicating things a bit) so had to join the sheep. It was a very large field, and the sheep moved away as I came in.

I had landed a couple of hundred yards from the farmhouse, and I was soon joined by the farmer in his pick-up. He strolled over and demanded a £50 landing fee. Before I had cottoned on, he had grabbed my flight deck and helmet, both sitting on the ground by my canopy and was back inside the pickup. Hind brain urged violence - and there was a brief moment when I could have got my kit back - but good sense prevailed. A long discussion ensued. A far from coherent litany of complaint from the farmer, of which the possibility that I had frightened the sheep came as a relatively low order priority. Trespass, lack of consent, somehow connecting a lone paraglider with night-time vandalism suffered by the farm, claims that the £50 was "company policy" and what they got from balloons (would a balloon venture anywhere near there?). The fact that, by grabbing my kit, he had put himself beyond the law whereas I hadn't wasn't persuasive. Anyway, after a time things cooled down (despite my inner feelings I had remained polite throughout) and, rather than return later with solicitors and writs, I decided that life was too short so, when I judged the moment right, suggested £20 and got my kit back. Much as it sticks in my craw, it was a fairly simple equation. Without being rich, we were where we were, and for me £20 was less hassle and risk than suing the guy through the courts for the return of my gear.

So what did I do wrong? Clearly I had lost the moral high ground by landing in a field with stock - although post lambing, shorn adult sheep in a large field with a lot of space to move were unlikely to be terminally traumatised or rush about and damage themselves by my mistake (any farmers on the forum please comment if I'm wrong - I wouldn't take the same view with horses) and they seemed very interested in coming over to check me out after I'd landed rather than seeking psychiatric help. I could have landed earlier in stock free, uncropped fields without having to risk overflying at low level a field with stock in. The extra 500 metres was driving me on - sadly in the hope of making a 10k flight (I was miles off anyway - 8k: sad, but when you've only done two 10k+ flights in your career these things matter). Perhaps I could have got my kit parcelled up quicker so that it would have required a greater physical challenge by the farmer to get hold of it.

Anyway, the farm is called Hoddern farm, and they farm the land between Peacehaven and Piddinghoe. It was clear from his comments that anybody landing there, whether in a field with stock or otherwise will get the same welcome, so avoid is my advice.

Peter Impey (blue and gold Serak - and £20 lighter)

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 Firlie, 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

Photos by Dave Hairs, and from <http://www.coupe-icare.org/indexuk.php> (click "Concours photos", "Voir", "VOIR LES SELECTIONS"), and the French "Aerial" magazine, Aug-Sept 2003 edition.

Part 3

At the September 2003 free flight festival at Saint Hilaire near Grenoble in France, Ariadne's thread (from the Greek myth) not only leads the way out of the labyrinth, but also shows where all the thermals are.



Tintin, in Professor Calculus's rocket, tries to save Captain Haddock from grapes and the demon alcohol:

Tintin makes a spot landing on the River Garonne in Toulouse, over 500km away and, mysteriously, 4 years earlier in time:



Early on Sunday we walk up to Dent de Crolles.....



...where people are already flying



An alpine take-off, then a swift turn to the right



I just about maintained altitude above Dent de Crolles, it was around noon, 30 minutes earlier the first paraglider to make it above take-off received a round of applause. Several people were happily sitting on the over-hanging cliff edge, dangling their legs. Watching them while soaring the ridge made me feel slightly uneasy, but I was soothed by the fact they would all have to be reasonably competent mountaineers to walk there in the first place. I felt considerably more uneasy when soaring the cliffs at Beachy Head, where people also dangling their legs into the abyss might be less psychologically prepared for airborne objects.



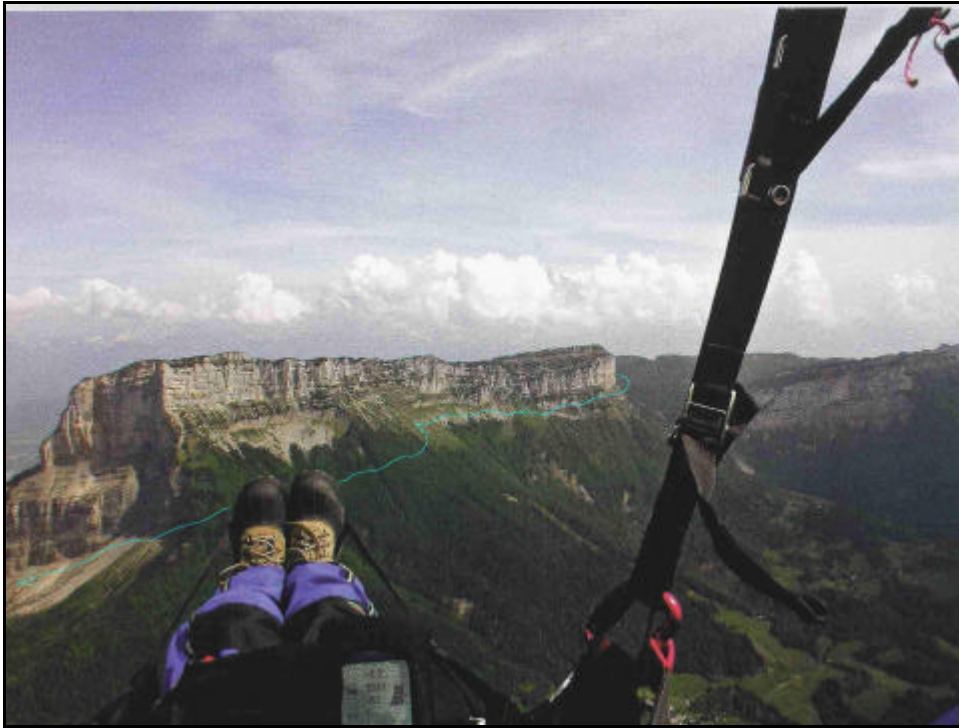
This was so scary for me that I rapidly headed north along the cliffs (which is to the left in the picture on the left of this page). This picture is the "Compe-GPS" super-position of a flight featured in the French "Aerial" magazine (August-September 2003 edition, www.glenatpresse.com, €5-40).

My track is shown in light blue, from Saint-Hilaire-du-Touvet, via a brief slope landing on the west face of Mont Granier, to landing in an (empty) football field east of Chambery. I drew this track in using Microsoft Paint, so it is approximate.

In the same Aerial magazine, there was a photo (shown opposite) taken by Vincent Sprungli or Philippe Barnier in March 2003, of Mont Granier from the west, i.e. from the bottom of the Compe-GPS plot on the previous page, somewhere above his "B2 Le Corbeley" turning point.

Again I have drawn in my approximate flight path, from the right, around the south face of Mont Granier, which was not a big cliff but just a pass across the the "Chartreuse", so I was lucky to make it. I slope-landed to the right of Sprungli/Barnier's boots in the grassy area to have a look at the map, and decided to try to cross the Chambery gap to the south-facing cliff above Montmelian. I made it about 2/3 of the way, over the vinyards of Apremont, to the above mentioned football ground. It would have been nice to spot-land in the centre ring, but the 12-15 mph valley wind from Chambery (again only in the bottom (200-400 feet) and the floodlight towers discouraged me.

Retrieve complicated by total overload of mobile phone network in Saint Hilaire area. They also confiscate radios. Sampled local Apremont vin de Savoie. Worked out distance from Dent de Crolles take-off was 23km, my furthest so far, although the only really challenging bit was cutting through the pass. Before that, the main ridge did however not provide enough lift to maintain altitude all the way, I had to beat/circle around in the rather choppy lift whenever I found it. My max above take-off was only 110 feet, and I note Skysurfers' John Pinchin wrote, in its October '03 mag, that not only was he at Saint Hilaire, but also that there was an inversion not much above the cliffs. I did see some haze caps about 100 feet above, so I believe he was there, perhaps even in a costume.



Over dinner that evening, Irwyn said that people have flown from Mont Granier all the way back to Annecy (an other 40km).

Prototype winglets on the "Bionic" at Saint Hilaire, to reduce wing-tip vortex drag. As Dave Massie has since pointed out on the forum, the Bionic 2 is described at http://www.bio-air-technologies.com/bionic/en/bionic_design.htm.



Winglets are of course used on many commercial aircraft, and to great effect on Burt Rutan's "Voyager", shown in photo, in which (as shown on TV at the time) he and his girlfriend Jeana Yeager took off from Mojave airfield in California on 14th December 1986 and flew around the world non-stop on one tank of fuel, an xc of 40,000 km.



But is he happy? Jeana left him shortly afterwards. His company Scaled Composites' prototype composite rocket plane "SpaceShipOne", which in Nov '03 was successfully drop tested from 47,300 feet, is the favourite to win a forthcoming competition to put a human in space, return him/her safely to earth, and repeat within two weeks with the same spacecraft. I recently (May 2004) heard SpaceShipOne has now successfully performed a flight, using its own rocket engines, to 211,000 feet altitude. "Space" officially starts at 327,000 feet.

Personally I do not pray, but I do contribute every month to a bird conservation charity.

Bon vol a tous.



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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 paradriking (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:

- 28th June 2004
 - 26th July 2004
- etc.

The full address is:

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

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)

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

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 and pilots must personally submit their flight details within one calendar month. Although all flights are recorded only the 6 best count. The league is open to all classes of hang gliders and paragliders. 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. 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. 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) 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 and 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 a 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
Novice League	Pilots with less than 2 10km xc flights in the UK, at the start of the 12 month period

BP Cup Report

Here is a report for the 1st leg of the **BP Cup**. Southerners that went were: (Correct me if I'm wrong!):

Mike Peters
Carlo Borsattino
Nancy Elliot
David Webb

Alison Webb
June Sage
Andy Davies
Richard Hopkins

John Stevens
Mike Parfitt
Peter Longstaff
Ron Green

There were 2 tasks planned@

Task 1 (Saturday) - Take off Arenig Fach (SH825405)

Race to goal at SH948590. Start gate external cylinder 20km around goal. Distance 22.2km, Bearing 56 degrees.

The weather was warm with a south west wind which we believed to be the sea breeze, which made the task a downwind drift. Of the 60 pilots only 8 actually left the hill, as there was only one workable thermal during the launch window. Fortunately this occurred almost immediately after the start gate opened, so there were only 20 or so pilots milling around in a tiny amount of air. Had all 60 launched then it would have been like the Dyke on a Saturday... As it was, there was plenty of shouting and many people waited for the melee to land at the bottom of the hill. By this time, the only thermal of the day had been and gone so the rest were doomed. 2 pilots made goal, Carlo was only a couple of km short (and came 4th) and the rest of us did a naff top to bottom and some lousy scratching :-)

Due to the way the scoring system worked, the fact that so few people even made the start gate (2.2km downwind) really dragged down the scores of those that did leave the hill. The winner only got around 430 points out of 1000, whereas 130 points were had by 50 pilots who did a ttb! The principle behind the scoring system is that because so few people left the hill, those that did were deemed to be very lucky and so did not earn their points by skill. Most of us thought the opposite though and were amazed to learn that points can be had merely for handling in your GPS.

Task 2 (Sunday) - Take off Arenig Fach (SH825405)

TP1 Cerrigydrudion (SH955489) 15.4km. Goal Pentrefoelas (SH875514) 8.3km. Start point 13km external cylinder round TP1.

The weather conspired against us again though and the sea breeze was even stronger and nobody managed to get more than a couple of hundred feet above T/O before the event was cancelled due to strong wind. One bloke did get away by taking off before the event started just to practice. He then blew away into the distance at approximately T/O height. About half of the pilots decided to walk down as the wind was quite strong. The other half flew down with varying degrees of success. Although everyone in the event was pilot rated, some of the take offs left quite a bit to be desired, and much dragging was had. One bloke went crashing off across the hill and trashed someone's wing on the way. Fortunately Hoppy chased after him and jumped on his wing before he crashed all the way down the hill over the rocks. Patient pilots were rewarded by a wind that didn't blow strongly across the hill and flew safely down to the bottom.

Most pilots camped by Harlech where we were kept awake by sheep and cows making a racket all night. The true jessies went to B&Bs around the area.

I think a good weekend was had by most, although the lack of flying was disappointing. The climb up to T/O was quite shocking, as it was very steep and covered in deep heather. It was possible to climb up on hands and knees. This was not made any easier by the hot sunshine and 250m vertical distance.

BP Cup cont....

Lessons Learned:

- The sea breeze can be a real bummer. Always hand your GPS in; a TTB might be worth something!
- Flying in >1025mb pressure can be pretty naff.
- A heathery hillside strewn with boulders and a strong wind across the hill is not the time to practice ground-handling.
- Take off as soon as the window opens if multiple attempts are allowed

Well done to Carlo for leaving the hill!

Thanks to Carlo, Ron, John and Mike P for your help in explaining the rules and how to use the GPS properly.

An amazing track-log can be downloaded at: <http://www.geocities.com/r.hopkins/tracklog.gif>

** Speeds in Track 0001 **

Average Speed: 17.7 km/h
Maximum Speed: 43.0 km/h
Minimum Speed: 1.5 km/h
Total Time: 00:04:50
Cartographic Length = 1.428 km

If I managed 1.5km/h whilst climbing during some ridge lift, why is my maximum speed only 43km/h flying downwind in a fair wind. I knew I flew slowly, but that seems like my flying speed is quite a bit lower than I expected!

An official report should appear on www.bpcup.co.uk

Next time,

Hoppy

PG Comps Calendar

Paragliding Competitions 2004

BHPA - British Paragliding Competitions:

<http://www.pgcomps.org.uk/>

British Open Competitions:

30th May - 5th June – St. Andre Open - France.
 30th July - 2nd Aug - Long Mynd Open - UK.
 12th - 18th September - Castejon Open - Spain.

The Paragliding Championships

(Championship Pilots - Qualifiers only)

The competition dates and locations for 2004 are as follows:

30th May - 5th June - St. Andre, France
 30th July - 2nd August - Long Mynd, UK
 12th - 18th September - Castejon, Spain

British Paragliding Cup & Paragliding Open dates:

<http://www.bpcup.co.uk/>

This year there are 6 events, some events will be Open class, the details and dates are as follows:

24-25th April - Snowdon BP Cup & Open, Snowdonia
 22-23 May - BP Cup & Scottish Open, Fort William
 10-11th July - BP Cup & Lakes Open Lake District
 17-18th July - SE Wales BP Cup, Crickhow ell
 7-8th August - Borders BP Cup, Borders
 27-30th August - BP Cup & Welsh International Open FAI Cat 2, Mid Wales

The aim for the British Paragliding Cup is to have fun by providing an exciting and safe format to introduce pilots to competition flying and to allow existing competition pilots to develop their skills. The top 7 pilots will receive automatic entry into the British Paragliding Championships for 2005.

Pilots must hold a current BHPA membership and be rated "Pilot" or above.

PG Comps cont...

Other 'low key' Competitions:

The Cumbria Soaring Club holds an annual event called the 'Lakes Charity Classic'. The aim of this gathering of pilots is to raise money for local charities and, in past years, they have donated substantial sums to; The Calvert Trust and 'Fly ability; Mountain Rescue Teams based in and around the Lake District area; local village halls and other benevolent charities.

Last year's was really great fun, this year's date is:

19 - 20 June - Lakes Charity Classic, Grasmere.

Contact:

James Jackson - 01228-514039 after 6pm.

Email: james.lcc@ukonline.co.uk

Blorengé Bash 2004

3rd – 4th July, 2004

This year the Blorengé Party has been scaled down to be less weather dependent, and will be held at the Alice Springs Golf Club, Usk, (near Abergavenny).

During the day, weather permitting, you will be able to fly and compete for the Blorengé Cup and when the sun goes down an excellent evening of entertainment will be provided. The Bash has arranged for various demo paragliders to be available to test fly over the event and they are also trying to arrange a 15 mile paramotor fly-in.

Contact:

David Sagan - 07971 544719

SE Wales Club

Email: info@welshairsports.com

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):

---||---

FLYING PLANET ASTAIR: Excellent first wing "solid, simple and safe" - Skywings Test April 2000. AFNOR STANDARD (=DHV 1) Large 90-115 kg. Only 20 Hours Purple/red/white Just serviced by the LOFT A bargain at only £495. Arrange to see and try with John Templeton 01323 873337 Seaford, Sussex jcm@onetel.net.uk

Harness: Woody Valley X-Act (Large): Integral Cygnus airbag and 12cm bumpair. Excellent condition (1 year old) - a bit too big for me (I'm a reasonably slim 6', as an indication of the size) hence selling to get a 'medium' replacement. £225 ono. Tel:01273 275450 Mobile: 07800 992321

Ozone Electron (L) + Harness: DHV 1/2, 95-115 kg take-off weight, includes inner/outer bags and manual. Recently serviced. Plus Airwave RAP harness. £600 ono for the lot. Mike Parfitt Phone (M): 07973-403542 Phone (H) : 020-8876-6479

Flying Planet Sirius Large (up to 115 kg): White and red DHV 1/2 one season use 60 hrs good condition £ 500.00 ono John 07884 117730 or john@oldhamj.fsnet.co.uk

SIMBA M: Cheap high performance flying hours. This wing has only flown one season and is in excellent condition. You need to be over 102Kg all-up, 'performance' rated, and have over 500 notes to spare in your wallet. Ian Grayland 07977 910645.

Ozone Electron (L) + Harness: DHV 1/2, 95-115 kg take-off weight, includes inner/outer bags and manual. Recently serviced. Plus Airwave RAP harness. £600 ono for the lot ? Mike Parfitt Phone (M) : 07973-403542 Phone (H) : 020-8876-6479

Nova Xact: DHV 1/2, 85-105kg, purple, about 70hrs but well cared for, good 1st glider, £700 ono, Paul 07949 267327

Freex Control Harness (L): £150. Minimal usage, still in vgc. Includes Freex back protector. Contact Rod 07761943307 or email airfly4@aol.com

Airborne Sting II XC 154: Practically new, superb intermediate glider. Green/yellow U/S. White mylar LE. Aerofoil d/t's, wheels, etc. Batten profiles. Near new but only £1600 ono Please ph. Mark 01795 591552

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

Classifieds cont...

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

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

