

SHGC Windsock

Winter 2008 Jan 2009



Chairman's Report

It seems that winter is on its way! A spell of cold northerlies over the last few days brought some snow and reminded us that winter is only round the corner. Although the colder airmass did provide some very buoyant conditions and Carlo managed an impressive XC on his paraglider to Pevensy Bay from the Dyke and there was some very pleasant thermalling to be had along the Truleigh ridge when the sun came out.

The committee has been kept fairly busy over the summer looking after our sites, organizing the monthly coaching meetings, paying the bills, organizing a very successful summer bbq at the end of August and drumming up interest for the Coaching Course that we will be hosting in December. Membership is around the 400 mark which is about the same as last year and the online payment system has proved pretty popular. We are always on the lookout for new sites and we were looking into the possibility of flying at Butt's Brow near Eastbourne but unfortunately the council isn't keen to allow us to fly there. We are also investigating the possibility of a site near Plumpton College as well and will let you know the outcome shortly hopefully.

Our sites are obviously our most precious resource and a couple of incidents at Newhaven have highlighted how important it is to stick to the site rules to keep yourself safe and prevent our presence attracting unwanted publicity. Lewes District Council are introducing new byelaws with respect to Castle Hill Nature Reserve and despite a lot of work by David Webb our Sites Officer we have so far been unable to get them to remove a byelaw that prohibits us from "operating any hang glider at such a height that persons on the ground or in buildings may be inconvenienced or annoyed". This makes it even more crucial to ensure that we fly responsibly and maintain good relations with the locals and authorities.

Please read the site guide before you fly and if you witness any anti-social behavior on our sites please let one of the committee know. We will be introducing a few measures that will help to identify our sites as member's only sites and encourage visitors to make contact before flying.

On the subject of visitors, I have had an email from the SkySurfing Club about the conduct of some of our members on their sites. If you are visiting other sites it is as, if not more important to read their site guide before flying and take notice of any rules or restrictions they may have. The club welcomes visitors to some of their sites but they have come close to losing a site recently due to people ignoring the rules. If you fly there regularly please consider becoming a full member as we do not have any reciprocal rights with the SkySurfing Club.

Now that the nights are drawing in this may be a good time to catch up on the more theoretical side to the sport. Have you got your pilot (or advanced pilot) rating yet? As a Club Pilot you are really only half way through the rating process and should be aiming towards Pilot rating as a minimum qualification.

The good news is that the club is there to help you with all this. When you are out on the hill and are unsure about the conditions and why they are changing or not completely happy about how to top land in a strong breeze for instance, take a minute to find a club coach and see if they can help. If they can't they'll certainly point you in the direction of someone that can. We have issued white streamers to coaches to help to identify them – hopefully they'll put them on their harnesses!

Or why not come along to one of the monthly Coaching Meetings held at the Glynde Social Club on the last Thursday of every month where you can listen to a talk and meet up and chat to fellow pilots and coaches. I know a lot of our members don't live that close to Glynde and so can't make it during the week so we are looking at alternatives in cooperation with the London Wing which hold monthly meetings in London.

We will also be running a series of lectures that will cover the topics needed to pass the Pilot and Advanced Pilot exams in the near future – if you are willing to help out with any of the subjects please let us know.

Winter Safety Briefing.

I often joke after a period of bad weather about what a 'safe month' it has been. It would be very easy to dismiss this year, with its total crap conditions, in much the same way. However, it does look as if the number of serious incidents has reduced more than just pro-rata with the lack of flying. Thanks are particularly due to our ever-vigilant coaches. I have noticed though that the number of spins appears to be on the increase. Make sure that you can recognise a spin and have the ability to let your hands up and let the glider fly. On no account try to stop the rotation with outside brake.

Winter Winds

With reduced thermal strength, we can generally fly safely in somewhat stronger winds. However, take note that this laminar air tends to be more stratified so the wind gradient near the ground can be more intense as can lee rotors behind almost any obstruction.

PG pilots should allow a good few yards extra clear space downwind of their intended launch spot. Basically, make sure you have enough room to get dragged and either recover the situation or collapse the canopy before you run into anything unpleasant.

When top landing don't get too far back (close to fences, car parks, buildings, roads etc). Aim to touch down around one third back in the landing area rather than the usual two thirds. This will give you the extra time and space required, as above.

HG pilots should be aware of the increased wind gradient on launch, being sure to take off into clean air with no chance of dropping one wing - even if it means walking a few yards to one side or the other. Also, be particularly fussy about your top landing approaches; make sure you can complete your final turn at good height leading to a straight, wings level final few feet.

Rotors

With regard to lee rotors, try to be aware of where the air you are flying in is coming from. Line features at 90 degrees to the airflow are the worst offenders. Even a simple line of bushes on the lip of a soaring ridge can produce a tangible kick at 50 feet or more above and behind them. A line of full size trees (like the plantation at Firle) can have you right out of the air in a serious heap. So don't fly behind them.

When the wind is 'off' the hill, be aware that vertical features produce 'horizontal rotors' (axis vertical), so again, be aware of where your air is coming from and do not fly behind prominent obstructions such as large chunks of Beachy cliffs or wooded spurs. If the wind is a long way 'off', do not assume that the site will function anything like you are used to. The rotor over the Dyke take-off in a NNE wind is best left well alone, as is the rotor in the cliff bowl at Beachy in a SSW.

A useful indication of how much tendency the air has to generate rotors is how 'wakey' the air is. If you find unusually strong wake turbulence or it gets carried unusually long distances behind gliders then you will probably find a strong tendency to get lee rotors forming.

Low Sun

Don't forget to make due allowance for the low winter sun. With the sun behind you, the guy flying toward you may not be able quickly to see if you are flying toward or away from him! Give him plenty of room. Try not to disturb the pattern of the established soaring 'circuit' if it is at all busy in these sort of conditions.

Coaching and Self-improvement

Finally, and on the positive side, this is the best time of year for novices to get things sorted. You can fly all day in reliable lift. You can carry out endless circuits and bumps. Sort your ground handling in strong non-gusty winds. You can fly in the same air as the best local pilots who are going nowhere away from the hill this time of year - and, once they get over the frustration of the last few weeks of un-flyable weather, will have the time to help you out if you need it.

For the more experienced fliers, since there's obviously nothing wrong with your flying (!), it's a great time to get your kit sorted. Brake / flap adjustments. Trim speed. Harness set-up. Relative glider performance assessment. Speed range. Polar plots. Energy conversion. Flying other guy's gliders. - And helping out the aforementioned novices. If they keep getting in your way come spring / summer, it's your fault for not teaching them properly now!

Oh, nearly forgot. Make sure you have enough drinking water; you can get dried out really quickly in all that wind, even without the hot sun. Plus your blood sugar will drop faster in the cold and the wind will tire you, even just standing in it. Take a break now and then for a sandwich and hot tea or similar.

Wishing you all a fun warm-up for the epic new season's flying ahead
Ian Grayland

AUTUMN MENU: Whoppers with hot, spicy gliders and chilled air.

Hairy Dave 26/9/08.

It's the morning after the Glyne meeting the night before, and I'd like to recount a conversation I had with Dave Nichols, which might be of interest to more of our members. Dave and I were discussing a big collapse he suffered on his paraglider last week, to try to get to the bottom of why it happened and why it put the willies up him.

To set the scene, Dave was flying at around mid-day at Firle on his **DHV2 Sky Antea**. He said the day began windy, late morning it dropped down to good wind and some **thermals were developing**. Another pilot was seen to suddenly go up and become pinned in an unexpectedly **strong wind at his extra altitude** and descend with **big ears**. Dave was fairly high (enough to deal with his whopper and survive!) when he felt half the wing go soft, even with full brake on that side. After that he got a bit hazy with the details, and continued the story with putting faith in the wing and going hands up to effect a recovery, after a violent dive and at some stage a riser twist. All this happened high enough that this becomes an interesting academic study rather than an incident investigation.

The weather bit.

Understanding weather and wind on a large and small scale is the bread and butter of us glider pilots. We need that knowledge to be able to get to the right hill at the right time and to make the most of the lift that nature provides. It's also essential for avoiding the sinister side of weather when it provides us with strong winds or turbulence beyond our ability to handle.

The conditions on Firle that day are typical of autumn flying. In the big picture we had a 20 ish mph northerly wind showing on the charts. We had a clear, cold night. It felt like autumn, the kind of day you'll expect to see dew on the grass and mist or frost in the hollows. Pressure was high and probably building. The high pressure means that the big bulge in the atmosphere above us is causing air to descend and spread out to fill the adjacent low pressure areas. Just as air gets cold when you put it in a bag and go up, it gets warmer as it comes down. Of course, the air can't go down all the way to the ground, so at some height it spreads out and the descent more or less stops at a particular altitude, perhaps 500 – 2000 feet, just where we play about in it. This gives us a warm layer with cooler air beneath – an inversion. Where you have such distinct layers, you have potential for differing winds in each and a shear layer between them. Such shear layers aren't going to be smooth.

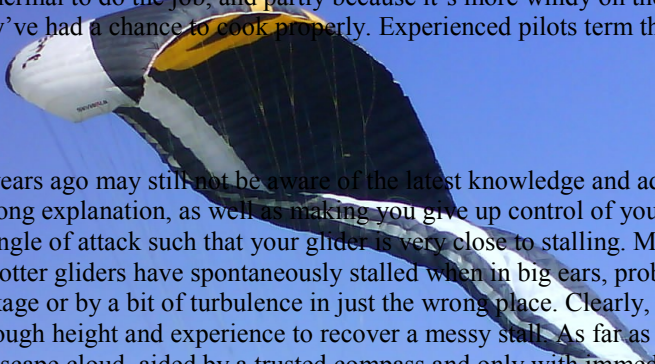
The next factor is the autumnal cold ground. On a clear night all the heat energy is radiated from the ground and lost into space without a cloud blanket to bounce it back to the ground again. So all the air touching that cold ground gets chilled, making it extra dense. Hence you get the cold air pooling like water in the hollows, made visible by mist on those chilly mornings. Look out from the top of Firle on a clear morning and you've got a vast lake of cold air out there. Consider that you're on Firle because there's a light north wind, and you can expect this cold air to be blown towards you, getting blown up the hill, and perhaps blown over it if the layer is thick enough. It will also happily flow like water through the valleys and out to sea. That's known as drainage, or a kind of land breeze. So we have another reason to have a cold, low layer, separated by a shear layer from the warmer air above. Put those two effects together, and you've got a vast puddle of cold air being blown towards a hill that it really does not want to go up.

So that's Dave's day on Firle, sitting on a chilly hill in a layer of cold, dense air which extends perhaps 200 feet over the hill top. There's faster moving air over the cold layer and a gently turbulent shear layer separating them. So the result is, we get a smooth, flyable wind on the hill. Chances are it's pretty blowy across the spurs sticking into the valley flow out to sea and any passing helium balloons will be making sudden changes of speed and direction as they transit the shear layer.

Where all this gets extra interesting is when the thermals come out to play. At this time of year the sun is still high enough to do its job, but later and later in the day as winter approaches. So add some thermals into the cold layer as the fields warm up, and they're going to go through that cold air like rockets – hooray! But they seem to stop climbing and go rough just above the hill – remember the pilot seen shooting up and suddenly hitting wind and coming down in “big panic ears”.

This is the key time of day when it's all going to change rapidly and roughly. As the sun gets stronger, so do the thermals. Strong enough that their inertia carries them through the shear layer and up into the warm, windy

layer. Clearly, any pilot riding that thermal is going to find it pretty turbulent on the way through and the way back down again. Right Dave? The guys lower down in the cold layer will also notice it start to get funky as the thermals cause the two layers to mix up. As the mixing takes place, the lower layer is going to get ripped up, the upper wind is going to reach the ground and those still flying will have experienced plenty of turbulence with their thermals and an increase in wind speed. This process might take about 30 minutes, and is always a fascinating time to be in the air, and a very rough one. Once the mixing process is complete and your inversion and shear layer have dissipated you can expect less thermal activity for a while, partly because the air is now warmer and you'll need a hotter thermal to do the job, and partly because it's more windy on the ground so the thermals get blown off before they've had a chance to cook properly. Experienced pilots term this period "lunch time".



The big ears bit.

Those pilots trained more than 2 years ago may still not be aware of the latest knowledge and advice about big ears. Without going into another long explanation, as well as making you give up control of your aircraft, big ears dramatically increases your angle of attack such that your glider is very close to stalling. Many gliders, safe working tandems, 1/2s, and hotter gliders have spontaneously stalled when in big ears, probably thrown over the edge by minor line shrinkage or by a bit of turbulence in just the wrong place. Clearly, big ears is not worth the risk unless you have enough height and experience to recover a messy stall. As far as I can see, the only time big ears has a use is to escape cloud, aided by a trusted compass and only with immediate application of full speed bar to get the angle of attack somewhere sensible again. If you have to get down in a hurry, and can see where you're going, a controlled spiral dive is by far the safest and most effective technique and should part of every paraglider pilot's tool kit.

The collapse recovery bit.

Paragliders can and do collapse. Pilots find themselves in a bit of rough air they didn't plan for. Sometimes the collapse is small and easily dealt with, sometimes it's a whopper that's not so easy and takes time and height, time and height which may not be available. That's the dark truth of paragliding and if you don't like it, please see John for hang gliding lessons.

Dave's whopper sounded like an asymmetric of 50% or greater, not that out of the ordinary. I suspect that Dave over-braked the open side, causing it to stall / spin, producing the twisted risers. He then went for "hand up and hope", allowing the glider to immediately dive very hard, spiral a bit, open and recover.

At risk of offending Dave, who flies a lot, has watched the videos and done an SIV course, the hands up and hope method of recovery is not at all appropriate to piloting a hot glider like the Antea. This method is just about acceptable on a DHV1, at least until the pilot has learnt more about SIV and how to recover with much less loss of height.

If we're to stand a chance of recovering our mess before hitting the floor, we need to get information fast and take the appropriate action at the first sign of trouble. We need to look up and understand what the problem is, and with the other eye, look down to gauge how much height we've got to deal with it. If there is any doubt at all that there is sufficient height, we must immediately throw the parachute, and throw it hard. If there is sufficient height to fix it, we should try, but always with one eye on the ground ready to deploy the rescue while there's still time. The other eye should, or course, be analysing the state of the glider to effect the most rapid recovery possible, without over-cooking it and stalling anything that's still holding us up.

In the Southern Club we all spend a lot of time flying complex and often unexpectedly turbulent air low to the ground, not leaving much time for either recoveries or parachutes. This implies that we should all fly wings that are well within our abilities to control so that when something horrible happens at 50 feet it doesn't result in hitting the ground. I encourage us all to ask ourselves: In Dave's scenario, what would you do? Do you have the skills to manage a whopper properly, in rough air, on your current glider? Would you have the presence of mind to throw the rescue if that really was the best option? Do you know how I can learn to point my eyes in different directions at the same time?

If you want the best paragliding during January and February you must join Dave and the Skylark team in Southern India.

They go soaring or thermic XC at will, stay in the best hotel and have the best cars in town.

Their plan for days of pilgrimage by Mahindra jeep and Enfield to reach other sacred launches and golden beaches can only accelerate your quest for enlightenment.

Begin your spiritual quest by visiting www.skylarkparagliding.co.uk

or speak to Dave on +447884072536

The Early Days Of Hang Gliding And The Southern Club

A Personal Perspective by Ian Grayland.

Part Three. The Hiway Days continued.

In the last issue I told you about some of the early technical advances that took place at Hiway in Brighton. This time I'll continue with more on the theme of mid 70's glider development and some of the pilots involved.

Knee Hanger Harness

Steve Hunt, although capable, was a very conservative sort of flier, rarely flying his own development gliders until they were close to the production stage. Thus much of the early test flying at Hiway fell to his partner John Ievers, a relatively unflappable sort of pilot. Taking off from the Dyke paddock one morning in his new knee-hanger harness, John was snatched off the ground half-stalled. This was the real drawback with knee-hangers, though they were great for getting the punters flying prone - they simply had no choice but grab the control bar as their feet were snatched out from under them - occasionally one could get taken off rather too soon... Despite pulling the bar well back, John failed to get enough airspeed and was unceremoniously dumped smack into the hump on the far side of the path. He hit really hard. Far too hard. As soon as he got up, guys stopped running and the whole hillside erupted in relieved laughter as he stumbled around the glider winded and speechless, gasping for air in a shocked daze. When he realised that he hadn't actually unclipped, the reason for the heavy impact dawned on him. The main height adjuster buckle in his harness had completely separated. The stop bar had broken and was missing. When he found it, he went completely ballistic, running across the hill to Steve and with a shout of "You fucking idiot!" promptly set about punching his lights out! Steve had made the harness himself that morning. The visually identical adjuster buckle had a plastic bar instead of metal. After that all adjusters on Hiway products had a bypassing safety link.



Gulp

One afternoon, whilst soaring at Mill Hill, I looked down to see local regular Miles Handley arrive and start to rig. Instead of his usual well engineered home-built Skyhook or his scaled-up Bighook, he was rigging something completely different. I immediately set up a landing approach to investigate. By the time I had landed he had a fully rigged glider standing there ready for inspection. It looked like a little single surface aeroplane with an A-frame and a kingpost. The keel tube stuck a couple of feet out the front and the straight taper wings were wire braced off the 'snout'. In fact the whole bloody lot was wire braced off the snout, king post, Vee tail and all. To rig it you simply sat on the ground in front of it, put your feet on the nose plates and tensioned it like a crossbow. Lift it up onto the A-frame, in with one pin and you were done! OK. Way cool. I had to have a go on this!

Neatly stencilled on the tail was the word 'experimental' in block capitals. Alongside in bigger letters it said G.U.L.P. This was some kind of acronym, like 'Groovy Ultra Light Plane', or something like that - I actually never found out - within minutes I was in the harness and airborne.

Low Speed Flight

It flew really slowly. I mean r e a l l y slowly. The airfoil for the most part was a circular arc of ten percent or more camber. Despite having less than 130 square feet of wing, with me flying seated it didn't even rustle my flared jeans at trim. I climbed easily to about 500 feet or so above the soaring pattern and checked out the stability. Stalls were clean, straight ahead and very gentle. It was very reluctant to drop a wing and spin, but was going so slow, and with that little baby V tail it slipped and skidded about rather alarmingly as I slowed it down further. On landing, I reported all this to Miles who then told me the wing had previously only had a couple of ground skimming flights at Steyning!

The next time I flew one was at Bo Peep. The Gulp was still immediately recognisable as such, but now had a new conventional tail and vertical fin. Good. Much easier to get sorted. It also had an additional set of bracing wires out to the tips to tighten the trailing edge, plus additional outer side wires curving the leading edges down to match the trailing edge curvature, thus evening-out the wing twist distribution like the vertical delexors on conventional flexwings.

I waited for a lull in the light breeze, took off and flew straight out and up about 1800 ft. I turned left flying off towards Lewes and looked down, contemplating my stationary trouser legs. Yaw stability was excellent now and there was a big improvement in speed range, but there was, at my light weight, insufficient control authority in roll. The wing was stiff enough that it would almost certainly need aerodynamic controls. After half an hour or so I came in for a top landing, lining it up straight into wind from well back. Rounding out behind the bowl at Bo Peep I had both my feet literally hooked over the left side wire just to keep it level.



A Tricky Beast

Despite the obvious shortcomings Miles went ahead with production, selling several gliders locally. Guys like Johnny Carr, Tony Fuel and Dave Goeppel bought and flew them with great enthusiasm. Johnny Carr in particular not only mastered this beast, he turned it into a competition winning art form. Somehow he developed the knack of putting in a written request sufficiently well in advance of requiring a turn that the turn would actually take place more or less on schedule. Miles did experiment with aerodynamic controls (though the spoilers on the wing in the photo were only really there to put the glider in class two for that particular competition), but it wasn't long before weight sensitivity and pitch instability issues demanded drastic action.

Flying at Mill Hill one day Johnny got a bit behind the hill and pulled a little extra speed to get out into the lift band. The Gulp went into a progressively increasing dive from which it never recovered. Luckily it impacted on the steep slope half way down the hill and Johnny was uninjured. This resulted in a retro-fit mod to the Gulps' horizontal stabilisers, increasing their size and range of adjustment. Problem solved.

Not Quite

Dave Goeppel was flying his Gulp watched by a group of us at Bo Peep. He pulled a bit of speed, showing off his glide across the wind. The glider went into a shallow dive. As the bar pressure reversed Dave pushed out. No effect. The dive increased. Before things got completely out of order, Dave climbed back up the rear wires, got his feet up on the control bar and gave it a mighty shove, getting the nose up and slowing things back to normal. He carried on flying as if nothing had happened until forced into a landing by the collective shouts of the assembled observers. Determined to solve the problem, Miles retrofitted the Gulps with a full set of pre-formed tubular ribs to create and constrain a much more stable airfoil. This did solve the problem, but at the expense of a further increase in weight, complexity and wing stiffness. Miles quickly moved on by designing a new flying wing with harness-actuated tip rudders. Somewhere in the course of its development the Gulp had been lost.

Graham Slater

A name some of you will recognise from later competition successes, Graham had moved to Brighton with the intention of starting a hang gliding school, but wound up working at Hiway for a bit whilst recovering from a nasty downwind crash into the paddock at Mill Hill shortly after his arrival in the area.

We factory pilots had taken to doing quite a bit of dual flying since the advent of the Cloudbase, which compared to the sluggish standard wings was controllable enough to do the job fairly well. Graham was interested in this for instruction purposes and asked me to join him in a dual flight at Bo Peep. His wing was already rigged and parked flat from a previous flight so I picked the nose up, engaged the nose catch and we pre-flighted the wing as we kited it over to take-off. I was on the nose wires with Graham steadying the roll on the side and one rear wire. Somehow as we neared the edge of the hill Graham had ended up holding both the rear wires a couple of feet behind the A frame, with me still on the nose wires only a couple of feet in front. A moment later the inevitable happened and we became airborne. Despite me shouting at him to let go, Graham clung tenaciously to the rear wires. Though still behind the edge, we were slowly climbing. To hell with the gentlemanly conduct. "If you don't fucking let go now, I will..." My fingers were already opening when he finally gave in. We dropped six or eight feet to the ground for a simultaneous stand-up landing. A split-second later we were re-joined by the wing, the keel of which smacked both of us on the head cartoon style, breaking

neatly in two places over our crash helmets. On the up-side, our antics produced considerable mirth amongst those present on the hill. Oh, and it was Graham's glider...

Boomerangs

With the Cloudbase in volume production most of Hiway's day to day development flying was by now on truncated tip gliders in the Boomerang series. Unfortunately, with fixed tips you get a lot of roll damping and the handling is also further hampered by the extra tip mass increasing inertia, especially in yaw. This type of glider was not really a favourite with me, but I did like the excellent glide, penetration and quick rigging of these simple wings. They made a pleasant diversion from the more disciplined flying I had been doing with the complex rigids. It was on one of the Boomerangs that I made the first flight along the cliff to the lighthouse at Beachy Head.

A group of us were soaring the bowl at Beachy, using the clearing in the centre of the bowl for launch and landing (as was normal in those days, since the whole slope was covered in bushes and the launch we now use was largely obstructed by a fenced-in concrete ruin). The wind gradually veered off to the South and most gliders were restricted to the area at the Eastbourne end of the bowl except for Martin Farnham on his Cloudbase Three with me constantly catching and passing him at similar height on the faster Boomerang. At the end of one beat into wind Martin stuck his nose over the edge of the cliff bowl before quickly turning back downwind. I flew straight on through the turbulence past him and onto the main cliff. By the time I got to the lighthouse I had gained 750 ft in strong smooth lift. Though nothing can compare to the excitement of that first flight, I still enjoy flying Beachy Cliffs whenever the rare opportunity occurs - despite the occasional incident.

My First, Last Big Wingover Ever

Beachy Cliffs. Plenty of room. Maybe 200 ft or so above the top. Pull a touch of speed, then push out smooth, but fairly quick. Up goes the nose. Nothing to see but sky. As the nose drops in the whip-stall, snatch the bar hard all the way in. Down comes the nose. Just before the dive reaches max airspeed, feed in a few degrees of roll. Then smooth hard push. All the way out. Loads of 'g', blue, blue, blue. Airspeed falling away, 'g' dropping. Look up to see the ground coming down out of the sky. And... Oops! No ground. No fucking airspeed. Still inverted. Bang! My legs smack into the keel. I've already reflexively shuffled right across the control bar to the lowest wing to slip and roll out whatever glider I've got left. "If I get out of this, I'll never do another one!" Whoosh! The nose comes down. The grass half way down the cliff bowl shoots by fast and close. I make a very, very gentle climbing turn to the left and land at the top of the cliff bowl. All the top-rigging thimbles are stretched flat and the thread in the top side-wire turnbuckle is stripped right out, leaving the load entirely supported through the lock-ring retainer wire. Close.

Boomerang Three

I managed to talk Steve into making a new sail with longer chord roached tips for the scrap Cirrus airframe - he finally believed me about laminar separation stall limitations with short wing chord. This wing was to become my personal glider and pride and joy for quite a few months. I fixed it up with all the features I liked; light weight, easy knockdown to 12ft, seated / prone reversible rigging and a snazzy two-tone green and yellow sail. It was a striking looking glider for the time with its 22 ft leading edges and 11 ft keel; a proper swept flying wing. Some years later, I was chatting to aviation adventurer Gerry Breen who had commissioned a couple of Clubman wings from me for his Angel Falls expedition. He had first noticed me on take-off at Minaun Heights, Achill Island rigging my Boomerang during an Irish fly-in. He said, since the wing had no keel there could obviously be no pitch stability, he knew I was going to die! Needless to say my flying all that week, including a spectacular wave flight late one evening, had proven very much the contrary.

Recycling

Boomerang Three was so successful that Steve and John were quite happy for me to play around with the scrap heap and recycling became my primary way of experimenting on the cheap. Amongst the scrap was a brown and orange wing with the trickiest handling of any of the mainstream Hiway protos. This glider had bitten everyone who flew it and had hence become known as the 'Brown and Smelly'. This was a high lift wing (lots of camber) with stiff leading edges and a ventral fin the size of a billboard. The result was a glider with very good sink rate and glide, but with the spiral stability of a demented corkscrew. I knew I could tame this beast using a new type of crosstubeless airframe with high crosscoupling between the tips to reduce lift differential in turns. I got Frank Tarjanyi, Hiway's young Hungarian toolmaker, to make me a big pulley for the nose wire

linkage using a skateboard wheel bearing, and kept some roll damping by only floating the outboard third of the wing. The result was great. Both roll and pitch forces were now so light as to be almost imperceptible to the average factory pilot. Aside of the overcontrol problems and endless amusement that this introduced whenever I gave anyone a go on it, the wing was now totally forgiving and pleasant to fly. I stopped the whole slalom and spot landing competition at the British Championships at Mere that year by thermalling to cloudbase in no wind to a blow-by-blow commentary by Brian Milton over the Tannoy, before spiralling back down to a landing outside the beer tent. Cool.

Scorpion

Whilst I was busy recycling scrap we were all busy as a group developing the next range of production gliders. These, like my Boomerang, were also a move back from the more complex truncated tip wings to simpler roach tip designs. Nose angles, though reduced, were still large enough to need additional directional stability and after much experimenting with performance enhancing droop tips, Steve opted for the superior handling combination of roached tips and a small ventral fin. The entire set of hardware was re-designed, together with the use of 'E' brightened shiny anodised tubes. The really smart looking end result was a worthy successor to the Cloudbase called the Scorpion. Steve and John presented me with one of these fitted with every possible extra. It was all E bright tube and an expensive Dacron sail fitted with large triangular clear windows. It was the smartest looking Hiway glider to date. A man could be proud of a machine like that. Well, until he realised he could make a better one...

After a month or two of tweaking and tuning, I got frustrated with the lacklustre performance and handling of the Scorpion and passed it on to Frankie, who really loved flying it and did his first cross-country flight on the glider a few weeks later.

Frank Tarjanyi

Morning tea break time. After starting a resounding group rendition of Handel's Aluminium Chorus, Hiway's airframe man Dale Clothier went over to the sink to get some coffee. He glanced out of the window. "I've just seen Frankie flying past!" We all downed tools and rushed over to look. "No, you won't be able to see him; he's lower than the factory!" He had gone low over the back of the Dyke and then over most of Brighton, then through the remainder, heading for the Race Hill. When Dale spotted him he was flying *up* Bear Road in determined defiance of the laws of physics. A car was rapidly dispatched. Frankie was found, perhaps a little paler than normal, but still perky as ever, in the graveyard at the top of Bear Road, his glider parked nonchalantly on a gravestone.

Nameless

Realising that I could use my crosstubeless frame system to control a much flatter wing, I whipped another old Scorpion project sail off the scrap heap and reworked my airframe to fit. This resulted in a longer span with less taper, this time using droop tips for directional stability and to maximise the effective wingspan. The Nameless was fast, stalling and spinning rather abruptly, albeit controllably, at 24 mph. It had excellent penetration performance, good static balance and light, easy handling in thermals. All the basic ingredients I was looking for. This wing served me well as a research vehicle for the next few months and enabled me to zero in on the design parameters for a potential production version.

Super Scorpion

Accelerated by market success, development work was running by now at fever pitch, with new and different protos flying almost every week. Following the sudden death of my business partner, I had ended up working full time at Hiway (well five hours a day on the sail loft night shift plus flight testing during the day), whilst living in my VW van in Bernard Road with fellow van dwelling Antipodean hang gliding migrants who made up a good part of the factory work force. Most of my work in between flying involved helping Steve with wing twist distribution, camber distribution and sail shaping. This was all trial and error stuff - no computers back then. I made most of the development and production sail templates as well as being a regular production sailmaker in the evenings.

With the Scorpion sorted and selling well it was time to start working on the next production development series. The plan was to develop three new wings in three sizes each, this time with specific objectives pre-defined at the outset. The Super Scorpion was aimed at 'experienced' weekend fliers. The Harrier was a

basic training wing for school use and the Spectrum was specifically for raw beginners on final training flights and for purchase straight out of school. Yet another sound market-driven strategy straight from the pen of Mark Woodhams, Hiway's graphic design consultant.

Simplicity

One of the key elements in the success of the Super Scorpion was its sheer simplicity. All the aerodynamic shaping of the sail was carried out internally by the use of shaped seams which gave the otherwise flat fabric its shape and also compensated for the flexing of the leading edge spars under load, thus doing away with the need for external deflexor wires and struts. Even the wing ribs were just simple straight lengths of plastic electrical conduit, snipped to length as required and tensioned with bungee elastic. The primary objective was soft easy handling, but with adequate performance to appeal to the broadest possible market sector. Not really my kind of glider. After the fast, cruising thermalling wings I had been flying, the SuperScorp felt like a parachute with



the handbrake on. For flight testing I wasn't the only one who used to rack them out as flat as a board with a handful of billow rings (crosstube extenders) to liven things up a bit.

That SuperScorp B

Production sailmaking generates a lot of scrap. Hiway used to donate bags of scrap sailcloth to a local school for the kids' craft classes. On the night-shift one evening we were musing collectively - as was our wont - when suddenly it seemed a great idea to build a SuperScorp B out of scrap off-cuts. Now, the B (small size) wasn't really fully finalised yet and, though we had built

a few protos, was certainly not yet a proper production glider. With Steve away on a business trip, this would surely make a nice surprise for him when he got back. On the day of his return, Steve was told to watch the BBC news at six o'clock. He was greeted by a news item about flying at Mill Hill. Good promo; they were nearly all Hiway gliders flying. The most notable being a psychedelic oil-slide multi-colour wing decorated with marijuana leaf graphics!

Sigma

Meantime, the Nameless was flying so well that I got the OK to build a complete new wing, so I really pushed the bar out this time. The Sigma was radical. It had a big 140 degree nose angle crosstubeless frame with 36 feet of span and a six feet to three feet straight-tapered wing with floating droop tips. The resulting aspect ratio was well over eight, yet pack length was only seven and a half feet. It was all shiny E bright tubes and had a fully battened sail in shades of red in the very best Dacron. After a couple of ground-skimming flights at the bottom of Goldings Barn, I made the first flight from the top of the Dyke. The Sigma circled like it was on rails and was truly effortless to fly. I climbed out and flew straight back over Brighton, landing conveniently close to the factory at the Race Hill. Pretty bloody good for a first test flight. However, there was at this time no real market for such an advanced wing and it wasn't until years later that I was able to produce and sell a couple of hundred wings inspired by this prototype in one of my own factories.

The Big Move

Hiway were now churning out wings nineteen to the dozen. Sales of Super Scorpions had exceeded all previous gliders in the UK and, despite running a sailmaking night-shift, Hiway also had to buy-in sails from an outside sailmaker to keep up with ever increasing demand. The only volume limitation now became the factory building itself. Following extensive investigations and many flying trips around the country, John and Steve decided to make a grant-aided move to a new factory in SE Wales. I may well have gone along with them for a while, but with my latest design already hot on the drawing board and the vacuum in the marketplace that Hiway's departure would leave, it only needed local flier Mike 'Golly' Robertson to introduce me to Roger King, a young engineer with a burning desire to manufacture hang gliders, and the stage was set for the inevitable emergence of Vulturelite...

To be continued...

Once in a lifetime!

written by Claire Furminger



In 2006 my kids gave me the wonderful gift of a paragliding lesson. I had always dreamed that I could fly. I learned that year at Sussex Paragliding and bought my kit with a friend who learned to fly the same time as me. Sadly my friend Kate fractured her ankle so I had to find my own way to break from the school and fly with others. I was given the chance to fly in Olu Deniz, after only about 20 minutes flying in the UK, and threw caution to the wind. People laughed at me when I said my ambition was to become a competition pilot by the time I was 50 (who's laughing now?). I have had some great adventures in Turkey, India,

Nepal, Australia, France and Croatia.

So far I think my highest point (pardon the pun and excluding my cross country flight of 18km in Australia) was getting the opportunity this July to go with the GB team to compete in Croatia in the Pre World Accuracy Cup. I did it, a woman (who has been in mid life crisis for a good twenty years now), got to represent GB initially and then Lithuania in World Class Competition!

This is the story of how that happened.

I went to Laragne to meet up with Veronica a tandem pilot from Canada whom I had met in Australia for the Flying Competition sponsored by Ozone. Whilst out there a guy called Tony Blacker asked me if I would like to represent the UK in a Paragliding Accuracy Comp in Croatia. Well how could I say no! The last day at Laragne was declared a free flying day and a bunch of us headed off to St Vincent le Fort. This is a stunningly beautiful site and when we got there Tony suggested I try accurate top landings. He said I should ask Jocky Sanderson to talk me in over the radio but I thought that would be a bit bloody cheeky as I didn't know Jocky, he had been working all week had probably had enough of looking after people already. Fired with patriotism and determination to get in as much practice as possible (I so didn't want to let the side down) off I went. The second I took off I realised that I would probably not be able to top land at all! It was so buoyant and lively I soon decided just to go with the flow. Free flying on a beautiful day in a stunning place I had that feeling just dancing along in the air having so much fun. I soon realised that the guys I had arrived with might be getting bored and leave without me. Better come down fast. I tried wingovers but did not seem to lose height at all. Luckily I had been a helper on a SIV course with Steve at Airworks so finally I had a go at a spiral dive. Whoa... that got me down! I went from a feather to a stone caught in lea and unable to get any lift at all to approach the top landing. So just fly out and land in a field but whilst the road looked passable the electricity cables did not. So I landed, possibly my most inelegant ever, grateful not to have been seen and a mightily embarrassed by my own cheek. I radioed to report that my first effort was not altogether successful. The next morning I saw Jocky at breakfast. He said good morning Claire. He actually knew my name I concluded from that perhaps I had made myself look a bit of a tit.

Croatia was the following weekend so I arranged to stay with a friends Simone and Keith Simpson at their place in Gréolières in the South of France. The Simpson Family are lovely, really kind and hospitable. I stayed in their Yurt (which is a Mongolian style tent) and had a moon bath. A moon bath is a bath outside where you fill the bath and light a fire under it you just sit there outside looking at the mountains, fabulous. I certainly plan to visit again, their Yurt is available to hire and Gréolières is a magnificent place. The weather was uncharacteristically poor for the time I was there so I missed out on what must be (weather gods allowing) fabulous flying.

Having found out the air ticket was too expensive I plumed for going by rail unable to book it on line I had to just turn up.

Simone dropped me to a local railway station where I got to a train to Nice I saw the train to Milan disappear before my eyes (one minute it was on the sign then it was gone). I had to get a train to Ventimillion in Italy because the French were on strike. I recommend the train journey from Nice to Ventimillion as it is beautiful and not too expensive it travels all along the coast line. At the end of the line I went straight to the information to book my train to Milan. There ensued much confusion as I did not realise, not speaking Italian that I was supposed to jump through hoops backwards with my left eye shut, holding one foot up to my right buttock with my other index finger in my ear. Eventually a train to Milan turned up hours and hours after I got there. The inspector said that it was the wrong train and wanted to charge me another 17.5 euros or chuck me off. I was pretty frustrated and angry by then and told him to call the police and get me arrested. I never usually have tantrums but I felt

vulnerable, (stamping my feet and shouting still doesn't work) in the end I had to cough up. At Milan confused as ever I got the train for Mestre VE arriving at midnight in a run down area like the Clapham Junction of Venice complete with dodgy characters and a by now very heavy glider. I finally found a surprisingly nice hotel for 60euros being too frightened to sleep on the station in case I was robbed. (When back in UK I realised how much safer you feel when you understand language.) I missed the opportunity to visit Venice proper as there was no where to leave my wing it was too hot to walk around with it and I didn't want to miss the train again, a bit of a wasted day really.

I met a crazy, entertaining American on the train and it was good to share the strangeness, no signs on railway lines and no information at all, with someone who was just as culture shocked as me. I got off at Zagreb and had about 5 hours wait before I was picked up by the organiser General Zdravko Jacob and really appreciated that. We went straight to the practice field. That part of Croatia is very green, the land is quite undulating but is much more angular than the hills we have in Sussex. I met some of the British team Andy Webster, Nick Simmons and Nick Bohill they were helpful and encouraging and talked through the process and what generally happens in accuracy competitions. I had two practice jumps and they went OK. Tony, Joanne and baby Christopher turned up that night and we went to an evening in the town to watch the Croatian football team play the Turkish, the Croatians are very patriotic and whole families turned out in Croatian team regalia it was a very social event with big marques put up and a huge wide screen TV in the centre of town. I slept really well that night.

First day of the comp we went to get our numbers, we had three flights that day, it transpired that at the beginning of the season the British team had joined forces with the Dutch so there was no team space for me. I had a choice of being in a British team on my own or becoming a Lithuanian. Possibly staying on my own would have given me a better chance of getting sponsorship in UK (depending on how creatively I coloured in the facts) but it seemed more in the spirit to join a team. I became Lithuanian, this suited me for three reasons; I've never been Lithuanian before; the Lithuanians have a really cool flag and their hosting of the competition is legendary because they held the comp in their country on a frozen lake, (I have it from a good source that it was absolute madness to land on ice and several people say it can never happen again in living memory-fantastic eh). I was up for learning the national anthem and everything We had four flights in total, three on the first day and one on the second day when it quickly became too thermic to be safe. The logistics of getting a so many pilots off in competitions always amazes me. Usually you take off about 5 minutes apart (this is to allow enough spaces between the landings) and its quite a nervous place to be. For me it went a bit against the grain to fly through thermals on direct path for the landing field watching the course that earlier pilots were taking in order to be able to take your turn. Many a pilot is tempted just to do their own thing but that would ruin it for the rest of the competitors as all pilots have to land before the next round can be taken. When it came to the actual landing the considerations of pilots before and after you makes for a very intense experience and bits of my brain that I didn't even know existed started to fire off all sorts of information. There is no room for error because every landing has to be good. I managed to be consistently 15metres short on 3 of the four flights. If only they had moved the spot after my first landing I could have had a Disney style fantasy victory (but there's nothing Disney about paragliding). Getting good at anything takes time, dedication, money and suitable weather (I don't know which is the dirtier word, in the present climate, money or weather).



The UK accuracy squad are a pretty accomplished bunch and shared their knowledge graciously. They did a good job out in Croatia and it was a great privilege for me to be involved. Croatia has good flying sites and it was a shame that none of us were able to stay on to free fly. I booked the same flight back as Tony and family. I would consider more accuracy competitions in fact when money grows on trees I will be there. I'm back in UK now surrounded by gravity and trying to earn for my next flying adventure. If anybody would like to purchase the mucky Mojo I used to come 80th out 85 then it is available of course the Lithuanians get the first shout if they contact me back.

Claire

The Shgc Christmas Party and annual awards ceremony



The Shgc Christmas Party and annual awards ceremony was held on the 20th December at the White Hart in Lewes. A good time appeared to be had by all with some great music and many strutting their stuff on the dance floor. A special Honorary award was given to Dave Massie for the outstanding work he has done for the club, Dave has stood at every post on the committee and been the chairman for a stretch of 5 years, after passing the chair to Charlie, he has designed and built our all new singing and dancing web site. We, the committee and the members of the club, would like to say a big thank you to Dave for all the commitment he has undertaken for the club

The prize-winners were:

Paragliding Awards

Longest PG XC : Carlo Borsattino.....**Martini Trophy PG**: Winner: Carlo Borsattino

· **2nd place**: Dave Massie.... **3rd place**: Chris Jones

Sussex XC league PG....Winner: Carlo Borsattino....**2nd place**: Dave Massie....**3rd place**: Charlie Merrett

Sussex XC Weekend League PG....Winner: Dave Massie....**2nd place**: Ian Haselgrove....**3rd place**: Rob Chisholm

Best Novice XC PG: Glen Burrows....**Most Improved Pilot PG**: Richard Chester-Nash

Award of Merit PG: Matt Botterman, George Lisher, Ed Shamwana

Hang Gliding

Martini Trophy HG....Winner: Dave Matthews....**2nd place**: Ozzie Haines...**3rd place**: Steve Marnier

Sussex XC League HG....Winner: Ozzie Haines....**2nd place**: Dave Matthews....**3rd place**: Steve Marnier

Sussex XC Weekend League HG...Winner: Ozzie Haines...**2nd place**: Dave Matthews..**3rd place**: Steve Marnier

Bent Upright: Charlie Foulkes...**Class 5**: Ozzie Haines...Not awarded for 2008...**Most Improved Pilot HG**

Best Newcomer HG...**Best Newcomer PG**...Ron Steadman Trophy HG



THE AIRWORKS 2008 RED RIBBON CLUB

OPEN PG COMPETITION

Sat 5th September saw this annual informal competition take place at West Firle and Caburn. The event is divided into two classes – the *red ribbon class* and the *open class* and aims to place complete novice pilots alongside experienced pilots, whilst providing a series of ground and flying tasks which remain a challenge suitable to those of all levels of ability. The weather this year provided us with very light winds and sunshine producing weak thermals. Nevertheless, we managed to complete a selection of interesting and amusing tasks, and above the various winners have just been presented with their prizes back at Airworks. The results were:



Winners Mark Wigglesworth (left) and Tony Aldhous.

RRC Class: 1st Mark Wigglesworth 2nd Sahand Ghanoun 3rd Ian McWhirter

Open Class: 1st Tony Aldhous 2nd St John Gilbert 3rd Ronan McDonald

The Golden Shot and monkeys up a tree

A very exciting afternoon flight was had at the Dyke today. Turned up around 16.30 and was quickly joined by half a dozen others. Four of us were quickly in the air only for the wind to pick up equally quickly. Windy John and Stu Troop made it back on top and Dave Nikels bottom landed. That just leaves me pinned in front of launch about 150' ATO with 1/3 bar. Now the wind is really getting a move on and I want down! big ears, slowly down but also going back slowly, now 3/4 bar, arrived over launch and let of bar and ears. Now it's Golden Shot time i,ve been up, and down, forward, backward and now im going backward and sideways. Flew across the gravel car park and was thrown into a tree at virtually ground level, another nice blast of wind and I was pulled up about 6' and jammed into the branches. Shot. Many Hands held on to me while I unclipped and climbed down. Now I have to get a glider out of the tree 30' up and I suppose this is where you find out if you have any mates in the club. No worries, time now is 16.55,(my watch stopped at this time because something pulled the winder out on impact) two handsaws and a length of hosepipe to use as a rope and all of a sudden the tree was full of monkeys sawing and pulling. 1 1/2 hrs later and it's on the grass in the dark and we're pulling the twigs out of the lines, only damage seems to be 6 tabs pulled out. One of the guys helping, (not a paraglider or hangy pilot) was in the tree when his false leg fell off and landed upright in the grass below! he weight shifted onto his good leg until he had to go home, bonkers, you couldn't make it up.

Finally, a big thank you to all those that helped; Windy John, Dave Massie, Ghandi, Chris Bere, Mark Johnson, Stu Troop, Dave Nickels, a couple of hangy guys (sorry don't know your names guys) and the one legged bloke! Luckily only my pride seems to have been slightly dented so I'll probably see you all on the hill tomorrow, I owe you a beer or two. Fly Safe! Pete.



Photo Chris Bere

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Coaching Matters!

The B.H.P.A. is recommending that all coaches should be re validated every five years by attending a club coach course. The idea is to keep everyone up to speed on current coaching techniques and ideas, also to encourage and renew the enthusiasm that coaches need to be welcoming and helpful. After all, the coaches are often the first contact that a newcomer or visitor has with the club, with this in mind the southern club is hosting a two day club coach course on the 13 and 14 of Dec. There are thirty places available, those who wish to continue coaching and need re validating (if you've been a coach more than 5 years that means you) and anyone who wishes to become a club coach should contact me to book a place. The cost of thirty pounds for new coaches and twenty pounds for re validations. will be met by the club, so you have no excuse.

You may have seen recently a few people flying with a white streamer, they are your club coaches, this is our new method of identification, we've tried fleeces, body warmers badges, and helmet stickers, armbands and many other things have been suggested, but we needed something that would always be on the hill when we are flying and not left behind or forgot hence, the white streamer.

So don't be bashful, if you need help or advice, a sight assessment, pilot tasks signed off or simply to get to know someone on the hill, your coaches are happy to help.

Contact details

John Lancaster, Committee SHGC or johnandshaz@yahoo.com or 07951500769 or john@info@airworks

See you on the hill



Subject: [SHGC] Foreign pilots and Non playing members!

Club membership for 2008 has tipped over the 400 mark this month which is good because our site rent roll is not cheap, and as you know Southern sites are very crowded on good days.

Most of our written agreements with landowners (especially NT & Local Authorities) are specific about qualification. Pilots wishing to fly must be members of the BHPA (or prove suitable third party insurance and competence) and must be members of the SHGC (or an affiliated UK club & must pay day membership).

With the opening up of job markets within Europe there has been an increase in overseas pilots moving to live/work in and around London. Some of these guys join the Club and come and fly on our sites but others consistently ignore our requests to them to join the Club.

As you know, we always welcome visiting foreign and new pilots as guests and they are well received and supported but it is entirely different situation if they are resident !

At least one of the two 'foreign' pilots, who were apparently close to getting into dangerous flying difficulties, is a current UK resident but has refused to join this Club for months now. (He now advises me that he is going to join...and we welcome him)

Foreign and Non members will have never read a full sites guide and will probably not be aware of site hazards, landowners requirements etc, leading potentially to actions by a non member that could put our site usage in jeopardy. It is all our responsibility to assure that we are flying with safe, insured and responsible pilots.

The Committee is aware of the strength of feeling from many members on this subject and will shortly produce appropriate guidelines. It will be a combination of education, peer pressure and ultimately prevention by legitimate means, we will be shortly starting with site sweeps to check SHGC membership, BHPA or other 3rd party insurance, if you are wanting to help with site policing please email committee@shgc.co.uk

Please help us to undertake this important issue by insuring that you have your helmet sticker on your current helmet! (the clue is in the **Helmet** sticker) and not left in the van/car, it just saves the embarrassment of being questioned about being a member! If you are lucky to have 2 helmets and need a second sticker or if you have lost your sticker please log on to the web site and contact committee for your request.

Saw this on the pg forum.

To all,
I was going to repack my reserve, and every time I do this I simulate a deployment from my harness hanging from a tree. I was unable to deploy my parachute from the SUPAIR frontal container.

(<http://www.supair.com/fr/produit.php?id=20&prod=accessoire>)

My container is about 6 to 8 years old. The container material is rubberized on the inside. Apparently, during the last year, this rubber material decomposed and became like glue. For as much as I pulled, the parachute was trapped inside the container. If I had continued to pull, I feared I was going to rip off the handle from the parachute bag.

I will be sending this email to SupAir myself, they are great professionals and have great products, I am sure they will have comments, but please if you know anyone with a SupAir frontal parachute container, tell them to check the inner surfaces for any degradation of the material. If it is sticky, stop using the container as degradation occurs quickly to the point of becoming like glue.

Matt Pepper

Stephanie's De Bagging!

The names used in this article have been changed to protect the identities of those involved apart from Mahoney, which probably isn't his real name anyway!

Not To be tried at home!!!

It started with a cheap package holiday to Olu deniz turkey, with myself and Birium, with the intention of free flying and Acro!

While we were there, we were chatting to Mahoney in the pub while all pissed out of our heads, about his De bagging adventures, Mahoney had tandemed and de bagged many a time (at least once), and we convinced him to take us up the next day before he sobered up, having done many SIV's (at least one) and with our confidence of coming out of various extreme manoeuvres (big ears etc), we started the preparation our D bagging (fall stalls, and ramming our bed sheets into the pillow case).

D bagging is where you are taken up to a certain height and you are released to free fall and your glider unfolds until its gets to its normal shape and should not be confused with T bagging. The idea is that you can go up by micro light or balloon or tandem and be released with enough height to practice manoeuvres or start your XC with a 1000 ft or so!

After we carefully stuffed my glider into the special D bag (like a pillow case), in the way we had learnt that morning when we were very hung over, we set up for the drive up the mountain all wearing sunglasses to disguise the night before.

Once at the take off at the 1900m mountain, we prepared the tandem for take off, and off we went! This was quite unusual, for a start I was nearly double his height! Once he inflated the glider I had to run him off the mountain! This seemed to be the most dangerous part of the whole operation, once launched I hung below mahoney like a he was giving birth to me!

We headed towards the manoeuvring area high above the sea, I was holding the D bag in front of my face not able to see straight ahead and penduluming below, In a vein attempt to record the incident radioed to my mate who was following behind to video the whole calamity, Mahoney said 'ok you go now' in his strange engrish accent, I promptly told him to hold the horses! As I reached into the D bag found my break handles slipped them over my hands and shouted ' im ready!' "ok on the count of three" he chuckled in a deep Turkish accent, "one, two," bang I pulled the pins holding me to the tandem, I fell into free fall going over backwards, watching the tandem pitch violently backwards, and then seeing the lines of my glider above me as they were pulled from the hi tech retaining device (elastic bands) then there was a pop as the small bag finally let go of the large wing and it began to open, accompanied with a cloud of the finest Turkish dust, the centre opened first and it concertinaed out left to right until it stabilised, it was as smooth as recovering from a front collapse, then my trusted Rush flew away, I finished the flight with a SAT and some wingovers and flew to the beach! Overall the experience was exhilarating, a lot better than I expected, but nowhere as extreme as I thought! How ever, if you are wanting to have a try, go to olu deniz find a stoned Turkish man with too many teeth to fit in his head, it makes the experience so much more enjoyable!



SHGC Jolly Morocco Autumn 2008

With a full group travelling out to this sunny part of the world, fun was gonna be had by all! The group were a mixed bunch of newly qualified pilots, to those with 30hrs and some who had never flown abroad before. As we arrived at Gatwick we were excited and ready for a taste of Africa!

Check in for 'sleazy jet' seemed easy going for most! But Paul and myself got clobbered £70 for excess baggage! That will teach us for taking 2 gliders each!

Arriving at Marrakech, the panic was on! 2 meter radios are not really legal, and I was carrying 8 of them! "Operating a small militia", I could hear the prosecution, but luckily I got through customs with no problems. As always, there were bright blue skies and a warm greeting from Toby awaiting our slightly bleary eyed (from the early morning flight) group. Once we had got out of the airport and into the small car park, we felt the warm breeze and gazed enviously at the kestrels thermalling in the blue sky, the heat was shimmering off the cars – it was going to be a good week!



The gitte, where we stayed is at the landing field and is the main centre of attraction for all other pilots; it's like an international paragliding fest! In the evening, when you have finished the days flying, there is always a display of Acro by some very good pilots (the Nivok test pilots were putting their new acro and 1/2 wings to test and performing a show), and whilst the young Moroccans are wanting to pack your glider away, (which normally costs a couple of sweets or a pencil) you can sit and enjoy your beer!

Our main site is approx 500m top to bottom and normally you get over 3 flights during the day! The first of the day is a gentle morning flight, we go up the mountain unpack and get ready to go and then do a weather briefing, which is "looks a much like yesterday! Best get ready for flying!". Our site works on the Anabatic /catabatic system and we had to wait for the catabatic flow go to the anabatic, wind flowing up the hill and not down!

Once a healthy breeze had come on the hill and we had our mid morning mint tea, flying was the name of the game. Each pilot had their own little goal to aim for and we tried to tailor a bit of coaching to help them achieve it! Some pilots were concentrating on thermalling and others just the fun of being able to be in the harness and enjoy their flying. It doesn't matter if you land at the bottom, Nutter Paul will come down and pick you up in the 4x4 and take you back to the top, ready to go again! Middy the flying gets a little stronger and we usually ate while it calmed down, then got back in the harness for more goal setting and flying. You can fly all the way to sun set where you can experience magic lift or restitution! This is where the sun heats the plain all day and stores the heat, once the temperature drops and changes all the heat from the plane rises and makes for lovely flying in buoyant smooth air, lovely!! Once we have landed we crack open the beers and watch other gliders coming to land. Evening are very much a casual affair, aperitif's, tea and everyone sitting around on scatter cushions chatting about their flights, downloading and looking at photos or listening to music, before we know where we are dinner is being served! Tagine is tradition Moroccan food, everything is homemade in the kitchen and after good days flying there is never much left! A big thanks to Al for donating his insanity chili sauce just to fire things up a little! Then it's a little more drinking and chatting and ready for bed! Two options! Your room or the big room with panoramic views (the roof), the midnight sky is breathtaking!

The rest of the week is much of the same; I try to keep it simple. We fly one or two sites, concentrate on flying and let pilots gain confidence in their flying, surroundings and their equipment!

I would like to congratulate everybody who came and well done, they all improved their confidence and their flying skills and many were able to tick off most of their tasks for their pilot ratings.

I run these trips in March/April and November for the SHGC members who have recently qualified or low airtime pilots or in fact for any pilot who want to fly consistently ready for the XC season! For any more information, you can contact me on neilbrennanwright@gmail.com or 07970814216.

Newhaven Incident & Safety Notice

My investigations reveal that the Club Pilot injured on Saturday is NOT a SHGC member, but is a BHPA member.

In the next few days I will be following this issue through with your Committee but it again highlights the issues that the Club have to deal with regarding people who feel that they shouldn't be asked to pay to join like the rest of us !

PLEASE READ THE FULL POSTING BELOW:-

We are currently making some updates to the Sites Guide and I draw your attention to the rules about the reporting of incidents/accidents to the BHPA and the AAIB

[Incidents

An incident may or may not involve injury being sustained. Where a fatal, potentially fatal, serious but non-fatal, unusual or dangerous flying event has taken place, it is now a requirement that you immediately report this to the relevant authority. Read the detail in the highlighted box on this page. Fatal or potentially fatal flying accidents must be immediately reported to the Air Accident Investigation Branch. All incidents and accidents must be reported to the BHPA (incident report forms are available at the BHPA website) in order that dangerous trends or situations might be identified and remedied.

Reportable incidents are those which...

...involve injury, whether to participants or others.

...involve damage to property, whether third party or not.

...may cause an insurance or legal claim. ...involve the use of non-standard equipment or techniques.

...involve failed or malfunctioned equipment. ...highlight safety points or were unusual.

...you feel the sport may learn from.

If you witness a fatal or potentially fatal flying accident, you must report it immediately to the Air Accident Investigation Branch (AAIB) on 01252 512299. If you witness a serious but non-fatal accident or incident, you must report it immediately to the BHPA on 0116 261 1322 . If you witness a less serious accident or incident, please fill in a BHPA Incident Report Form (IRF) and send it to the BHPA Office as soon as possible. IRF's can be downloaded from the BHPA website.

Dont assume that someone else has already reported an accident or incident.]

You should also Inform the SHGC Safety Officer or any SHGC Committee member as soon as possible.

David Webb

Sites Officer

Newhaven Cliffs and Brighton Run

Following a very busy Saturday at Newhaven Cliffs, with one serious injury reported, Club members are reminded to re-read the Sites Guide for Newhaven. It says:- Site pilot rating HG: Pilot

PG: PILOT. (Club Pilots may fly as far as the end of the southerly face following a briefing from a club coach/suitably experienced pilot.)

In other words,

UNLESS YOU ARE PILOT RATED...DO NOT FLY PAST THE 'POINT'.

The southerly face finishes at the point where it becomes SSW. The point is approximately 0.5 ml west of the coastguard tower.

David Webb

Sites Officer

