

Windsock

The Magazine of the Southern Hang Gliding Club

End of another summer

Here we go again! It's that time of year when we get so depressed that we start to think about what other pastimes we can take up over the less-fun-for flying months. To save you time looking into it I have conducted detailed research on the matter and my findings are as follows:- **NOTHING ELSE WILL DO**. And better still, you don't even have to go abroad to have fun. The hangies have been having a great time in the last few weeks with a nice run of northerlies and the Southern sites delivered in handfuls last winter. We had good thermic days at the Dyke and Firlie this time last year and even Newhaven and Beachy had some great days plus you've got a Windsock to read in between flights eh?



It seems like ages since I last put pen to paper (OK finger to keyboard) and lots of exciting things have happened since the last edition. There have been some fantastic flights from our sites – Carlo and Nancy from **Flybubble** both broke 80km from Caburn, Kenny McPhee and Simon Steel both flew over 70km from the Dyke and Simon also flew 40km from Caburn. Our members have been doing well in other parts of the UK too. Greg Hammerton flew 120km from Rybury and Lauren Martins 112km from Frocester Hill.

Catherine Castle did another great job of putting together the Summer Bash and we're all looking forward to the Christmas one. For those who want to get to know Catherine a bit better, I can't say too much but she reveals all later in this edition.

Simon Phipps

In this edition

Phil Ettinger and **John Turczak** get the Red Ribbon Club moving
 Newhaven run on his very first post – CP flight by **Lukasz Golebiowski**
 Special **Big Day** report for the 5 October
 Confessions of a Paragliding Instructor. **Rob Chisholm** from **Freeflight** tells it how it is
Andrew Craig has an adventure
Simon Phipps has a day out at Beachy Head
 Top tips for Tenerife from **John Turczak**
 Committee profile - **Catherine Castle**
Catherine Castle organises another Bash
 Reducing Risk by **Flybubble Paragliding**
 More expert advice from resident Ace pilot '**Peregrine**' **Molehusband**
 Fantasy site guide – how to cross the Channel
 The Yorkshiremen go flying. **John Turczak** finds this long lost sketch in his attic
 Dear **Peregrine** – more of your personal problems answered

Bits and Pieces

South Africa

Greg Hammerton recently returned from an epic holiday in South Africa. Greg reports very good conditions there in the Autumn and if you're prepared to drive there is always somewhere flyable. He flew for seven days and his flights were epic. He almost broke the site record again for Piketberg on the second-last day (80k+), a great XC up to 11000ft wearing only a Flybubble fleece! He also did a great flight over most of the mountains in the Western Cape.

Old Bold Pilots

Congratulations to Phil Ettinger, Vincent Tallau and Adam Reynolds who all passed their Pilot exam with flying colours (get it?). Thanks to Rob Chisholm for invigilating at short notice.

Beachy equipment

When flying at this site please remember that it is a site rule that the warning signs should be put out around the take-off area. Full details are in the site guide.

October Hurricane

Many were shocked at the power and devastation caused by the powerful hurricane striking Southern counties recently. A reader from Chichester sent this this photo of the catastrophic devastation caused saying "I've never seen anything like it. It was just terrifying".



The table was still standing but there just wasn't anywhere to sit



The Red Ribbon Club



Phil Ettinger and **John Turczak** give the RRC a kick start

Phil "Dave I'd like to help out with the Red Ribbons"
Hairy Dave "Great"

Phil "I'll probably start it up next year"
Dave "Great"

Phil "I'll do a bit of research first"
Dave "Great - its all yours then"

Phil asked me if I would give him a hand. I said yes and Phil then scarpered off to St Andre for two weeks. Anyway, I posted something on the Southern website about the up and coming Saturday to see what sort of response it might get and it got a lot. About six or seven keen new pilots turned up and were helped with site briefings, tips on launching and got any questions answered that they had. We got them sorted out on the hill and into the air. They all seemed to have a good time and several commented that they had done their longest flights as a result. And so it began

Phil is now back from his flying capers and out meeting with the Red Ribbons again. I am helping with some of the organisation of it all. The idea is to help new pilots find other people to fly with and get out safely while having some fun. Its much better arriving on the hill and meeting people you know and flying with them rather than tucking yourself away in the corner and not launching.

We have created events on the Southern Website. There is one for each Saturday. It is open for any Red Ribbon to post questions. What we will do is look at the weather and try and help you select the correct site to go to. We will aim to arrange a meeting time and point and one of us will be there for a site briefing, sort out any questions and generally give you help to get flying.

If you want to take part in this, just log into your profile on the web site. There is a tick box option there for being in the Red Ribbon club. This will put you on the email list.

We would like to see more input from Red Ribbon pilots on the event with their (your) interpretations of the weather, where you think would be a good site and any other flying related questions. If you are not a new pilot but would like to add your input then take a look and chip in. Even better come along when the Red Ribbons meet and give us a hand for an hour.

A lot of pilots spend the first hour just chatting anyway so use that time to give Phil and I a hand. The Red Ribbons are a fairly attentive group and like meeting more experienced pilots.

We have quite a bit lined up for the winter months. The winter XC league kicks off in November and as any distance logged gets to score we are going to be promoting a series of little events to get pilots flying along the various ridges and then logging their flights. This should make the winter months a bit more fun and get the newer guys used to using a GPS and downloading the data and logging flights.

See you on the hill

John and Phil

Fantastic Newhaven

Lukasz Golebiowski conquers the Newhaven run



I had only just finished my CP and done about twenty or thirty minutes airtime after it on my SKY FIDES 3. I wasn't feeling too confident about flying on my own so I signed up with Rob Chisholm on one of his pilot development courses, aimed at getting you to Pilot rating eventually. I met Rob on 4 August at Newhaven – it turned out to be my best flying day ever (so far).

I'm writing this article as my first impressions soon after the flight, which I also posted on Rob's TV site.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=n9TJJcvdZM0

I'd never been to Newhaven before and was straight away impressed with the look of the site and the scenery. As I say, I am still quite new to paragliding so I didn't really know what to expect during my flying day. I arrived at 9am and there were some pilots already flying and others waiting for the tide to go out. The first part of the day was a tandem flight with Rob. I had never been up on a tandem so I was a bit nervous.

Then I had a go at steering - HmMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM

I must say tandem is much more difficult to fly than my own wing. It needs much more energy to turn, the weight shift must be much more efficient. My stomach that time was not playing well, probably because I was slightly under pressure. I really did not feel like I was doing very well at that time.

Then Rob said it was my turn for a solo flight. To be honest with you I felt under even more pressure at that point. I have never flown over water and my swimming abilities are limited! I am not very fearful guy by nature but I rather like to feel I am in control of things in my life. To my surprise, it was much smoother than I was expecting. It might be because all other pilots I spoke to built up confidence in me. Despite all this I was not one hundred percent relaxed. Having said that - after a while I really really started enjoying myself.

After a lovely lunch in an Italian restaurant (*Editors note - who paid?*) it's now time for the flight from Newhaven to Brighton. Once again I was thinking can I really do it? Once in the air I really enjoyed myself. I was getting radio instructions from Rob and other pilots and this gave me a lot of confidence. I felt I could control my glider without difficulties and everything seemed to be going smoothly. I have never had such a long flight in my life. I learned a whole lot that day but I am still aware that this is just beginning of my journey.



My main purpose during this was to try not to make any mistakes which might affect my flying. I was really concentrating on weight shifting and reacting to any unexpected movements so I wasn't enjoying the scenery as much as I should have been. I followed other pilots over the gaps to make sure I could cross them. I was aware that if I did go down I could land on the beach and get an ice cream or something. I wasn't particularly aiming to get to Brighton and it was only afterwards I realised what an achievement this was.

I would like to say MANY THANKS to: Rob, Chris Hover, Paul Jiggin's, Mr. D.B., Charlie, Windy John and the other pilots who helped me a lot building my confidence and giving me good advice

BIG Saturday

Windsock's '**Big Day**' reporter gives a **special report** about 5 October – all sky gods put on standby for this big one.



Weather says 'Nope'

ROB REVEALS EVERYTHING



Rob Chisholm from **Freeflight** reveals the terrible truth behind some of his great flying holidays

I had a few jobs different jobs after school ended. A few of them were quite exciting - like the one working in Formula 1 being surrounded by the Marlboro Girls but I was looking for more. What could I do that would be rock and roll 'fun fun fun' and keep me laughing all the way to the bank? I know, I'll be a paragliding instructor and take trips abroad. What could be an easier way of making loads of money?

That was twenty years ago. I have done so many trips abroad since that they can blend a little into each other but it was exciting times at the beginning of the sport. Some of the trips were more memorable than others and I want to share a few of the more quality moments with you.

Back in the early 90's I had intended to focus trips abroad on high end business clients. My first proper trip was to Spain and I was followed down by one of my students, who happened to be the original Gadget Man. He was called Nick but to protect his identity we'll call him Nick (doh!). He had every gadget possible at the time and he was well known for hogging power adapters and sockets wherever he went. When we arrived, our accommodation was a poor variation of a mud hut and had one bathroom for around fifty guests. No sockets for gadget man and he wasn't happy. After just a few days he was going mad with nowhere to charge his stuff so we decided to head South to maybe Granada. So long as there were hot showers, food, somewhere to get a tooth brush and a plug socket we'd be OK.

En-route down we met a German pilot looking for a lift. We sat in the sun chatting to our new friend and he told us all about the flying in this area he apparently knew so well. He was very convincing and gave us a good yarn. A short flight later and he had hit a tree and spiralled onto the beach road. It came to light that he had only flown in the area once before and was full of bul\$%^&it.

Anyway, we headed south and found paradise - accommodation overlooking the sea, low prices and a hospital nearby. I booked in a party of twelve pilots to meet me down there. I'd never met most of them before and some were foreigners. I was still green and thought everyone was sensible in a dangerous sport. I also thought that I

would have the final word on safety and behaviour. I proudly collected them from the airport in my brand new Ducato van, loaded the gliders and made haste to get to the accommodation. After all, it was now 11pm and we had over an hour's drive to get there.

Straight away the clients wanted beer. I tried to persuade them to wait until we got to the hotel then I'd show them the town but they weren't happy at this. Gadget man was driving ahead of us in his VW camper and I had to stop for fuel. I put in twenty-five quid's worth as fast as I could but in the meantime my group jumped out and grabbed all the beer they could carry from the shop. As we drove on they started drinking quite hard and some started on the wacky-backy. I asked them not to but they just ignored me. I decided to deal with them later so I drove and concentrated on getting to the hotel. Then gadget man radioed up to say there was a police road block coming up – great!

We turned the corner to see the roadblock. Gadget man obviously had the right gadget to get through without getting stopped. I didn't have one so got waved down. As I slowed down, my rabble in the back threw their cans and stash over the seats into my foot-well. I wondered what I had let myself in for on this trip.

I stopped as far from the police as I could, hoping that my 'high end business clients' wouldn't attract too much of their attention. I was asked for passports so went back to the van to get them. The naughtier members of the gang were very quiet now. As I took passports back to the nice man with the gun, suddenly a police dog went mental at the door of a little Fiat nearby and it was soon being pulled apart by officers. The stash was found and the hand cuffs brought out.

The policeman holding our passports was pulling out his gun in case of trouble from the Fiat crew. I hinted to him that perhaps we could have our passports back and go? He just glared and said 'no'. Suddenly the men from the Fiat made a run for it, the dog came off the leash and a shot was fired into the night sky. I gave the cop my most sickly smile and tugged gently at the passports and we were allowed to go. Eventually we got to the hotel, where there was a group of Dutch pilots staying too. They had travelled down in a bright pink hearse driven by a 6'9" Albino. I'd seen the film 'Phantasm' so I knew exactly what to expect during the night. We all got on well together and partied every night. The Dutch all had roller blades and raced around the corridors. I was sorry to see my group leave at the end of the week but then I had more pilots arriving for the week after.

We had some epic flying that week and the group wanted some big air. I suggested that it might not be right for all of them but they were keen so I took them to an inland site. We all had fantastic flights but I was about to make a silly mistake. I caught the mother of all thermals and before I knew it I was seven grand above take off. I was marvelling at the line of light aircraft below me and then I suddenly realised they were passenger jets getting ready to land somewhere! I was now more than 14,000 ft above sea level and the view was fantastic. I could see the curve of the coastline flowing into the sea. I felt all dreamy and cosy. Nothing seemed to make sense and all my decision making slowed down. Everything was beautiful, no problems, vivid blue all around, It seemed like I could just unclip and walk along it

HYPOXIA! 'Come on Rob – sort yourself out'. I let off the trim tabs and pushed out the bar all the way and just glided for ever.



This is what I had in mind

When I got down to 6,000 feet there was pain all over, the pain - I cannot describe the pain but I can still remember it today. As I was flying I had an itch that had been bothering me near my eye. I took off my steel rimmed glasses for a scratch and with them a chunk of skin came off, frozen to my specs. As I descended, the feeling in my face and hands was coming back and my fingers were in agony with frostbite.

My eye was also in agony with the skin off. At least I was getting nearer the ground and eventually I landed without further drama. I managed to get the harness off by pushing the straps down then climbed out because my hands just did not co-operate. I avoided inland sites for a bit after that.

My new group arrived and all started well – one lady managed ninety minutes up on her very first flight. The Albino appeared again with the gang of Dutch so there was more partying to have. Later that evening I popped out to see some people and then went to the bar to find my group. Things weren't right there. The barman was hiding behind the counter and everyone else was cowering behind tables and chairs. One of my female students had a can of CS and was pointing it at anyone within range. It was all something complicated to do

with a love triangle but eventually things calmed down so I headed off back to the Hotel.

I had just got into the lift when a bloke ran up shouting 'Rob come quick!' We ran up the stairs (12 flights) and outside my room a small crowd had gathered. The (6'9") Albino had thrown a wobbler and was in my room. His hearse had been towed off the street by police and he wasn't happy. Somehow he had got a complete 'No Parking' sign together with its concrete/tyre base up twelve flights of stairs and onto my balcony. At some point in his rage he had lifted it up and tried to throw it off but it had got wedged in the railings.

He appeared to want to kill someone if he couldn't get the sign off the balcony. Using maximum powers of persuasion, humour, a light fitting and a Phillips screwdriver we calmed him down and freed the sign. We needed to move fast so that it wouldn't be thrown into the swimming pool below. It took three of us to carry it down the stairs and hide it safely in the ladies toilet. When we got back up the mood had lightened. The hearse was recovered and we were all friends again. I suggested that we all hit the sack and fly tomorrow.

Time to get some rest – not tonight though! Suddenly there was a shout from a room nearby. I rushed out to find one of the students in the corridor looking in disbelief. He had been about to have a wash when he found a 'No Parking' sign (together with concrete filled tyre) in his bath. 'Hmmmmm' I thought – we'll sort that one out in the morning. Next day we headed off and had some good flights, all calm and relaxed. I just needed to get that sign out of the bath before the students started to complain, eventually sorted under cover of darkness.

A few days went by and all seemed to be going quite well. I suggested we walked into town for a spot of local history. En-route one student spotted a glider launching from the corner of a sea front hotel. It all looked a bit tricky with no clear landing area so I thought this would be a good one for the students to assess. We all agreed that it looked a bit dodgy but when the pilot took off it looked quite skilful. All seemed fine until he attempted to soar the hotel but there was hardly any lift.



Soaring the hotels on a better day

There was quite a strong land breeze and he wasn't going to make it to the beach but he made it to the water slide park – now closed for the Autumn. The landing looked uneventful and we were about to continue with our sightseeing when we heard a blood-curdling scream from behind the wall. The two Dobermans guarding the water park had found their dinner the pilot was trying to escape by scaling the wall still attached to his glider and harness. He got taken to hospital afterwards for a few stitches.

Anyway I could go on but Simon told me to stick to two pages. I suppose the moral of this story is that you only get one life so enjoy it. Life is short, no bigger than a grain of sand in time. Make the most of the time you have and keep a smile on your face.

Oh yes – and book yourself onto one of my courses.

Rob

FREEFLIGHT PARAGLIDING



Rob Chisholm
Chief Flying Instructor
Freeflight Paragliding
01273 628793 or 07958 440519
www.freeflightbrighton.co.uk
freeflightbrighton@gmail.com

Saint Andre or bust

Andrew Craig puts together a posse for a French adventure

It had been a good summer by my modest standards, but autumn was marching on. A Facebook appeal for companions on an autumn adventure produced lots of regretful responses: if only we hadn't already booked that trip to Spain/India/Mexico/South Wales!



"Pass"

Ed note – sorry Andrew I couldn't resist

Only two committed themselves: Phil Ettinger -- not commonly known as Sane Phil -- and Tim Reeve, an ex-Grenadier Guards major from Wiltshire who wanted to climb Mont Blanc and fly from the top. I've tried that twice before and not made the summit; I'd told myself that I'd never again face the squalor of the overcrowded Mont Blanc huts, the terror of the Gouter Face, and the gales that had always ruled out extracting my wing from its bag anywhere high on the mountain. But we agreed that I'd give Tim a lift to Chamonix, and there have a think about it. Phil, of course, was up for it, despite his lack of any mountaineering experience at all.

Tim and I collected Phil near Ashford after he'd stealth-parked his car at an old folks' home. The ferry (I like to avoid the tunnel and feel that I'm changing land masses) took us to Calais in time for a civilised evening at a campsite in Chalons-en-Champagne, followed by a gear stop in the local Decathlon. On to Chamonix, and we secured a pitch at the excellent Arolles site among Polish, Czech, Israeli and British climbers.

The next couple of days were not fit for flying, climbing or even acclimatising hikes, which was a little worrying. Finally the weather cleared, and the mountain tramway took us to the Nid d'Aigle at 2380 metres. Three hours of hiking -- the last hour in crampons -- and a glacier crossing saw us at the Tete Rousse hut, where Phil turned green and almost keeled over into his bowl of soup.

After a restless night -- Tim's not the quietest bunk neighbour -- he and I left Phil sleeping and started up towards the Gouter hut at 3900 metres. But, thanks to a mixture of the altitude, my imagination and a less than perfect weather forecast, I felt rotten, and before the start of the face, I chickened out and went back to the Tete Rousse for a second breakfast. Tim continued and spent the afternoon at the Gouter searching in vain for a chance to launch and fly down to town. The next day he made the windy summit (4800m), came down to 4300m and took off -- a creditable result, marred by the news that one of the British climbers he'd chatted with at the Gouter hut had fallen and been killed on the descent to the Tete Rousse.

But Phil and I were already on our way south, our destination the Coupe Icare festival at St Hilaire. We got there to find it a bit like Piccadilly Circus, complete with traffic jam. We turned into the campsite entrance, then changed our minds and turned out again. Amazingly the other drivers helped to guide us out rather than beating us to a pulp with their tyre levers. A long afternoon's drive brought us still further south to the calmer surroundings of St Andre Les Alpes, in time to see the last few paragliders enjoying the late afternoon lift. The municipal campsite is a delight -- we picked our spots on the carpet of pine needles, mine chosen for shade and Phil's for morning sun. Our nearest neighbour was a motorcycling German doctor, who made a beeline for Phil; her English wasn't perfect, and nor is Phil's, so their exchange of doubles entendres was a bit hesitant -- but some communications need no words.

The morning was flyable. At the landing field we met two friends that I'd made the previous year: Nigel, who lives at St Andre, and Dieter who visits every autumn from Switzerland. A school shuttle or shared taxis are always available to run pilots up to the 1500 metre launch (five euros a time). As Phil bounced around waiting for the usual thermic westerly breeze, Dieter assessed his character: "Phil, I sink you are too nervous," he pronounced. "No, Dieter," I replied, "the trouble with Phil is that he's not nervous enough!"

It wasn't a day of super high cloudbase, but we both managed cross-countries. Scratching on the start of the Cheval Blanc (meaning White Horse -- they fly them in France too), I pimped Dieter's climb. But I was then foolish enough to follow it through a windy col, thinking: "If I keep going up, I'll be fine.". Just as I thought I'd got away with it, the turbulence caught up and whacked me. My Oryx's quick recovery reminded me why I fly an EN B.

I landed at Thorame Basse, and had a long, hot walk before the local district nurse picked me up and dropped me at the road junction. Phil also landed out and blagged a lift. The next day was similar, except that I didn't fly through the windy col, and managed to scrape along in a 0.1-up to Thorame Haute and the road junction myself. This time it was two lads in a tatty white van who took me back to town. Phil again went rather further. Tuesday was rough, and I bailed out after 20 minutes, while Phil, scratching the Cheval Blanc in a crosswind with a French gaggle, had the horrible experience of seeing one of them crash. A helicopter was called, but the rescuers could do nothing for the poor pilot.

The next day was soarable on the west launch by 1100 -- much earlier than usual. It wasn't a good sign, and I landed early in the bomb-out field below launch, rather than risking a low arrival across the col in town. Phil made the most of the soarable window before it got definitely too strong. On the blown-out Thursday, Nigel took us to a local via ferrata with his missus Karol, Dieter, and an English climber and ex-hangie, Ray. Phil wasn't keen, having done plenty of messing about on wires as a fireman, but for me it was a lot of fun -- especially the two big Tyrolean traverses. Phil failed to meet us at the rendezvous in the woods, but we found him safe and well -- or he found us -- back in the valley.

So to Friday, the last decent day expected before the weather system broke down. It wasn't forecast to be epic, with base at about 2200m. I was therefore surprised and delighted when, after a first dozen kilometres much like our first two days, I suddenly found a climb over Cordeil that took me to 2950 in a blue sky, although cumulus was plentiful away to the west. This was a definite chance to do something. Although I took a sinky, headwindy line south, I managed to join Dieter on the soarable Crete des Serres west and south of St Andre. As I came back north thermals were generous over the town itself, giving me the chance to nip back to take-off and complete a 33k FAI triangle. Dieter did the same, while Phil had wandered off to the west and landed in an unknown village after a flight probably also in the 30s. A train and several cars brought him home.

I hope to go back to St Andre next September, and I think it would be a good place for a bunch of Southern pilots to go together. If you don't mind strong Alpine thermals cross-country flying is there for the taking. If you do, you can have a big top-to-bottom in the morning -- perhaps extending it with the day's first thermals if you launch at about 11 am. And in the late afternoon it's usually soarable for a couple of hours. We saw several gliders landing in the town field by twilight.

We stopped in Grand Bornand near Annecy on the way back, where it was grey and drizzly -- although Phil was still tempted. At Calais a night in the camper van car park was more comfortable in my van than in Phil's tent. Back in England he brushed aside a telling-off from the caretaker at the old folks' home.

Flying days: 6

Mountains climbed: 1 (I'm including the achievements of the whole party!)

Breakfast fry-ups: 10

Cups of tea: 137

A good trip with good companions

Andrew



There are plenty of things to do when it's not flyable

Beachy delivers

Simon Phipps reports



With a forecast of clear blue sky and 12mph SE it had to be a Beachy day. I left home in Surrey after the morning rush hour but a jack-knifed lorry on the M25, a pensioner driving at 20mph on the A27 then getting stuck behind Watts in the blue van made for a painful journey down. When I arrived it seemed like I hadn't missed much and the flying was just starting, with pilots using the Southerly take off above the bowl.

There was plenty of lift around and I made straight for the big cliff above the lighthouse. It was very smooth with height gains of over 500ft. Most people were sticking to the bowl and it was nicer to be on my own down the cliff and have a bit more space to play with. The wind was pushing more along the cliff towards Cuckmere so I was mindful of potential dangers of not penetrating against the wind to get back. I thought I'd try to get to Birling Gap and my groundspeed going West was quite fast. I got as far as the old lighthouse but the cliff edge was running more in line with the wind direction so I thought lift would be poor here. I didn't want to chance bombing out at Birling and having to hitch back as I would miss the fun.



I didn't get much further around as I was a bit concerned about getting back to my coffee

I turned back to take off and it was very slow going, eventually getting to the bowl and landing for a cuppa. When I was ready to fly again, the wind seemed to have picked up and cloud was starting to form a few hundred feet above take off. Most had landed. Vincent and I decided it was still safe to fly and we would head straight out to soar the lower cliffs. This way we would be well below the clouds and have a bomb out option of the field below. Vincent made straight for the Eastbourne end of the cliff run and I stuck to the section below take off. There wasn't a lot of lift and after a few beats I didn't think I could stay up for long here. Vincent

seemed to be getting low at the other end and I didn't think he'd make it back, although he did eventually. I landed at the bottom of the slope and plodded back up to take off for another cup of tea and a debrief. Even fewer were flying now and the wind was picking up as forecast. Youngie and I decided for the same plan again of soaring the lower cliffs. When we were in the air we found that penetration was no problem and soon lots were in the air again.



Youngie checks out the lighthouse situation

Then things got a bit spooky.

I was soaring above the lighthouse when I noticed a woman standing on the edge of the cliff looking down. She'd sit down for a bit then walk to the edge to look over. I watched her for about fifteen minutes and it seemed that every time anyone walked past her she sat down. When they'd past, she'd get up again and look over the edge. I thought she was getting ready to jump and I wondered what to do.

I thought about something that had happened to me about thirty years before. As a new policeman I had to deal with a young woman who'd killed herself by jumping in front of a train. I spoke to the Station Master and he had seen her keep walking to the edge of the platform for some time before eventually jumping. I then had to go and see the parents to tell them their daughter was dead. I remember seeing an attractive, smiley picture of her on their mantelpiece. I thought of the Station Master and how he could have stopped her. Anyway enough of my rambling on about the last unreformed public service and get back to the story

I decided that if the woman walked to the edge again, I would do something. Surprise surprise, she got up and walked to the edge, looked down then moved back and sat on the grass nearby. I decided to fly back and try and find someone from the Chaplains Team. When I got above the bowl I could see that their pick-up wasn't there so that was a bad plan. I thought about calling 999 but then imagined the hassle and delays so I decided to land and speak to the woman. I made an uneventful landing nearby and went to speak to her. What would I say?

I said "Hello" explained what I had seen. She looked at me thoughtfully for a while then burst out laughing. Blimey, this is more serious than I thought. Then her boyfriend turned up – he seemed to think I was chatting up his love interest and wasn't too amused. When I explained, he thought it was funny too although I'm sure he thought I'd made it all up. She'd been waiting for him to catch her up on their coast walk and was a bit p%^&ed off he was taking so long.

Anyway, the wind had really picked up now and the hangies were all up with a couple of para's. It was more difficult to take off and I went down the slope bit where it was less trouble. Penetration was more difficult now and the flying not very enjoyable. Youngie shouted that he was going to land on the beach and I big-eared and landed on the slope to call it a day. I phoned him and he said he was going to catch the tourist bus back up. When I reminded him that it was out of season, it was about to get dark and there were no buses, he accepted my kind offer of a lift back up.

Another memorable day at Beachy.



Flying in Tenerife

John Turczak gives an in-depth guide to the main flying sites

Its winter, flying in the UK is not great, you want somewhere to fly. Tenerife in winter is around 25 degrees, sunny and only 4 hours away. My own personal view is that Tenerife is a great place to fly in winter. You will get lots of thermal flying. It has limited XC potential in terms of distance. You are not going to get more than about 20k. The scenery is spectacular. I have flown there over the past three winters. Each time with para42.com, who were very good at making sure safe flyable sites were found each day.



The first year I flew there I had about 25 hours flying time and was CP rated. I enjoyed the flying but was aware it was on the edge of my flying experience and skill level. The next year I went with about 65 hours flying time and a pilot rating plus a lot more thermalling experience. I got a lot more from the flying, had longer flights and a lot more enjoyment. And last year with around 150 hours it was really good winter thermalling practice.

These are some notes on why you should fly there and why you should not and will hopefully help people decide if it is for you or not.

Basics

The flying season there is from October to April with the best conditions being from November to March. Like any other flying sites in the world before you fly there you should do your homework on the sites and the conditions. This is a brief rundown on Tenerife geography and weather.

The island is a small volcanic island – it is around 80km long by 50km wide. (yes 80 x 50 not a typo). It is

dominated by Teidi, a dormant volcano that stands at around 3700 m in the centre of the island. The prevailing wind conditions are NE, most of the flying is done on the South of the island, which is in the lee of Teidi. This means you are NOT flying in the meteo wind but always in localised wind that is affected by Teidi, sea breeze, air pressure and cloud cover. So conditions can change rapidly.

This is a volcanic island. Other than where someone has built something the terrain is very rough, full of small and large valleys (barancos) , covered in rocks of all sizes and the vegetation is a mixture of cactus, bushes and other small tough plants . What this means is that other than the few designated landing areas that have been cleared there are very few other places to land. If you cannot make the landing field the road is often your only other option. The landing fields vary greatly– covered later – but you need to be confident that you can pick a spot and land within 10m of it to make the flying safe.



You are usually taking off from mountain take offs (2000 to 3000 feet above sea level) and landing at around 500 to 600 feet above sea level. This means that to fly here you need a driver who is going to drop you off and pick you up. Take offs are generally low wind (0 to 6mph) so you need to be very good at reverse launching in low winds or spend some time practising forward launches. Either way before coming to Tenerife go out on some low wind days and practice launching. Take offs in Tenerife are fairly unforgiving. They are usually quite small and once you go past the takeoffs you're into rough rocky ground. So launches are wing up > GO This means you need to be good at checking your wing as it comes up. You don't have the luxury of being able to spend several minutes checking it while its above your head.

General flying conditions

This is a thermal flying area. There is little ridge soaring except at specific coastal sites. You are either going to find thermals, be able to thermal and stay p or you are doing top to bottoms. You are often taking off at around 1000 meters and cloud base is around 1200 to 1500 meters, so you don't have to go too far till you hit it. This means you need to be confident about flying near cloudbase. And know what to do if you end up in the clouds. At least know which way the sea is, use your compass or GPS and fly in that direction. This will bring out of the cloud with plenty of height to find a landing. Also, be confident that you can use Big Ears and your speed system

In summary to get the most out of flying here you need:-

Good low wind take off skills

Spot landings within a 10m radius

Thermalling skills

To know how to get out of clouds

If you don't feel good about any of the above you probably should not be flying in Tenerife.

Sites

This is going to cover Taucho, Ifonche and Jama (Hama). Taucho and Ifonche are take-offs at either end of the SW facing ridge of mountains that run behind Adeje and Play de las Americas.

Taucho

Take off is at 767 meters. Landing at about 220m approx. 3km away.

Visit the landing field before you take off. The landing field is split into two sections.

The first section is smaller and carpeted. It is surrounded by a road, a car park and a 30 foot deep and 40 ft wide rocky vertical walled, ditch. If you overshoot this landing you will end up in the ditch. You will get hurt. The other side of the ditch is a landing area about the size of a small football pitch. If you overshoot this you can still safely land. So if you aim for this you will get down without any real problems. There are several windsocks around the landing areas. Use them.

After taking off from Taucho you do have to cross an industrial area, power lines and a motorway to get to the landing field. If you have lost a lot of height scratching around on the mountain looking for lift and cannot make it across these then the road leading up to the take-off is your emergency landing. It is the stretch of road between the white house on a bend and the part where the street lights start. You will pass this on your way up to take off.

With the right wind direction and thermals Taucho can give you some great flights. With the ridge across to Ifonche on one side and for the more experienced pilots a 20K Xc to Los Gigantes in the other direction. Otherwise it is a 15 minute top to bottom.

Ifonche

Take off 986m. Landing 125m about 5 k away. Ifonche has two take-offs. One on either side of the mountain.

The use of these is determined by wind direction. You take off from the one that is not in the lee.

The take-off from the north side of Ifonche (the first one you get to) has enough room for three pilots at a time to set up and take off. The one on the south side is from an old threshing circle plus some space to the side.

You can have two pilots at a time setting up and taking off. The south take off definitely requires a more committed take off and is a lot less unforgiving if you mess it up. You will be going down a steep very rocky slope. The north take-off is not quite as steep but still has rocks, trees and bushes to deal with.

After take off the usual flight path is to fly around to the front of Ifonche to where the 'fingers' are and use the thermals around these to get back up over Ifonche. From here you can cross to the flat top mountain, Conde (about a 1.5 K cross) or you can go in the other direction over Baranco del Inferno (valley of hell) and to Taucho and fly the entire ridge along there or head down to the landing field.

The landing field can be easily found by following the ridge down from the fingers. It is to the left of it as you look down the ridge before you get to the motorway. It is easy to reach and there are plenty of other landing spots. Note the power lines that run across a few hundred meters behind the landing field. If you do not have enough height to get over these you will need to land before them. An obvious thing to say but you need to note where they are when you are flying. They run down the hills and across the valley bottom. If you have loads of height over the landing field the other option is to keep going and land on the beach at Caleta.

Jama

Elevation around 930m. This site is about 8 K from Ifonche. It is mainly used as a start point to fly across to Conde, then continue to Ifonche and Taucho. It can be flown in its own right and does have a landing field.

The landing field needs to be visited before you fly there. It is about a 50 m sq of landing. It slopes down (gently) You cannot overfly it as you will hit power lines, buildings and trees. The landing area is usually quite thermic, wind direction can change rapidly, it is surrounded by cactus. Because of the surrounding terrain you may have to do make a cross wind landing. If you are not confident about landing within 10m of a selected spot

do NOT fly here. The take off is found on the side of the road next to a hairpin bend. It needs very specific conditions to fly here. Usually it is only flyable in the morning. The wind direction can change very fast here. It is not advisable to fly here without some local who knows the site and can let you know if it is safe to fly or not. If it is flyable and you can get above the ridge above take off then you can go for the cross to Conde and Ifonche.

Contact

If any one has any questions on flying in Tenerife feel free to email me on john@accessdev.co.uk.

Videos of different flights in Tenerife can be found at

<http://youtu.be/RAP40C7I9wY>

<http://youtu.be/F3yZJM3ghr8>

<http://youtu.be/pZUO4qDDJ94>

<http://youtu.be/XZ5Iliw8BPw>

John



Your Committee

Catherine Castle took on the role of Social Secretary three years ago and is responsible for the Summer and Christmas Bashes plus other events.

Why get involved in the committee

As social secretary, being a committee member has given me the opportunity to legitimise my weakness for having a good knees up with my buddies and disguise it with a veneer of respectability.

What is your best flight from a Southern site – so far

Well, I haven't managed a big XC from a Southern site, but I did have a lovely flight from the Dyke to Stanmer Park one afternoon late last Summer with Em & Paul Watts.



So, when was your latest crash

Well I've not had a crash as such but I have had an altercation (or three) with various barbed wire fences. As for what I learnt... It may seem blindingly obvious after the fact but performing a "touch and go" whilst trying to clear the fence at Bo Peep is never a good idea, especially when you have a large loop of your shoelace just asking to get snagged on the aforementioned barbed wire....

What do you do on days when it's not flyable

When I'm not flying or in the office, food is a big thing in my life. Oh and shoes. Mmmmmm shoes. In fact the real reason I needed to move the club marquee out of our garage was so I could make space for a climate controlled closet for my extensive collection of heels. When I'm not flying I spend an extortionate amount of time in Kurt Geiger, eating cake, and planning the menu for the next Thai feast I will cook G, to appease him for my stealing his garage / workshop (oh and wardrobe) space.....

What is the best rumour you've heard on the hill

Chris Beer and I were separated at birth.

What is your favourite topic of conversation in between flights

Voltaire's notion that "doubt is a pleasant condition but certainty is absurd." Oh and cake.

What one personal flaw do you think might hinder your ability to be world champion.

My inability to ground all other competitors simultaneously.

What three websites get the most hits from you

Well various weather related websites (too many to list so let's just lump them together at number one), followed by Kurt Geiger.com and various other clothes related websites.

What would your profile say in a lonely hearts advert

Lively, adventurous female seeks male for fun, frolics and retrieve driving. Love of food and the ability to make packed lunches and cake essential, as well as an appreciation of live music (especially anything ear-poppingly loud and with a tendency towards thrash guitar). The ability to hang around looking decorative for hours on end at a freezing flying site also an advantage.

The BASH

Catherine Castle makes it happen

As many of you know this paragliding malarkey can be a stressful sport, so what better way to unwind at the end of the season than to share a beer or two with those you've spent the last few months swearing and shaking your fist at? This is where the Summer Bash comes in, and where I come in. You're probably aware that I'm a member of your committee, those dedicated individuals who spend their time on important matters such as retaining flying sites, briefing the membership on safety matters, training coaches, arranging lectures for pilots, and organising events where you can get pissed with your mates. (The bit after "arranging lectures for pilots" is my job, in case you were in any doubt).

So what does it take to throw a party for the SHGC? Well as with all things related to the club, it's all about you and what you think it takes to have a good time. Luckily for me, extensive research has shown that the main ingredients for a successful Summer Bash are: Beer, some music (it seems that any flavour will do, though I've yet to try a night of hard-core acid house), a fire, some silly games, food, beer..... Did I mention the fire? This seems to be the main focal point. And the beer.

Over the last few years, we've held the Bash at a few venues, but have finally settled on a lovely field just outside Ringmer. This site has plenty of room for camping, is set a way back from the road to allow privacy (and to allow us to make as much noise as we like) is close to our sites, and most importantly, is close to me. "Hang on!" I hear you say. "I thought this was supposed to be all about US, not you?!", but actually this is key, as there's a lot of running around required over the three days it takes to organise the Bash.

Why three days? Well, roughly speaking we'll set up on day 1, have the party on day 2 and clear up on day 3. Now the observant amongst you will remember that the location is a field slightly off the beaten track. Which means no electricity or running water. Thus setting up isn't just a case of popping up the marquee - which is quite a task in itself and requires a minimum of 7 people for an easy erection (insert own joke here) - we also need to get power for that all important music, and we need portaloos on site, erm.. for reasons I won't spell out.

So it's day 1. With help from anyone with a large enough vehicle, I'll collect the marquee from wherever it happens to be stored, we'll put it up, lay the carpet, and if possible our lovely Flying Sparks - Shaun - will wire up the marquee for the band and disco lights. (Did I say disco? I'm so uncool). This is also usually the day the portaloos arrive. This year, due to the vagaries of the weather, we only managed to get the marquee up at the end of day 1, no time for power, but as the evening drew in we all sat round the tool box and enjoyed a beer or three as the sun went down satisfied at a good afternoon's work.



On day 2, if we're wired for sound by this point, all well and good. If not this is when Shaun does his stuff. In the meantime I'll get the chairs, tables and any other bits of furniture from wherever we are borrowing them this year, set up the beer and cider, bring any props required for the silly games (pop up tents, wellies for wanging, a whiteboard for scoring), make sure we have enough plastic cups for the beer (very important that) and buy some snacks for the helpers. Meanwhile Mark Watts is building the camp fire, and anybody at a loose end will help load his truck with enough logs to last us through to the wee hours. Before the party goes rock up, the generators arrive, Hairy Dave sets up his rubber lunge, Mark ties some ropes in nearby trees from which to hang small children, Ghandi sets up a slack rope, Dave Watts - who has spent the previous 2 days making candles - plants slender leafy branches around the site and suspends his night lights from them, whilst I have a mild panic wondering what I've forgotten.



Dinner is served

This is usually the point that Garry hands me a large Gin and Tonic. And then the party-goers arrive, the camp site fills up, the beer is poured, intrepid folk have a go on the rubber lunge (usually with the aid of crampons and ice picks – yes I mean you Andrew Craig), the pizza man arrives, the fire is lit, the sun goes down, the band plays, everybody ignores the band and sits round the camp fire, hangies hang out with paraglider pilots (yes really), more people sit round the fire, more beer is drunk, Tefal's homebrew is sampled, the band is ignored for a bit longer, anybody who has done anything more than just "sample" Tefal's homebrew passes out, more beer is drunk.....



Did I mention the beer?

.....And in the blink of an eye, it's day 3. As the sun rises bleary-eyed pilots stagger from their tents and vans - sometimes even their own - in search of sustenance. This year our very own mad baker Vincent made us all breakfast, whilst I nipped home for a sneaky shower, before returning to the site and enjoying an excellent bacon butty. Not too much time to relax though, as this is the point I have a captive audience, and those who have stayed overnight are coaxed into helping clear up. Bin bags are filled, the electrics are dismantled, the marquee comes down, the carpet is taken up, the furniture loaded onto a truck and brought back to wherever we borrowed it from this year, the marquee back to wherever it happened to be stored, the generators collected, the left-over cider deposited in my garage (ahem), and the left-over beer... actually there never is any left-over beer.

And it's all over for another year.

As I said before, this party is for you, and your family and friends of course, so if you have any thoughts about what you'd like to see at next year's Summer Bash, do let me know. Any reasonable suggestions considered (and even some unreasonable ones). And don't forget, the Christmas Party and Annual Awards Ceremony will be on December 14th at The Abergavenny Arms in Rodmell. Please have a look at the website for full details. See you there for some good food and even better beer drinking!

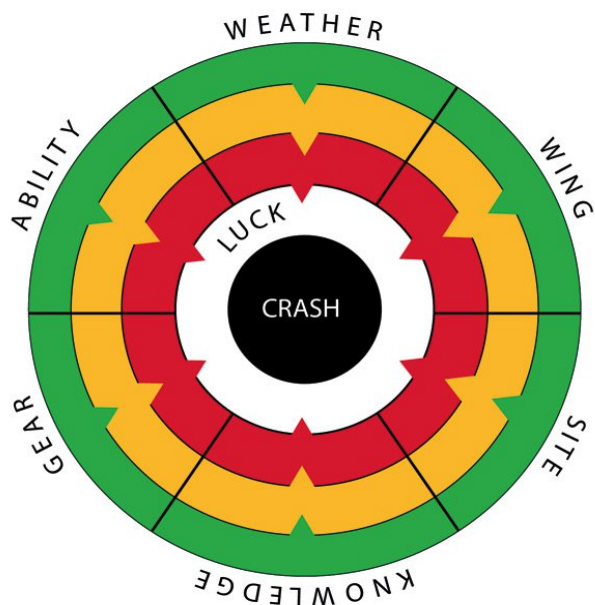
Catherine

Reducing Risk

Part 3: (Safety Gear)

By **Flybubble Paragliding**

Free-flyers are exposed to many risks. By identifying the greatest danger, you can make an effort to increase your safety margins in other areas. By examining each element in turn in a series of articles, we hope to provide some insight into reducing your risk.



Reducing your gear risk is simple: upgrade as many elements as you can afford.

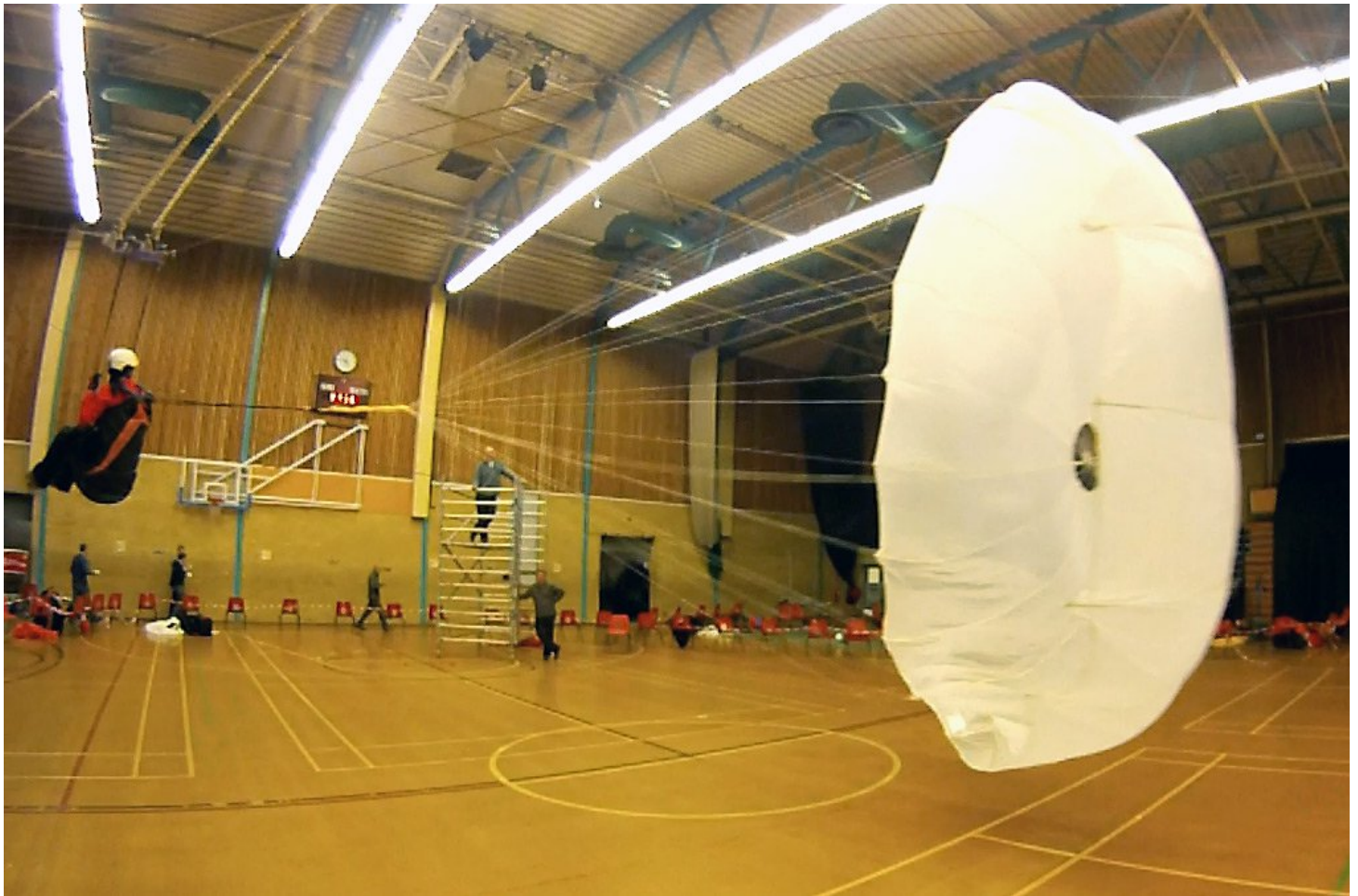
A **harness** with certified back protection is an absolute must-have, the most reliable being the mousse-bag foam system in use since the mid 90s. The lightweight travel-style airbag harnesses are certified to absorb one impact, but bear in mind that on the launch site, after a hard landing, and if you're flying rocky terrain, your risk is higher because there will be little between you and the ground. Hybrid designs feature the best of both: look out for some kind of pre-inflation system and built in foam so you have passive safety.

Harnesses contribute to safety in many ways. A good design ensures that you have the best balance between comfort, security and feeling. Your chest strap setting should be at the recommended 42cm between the carabiners, or you have increased risk of twists. This is hard to measure unless you're in flying position. Your body position is just as important for enhancing stability. That's why you should insist on a **fitting session** when you buy a new harness, so you can get the adjustments right.

According to some SIV experts, the **pod harness** increases your risk of getting riser twists. However, this is a moot point as most pilots in open harnesses fly with a foot stirrup, putting themselves in the same prone position. In either case, when encountering severe turbulence it's best to sit upright so you rotate with your risers.

A **good helmet** reduces your risk, but it loses strength with age, particularly if there are any cracks in the shell. Because every helmet design is matched to a different head shape, be sure you're getting the perfect fit. Check to see that it can't easily be pulled off – you might be surprised when you lift the chin-piece. A full-face helmet offers maximum protection, but many open-face helmets are still certified while being lighter. They reduce the size of your pack, because they squish down on top of the wing nicely. The best helmet is the one that stays on your head.

If you fly with normal hiking boots, consider upgrading to **paragliding boots** which are shock absorbing, lightweight and waterproof. They offer extra ankle support which helps during hard landings and is very useful in mountainous terrain. They also have enclosed eyelets so no risk of lines catching on your boots, which can be character-building if it happens after launch.



Reserve parachutes are life-savers, but they do not reduce your risk just by buying them. To reduce your risk, you must learn how to use them, and check your system regularly. There are regular BHPA repack clinics throughout the year: check the events calendar for a session near you. Consider the new steerable designs, which greatly improve your landing options.

A pilot throws her washing out during a BHPA repack clinic

Some of the reserves at repack clinics have deployment problems, usually due to bonded Velcro strips, awkward harness designs, or reserves being put in the wrong way into the harness. Packing errors are less common, but it does highlight the need to understand the reserve before it can work for you and not against you.

Once you own a reserve, you must check the pins every time you fly. Accidental deployments are risky moments because you tend to land on things you didn't want to land on.

The DHV recently ran a study on various pod harnesses and criticised the placement of the reserve handle (<http://www.dhv.de/web/en/safety/articles-statistics/pod-harness-test/>). Be sure you know where your handle is! Practice reaching the handle on every flight, so it is second nature.

Don't forget the condition of your **carabiners**! Over time, metal fatigue sets in. Although carabiner failures are rare, you should check for cracks and replace them if they are looking worn. The **quick-out** carabiner system is essential for tandem flying and recommended if you're doing XC in windy areas. If you're getting dragged through hostile terrain, the ability to jettison your wing while remaining inside your protective harness makes a huge difference.

A **radio** means you can benefit from shared knowledge and warnings from other pilots in your area. But it's pretty useless in a pocket. Make sure it's strapped in a well positioned radio pouch so the antenna is vertical in flight and not touching anything. The best place is fixed to the base of your carabiner.

A fully charged **mobile phone** is vital, but consider where you put it. The side pocket of the harness might get crunched on impact. A chest or sleeve pocket on your jacket is more protected and accessible. On a smartphone you can use apps like Google Latitude to share your location with friends. This makes finding downed or lost pilots much easier.

SPOT allows for pilot tracking even when you explore beyond the coverage of the mobile network and can alert emergency services with a simple press of the 'SOS' button. If you're doing XC flying, this is a great risk-reducer.

Finally, a **GPS** is a useful tool for XC flying, giving you a constant update on your speed over the ground, which reduces your risk of being blown over a ridge in wind you didn't recognize. It is indispensable for navigating around airspace so reduces your risk of collision with EasyJet flight number 666.

Those are some of the main items to consider. There are many small things that add up to your combined gear risk. With a bit of forethought and preparation you can improve your kit so you arrive at the hill with less inherent risk and a greater margin of safety.

Next issue we'll look at **site risk**. In the meantime, remember to do your daily equipment inspection to further minimise the risk presented by your equipment.

***Flybubble Paragliding** is a BHPA school based in Sussex that offers specialised tuition for all levels, guided trips and equipment sales. For more info visit flybubble.co.uk*



Change your reality ...

Get what you want

- Expert buying advice
- Fast order despatch
- Massive stock range
- Demo wings to test fly
- Great customer service

Fly the best brands

Advance Aircotec Ascent Brauniger
 Charly Digifly Flymaster Flytec
 Gin Gliders Hanwag High Adventure
 GoPro Icaro Kortel Design Naviter
 Niviuk Nova Ozone Skywalk Sup'Air
 Swing Woody Valley ... and many more!



Keep learning

Visit our comprehensive website
 Subscribe to our newsletter
 Join us on Facebook
 Watch our Youtube channel
 Come for some pilot coaching



Spend £100 and get
 this exclusive 2014
 flying calendar - free!

flybubble.com

info@flybubble.com

Carlo Nancy Greg Simon

01273 812 442



Carlo



Nancy



Greg



Simon



Our **Pilot Coaching** is only £50 per session for a personal masterclass.



Watch our latest wing reviews,
 learn XC Secrets and more on
[www.youtube.com/
 FlybubbleParagliding](http://www.youtube.com/FlybubbleParagliding)



Be the first to know ... join us online!



flybubble.co.uk

For free news, tips and reviews,
 subscribe to our newsletter:
flybubble.co.uk/newsletter

info@flybubble.co.uk

01273 812 442



Pilotage Masterclass

Veteran member and Ace pilot Freddy 'Peregrine' Molehusband gives an expert guide to weather forecasting.

I should start by apologising for the lack of expert advice from me over the past few months . Those of you who can read or saved up your benefits to buy a TV and watch the news will have realised that I have been busy out on 'black ops' top secret missions. I can't go into more detail as you won't have a high enough security clearance and I don't want to spend the rest of my retirement in the Ecuadorian Embassy snuggling up to Julian Assange.

Anyhow - when you are one of the world's top elite pilots (like me) it is critical to be able to interpret and fully understand weather systems. Using my own weather forecasting system, developed over many many years I personally guarantee that you will maximise you chances of flying at all times of the year. There are many sources of information for weather forecasting and each give a slightly different interpretation based on the same data from the Met Office.

The BBC weather on the web is amongst the easiest to understand. There will be something like a symbol of a big sun or as raindrop to give you a clue as to what they think the weather will do. Mathematicians can use probability tables to calculate if this forecast bears any resemblance to what is really happening and see that this forecast is right about 38% of the time.

The BBC news is much more entertaining. Carol wearing a pretty frock will tell you them same thing but with a couple of smiles thrown in if the mood takes her.

Sky News also dabbles in weather forecasting. The forecast is more bland than BBC but the forecaster will have a pretty dress on although no real competition for Carol. The main problem with SKY is that there are far too many adverts and the forecast is given at 08:24 when I'm usually sitting on the toilet.

Some of the internet forecasts include isobars and more complex data such as RASP. They're probably quite useful but I can't see which way up the isobars go any more and RASP looks just like a swirl of colours and shapes even with my new glasses on.

The Met Office Shipping Forecast is one of the best indicators for flying near to the coast. It's not too specific about wind speeds but gives a good indication if the wind will be too strong for flying.

So – what is my system? Well it all starts when Mrs M's alarm goes off at 6.30am. The alarm is set to an unusually low level so it doesn't wake me unnecessarily. As a top athlete, I need to conserve my energy for that day's record breaking activities. Anyway Mrs M gets up and puts the kettle on. While it is boiling she looks out of the window to see what the weather is doing. When the tea is made she will wake me up using our agreed method then she gives me a full weather report. This will include key issues such as 'is it raining', 'is it windy' or 'is the sun out'. She then goes into more detail like 'the weather forecast says the sun might come out later'. I then check out the Met Office Shipping Forecast and decide on whether or not to fly using the following detailed criteria:-

Force 2	it could be flyable
Force 3-4	it could be flyable
Force 5 and above (including gusts)	it could be flyable

then I go and wait on the hill to see if its flyable.

Fantasy Site Guide

DFDS ferry - A new facility for soaring XC to Calais or Dunkirk

OS Grid reference:- TQ13715619

Coordinates:- (51°15'16.8874"N) (000°19'21.5292"W)

Wind direction:- E/W

Take- off height:- 100 ft

Height top-to- bottom:- 100 ft

Site pilot rating:- EP

Training:- Permitted

Nearest telephone:- At the back of the lorry drivers' breakfast bar

Airspace restrictions:- none

Description:- After many months of negotiation a new soaring facility with loads of XC potential has been made available to us. The DFDS ferry has sailings from Dover every two hours, destinations alternately Calais and Dunkirk. In moderate Easterly and Westerly breezes pilots can easily soar along the side of the ship until it reaches France. Once at this destination simply fly a short XC along the width of the ferry to soar the opposite side back again.

Site Rules:- If taking off from the Dover White Cliffs you must comply with DFHGC rules. If soaring one way to France only, then there is a requirement to carry your passport and show it if required. You must not obscure the captain's view by soaring in front of the bridge. This XC site operates every two hours in daytime starting at 06:00. We recommend that you arrive on site at least 45 minutes prior to departure. Do not carry any gas cylinders on your flight.



*Safety note: this is only an artist's impression of flight
(I think it's an old picture of Youngie taken from above as usual)*

Car parking:- Is available on the ferry from £29 each way. Alternatively you may park in the long stay ferry car park at Dover Harbour before making your way to take off.

Take-Off:- Multiple take-offs are available for this site on Deck 2. The ferry operator has allocated the area between the restaurant and the safety rail for setting up and take-offs. This area will also be suitable for a bit of ground handling.

Landing:- Either land in the take off area or if near either coast you can set off on a long glide to the beach. Take care at Calais beach to avoid windsurfers and kite buggies.



Plenty of room for ground handling

Hazards:- This is smooth coastal soaring at its best so minimal turbulence will be encountered. If you are planning to make the round trip then you will have to cross over the ferry at Calais. Keep a look out for the aerials and revolving thingy above where the captain sits as they could get caught in your lines if you don't have sufficient height.

Services:- All the usual stuff – toilets, restaurant, duty free and plenty of first aid boxes.



The view from the East take-off shows the whole ridge is soarable

Yorkshire-men go flying

Thanks to **John Turczak** for recovering this sketch from the Python archives

Pilot1 Who'd have thought thirty year ago we'd all be sittin' here on te hill with our super fast 2 liner jobbies.

Pilot 2 In them days we was glad to have 4 sticks and a piece of canvas.

Pilot1 A torn piece of canvas.

Pilot 2 Without any sticks.



Grayland and Watts?

Pilot 1 Or string.

Pilot 2 And no stuff bag at all.

Pilot 1 Oh, we never had canvas. We used to have to fly from of a piece of plastic.

Pilot 2 The best we could manage was a piece of damp cloth.

Pilot 1 But you know, we were happy in those days, though we made our own wings.

Pilot 2 Because we made our own wings poor. My old Dad used to say to me, "Money doesn't buy you a new wing, son".

Pilot 1 Aye, 'e was right.

Pilot 2 Aye, 'e was.

Pilot 1 I was happier then and I had nothin'. We used to fly this tiny wing with great big holes in it.

Pilot 2 WING! You were lucky to have a wing! We used to fly off one small hill, all twenty-six of us, no wings, 'alf the slope was missing, and we were all 'uddled together in one corner for fear of falling.

Pilot 1 Eh, you were lucky to have a hill ! We used to have to fly from a tree in t' field!

Pilot 2 Oh, we used to dream of a tree in a field! Would ha' been a palace to us. We used to fly in an old water tank on a rubbish tip. We got woke up every morning by having a load of rotting fish dumped all over us! Tree? Huh!

Pilot 1 Well, when I say 'tree' it was only a hole in the ground covered by a sheet of tarpaulin, but it was a tree to us.

Pilot 2 We were evicted from our 'ole in the ground; we 'ad to go and fly in a lake.

Pilot 1 You were lucky to have a lake! There were a hundred and fifty of us flying in t' shoebox in t' middle o' road.

Pilot 2 Cardboard box?

Pilot 1 Aye.

Pilot 2 You were lucky. We flew for three months in a paper bag in a septic tank. We used to have to get up at six in the morning, clean the paper bag, eat a crust of stale bread, fly down t' mill, fourteen hours a day, week-in week-out, and when we got home our CFI would thrash us to sleep wi' his belt.

Pilot 1 Luxury. We used to have to get out of the lake at six o'clock in the morning, clean the lake, eat a handful of 'ot gravel, fly a twenty-hour day, pay club fees every month, come home, and the CFI would thrash us to sleep with a broken bottle - if we were lucky!

Pilot 2 Well, of course, we had it tough. We used to 'ave to get up out of shoebox at twelve o'clock at night and lick take off clean wit' tongue. We had two bits of cold gravel, flew twenty-four hours a day paid club fees every day, and when we got home our CFI would slice us in two wit' bread knife.

Pilot 1 Right. I had to get up in the morning at ten o'clock at night half an hour before I went to bed, drink a cup of sulphuric acid, flew twenty-nine hours a day down lake, and pay land owner for permission to fly every day, and when we got home, our CFI would kill us and dance about on our graves singing 'Hallelujah'.

Pilot 2 And you try and tell the CP's of today that they won't believe you.

Both They won't!

Dear Peregrine,

Ace pilot Peregrine Molehusband takes time out between top secret missions to give advice on your flying.

Dear Peregrine,

Does your wife mind you spending so much time away from home on these top secret missions?

Peregrine replies: We have our ups and downs. We went through a bad patch some time ago and I said to my (late) father over a beer "Dad, I think I'm going to divorce Mrs Molehusband. She hasn't spoken to me in over six months." Father, silent for a moment, slowly took a sip of his beer and said, "Son, you better think it over; women like that are hard to find." We went out for dinner to make up. On a table in the restaurant was a little piano with a tiny man playing it – he was very good. I said to the waiter "How did you find such a tiny man to play the piano?". He replied "I found a lamp with a genie in it who granted me one wish." "Oh" I exclaimed "so you asked for a ten-inch pianist." "Well not exactly". It was my mother-in-law's eighty-fifth birthday and I arranged for a male escort to give her a night to remember. He knocked on her door and said 'I'm here to give you super sex.' She said 'I'll have the soup please.' Mrs M and I are both getting on a bit now and we wondered if we were too old to have any more children. We asked our doctor. He gave me a specimen jar to provide a sample. I took the empty jar back a few days later. I explained "I tried with my right hand and my left hand. Then my wife tried with both hands. She took out her teeth and tried with her mouth. We still couldn't get the lid off the jar." My wife asked me if I only loved her because her father had died and left her a fortune. I explained "Of course not, I'd love you no matter who had left you the money." She spilled stain remover on her dress the other day. How do you get that out?

Q: What do you like to watch on TV?

*Peregrine replies: Well you know, we top athletes don't get too much spare time due to constant training but I do watch the occasional show. Did you see that reality show on recently? Three men got dropped off on this desert island to fend for themselves for one year. There was an Englishman, a Frenchman and a Japanese chap. They got dropped off by helicopter and after the camera crew had left the three had to decide on how to survive. The Englishman said to the Frenchman "The English are good builders, so I'll be in charge of building a house and you can take care of the cooking as the French are well known for their culinary skills" He said to the Japanese "You better be in charge of supplies". One year later the camera crew returned. They made their way along the jungle track and came to a fantastic house amongst the trees, all made of wood. It even had a wooden jacuzzi. On a table nearby was a magnificent feast prepared by the Frenchman. But there was no sign of the Japanese. "It was very strange" said the French. "Soon after we arrived the Japanese disappeared and we haven't seen him for nearly a year. They decided they would have to leave without him so they all made their way back through the jungle. Just as they got to the helicopter there was a shout from behind a thicket. The Japanese man jumped out in front of them waving his arms and shouted "**SUPPLIES!**"*

The end

Keep those articles coming in to simon.phipps3@ntlworld.com

Fly safe

Simon