

WINDSOCK

THE SOUTHERN HANG GLIDING CLUB - SPRING 2015

AGM

The 2015 Annual General Meeting of the SHGC will be held at 7.30pm on Saturday the 21st March, 2015 at the Glynde Social Club, The Street, Glynde BN8 6SS. I will circulate an Agenda closer to the day, if you have anything you would like included please let me know.

With the exception of Simon Phipps who has been our hard working Windssock editor, the rest of the committee are standing for re-election. If you think you can fill the shoes of Peregrine Molehusband, or any of the other Committee posts now's your chance.

Every member is entitled to be present and has one vote on every question and or motion either in person or by proxy vote, nominating either the Chairman of the meeting, or an alternative member to vote on his or her behalf. This can be done by email or if you prefer in writing to The Secretary, Chris Aegerter, 6 Hawks Road, Hailsham, BN27 3BL.

Any member if nominated can stand for any office on the committee. Nominations can be made on the night. This is your chance to have a say in the running of your club, use it. If you are unable to attend please consider a proxy vote. Dave from the Social Club will be supplying one of his excellent curries, a vegetarian option will be also be available. This will be paid for by the club, as will your first drink. For those with good appetites, the price of a second helping will have to be negotiated with Dave

The usual attendance sheet will be on the bar, please sign it while being served. The Club will be open from 6pm.

Chris Aegerter secretary@shgc.org.uk 07753662475

Classified Advertisements

Wanted:

Windssock editor. Must be literate, computer savvy, genuinely impartial, bi-wingwal, humorous, reliable, busy (if you want something done ask a busy person!) organised and finally, daft enough to volunteer. Alternatively, just daft enough would suffice.

Offers/suggestions/press-ganging to committee@shgc.org.uk

- Used high-end HG harness
- D bars for supine flying.

Steve info@airworks.co.uk

Your old kit. All of the local schools would appreciate you trading-in your old kit against a fantastic new generation thingumijig. They are safer and better performing than last year's and will undoubtedly encourage bebies of your favoured sex to follow your every move. Of course, said hordes may well be comprised of several iterations of She Who Must Be Obeyed looking closely into your fun-fund, but that's your problem...

For Sale

One perfect day: Blue skies with 3/8ths Cb with 15 kmh tailwinds which, in a timely manner, change direction to suit each leg of your triangle flight. Price: A little leeway from the boss and close following of the weather forecast all year, enabling you to choose the best site to drive to on your given day; not limiting your horizons to SHGC sites. Remember, excepting DFHGC, everyones sites have easier secured XC potential than ours.

- Airbourne Sting II 175. It's a great glider, in used but good condition for its year. It would be really good for a CP flyer or a step up from a single surface glider. I'm selling as I never get time to fly these days with work, etc. and need the space. The glider is £1200 firm (as backed up by JB)
- Flytec 6005 Vario (very low hrs and nearly new but a few scratches) £80
- Base bar bracket with tethers for Vario £25 or offers Call Don on 07855 222551 or email don@nuttysworld.com

- John Barratt style Pod/harness, Blue and black (less than 5hrs use) would suit tallish medium build but is adjustable - £350
- Windsock on folding post £10

Or as a lot, OIRO £1600 for the full kit ready to go.
Call Don on 07855 222551 or email
don@nuttyworld.com

Congratulations

Mark Watts – In August he broke the UK open distance record for both hg & pg with a single PG flight of 275.5km from Milk Hill to Cromer.

Luke Nichol – This summer he won the 2014 British Championship for Class 5 hang gliders, after little more than three weeks in the sport. Now rated 5th class 5 pilot in the world ranking, he has now just bought himself a paraglider to take on Mark and the PG XC league...

DFHGC First Aid Course

William Harvey Hospital, Ashford. Limited space so book now! 10am to 3pm on March 14th (So not long enough for instructors/AEI I'm afraid) £10 per person to cover costs of room, sundries and kit. Email either nigel.gilbert@live.co.uk or 14freeflight@gmail.com

Airspace

The unseely blighters at Southend have managed to blag a huge swathe of controlled airspace in place of their equally undeserved RMZ. This now renders crossing Old Father Thames a whole lot more complicated than it needs to be. Make sure you check your notams and airspace. Before you infringe, rather than later...

SAFETY

Narcotics

Once again the issue of stoned pilots rears its ugly head. Please let the police know if any pilot is flying under the influence of a narcotic substance.

Nowadays the SHGC has to have a zero tolerance attitude to flying in our heavily used airspace whilst under the influence of narcotic substances. Anyone repeatedly doing so *will be reported to the police*.

I have received a report that cannabis has been seen being smoked by certain pilot(s) on our sites prior to paragliding.

I am sure that all pilots are aware of the dangers and severe penalties (5 years imprisonment) accruing to such actions and that therefore would not countenance such a foolhardy act. However, if you have indeed flown under the influence, I trust that you will not do so again, knowing these hazards...

Airmanship & Attitude

As always I have received a number of letters regarding poor airmanship and lack of consideration for others. We must all work together to make everyone's flying as safe and rewarding as possible. Air law is not optional and good manners are also important. If you don't feel secure in your application of air law, see a coach or instructor. In particular 'Head to Head - Break Right' and 'On the right is in the right'

A glider on the ground is the lowest form of aviation and has no rights; Do not block gliders attempting to land by interminably ground handling your wing on launch. Do not take off into the path of another air craft.

Marshalling

It has been brought to my attention that PG pilots have not always been allowing a window of opportunity for hang gliders to launch safely and more importantly to land safely, without a forest of paragliders on the overshoot. Don't forget that any of us can declare a hang gliding half hour whereby all paragliders below 1000' have to land and vice versa. We had this time-sharing system many years ago and it was not well received, but if everyone's voluntary behaviour does not improve it will have to come back to haunt us again.

Steve Purdie SAFETY OFFICER

Winter Wanderland

25 Nov 2014 - 25 Feb 2015

The Winter Wanderland is a fun competition for PG and HG, the aim of which is to encourage pilots to continue to fly during the winter season and to hone their XC skills ready for Spring's sprightly thermals. SHGC sites only I'm afraid

We have made it a little easier than originally suggested:

HG the challenge is to tot up your flights of more than 2km where:

- Ridge runs, but not the cliffs, count but you can only use each run once each way and the distance will be multiplied by a factor of 2/3.
- Every kilometer flown before Christmas gets multiplied by a factor of one and a half.
- Every kilometer flown after Christmas Day, but before February, gets multiplied by a factor of two.
- Every kilometer flown in February gets multiplied by a factor of one and a half.

For PG the challenge is to tot up your flights of more than 2km where:

- Ridge runs, but not Beachy Head cliffs, count but you can only use each run once each way and no multipliers apply.
- Every kilometer flown before Christmas gets multiplied by a factor of two.
- Every kilometer flown after Christmas Day, but before February, gets multiplied by a factor of three.
- Every kilometer flown in February gets multiplied by a factor of two.

Any flight terminating in trees, hospital or the sea does not count!

This should encourage pilots to leave the hill on the merest wisp of a thermal...

Log your flights on the club XC league as usual.

Windy John would like to inform all hang and paraglider pilots that with the opening of another workshop near Tonbridge Wells we can now cover a greater area and therefore we can offer mates rates to ALL shgc members and friends on any glass or glazing related building products, such as windows doors, porches, conservatories, ballustrades, balconies, shower screens etc; in fact if it's glass we can sort it, and we'll definitely beat any genuine like for like quotes. You can get me on 01273 475123 in Lewes or my mobile is 07951500769 or contact my lads on Seaford 01323 491777 or Erridge 01825 750007 and we'll be happy to chat (probably talk more about flying!)

Confessional

Ed's tree

The accident occurred on the last day of a holiday with Himalayan Sky Safaris. I had flown unguided on the first day in Bir (prior to the start of the guided holiday), then on seven days out of the following nine. On all the guided days I was flying one to one with Antoine Laurens, with whom I had flown in the Alps the previous spring, and with whom I have a good rapport. On the day of the accident Antoine intended to fly to the 'Golf Course' to install a memorial plaque to a friend who had died in an accident in the area a few years before. I therefore had the option to free-fly or join Eddie Colfox and Jon Silvester on a projected flight to Dharamsala. I chose the latter, partly because we had not reached Dharamsala on earlier flights, though Antoine and I had flown most of the way and top-landed at Chamunda temple, about 10km from Dharamsala. I was tired, but not, in my view, too tired for this task.

Preparations were normal. I was to be guided by Jon Silvester, who also would be looking after two other pilots. Just before launch, one of them, an Australian pilot who had been on previous trips with HSS, decided to drop out and free-fly. I considered joining him, but decided to continue with the original plan. I got airborne, climbed without much delay, but had trouble locating the guides and other pilots. From radio messages I worked out where they probably were and pushed on, getting a bit ahead of the main group, then waited on a ridge, ending up behind them as they arrived. The transition to the next ridge left me a little low, and Jon Silvester came back to join me. I followed him to the next ridge and lost some time gaining height. We passed Palampur and arrived at a tree-covered ridge where I found myself lower than the others and felt the need to gain height without delay. I tried to push back up the ridge too soon and got into weaker lift too close to the

trees, There was a significant flow up the ridge, and in trying to turn upwind away from the ridge I held in too much brake and entered a spin, recovered; but as I swung forward allowed my hands to fall, which induced a parachutal stall. I considered throwing the reserve, but thought that as I was close to the trees, maintaining the glider in a stall would be the better option. At that point somebody shouted 'Hands up!' on the radio and I responded by doing so. The glider started to fly again just as I arrived at the treetops, so I fortunately had not started to swing forwards before I arrive in the trees. I ended up standing on a branch about 20 metres vertically above the slope with the lines slightly in tension. I made sure I was secure and spoke to Jon on the radio to tell him I was safe. He top-landed on a track further down the ridge. Meanwhile, a group of five security guards from the nearby hydro-electric plant turned up and tried to assist. Having no common language made communication difficult, but I eventually got them to understand that my friend was on his way and that there was no way I was climbing down until he arrived. The only injury I was aware of was a bruised and grazed left shin, but it was not particularly painful. When Jon arrived after about 30 minutes, he managed to borrow a rope from the guards, climbed up to me and belayed me as I climbed down. He and one of the guards managed to retrieve the glider with minimal damage, though one riser had to be cut away. We then walked down to the guards' building and arrange for a taxi from Palampur to take us back to Bir.

My decision to join the expedition to Dharamsala was probably taken without full consideration of the differences between the conditions and human factors on that day compared to previous days. I was not used to being guided other than one-to-one, and I had not experienced the guiding style of the other guides. I had also probably not taken into account sufficiently either my own physical and mental condition, or the weather conditions on the day. The latter were not conducive to an easy flight over that distance, and it would almost certainly have been more pleasurable to free-fly locally. When the other pilot chose to drop out, I reviewed my decision, but still did not take the above factors into account.

The other "human factor" was perceived peer pressure to keep up rather than go at my own pace. This was exacerbated by the fact that my guide needed to split his attention between me and another pilot, and I did not want to hold him (and the other pilot) up unduly. This may have led me to fly closer to the terrain than I would have done had I been free-flying.

Despite having done an SIV course this spring (with Flyeo), I failed to put into practice the skills learned during the recovery from the spin. Although the initial phases were correctly handled, I was not mentally prepared for the effects of the forward pendulum after arresting the surge of the wing, and my hands went down, re-stalling the wing. To have a good chance of retaining these skills, an annual SIV course and regular self-briefing prior to flight on such emergencies would seem to be a good idea.

I did not throw my reserve because I recognised that I was in a parachutal descent and quite close to the trees. This was the wrong decision, and I should have thrown it anyway. This does need to be emphasised in training, as when things go wrong, it never happens the way you expect it to!

Lukes bush

On 2 Feb 2015 A well-meaning member of the public saw Luke collide with a small bush while trying to get round the corner onto the Truleigh run and decided to dial 999! I believe it took Luke about an hour to unpick his glider from the bush however a whole county's worth of fire engines arrived and apparently the helicopter had been dispatched but turned round before getting there. By the time I realised anything had happened he was back in the air terrorising more bushes and cows. Ian White. The usual gentle ribbing followed...

Hahaha, thanks For your concern everyone ☺. What ACTUALLY happened is... It was light and cloudy so I left the rigid on the roof and mucked around on the paraglider. It was NW so I tried to do the Truleigh run with two others, they bottled it half way as they were para puffing wimps and left me to carry on alone, I got low and slope landed ON THE GROUND half way back but the wing flopped over into a small prickly bush. The wing was lying on the ground and the lines were resting on top. I thought it was going to be a 2 minute job but the bush grabbed the lines and it took me about an hour to individually pick them out. I had almost finished but kept seeing more and more emergency service vehicles gathering at the bottom of the hill, 4 fire engines, 6 ambulances, police and some off road ambulances as well as a helicopter which was called off a few miles

away. I thought there must be a fire in the village or something and then they all started climbing the side of the hill, It suddenly clicked and I felt terrible. Some of these guys had driven from Gatwick!!!! Two of the ambulance ladies helped me pull the last few lines out the bush, I apologised a million times but they kept saying they had nothing better to do (obviously just really enjoyed my company ☺).

What a strange day, a few minutes later I took off from where I had landed and flew back to the dyke. Hoping I don't get a massive bill from the council for 15 emergency service vehicles and the helicopters fuel!

Steve's Sledder

I rigged, checked over the wing then ground handled into a good position to launch. I checked for full control movement then stood with the wing floating for a moment or two. At what I thought was the right moment, I launched. I didn't really feel that the launch was unusual, as I wanted to contour the hill anyway so as to get energy while getting clear of the Pg that was flying. I then got into the pod and simultaneously pushed out to both climb and slow to normal soaring speeds.

It was at this point I noticed that all was not right. I had to go straight-armed to keep the glider from pitching down. Initially I thought that I had managed to move the hang loop right forwards when rigging. That was certainly the feeling I got.

I took off with roughly 15 degrees of flap and on noticing all was not right tried more and less flap to no avail.

It quickly became apparent that I couldn't slow enough to soar up and top land so I set up for a bottom landing, applied full flap and allowed the wing to dive a bit to give me some energy for a traditional flare, as I couldn't fly a normal Exxtacy landing. I did manage to get the speed down to something survivable, but the landing was in no way pretty and I broke an upright.



Close inspection post impact revealed that the nose cone had opened up and the outboard end of the port flap was not correctly engaged with the rib, though that probably occurred during the prang since I know I checked it after rigging.



The next day I replaced the broken upright, checked the sweep angle and subsequently test flew the glider at the Dyke. All now seems to be fine.

The conclusion arrived at with John Barratt and Oz Haines was that the offending item was probably simply the nose cone. Thinking about it, it makes a lot of sense: if the top of the nose cone is vertical (as it was) then it will destroy lift from about a ten inch wide section of the aerofoil at the middle, and hence front, of the wing. This will have the effect of causing the nose

to drop and the rest is history... I think I'll be making this idiot-proof to avoid a repeat of that incident. Pre-flight check, pre-flight check and pre-flight check!

Subsequent checking of the nose cone velcro showed that a previous owner had cut out the central region of the fluffy velcro and replaced it with some self adhesive velcro. I have now sewn in some new 40mm stuff to do the job properly.

SIV Instability training - APRIL/MAY 2015

Whether you have just passed Club Pilot or pilot a two-liner, this course is personally tailored to you.

Simulated Incidents in Flight, SIV, in the first world! Lake Annecy, France.

As well as being educational, SIV is great fun... The initial trepidation at collapsing your perfectly functional glider is rapidly replaced by a huge grin as you learn how safe your wing is and just how easy it is to pilot out of the most unusual attitudes.

If you do manage to get it slightly wrong or are just having too much fun to stop, the fresh water of Lake Annecy waits patiently below...



Itinerary:

Saturday: You will arrive at Geneva in the afternoon and will be driven directly to launch for an orientation flight. If you are traveling independently you need to plan to get to Anecy by 15:00 or you'll miss the first briefing & flight.

Sunday : We'll go over reserve and harness systems, ensuring that everyone knows that theirs will function correctly if required. We'll then do some free flying - Let's see if the magic lift works and we can do the Tour du Lac cross country flight.

Monday - Wednesday: loads of SIV flying, with a little free flying too if conditions permit.

Thursday - More guided XC flying unless the weather means we need to catch up on some SIV.

How much is it going to cost? A measly £600, including: Tuition, lifejacket hire, briefing and video de-briefing, DVD of the trip etc.

Catching the train from the UK to Annecy is a very good way to get there. Civilised and no luggage allowance worries. Also clients often choose to drive down in order to spend more time enjoying the flying in Annecy after the course.

Accommodation and transfers are not included. The staff will be staying at the Maison du Moulin and we will have eight berths available there at £150 for the week. Transfer from/to Geneva will be available for the specified flights for £50 both ways.

Flights are not included in the cost. However the trip is scheduled around Easy Jet's low cost Gatwick-Geneva flights:

Trip two: (Spaces available)

Departure 12:30 Saturday 2nd May 2015 Gatwick to Geneva.
Returning 15:50 Friday 8th May 2015.

Let me know if you would like to have a go on the G-force trainer (£120 ish) while we are there?

To confirm your place please send us a cheque for £600, payable to 'Airtrips' or make a bank transfer as soon as possible - Spaces are very limited and we are not planning any further SIV trips for 2015.

See you in Annecy!

Steve Purdie

Book now on 01273 434002. Email: info@airworks.co.uk

Roundup

As every year, the 2014 SHGC flying season ended with a fun-filled Xmas dinner party and awards ceremony. Big thanks must go to Simon Steel and the owners of the Abergavenny Arms in Rodmell

(www.abergavennyarms.com) for organising such a great evening! As with the last two years, the pub and staff were very warm and friendly, and the food and service excellent. This year, even the company was somewhat tolerable! ;)



It was great to see some of the regular flying folk away from the hill, allowing for time to have a chat about the year gone by, catch up on all the latest gossip and share exciting ideas about the coming season, of which



there were many! Some of the 'jovial banter' exchanged wasn't entirely suitable for a family audience, so can't be shared here! Suffice to say that sides were split and many tears of laughter shed. To those who didn't come: You missed out! Make sure you don't next year. After partaking in some mind loosening fluids (hic) and devouring a splendid feast (burp), the (h)airy hoards reached a state of pacified plenitude. Sensing their moment, SHGC President Johnny Carr and Chairman Dave Massie unleashed their Awards Ceremony upon the very suspect audience, whom were by now quivering with much anticipation. "And the SHGC Paragliding winners and nominees for 2014 are":

Sussex League1 Carlo Borsattino2 Nancy Elliott3 Peter Impey
 Sussex Weekend League1 Carlo Borsattino2 Grita Rose-Innes3 Kenny McPhee
 Martini League1 Carlo Borsattino2 Kenny McPhee3 Nancy Elliott
 Novice League1 Vincent Talleu

Winter League1 Simon Steel
 Best newcomerMatthew York
 Most improvedGrita Rose-Innes
 Longest XC from SHGC siteCarlo Borsattino 128.52km*
 Outstanding Achievement AwardMark Watts**

In other, related news the SHGC paragliders and hang gliders each won their respective UK Club XC leagues. So the SHGC really is at the top of the UK air charts this year! It was noticed that, by strange coincidence, all of the paragliders present in the winning team (Hugh, Mark, Carlo) were all wearing checked 'lumberjack' style shirts, which lead to some idle speculation:

Catherine Castle: "Clearly it's all in the shirt. Luke [from the winning hang glider team] was wearing one too..."

John Turczak: "Clearly the secret to good XC flying is wearing a check shirt."

Carlo Borsattino: "Shhh, John Turczak! Don't tell everyone!"

Richard Goodman: "I've got one, but it hasn't helped so far."

Vincent Talleu: "Easy peasy. Next year I'll show Carlo how it's done... With my newly bought lumberjack shirt."

Luke Nicol: "Smug Git."

I asked some of the winners how 2014 was for them, and what they thought was the secret to their success. Winner of the Novice League, Vincent Talleu was the first to respond:

"2014 was great flying for me, learning to get up in thermals was a revelation, and I could not think of



anything else than get higher and higher! I have learnt so much from every day I spent flying. Getting up and away from the hill has become an obsession, so much that it has forced me to become very patient and persistent in my flying. In the past I would just land when it got light, or convince myself I'd rather fly close to the ground. But now I kept trying and trying to get up. It all paid up and I managed to leave the ridge many times.

My best flight was flying from Bo Peep to Brighton, because getting there took me a lot of patience and perseverance. I spent a long time struggling in zeros in the valley and I really thought I would never make it. I had an extremely low save behind the football stadium, seconds from landing, a few seagulls showed me a great climb. Also it was my first ever XC flight to goal, meaning I landed exactly where I intended to :D

Highlight of the year for me was landing to goal after a long and tiring flight under a round of applause by the park-goers :) There is nothing worst than landing after an amazing flight next to people and being completely ignored as if it happened all the time :(

This year went well for me because of all the help and advice I received from other pilots, the best is going XC on a Tuesday, being given clues why I landed out so quickly, what I could have done better etc, and the very next day going XC from the same hill, following all the advice and doing much better :D Instant results!

Most improved pilot, as voted for by the SHGC, Grita Rose-Innes wrote:

"It all started early on in the season (mid April) when I flew on my own from Devil's Dyke to Battle (53km). This flight was so stimulating and a break through - it set my mind and pace for the rest of the season.

I got more focused and wanted to achieve longer XC flights. I planned my time flying much more carefully, often I was able to fit work in around the flying. I also wanted to get to grips with our local conditions: the sea breeze, airspace. When I did achieve longer XC flights, that in itself became very stimulating.

My most challenging and exciting flight with strong climbs, was from Caburn to Hurst Green in August (36km). Flying as a gaggle of six, staying together, showing each other where the lift was, flying mainly at cloudbase. Then we all landed near each other at the same time. Very rewarding!

I think short periods of flying different sites abroad helps. I see it as a kind of training: learning, understanding, building up stamina, flying different conditions, different terrain. It all helps to build up the flying picture.

Next year I want to do much more XC flying - locally as well as other sites in the UK. Hopefully the weather will be as good as it was this year."

Peter Impey finished third in the Sussex League, and wrote:

"The start of 2014 promised two things: delivery of a new wing and a reduction in time spent working. The reduction in work didn't fully happen, but the new wing fired off a determination to get more XCs on the board. And the result? Well - at my own modest level of achievement - my best XC year to date by some way.



12 UK XCs over 10km logged between early April and October, personal bests in distance (63 km) and time (3hrs 45) and - satisfying a private long held ambition - a couple of flights from Mt Caburn to my home some 13km due north.

What made the difference? I have to say that the additional performance in climb, sink and glide of the Chili 3 was fundamental. It gave just that bit of extra reach and, with that, the confidence to push out for that early thermal or to go for that longer transition. But, paradoxically, it was the adoption - at long last - of a more patient mindset that made me slow down and think a bit more about decisions, that helped most. Added to this was the good sink rate of the wing that helped me feel more comfortable - in the absence of other clear options - to spend time drifting in zeros or below, rather than dash off without a clear idea of what I was heading for.



And for 2015? More of the same, but with - really this time, please - less work likely, perhaps more travelling in the UK to explore other sites with possibly better XC potential. Can't wait!! "

Nancy Elliott had a great season, and beat most of the boys; she shares a small snippet of her year below:

"After an extremely poor decision to stay in the UK for the entire winter (and it was a bad one) we did somehow survive those very long dark, wet and windy months! :(There was one late winter flying treat - a great day at the Dyke, where I remember feeling euphoric. It was absolutely freezing but the Truleigh run was on and we had winter thermals, reaching the dizzy heights of around 2000ft! That was so needed. :~)

So despite a real lack of currency somehow I felt like I had a head start as I was flying with my same kit as last year: my super comfortable Impress 3 and - my secret weapon - the gorgeous Chili3. My one new piece of kit was an Oudie 3 all-in-one flight instrument, which I was very excited about; the year that followed proved what a truly invaluable item it was!

My first XC adventure of the year happened when I was one of two (the other being Mark Watts) that had an early escape from the Dyke in early spring. I didn't get far, landing at Plumpton, but it was a nice way to start my XC season off - yeeha!

The next special moment for me was a big outing to Leckhampton (near Cheltenham) with a whole bunch of SHGC pilots in April. This was to prove to be an epic adventure for many! I gave myself a bit more excitement than was needed by landing in the centre of Bath (having just missed the next climb). At this point I didn't know that we'd be driving down deep into Devon to collect Carlo, and then all the way back up and across to Sussex! It was a super long day out but with a great bunch of pilots and friends.

Another treat was when the forecast showed that we had to go to SE Wales! So Carlo and I concocted a last minute plan and Phil Clark joined us. It had been a long time since I had been to Crickhowell so it was nice to be back, we met up with Richard Osborne and friends and were introduced to "Magic Mountain" a particularly special spot with a beautiful walk up. Many old friends arrived at the hill and we planned a triangle. An incredible climb out from launch with most of the pilots all in one gaggle we set off although the triangle was quickly abandoned by most due to the wind strength and we headed off down wind...

My other most memorable moment was a flight started and finished with Carlo, we flew from the Dyke and it was all going very well until Carlo got low and I chose to separate and carry on. I scabbled on, it was hard work! I managed to get high and had a moment of joy when I drifted over Bodiam Castle as I had always

wanted to fly there since hearing the tale and seeing Carlo's photos of landing with Ghandi and Rowena there many years before. I was in a good position to carry on at this point however, after losing most of my height on a long sinky glide, just north of Rye I was not! I was in dribbling mode, really hanging on to not a lot, when suddenly Carlo appeared even lower than my uncomfortable height. Together we worked the scrappy lift and made something out of it. Eventually we managed to get back up to base and could carry on together, which really was rather special. Sadly I couldn't carry on due to a very full bladder :~@ so we landed together at Ashford. :)

Many other adventures were had over the year, but I'll save those for other stories!

I'm very happy to have come 3rd lady in the UK XC league and walked away with a 2nd place and a 3rd place trophy in the SHGC Sussex (local) and Martini (national) leagues respectively. This meant that some of Carlo's trophies had to be moved to the side to make space for mine! :~)"



*128.52km is a new site record for Devils Dyke, if only by a meagre 120m! ;)

The previous record, set by Mark 'Wagga' Watts flying an Axis Mercury (uncertified competition wing) from Devils Dyke to Ramsgate on 26th June 2009, was 128.4km open distance (138.0km with turnpoints). This was Mark's second flight to Ramsgate in the same year, each time having to fly out to sea to circumnavigate the controlled airspace which was in place around Manston at the time! This record flight by Mark has since proven very difficult to beat. On 14th July 2014, Carlo Borsattino flew a Gin Carrera (EN B wing) from Devils Dyke to Margate for 128.52km open distance (140.32km with turnpoints), so beating the previous record by just 120m! This time Carlo didn't have to fly out to sea to circumnavigate the controlled airspace around Manston, as it has been closed indefinitely! It'll very difficult to do more (over land) as Carlo flew to the very furthest point possible - but for sure people will try!

** The Outstanding Achievement Award goes to Mark Watts for the second year running, this time for his new UK open distance record flight of 275.5km. Truly outstanding!

Letters

I have been fortunate enough to get a few flying days on the South downs over the last couple of months BUT during those few days I have had someone fly into me from the left causing a third of my wing to collapse! When I questioned the person he said "sorry I wasn't looking where I was going, I was looking at the floor"!! This was at High & Over.

I also had a very close encounter at Devils Dyke whilst coming along with the ridge approx 20ft from my right wing tip as I set up for a landing the person coming the other way flew straight at me causing me to sharply turn right, I believe the pilot was overtaking someone between them & the ridge! I was lucky enough to have just enough room to skim the grass & carry on to the landing area where I landed, packed up & went home!

I don't fly on weekends because of the terrible anti collision knowledge of a few of the people that fly the south downs & I know of many others that don't fly there for the same reason, in fact I flew with a new member on Monday at Devils Dyke but after he had walked up the hill a few times due to being forced away from the ridge by dangerous flyers he packed his wing up, said how he could not believe what some people were doing & he went home.

It is every pilot's duty to avoid a collision & I have removed myself from the problem at weekends, as a retired fireman I am lucky enough to get to fly during the week but I notice more people flying during the week these days (don't these people have jobs?)

I think the South downs are a beautiful place to fly & quite local for me but I fear it is only a matter of time until something happens that could cause the Southern club & paragliding a major problem.

The airspace is getting crowded & I believe the pilot skills are getting worse or are not good enough to fly in crowded air space so perhaps you could do an article on air law & anti collision rules? On the right, in the right?

The red ribbon club do a great job with new people but I suspect it is not these people that fly dangerously it is people with more hours that have forgotten that the law still applies to them.

Paul Wyles.

In 2014 wing manufacturers seemed to recognise that the EN/B band has widened to start introducing "Classic B" wings and "Sporty B" wings, examples are:

Ozone Buzz4 and Rush4

Gin Atlas and Carrera

Many others I am sure...

In addition lighter harnesses and "hike & Fly" Wings were also in all the Paragliding circulars, that may affect the wing loading calculations making you lighter than you might be used to.

If you have Read "50 ways to fly better" Bruce Goldsmith recommends beginners wring the neck of their first wing before purchasing the next wing and Germany now requires Schools use EN/A wings which has resulted in manufacturers supplying EN/A wings in their range.

If you have upgraded last year or fly a sportier wing, remember, Spring thermals can be punchy. Together with rust accumulated over winter watching the weather roll through instead of flying, you may not be as "current" as you were at the end of summer, so be extra cautious initially until the feel returns.

Jeremy Hine

I have read Paul's comments with interest. I'm afraid I'm going to name a couple of names !!

I too have found that it is the pilots with a few years flying who seem to be the worst.

One example is [censored] who has a very bad habit of ground handling his wing on the take off and landing areas and talking to his mates whilst doing so. I have never seen anyone such as coaches or other instructors ask him to move to one side. However I have mentioned this to him in the past and been met with "would you like to sign up for my pilots course"

As a pilot rated PG pilot Who prides him self on following as closely as possibly the air law, local rules and being a good sportsman I find some of the more experienced pilots to be the worst. In all the time I have flown I have never had a pilot come to me to discuss any of my decisions taken when flying!!!!
Some who are in a position of instruction seem to be the worst.

Another example I noticed was a [censored] sign written glider fly directly at red ribbon pilot on Monday (a day with at times around 20-25 pilots roughly in the air) who again had the ridge close on his right. With a fair bit of traffic behind him the red ribbon pilot didn't have many options but to drop his wing down and do what I would call a controlled crash. He was fine !!!!

I'm positive the [censored] glider did not notice the red ribbon pilot or me shouting at him. Overconfidence. Lazy, arrogance !!!! Not sure what to think.

When I landed the pilot had disappeared so I never got a chance to ask why he did it !!!!

It's only time before we have a bad accident caused by over confidence of pilots and anything we can mention to get them to open there eyes when flying can only be a positive.

Regards

Mick Collins



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Horrorscope

Capricorn

The sheep are mostly gravid now so you must bate your predilections and avoid chasing them about the place, still less fly or get dragged into them.

Aquarius

With groundwater rising in your vicinity you will find large bodies of water in most landing fields. Take care to avoid them and keep your kit dry. Wet reserves needs must be repacked.

Pisces

The sea is pretty much at its warmest now relative to the air. This means that if you land in it you will probably drown before hypothermia sets in.

Aries

Don't be afraid to back down if you have driven miles to get to the hill only to find conditions marginal. The hills will still be there tomorrow. Hopefully...

Taurus

Once the calves start to appear, treat all cows as if they were mad bulls. If you get between a calf and it's mother she will get decidedly uppity.

Gemini

You keep your 'flying with others' up to speed throughout the winter, but do remember that not everyone will and fly accordingly once the rusty pilots start to reappear. It takes two to mid-air.

Cancer

Ground handling on the beach is a great way to keep your skills up, but do stop the moment you notice you have picked up a stone, lest it knocks loads of holes in your trailing edge. Hang glider nose men **must** always use a safety harness and tether when assisting with a cliff launch.

Leo

If you store your glider in an outbuilding or garage, don't leave it against a wall as rats and mice prefer to run around the edge of a room and will burrow through any obstacle to create a rat-run.

Virgo

Lots of new pilots will have been appearing over the winter months. Treat them kindly and talk nicely to them. If you are one, then the Red Ribbon section is here to help you become part of the club.

Libra

Make sure that you have cleared out the sheep poo and rocks from your trailing edge and especially the wing tips as there has been at least one fatality from this. Hang gliders take care not to introduce grit into your sail as it can damage the carbon.

Scorpio

Many insects and no doubt the odd arachnid are quite capable of chewing their way out of your folded glider, so do clear them out as you pack.

Sagittarius

Horses are most effectively spooked if you hide your glider until the very moment they are at apogee, then inflate your wing. Alternatively use firecrackers. The riders invariably enjoy the extra speed with which this endows their mounts.