
SOUTHERN HANG-
GLIDING CLUB
WINDSOCK
SPRING
EDITION
FEBRUARY
2020

CONTENTS

“Every take-off is optional
every landing is mandatory”

1. Introduction

To all SHGC Club members. A belated happy New Year! It is said that the way to hell is paved with good intentions. Yet, despite the best of our intentions, and due to circumstances beyond our control (sloth, laziness, procrastination, and an inability to… what was I saying…?) this edition of Windsock is later than the editorial team would have liked. Apologies.

Firstly, a warm welcome to all new joining members of the SHGC and to any elderly Club members whom have forgotten that they are already members ("the milk's in the fridge, I said, the milk's in the…oh, no matter").

For all new members, please think of Windsock as a safety device in the same way as one wears a buoyance aid on a boat and your car has seatbelts, crumple zones, and air bags. Everything is designed to keep you, as pilots, very safe. All previous editions, stuffed full of helpful advice and suggestions, are available on the SHGC Website (www.shgc.org.uk).

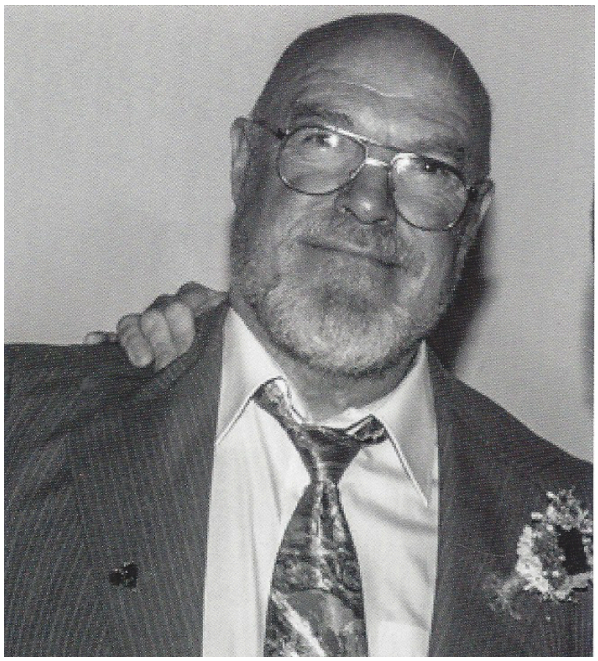
The Windsock editorial team have been hunkered down over the winter period. But an editorial point of order is needed here, David Newns (Club member, highly seasoned pilot, and something of a practised seaweed watcher) said recently (on Telegram) that we have not yet had a 'proper' Winter; it's just been a very long, continuation of Autumn. Given the renowned experience of the author, we have no doubt that this is 100% true. Roll on Winter!

We read this weather update with more than a pained smile given that down here at Windsock HQ, deep in the Sussex Countryside, we lost the roof off the outside toilet block twice (ok, it's really a shed, but…!). On each occasion we sent the sub-editor out to undertake the necessary running repairs and, on one occasion, he was seen to be airborne clinging valiantly to the plastic sheeting bought somewhat hastily from B&Q.

Lastly for anyone interested in the sub-editors love life which has been featured in many of the last editions of Windsock, here is an update. As you may recall, the sub-editor has had a crush on Josh's mum. Josh was our summer-intern last year (we offered him a glittering opportunity in journalism). To cut a long story short, (the sub-editor changed his shopping habits from Lidl to Waitrose because he suspected that this is where Josh's mum shopped and his instincts were correct. He was in there when he saw her. He couldn't believe his luck, even more so when she stopped, smiled, and then asked in which isle could he find the dried prunes. Oh, no, talk about going from elated to deflated in approximately 1 second…!

However, in this edition, we begin with a sad, fond, and heartfelt goodbye to a most remarkable man, John Lancaster. Club member, former Committee member, former Chief Coach, businessman, husband, father, devoted Christian, true gentleman, and a real friend to the Club (for many years) and a friend to many Club members.

2. In Memoriam. John Lancaster (20th June 1955 – 4th November 2019)



John was born in 1955 into a highly dysfunctional family. His father, an abusive alcoholic, was rarely present during John's extremely chaotic childhood. During all of their early and formative childhood he and his siblings experienced shocking and protracted abuse. In spite of his stature, his larger-than-life personality, his abundance of grace, and limitless humour, John's early childhood experiences left him deeply insecure, yet, he never let this show, in fact he seemed to compensate with an abundance of good humour. In his late teens John became a committed and lifelong Christian. In his twenties, he married his (one and only) childhood sweetheart. John is survived by his only wife (and sweetheart) Sharon, and his four sons, their wives, and his many grandchildren, whom he absolutely adored.

The Following is an extract of the wonderful and highly moving tribute delivered by Steve Purdie at the Thanksgiving Service remembering ('Windy') John's full, varied, and quite extraordinary 'flying-life' held on 21st November in Lewes. Many Club members were present. It is edited and used with SP's permission.

John was a larger than life character in all senses of the term. Once, while in New Zealand, on an extended holiday and, during a road trip in the South Island, john saw a hillside littered with odd rectangular 'flying mattresses' that against all odds, seemed to stay airborne – well, sort of! John was immediately smitten and announced "I'm doing that!"

He bought and brought a glider back to the UK. There followed a number of misadventures including the time when he was hand-tow launching his brother in the Coombe (by Lewes) and he had a loop in the rope for each of his sons to help hold down the glider. It was only once all four of his sons were also airborne that he decided it might be a little too windy. It is possible that John's strong Christian faith encouraged him in to take risks, that others would shun.

But all ended safely (just…!) and after a few more misadventures he took a paragliding course with Sky Systems. After this he became rather more safety conscious… Though he always remained a force of nature. As we (fondly (?!?) know.

John always showed great generosity of spirit. He was always helping others; and regularly taking inexperienced pilots under his wing (whether they liked it or not). He became the Club's Chief Coach in the early 2000s and he excelled in this role. As Chief Coach he helped a great many of the Club's newcomers to begin and progress as pilots, not just with the transfer of his abundance of skills and knowledge but also showing how to really enjoy this wonderful and often silly sport.

John was a kind and loving man but believed in tough love. His teaching methods could be, ahem, somewhat acerbic (to say the least). His berating of a student pilot's poor ground handling skills could be metered out harshly; one such pilot remembers being reduced to tears by such criticism but, importantly, says, without hesitation, that whilst John's manner could be abrasive, it had the effect of forcing him to dig deep' and ultimately to succeed. This just goes to show that you can take the man out of Yorkshire, but you cannot take Yorkshire out of the man.

There are very many pilots on the hill who thank John for encouraging them to succeed when giving up would have been the 'easy' option. Even after his tenure as Chief Coach was complete, he never tired of meeting new pilots on the hill and loved sharing his great skill in and even greater enthusiasm for the sport. He was always on hand as a mentor and friend to help in any way he could, freely dishing out advice, whether it was requested or not. He was an expert in ground handling an extra-large paraglider. He would sometimes demonstrate his flying prowess by standing on a fence-post on one leg, wing aloft.

One breezy day at Caburn, with just a handful of pilots present, in came John (from aloft), and top landed. John immediately saw they were struggling to launch. Each time they tried they were getting lifted off before they could turn to face the way they 'should be' going. Bearing in mind that reverse inflations are taught, practiced and encouraged, truly reverse inflations and reverse launches, (that means truly reverse, reverse launches) were never part of the training syllabus (and still aren't). None of these pilots had ever been taught to fly of the hill whilst still facing backwards (fancy that!). John calmly and confidently showed it was possible and duly launched while still reversed and flew away (facing backwards) chatting twenty to the dozen, shouting that it was fine and there was no need to worry.

John loved flying mainly because of the people he met on the hill. John knew that it was fun just to have fun and even more fun to share this fun with others. He was particularly keen to take people up, on his tandem, and would practically drag passers-by from the street just to introduce them the wonders of free-flight (and (maybe) fun too).

At Airworks, there was an informal (and long-standing) challenge to fly out of a particularly shallow training site surrounded by trees. On one occasion, John was there, circling just in front of the trees. Until the moment when he quickly rose, flew over the back of the tree line, and came face to face with a large beech tree. He landed perfectly in the top most branches, just like a roosting bird. Because the wing was getting well past its sell by date, and his tendency to exacerbate matters in such situations, he didn't bother with the time-honoured technique of climbing the tree carefully extracting the lines. Oh no, not John. Instead he decided that the quickest and best course of action would be to just tie a rope to the risers, attach it to his van, drive off and pull it out of the tree.

We weren't all that surprised to see him flying said glider that same evening at Mt Caburn! We were equally unsurprised to see that it no longer flew in a straight line and now needed immediate replacement.

John would regularly launch in very strong conditions to demonstrate that is was flyable. For John of course, it was. He wasn't called Windy John for nothing. In truth a

large part of this willingness (to do so) was due to his larger than life stature and thus the need for a fair parcel of wind to keep him aloft, particularly with the early gliders. He had a favourite catch phrase too “if it is too windy above cliff height, stay low”.

On one occasion, at Bo Peep, a number of pilots were packing up, having decided that conditions were just too windy to fly. Then a Citroen Berlingo van pulled up (at some speed) and out hopped John (literally as he had broken his leg some time earlier) resplendent in a full leg plaster cast. Opening the rear-doors he pulled out his glider (it was rarely neatly packed away), he walked (hopped) over to launch, popped the glider up and flew away before coming to land gently nearly some 30 minutes later. With a quick hello and a what you all waiting for, it’s lovey?” he jumped back into his van and sped off.

He enjoyed flying unlikely places, such as Seaford Prom when it was **particularly** windy and especially after a storm had raised a ridge along the pebble beach, and other unlikely places such as the harbour arm at Newhaven – many laps around the lighthouse and not once getting his feet wet! Remarkable!

A gentle giant, with enough humility to admit that while he enjoyed free flying, he had no interest in competitions. He usually flew an intermediate glider, it was never the latest model, and he would fly in his work clothes or his Sunday-best-suit if it was (remotely) flyable after Church. He was particularly well known for his chrome-plated helmet and, during the summer, the wearing of BHPA approved Safety Crocs. He'd freely admit that he got scared at any more that 1000 feet and would leave perfectly good thermals to come back and play on the hill.

The world has been made a significantly better place by John's time here. Many of us who knew him have become better people and have become much better pilots from knowing (and receiving instruction) from him. He will be sorely missed. His positive influence that is felt far and wide, and his influence (and reputation) will continue for generations to come.

It is said that “Nothing of real worth can ever be bought. Love, friendship, Honour, Valour, and Respect. All these things have to be earned.” And John, our dear friend, and flying colleague, and mentor (to many), certainly did so. Fly Free John! We miss you!

The SHGC Committee plans to introduce a new trophy to be awarded each year to a Club member who, like John, has been recognised as never too busy or to occupied to mentor newer pilots; it will be called the ‘Windy John Mentorship Cup” (or something similar).

3. Date for YOUR Diary – The SHGC Annual General Meeting 18.04.2020

Look, I know that the very mention of the words “Annual, General and Meeting” in the same sentence and in that order, invoke the onset of fear, panic, and severe mental stupor in most people (me too).

So, how does the idea of free drink, free meal, and the wonderful opportunity to speak with fellow pilots and gain a wonderful understanding of the Club grab you? Tempted, good.

SHGC AGM will be held In Glynde from 6pm onwards on the 18th April 2020. This is your chance to come and to peer into the very soul of the Club. Why does this thing happen, that thing happen, why do we do this, why do we do that? At the AGM all this and more will be revealed. If you don’t come you will not know.

4. Guide To Choosing The Right Paragliding Harness.

The following article was written by Dave Lewis SHGC Sites Officer and proprietor of Skylark Paragliding who, it is important to note, does not sell harnesses. It is used with permission.

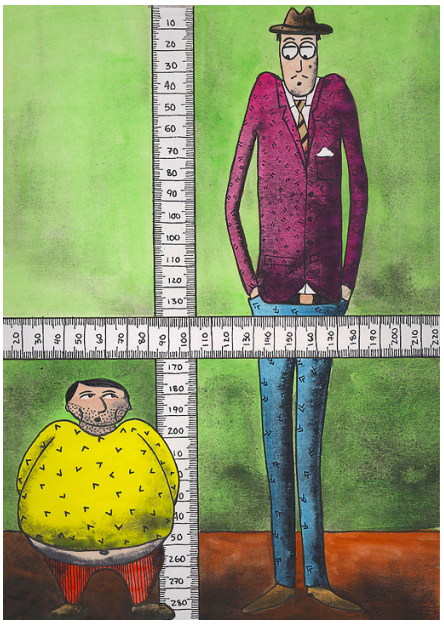
There are many different harnesses to choose from; brands, types, shapes, and sizes. But, choosing the right one is critical for any pilot and considerations should be given to many factors. Importantly, for any individual pilot, once these considerations are taken into account, there may, in fact, only be a few harnesses to choose from. As a trained engineer and enthusiastic para-gadget nerd, I have drawn together a summary of some of the design factors that pilots should consider when selecting the right harness for the job.

Comfort. It almost goes without saying that the harness should be comfortable. The only way to tell will be to spend time in it suspended from a suitable hang point. Once suitably suspended take time to play with all the straps and read the instructions to understand what they are for and to understand the purpose they serve.

Adjustment. An hour or so hanging around and fiddling should be enough to get it somewhere near right and gain a good impression of the fit. That's also a good time to check that all the straps can be adjusted under the load for when you're in the air.

Weight distribution (‘the angle of dangle’). It is important to make sure that these hang tests are undertaken with boots on, Instrument panel attached, glider bag, water

in the back, and anything else you normally fly with in place. Unlike hang-gliding harnesses, a paragliding harness doesn't have an angle-of-dangle adjuster and you might simply find that you can't get the angle right if you've got a non-standard body shape.



Wear just what you wear when (really) flying. A harness that fits snugly when wearing your faded “I love to fly” T-shirt will be too small when wearing full winter woollies and vice-versa, so you need to make sure it will work both in summer and winter. Once it's set right for flying, you need to make sure that it's also good on the ground and easy to get in and out of.

The pinch and the rub. Beware of some leg strap designs that can cause serious discomfort to one's gentlemen's equipment when ground handling. Some designs are still using buckles that can slip under load or move when off-load and packed in the bag. Adding some extra lines of stitching to give the buckles something to grip on can help, but these types are best avoided. Coastal flyers should consider the type and material of buckles carefully. Cunning lightweight automatic types are very nice and convenient, but get full of sand and with the mix of metals used, will corrode rapidly given enough exposure to salt air. Microscopic crevice crack corrosion is a serious business in aluminium parts and any visible corrosion is unacceptable. There's a lot to be said for good, old-fashioned pass through buckles and galvanised steel mallions.

Testing. Handling, weight shift and feedback vary, and it's not just about how high the hang points are. The only real way to tell is by flying a back-to-back test with a selection of harnesses on the same day in the same conditions.

The waist strap and weight shift. Almost every harness now comes with an adjustable waist strap and you'll find it's best set to the wing manufacturers recommendation for the best balance of safety, handling and comfort. Much wider and you get shaken around unnecessarily (per the Acro headbangers) and collapse recovery can be tricky. Too narrow and you can't feel what's going on, can't stop collapses, and will be more susceptible to line twists.

Some harnesses, usually those with V leg straps, have adjustable weight shift limits by altering the leg strap length. It's very important to use this correctly, too open and you're right over on your side in a collapse, too tight can mean no roll control at all and is very scary. There are a few designs with a separate “wobbliness” adjuster so you can have the risers the right distance apart and adjust the seat height to your chosen degree of feedback. In my experience, it's a very sensitive adjustment, so try it little by

little.

Aerodynamics. The aerodynamics of a harness can make a small but useful improvement to performance, especially at higher speeds. Many pilots could change to a low drag harness and get as much performance increase as they would get from buying a new faster wing. That's especially true if they understand speed to fly and (can) go fast when it's required. Low drag is achieved by reducing frontal area and by creating a slippery shape. At this point we start to get some serious compromises to think about. We reduce frontal area by adopting a supine (lying down) position; achieving significantly less drag, which is good, but this introduces a new problem to contend with.

Pod harnesses (AKA supine flying). By lying down we become a long, thin horizontal body shape, which has very low inertia in roll. Low roll inertia is good and means a pilot can react very quickly to weight-shift into a collapsing wing and potentially have far fewer deflations. The downside is that there is much increased inertia in pitch and yaw. On its own the yaw inertia can cause problems when the wing is turning rapidly or spinning. If the wing spins fast our inertia means we can't keep up with it. The result is line twists and probably a parachute deployment to boot. To make matters worse, if the pilot recognises an inertia induced spin situation a moment too late and tucks in to reduce their yaw inertia, they'll start to mimic a figure skater drawing in their arms in and will further accelerate their rotational speed. In these circumstances line twists and a full parachute deployment are almost guaranteed. So, the downside of achieving a low frontal area (less drag) is an increase in inertial; and with it a veritable can of worms. If we choose to fly supine, we must understand the inertia problem, know (roughly) where the spin point on your glider is, know how to 'tuck in' at the right moment, and practice recovering from any unexpected spin.

Ergonomics. Ergonomics becomes more of a consideration as we become older and perhaps less bold pilots. Lying down with your neck bent to look down the glide angle is great for performance but hard on the body. Add some G-force in that position and you can easily do yourself an injury. Acro harnesses are always very strong and put the pilot in a straight-backed, upright position so they can pull Gs (and lots of them too) without hurting themselves. The drag in that position, together with the type of wing,

means your typical Acro headbanger is compromised with back to the eighties glide performance.

Flight instruments & flight deck. Often overlooked when selecting a harness is the question of where to put the flight instruments, the (obligatory) air chart, and, of course, the essential in-flight catering (the thermals are always better at lunch time). Most of the low drag race harnesses now come with a dedicated flight deck, which fits and works properly, but most of them give you nowhere to put the air chart. An air chart is by far the most reliable way of navigating, so why don't they all come with an effective map holder? It's easy to design and fit in production, but a real pain to fit retrospectively. Yes, most people are now using an electronic navigation gadget, but a proper map and a dry wipe marker still have their advantages (not least they don't need batteries!)

Back protection. Back protection is a very important aspect of harness function and again it's always a bit of a compromise. Where a back-protector system is properly designed and fitted, thicker is always better. The drawback to a really big system is that it hangs in the airflow and increases drag. So, you pay your money, you take your risk. With the best will in the world, we all might crash and need some help from a nice, big, energy-absorbing cushion. Beginners and occasional pilots should not even consider a harness with a small cushion. Experts who always land well and fly in a safe fashion might trade some safety for a bit more performance. The DHV / EN minimum standard for back protectors is tested by dropping a weighted pelvis dummy on rig and measuring for a maximum allowable acceleration pulse. This test is only a minimum standard and only takes into account a single, straight impact. Some systems on the market are clearly designed to pass the test in the lab, but no more. Bigger is always better.

Certification. The DHV certification covers minimum standards for several other areas that have proven to be safety critical. If a harness isn't certified we have to ask why not, just as with any glider?

Safety. Where students are involved there is no pressing need for performance, only safety, so it would be a brave or foolish to use in a school environment any harness, which is not fitted with any sort of back protective cushioning. Similarly, all responsible tandem pilots should provide themselves and their passengers with something approaching the best available in crash protection technology. It's important that the tandem pilot has a good cushion as well as the passenger (and the cushion isn't the passenger!) because there's every chance the passenger will be falling onto the pilot whose back protector will then have to absorb the energy of both parties. Ouch!

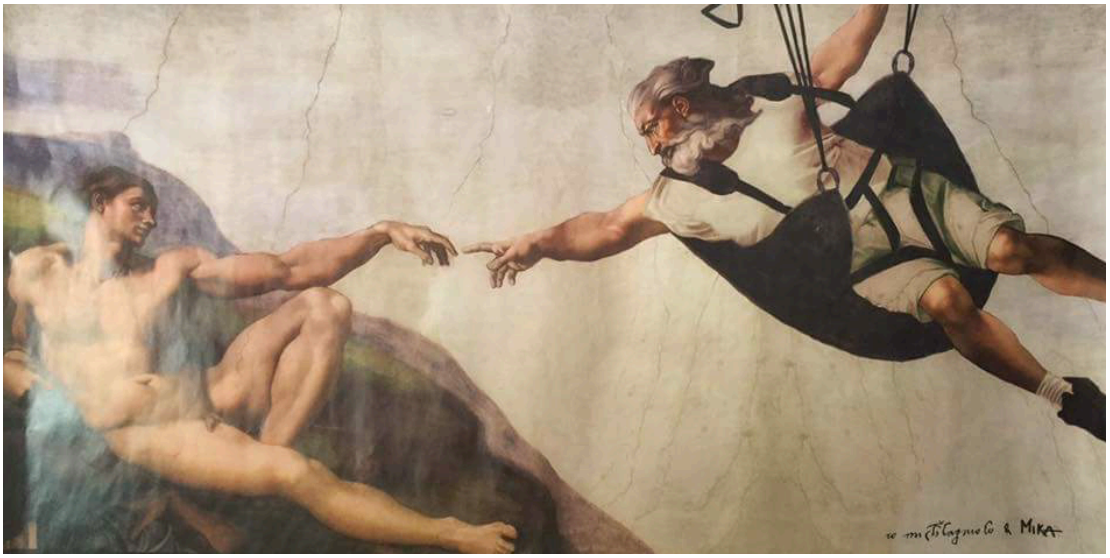
Parachute systems. Parachute systems vary greatly and we still get some new designs appearing that simply don't work properly. The handle / flaps / container system should be all neat and tidy, with no bits sticking out and no loose gaps to let dirt and debris in. Don't buy a harness without seeing your reserve inside it, not too tight, not too loose. The handle and the rest of it should be secure so it's not always getting knocked off, but light and easy to deploy when needed. Reserve bridles should be attached to the shoulders so the pilot is suspended in an upright PLF-style position ready for the inevitable heavy landing. Deployment handles should be arranged such that if they accidentally become loose and trailing in the wind, they are still accessible.

Some years' ago, it was identified that falling on a packed parachute (or water bottle) located in the small of the pilots back or behind the neck significantly increases the chance of paralysing spinal shear injury. Nowadays they go in the flight deck or under the front of the seat. Some designs of reserve system, notably under-seat tunnel housings, can have problems deploying under high G-forces (just when you usually need them) or can trap the parachute in the event of a bent or broken seat board.

Weight. Weight is always a priority and a compromise. The whole idea of our paragliders is to be a lightweight portable aircraft, so lighter is always better. In the pursuit of lightness though, you might compromise strength, durability, back protection, comfort or any of the design features discussed above and more. For most pilots a standard or slightly light harness is the thing for the job. Only those enjoying very long walk-ups and flying down in safe conditions, or mad athletes doing the X-Alps, should consider the very light gear designed for that particular job, which always have serious compromises in most or all of the other areas.

Conclusion. This article is a collection of my thoughts regarding the choice of a suitable harness. The choice can be daunting and the various considerations (and inevitable compromises required) a minefield.

In my opinion, with harnesses, like the rest of the flying machine, the best strategy is to keep it **suitable, sensible, and safe** so the pilot has utmost confidence in the equipment and can just get on with the business of flying the thing. Safe flying all!



5. Big (And Big Big) Ears

This article is written By Chris Grantham. Chris is a senior and highly rated instructor at Fly Above All Paragliding and is based in Santa Barbara, California. http://flyaboveall.com.

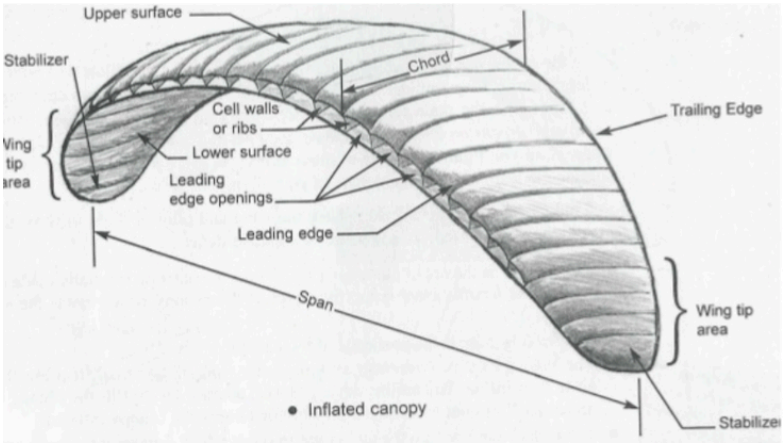
The Theory
Big Ears is one of a number of descent techniques available to pilots. It is undertaken when an abnormal and rapid descent is required. Others techniques include the spiral dive, the B-line stall, and the most fun of all, a reserve parachute deployment.

Big ears is a technique where the outside portions on both sides of the paraglider are intentionally collapsed by pulling down on the outermost A lines. Big-Big ears is a second derivative of the first (and often favored by French Instructors) where the next array of A lines is also pulled. The results are the same in that you descend but with big-big ears it all happens a little bit faster. In either event, the collapsing of the outer portion of the airfoil reduces the area of the wing actually flying while at the same time, drag is created from the collapsed segments of the glider.

Chris Grantham writes…
We've all been there. We've all done it. We've all wanted or needed to get down, preferably 5 minutes earlier, for any number of imaginable reasons and an equally vast number of unimaginable ones too. We have all, at some point in our time as pilots, thought "If I make my glider the size of a small mattress, I should pick up a few extra miles per hour and get down faster!" The logic works doesn't it? Smaller surface area, increased wing loading, speed increases with wing loading...just what we were looking for! We all remember that stuff from our training...Right? As an added bonus our gliders feel more stable in turbulence and we don't have to worry about the bumps! This is the part where you should hear a little voice that says… “wait a mo”.

To understand the problems, and why big-ears are so commonly used in inappropriate circumstances we have to understand the up-side to big-ears and, importantly, what happens while they're applied.

1. Increased descent rate without compromising speed? Check. We can see it on our instruments and it's quantifiable. This is, after all, the primary reason we use big-ears.
2. Increased wing loading? Check. Make your glider smaller and you're suspending the same weight from a smaller wing. We could measure it with the right instruments but we shouldn't need to.
3. Increased angle of attack? Check. Like an increase in wing loading, it's a by-product of big-ears. You can't have one without the other. Without increasing your horizontal speed, the angle at which the air is intersecting the Chord increases. It's debatable as to whether the angle increases to a dangerous level, but it does happen to some degree and could, in some conditions, be an important factor.



But how do we get ourselves into trouble with such a common, useful, and if used properly, safe manoeuvre? Unfortunately, it often goes all the way back to our training, where we learned that increasing the wing loading, however we choose to do it, increases all our speeds, makes our glider less susceptible to deflations, and that big-ears is one way of increasing our wing loading. It's an explanation that leaves out a myriad of variables. As eager students we instantly deduce that big-ears is the perfect method for getting into tight landing zones, dealing with turbulence that makes us uncomfortable, often on approach to a landing zone, or escaping “gale hanging” where our ground speed is zero or negative. We like to think of big-ears positively. "What can they do for me?" rather than "What does it cost me?"

The reality is that using big-ears to descend lower on a windy ridge may put us in a position with less wind and thus increase our ground speed, but no matter how much we wish they did, big-ears does not increase our airspeed. The extra drag from all that limp fabric flapping in the breeze conveniently negates any increase in speed we would have gained through higher wing loading. Some high-performance gliders may actually lose air-speed while in big-ears. Using speed-bar in conjunction with big-ears (big-ears first, then speed-bar) would clearly help our penetration and decrease our angle of attack, but using an appreciable amount of speed-bar close to the ground isn't recommended. I wouldn't want to give anyone the impression that descending below 500 feet AGL with speed-bar applied in turbulent conditions is a good idea. It's most definitely not.

What about getting into tight landing zones or dealing with turbulence? Tight landing zones are often tight because they're surrounded by trees, buildings, and an assortment of other turbulence inducing nuisances. By using big-ears to descend steeply into a landing zone you are gambling that the amount of turbulence behind the obstacles will be less than the turbulence required to disfigure your glider in its highly loaded state. Remember that you already have a higher angle of attack and while holding onto the outside A-lines it's utterly impossible to be a truly active pilot. [NB. For those unfamiliar with the term active piloting, it's what we do when we sense the glider through the brake toggles and harness, and translate those senses into properly timed inputs that keep the glider flying the way we want it to.] With big-ears installed you have no surge control or feedback from the glider through the brake lines not to mention diminished directional control. It's like driving a 4WD with both hands on the dashboard. One should always be an active pilot, but of all the times to be especially vigilant, flight close to the ground should rank high. To add to the complexity of landing, if you did suffer an unexpected glider disfigurement or surge while in big ears and you released the outside A-lines to apply brake, you're now dealing with high wing loading, an increased stall speed and a bunch of brake to stop the surge. Messy.

Very, very tiny big ears don't solve the problem! By using very small ears you gain none of the advantages and all of the disadvantages. Your descent rate won’t increase much, your hands are occupied with something other than active piloting, and you don't gain any real increase in stability through wing loading. You'd be better off yelling to someone on the ground to throw you a rope or some lead bricks.

Wouldn't the turbulence required to disfigure a glider in big-ears be greater than the turbulence required to disfigure a glider without big-ears? Not if you're being an active pilot. Be a pilot! Fly the glider and take command of your aircraft. Active piloting is much better at preventing glider disfigurement than passively hoping that big-ears will.

Remember, big-ears are a descent manoeuvre, not a deflation prevention manoeuvre. By using big-ears as a band-aid for poor planning, fear, lack of skill, or lack of knowledge, you are taking yourself out of the equation and placing your fate in the

hands of your environment. Planet earth is hard, and the atmosphere has no pity. If you have the altitude for it, and you no longer want to be involved in piloting your aircraft, come up with another descent manoeuvre. I'm a big fan of B-Line stalls and spirals. In a B-Line stall, your glider is no longer flying and is significantly less likely to require inputs from you. As with most manoeuvres, get training at a manoeuvres course before doing a B-line stall. Once you've descended to within 500-1000 feet of the ground, exit your descent manoeuvre of choice and actively pilot your glider to the ground. Obviously, any horizontal wind component will be a deciding factor since in a B-Line stall or spiral you will drift downwind at whatever rate the wind speed happens to be.

So why do we bother learning how to do big-ears? Is there any appropriate place to use them? Absolutely! We learn how to do them because they're a handy tool for escaping clouds or descending at a moderate speed in reasonably smooth air (your bump tolerance may vary). Big-ears is also the only descent method that doesn't compromise our progress toward a goal. You can install ears and still be zipping along at or at least near trim speed which make it a great method for escaping cloud suck or getting down to 1000ft AGL over a buoyant landing zone. When nearing cloud-base, and think you may be unable to make it to the edge before whiting out, toss in big-ears, pick a direction and make a quick exit. It's a band-aid for poor planning but is still better than entering a cloud. If the cloud suck is extremely strong, use a faster descent method, lose some altitude, then go back to big-ears.

Used in the right situations big-ears can be a safe and useful descent method. Used inappropriately it's a sloppy band-aid for poor planning, or fear, and is significantly riskier than actively piloting your glider.

6. Spring Safety Message for All Pilots. Top Twenty Tips To Keep You Safe.

Spring will soon be here ((hooray!!!) and for many of us it’s time to re-start our flying experience. Remember, at this time, the sun is still low in the horizon so pilots with their back to the sun may not be visible to you as you fly into the sun, more so with sunglasses on.

The easiest aircraft to fly is a hang glider or paraglider and, coincidentally, the hardest aircraft to fly is also hang glider or paraglider; it is free-flight-aviation in its purest and most unsophisticated form. Unfortunately, no two days are the same, and indeed, no two moments, in any flight, are the same either; strong turbulent air one moment where a strong input is required and a dramatically different moment the next where a very different input is required.

Here are a series of points for all pilots to consider as the Sussex Spring flying season looms upon us.

1. You are the pilot in command. Your safety is your responsibility. Advice you receive on the hill, could be wrong. Seek out, ask, and trust the experts.

2. You must learn to determine for yourself if conditions are safe fly.

3. If you have less than 30 hours make sure that you join the Red Ribbon Club. Unlike Fight Club you DO talk about it but you never really graduate.

4. Read the Site Guides, for all of our sites, and carefully review the flying rules. Make sure you understand all of the safe wind speeds and hazards for each site.

5. In our crowded Sussex sites you must understand all relevant AIR SPACE restrictions. These are easily found on air maps and also on the Club website.

6. Remember the ridge soaring right of way rules. However, NEVER EVER try to force your right of way. If a pilot isn't yielding then get out of the way early! It takes two pilots to cause a mid-air, don't let yourself be one of them.

7. Your skills are probably not current. Muscle memory is developed through hours of flying and is the only way for most of us to get there.

8. Try to feel the differences in the air in different parts of the lift band. It will have a definite shape with a front and back edge. Find out which is better and in which part it is easier to stay up.

9. Book yourself on a SIV.

10. Stay on a low B glider until you wear it out, begin with lots of hours on lots of days flying before noon.

11. Don't be ashamed in landing at the bottom (often).

12. Be aware of the danger zone! This is about 20 to 300 feet above the ground. In this zone 100% of your focus should be keeping the glider open, and maintaining normal flight on a straight heading either to land or to increase altitude to a safe reserve throwing altitude.

13. If you ever lose control at or below 500 feet immediately throw your reserve.

14. Even if you are above 500 feet, if your glider has entered a rotation and you cannot stop it or slow it down (even after a sharp pump and release on the outside brake) and you feel the G-forces increasing, throw your reserve immediately! You might only have seconds until you cannot! Make throwing your reserve something familiar that becomes present to your mind each flight.

15. Remember reserve visualization, handle touches, practiced motions, and (when on the ground) actually pulling it out ready to throw. Learning how to properly stow your packed reserve in the pocket of your harness and pull it out while on the ground is very important. Get it repacked often (annually).

16. Fly a glider appropriate to both your skill level and your flying hours.

17. Study the thermal cycles coming on to launch; only launch when the cycles are appropriate.

18 Remember OWT (obstacles, wind, and traffic). Fly straight, 100% focused on flying your glider until you have space below you. Find a thermal and try to get high. If you get below 500 feet don't make circles, either fly out to gain more altitude or land.

19. Between launch and 5000 feet AGL always have an LZ in sight. While flying XC, fly from windward face to windward face, never fly low over a lee.

20. Always approach your LZ with enough altitude to fully circle the LZ at least once before you need to begin your landing pattern.

7. Vacancy: The Clubs Needs A Social Secretary, A somebody (Or A Small Team Of Somebodies) To Organise Social Events. Could That Somebody Be You…?

The Social Secretary, which is a Committee position/ appointment, is responsible for performing a vital role in the Club: Namely to create and implement an effective social program for members.

Key duties:

- To arrange the Club's social events: Currently the Christmas Dinner/ awards evening and summer events (but other ideas/ events are possible).
- To co-opt (coerce) volunteers to assist in the organisation/ running of an event.
- Motivate Club members to attend Club events.

Skills:

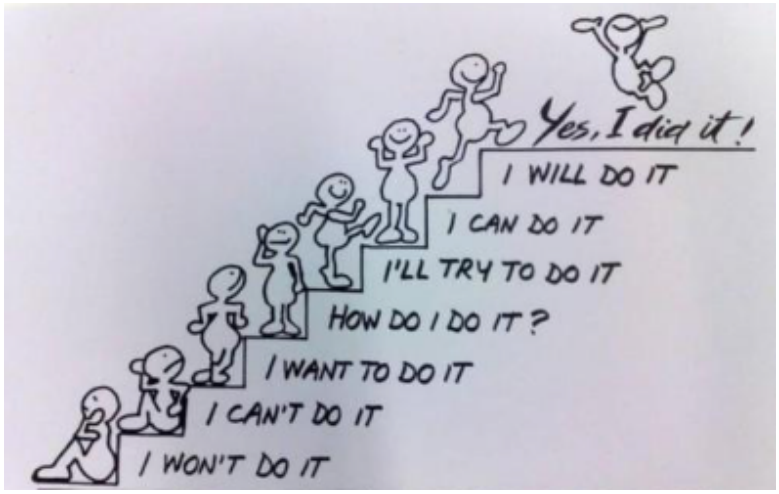
- Confident and effective communicator.
- Ability to organise and delegate duties.

Commitment to the Club:

- Will attend Committee meetings (in Glynde/ Firle area) as required.

The Club's commitment:

- The Committee recognises the importance of social events to the overall well-being of the Club will fully support the Social Secretary in this role.
- Will refund any expenses incurred in the performance of this role on behalf of the Club



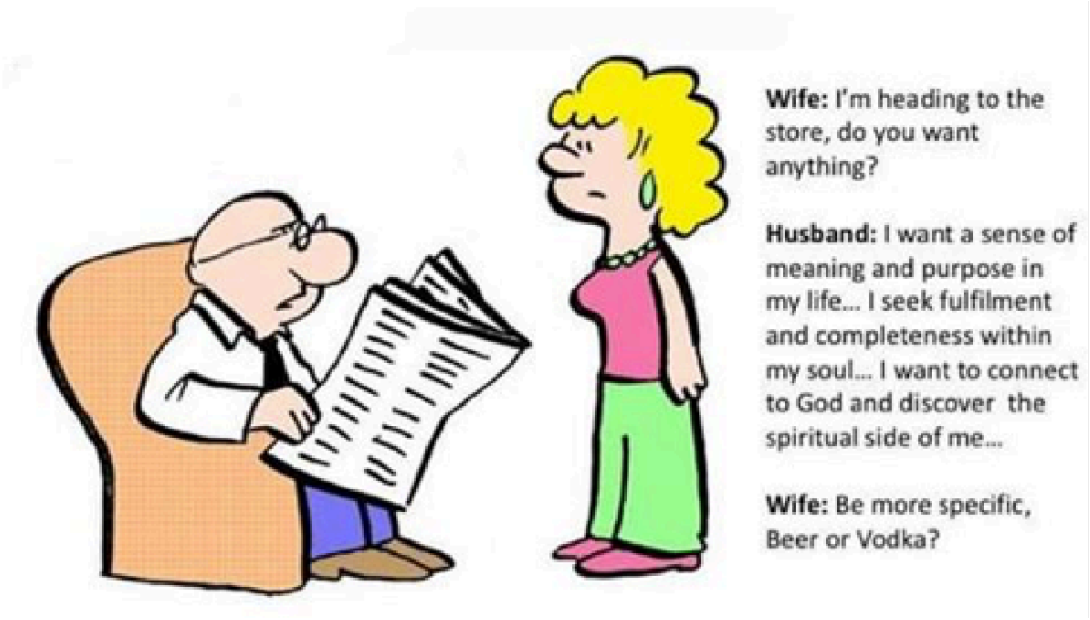
Could the Social Secretary 'somebody' be you?

8. Competitions & Events.

6 March 2020 - 7 March 2020		BHPA Trainers Conference	Lilleshall, Shropshire
7 March 2020 - 7 March 2020		BHPA Annual General Meeting	Lilleshall, Shropshire
24 March 2020 - 4 April 2020		World Cup Superfinal	Castelo, Brazil
29 March 2020 - 3 April 2020		British Paragliding Cup	Algodonales, Spain
1 May 2020 - 5 May 2020		British Open Series Round 1	South East Wales
9 May 2020 - 10 May 2020		Dragon Hike and Fly Race	Crickhowell, S. Wales

16 May 2020 - 17 May 2020		X-Lakes Challenge	Keswick, Cumbria
22 May 2020 - 26 May 2020		British Open Series Round 2	Yorkshire Dales
29 May 2020 - 30 May 2020		Buttermere Bash/Lakeland Charity Open	Buttermere, Cumbria
30 May 2020 - 6 June 2020		World Cup France	Passy, France
20 June 2020 - 21 June 2020		Lakes Charity Classic	Grasmere, Cumbria
20 June 2020 - 30 June 2020		British Paragliding Championships	Grand Bornand, France

9. Remember…



And… The ideal Partner.