

Camphill Expedition 2016

Edgar Brucke, St. Anne's College



Isabelle next to the Puchacz (and its awkwardly placed airbrake)

Starting on April 10th, eight OUGC members – Dina, Chris, Jonathan, Nikita, Robert, Isabelle, Arthur and I – started our trip northbound to the Peak District. With one week at the Camphill airfield, we were of course hoping for the best weather to be able to get some long flights! Having towed club glider FEF all the way up some rather dodgy roads, we finally arrived and got a rather unpleasant first impression: Cold! Very Cold! But this was quickly compensated by the amazing food and really cosy rooms.

Although the weather wasn't great the next morning for flying, there was a lot to learn, especially how to operate the tractors. With most of us not having driven tractors before or even not having driven any vehicles before, it was fun and a steep learning curve. There were also rudder locks, wing bangs, parachute bags, canopy cleaning regulations, electronic logging – and a lot more things that have never been seen at Bicester before.



Isabelle's very first driving lesson



Nick, imagining driving his dream car

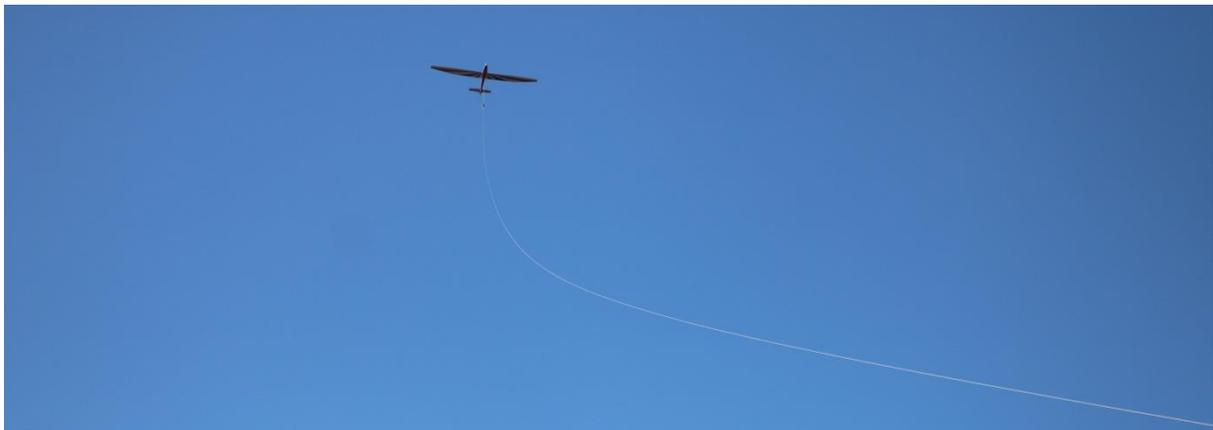


Arthur and Chris, definitely having way too much fun

Over the next few days the weather seemed to have improved a bit and we had a bit of lift, particularly along the ridge that the flat-as-a-pancake airfield at Bicester lacks, although the sun didn't show too much of its power. However, it did eventually start to do so towards the end of the week and it was actually enough to get most of us sunburned straightaway! The flights then changed from circuits and ridge-hugging into amazing long flights (and for me my very first thermal soaring flight!), allowing us to see the very beautiful peak district from above. Pre-solo pilots made a lot of progress in the last few days and Arthur went solo in the Puchacz- his first ever glass two-seater! Chris and Jonathan of course did not miss the opportunity to show off their soaring skills in FEF.



FEF whistling past



The other side of the cable was pretty interesting as well!

On the evenings there was always a lot to 'discuss' in the bar- gliding drama, arguments about how wings actually create lift, what happened during the day and how amazing the food was! In addition, we learnt that the simulator was a lot of fun until you got motion sick...

After an absolutely amazing Sunday with lots of flying, it was time to leave, taking home with us experience, stories and wonderful memories. Thank you to everyone for a wonderful time! Special thanks to the instructors that came with us – Nick, John, Jonathan, Tim – and of course, to Arthur for organising everything!