

Gliding Varsity Match 2019

By Francesca Gregory

Following the conclusion of Trinity term the long awaited annual varsity gliding competition took place, whereby OUGC had the pleasure of hosting CUGC at Bicester Gliding Centre (BGC). The Varsity competition traditionally constitutes a soaring competition, where both teams aim to gain as much height as possible through the use of thermals (rising air currents) across a 50 minute flight with penalty points for flights that exceed the allotted time.

However, the less than favourable weather across the 3 days led to a modification of the regular gliding varsity with the first day of the event being scrubbed altogether! In the 2019 match 5 OUGC pilots took on 6 CUGC pilots in a spot landing competition on day 2 in accordance with bad weather rules and a traditional soaring competition on day 3.

Despite poor conditions resulting in the scrub of the first day both teams were undeterred and set about the hangar completing maintenance work under the supervision of BGC inspectors. The teams conducted a 'post mortem' of a k13 wing with a cracked main spar and commenced the stripping down of the wing for parts.

The following day provided less than ideal conditions with a low cloud base delaying flying. However, in the later part of the morning CUGC were able to complete their site checks so that after a brief stop for lunch a spot landing competition was held during the afternoon. The competition involved accurately landing a k21 on a marker without the use of a wheel brake. An instructor in the rear seat invigilated and scores were calculated where each score = $3000/(x+30)$ where x was the distance in pigeon steps from the main wheel to the marker. The first day resulted in CUGC and OUGC bagging 86 and 67 points respectively, giving CUGC the lead.



The final day saw a reversion back to the traditional soaring competition as the weather improved. The conditions were marginally soarable for most of the day with climbs being capped at 2500ft. The OUGC team coped well with the conditions and after some scratching all of the team produced respectable flights. However, a stronger soaring window emerged in the early afternoon and OUGC pilots Chia-Man and Artur were successful in making the best of the conditions and produced two high scoring flights, strengthening OUGC's standing in the competition.



Scoring ensued after the hangar was packed. Scores were calculated using the results of the spot landing competition in tandem with the points for duration and height gain in the soaring competition with the help of some sophisticated maths. The results showed that CUGC's score was 990.475, whilst OUGC's score was 1009.524. OUGC had successfully reclaimed the title and the trophy! The very close competition was an excellent result for both teams and we look forward to meeting our friends from the 'other place' at Gransden next year, where we plan to defend the trophy!

