



FINAL GLIDE

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Edited by Paul Smith

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Photo: Paul Smith – Dave Bray just landed after his Diamond Distance flight

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Editorial

This is my first year editing Final Glide. I'd almost forgotten I volunteered when Cloudy stepped down after 12 years at the end of last year. Thankfully she handed over an editable version, so I had somewhere to start. Cloudy has done a brilliant job, silently working away in the background each year. How hard can it be?



I didn't realise trying to get people to write something about what they enjoy so much would be difficult. People will tell you I never stop talking about gliding and over the last decade or, so I have written quite a few pieces, even though I rarely write anything other than emails otherwise. I contacted a few people to offer some encouragement and was delighted when the pieces started to arrive. I hope you will find a few things here to entertain, inspire and inform you through the shortest days of the year. I'm looking forward to a New Year of excitement and have already planned a first gliding adventure to get the soaring season off to a start.



Photo: OGC WebCam 20th January 2017

OGC Club Ladders

Nick Hill

Over the years OGC pilots have always compared their flights during the season by entering them on the club ladder. The ladders for OGC and other UK clubs can be found on the UK gliding ladder website (www.bgaladder.co.uk).

Once a flight is entered the flights are assigned a score based on nationally agreed rules and the results displayed in a variety of local and nation ladder tables. As glider pilots from all the BGA clubs enter details of their flights on the ladders the web site provides a simple way to compare flights on the same day with both those in OGC and amongst the wider UK gliding community. Useful information can be obtained about tasks set, speeds and distances achieved and if people experienced similar problems in the same areas as others.

The primary national ladders for which the BGA awards annual trophies are:

- Open ladder: For any cross-country flight
- Weekend ladder: For cross-country flights made on weekends or Bank Holidays
- Junior ladder: For cross-country flights by pilots under the age of 26 at the start of the season (1st January)
- Vintage ladder (formally called the Wooden ladder): For gliders constructed primarily of wood and/or metal

OGC also has a local ladder that only contains flights made from Weston-on-the-Green to better reflect normal club flying. The club ladder trophy is awarded to the pilot that tops this ladder.

In all ladders only the six highest scoring flights are used to calculate the ladder score for each pilot.

Some notes on scoring and logger files

Full cross-country points plus a bonus are awarded for declared flights where the task is successfully completed as declared before take-off AND a logger file is posted on the web site.

It is therefore always a good idea to upload a logger trace of the flight to maximise the points that can be scored. If you don't have the logger trace to hand when entering your flight on the ladder it can be added later so no excuse to not enter the flight when it is fresh in your mind.

There are rules and regs covering the ladder and scoring system which are a bit detailed to cover here. However, if you are serious about trying to win national trophies then reading these will show there are various things you must conform too for a flight to be valid and that the design of the task you attempt can influence the potential points scored. For club ladders I am a bit more lenient and don't vet all flights for absolute conformance or delete flights for minor indiscretions.

If you really want to read all the rules they are at <https://www.bgaladder.co.uk/Rules.asp>

The results of various ladders for OGC members are presented in the following tables. The listings here show all flights including those without logger trace uploads.

OGC Open Ladder

Pilot	Flight 1	Flight 2	Flight 3	Flight 4	Flight 5	Flight 6	Total
Claudia Hill	2409	2384	2342	2216	2082	1718	13151
Dave Bray	3644	2301	1968	1608	1300	985	11806
Richard Hall	2663	2008	1914	1852	1516	1434	11387
Jonathan Hunt	2052	1761	1696	989	833	712	8043
Paul Smith	2109	1847	1270	973	814	700	7713
Andrew Butterfield	1943	1647	1477	996			6063
Gordon Craig	3255	1195	989				5439
Krzysztof Kreis	1101						1101
Cecilia Craig	624						624
Patrick Wallace	454						454
Mark Brooks	429						429



Photo: Claudia Hill

OGC Club Ladders (contd.)

Nick Hill

OGC Weekend Ladder

Pilot	Flight 1	Flight 2	Flight 3	Flight 4	Flight 5	Flight 6	Total
Richard Hall	2663	2008	1914	1852	1516	1434	11387
Claudia Hill	2384	2342	2216	1718	1436	1071	11167
Jonathan Hunt	2052	1761	1696	989	833	712	8043
Paul Smith	2109	1847	1270	973	814	700	7713
Dave Bray	3644	1608	1300	985			7537
Andrew Butterfield	1943	1647	1477	996			6063
Krzysztof Kries	1101						1101
Cecilia Craig	624						624
Patrick Wallace	454						454
Mark Brooks	429						429

OGC WOG only ladder

Pilot	Flight 1	Flight 2	Flight 3	Flight 4	Flight 5	Flight 6	Total
Richard Hall	2663	2008	1914	1852	1516	1434	11387
Jonathan Hunt	2052	1761	1696	989	833	712	8043
Paul Smith	2109	1847	1270	973	814	700	7713
Andrew Butterfield	1943	1647	1477	996			6063
Dave Bray	3644	1300	985				5929
Krzysztof Kries	1101						1101
Cecilia Craig	624						624
Patrick Wallace	454						454
Mark Brooks	429						429

OCG distance ladder

Pilot	Km	Flights	Avg Km
Richard Hall	2927.2	14	209.1
Claudia Hill	2499.4	14	178.5
Dave Bray	1953.7	7	279.1
Jonathan Hunt	1302.4	7	186.1
Paul Smith	1192.8	6	198.8
Andrew Butterfield	986.2	4	246.6
Gordon Craig	872.4	3	290.8
Cecilia Craig	108.0	1	108.0
Krzysztof Kreis	108.0	1	108.0
Patrick Wallace	108.0	1	108.0
Mark Brooks	108.0	1	108.0
Totals	12162.1	59	206.1

Distance ladder summaries for the last four years

Year	Pilots	Km	Flights	Av Km
2017	11	12162	59	206
2016	9	10993	48	229
2015	11	16625	71	234
2014	10	15841	72	220

The summaries of the previous year's shows that whilst the amount of cross country flying was up on 2016 it has not yet returned to the levels seen in 2015.

Height Ladder

The majority of height ladder points were from flights chasing diamonds flying from Denbigh. Andrew came out top as he had more flights!

Pilot	Flight Points
Andrew Butterfield	1395
Dave Bray	1330
Richard Hall	270

60 Years Gliding

Peter Brooks

The club has changed significantly since the early 60's. The club fleet in the early days consisted of a T21, an Olympia 2b, two Skylarks 2s and a Skylark 3. This was an 18 metre 3 piece wing as the current Skylark 4s.

In the beginning I learnt to fly as an Air Cadet. I did a 6 day course at White Waltham Gliding School near Maidenhead.

The course ran between 12-17th August 1957! The first few flights were in Daisy! In total I did 13 with flight times in minutes and seconds. My longest flight was 6 mins 20 seconds. There was no spin training or cable breaks, just circuit training. 41 dual flights and 3 solos to complete my A and B Licence. The Solo glider was a Cadet Mk 3 tandem 2-seater. Looking back as an ex-CFI I realise how very basic this training was.

When I joined The Oxford Club in March 1964. I had to be re-trained as the ATC standard was too basic. After a further 62 Launches I was deemed safe to go solo.

All my dual flying was done in the T21 as this was the only 2-seater! When it was used to send someone solo there was a box arrangement which was fastened in with the seat belts this had the necessary balast, to allow for my mediocre weight, I was about 120lbs. From the T21 the next solo aircraft was the Olympia 2b. Looking back in my logbook I had no soaring flights for 89 launches. Either I or the then Instructors were not as capable in those days.

The system at the Launch was very different, it was run by a member called Arthur Speechley. He was secretary for many years and ran the club his way! Before you could fly you had to purchase a winch ticket, from a box at the launch point. There were three types of tickets; a winch ticket, a soaring ticket and an aerotow ticket. I remember the winch ticket in those days was 1 shilling and threepence old money, in today's this would be around 7p.

We had two winches. One was an old balloon winch that was towed out by a Second World War II Bedford truck and had no drivers seat, just a wooden box to sit on! The other winch was a home made version with a British Leyland 3 litre petrol engine from an Austin Healey.

This winch had one auto pay on gear, the other drum was paid on manually with a length of scaffold pole. This had an eyelet on the end to feed the cable onto the drum evenly. Health and safety wasn't heard of!



Photo: Garry Cuthill



Photo: Garry Cuthill

Aerotows consisted of a briefing and off you went in the Olympia with no dual training at all.

The Main hangar at Weston was used partly for the parachuting and the North end was sectioned off for OGC. We had a second hut, on the now hard standing, called Building 88 which was the club house.

The Secretary ruled the club like a dictator, with no one prepared to stand up to him, he felt he was irreplaceable.

On the 9th March 1967 I was driving the winch launching the T21 and as it approached over the road to the west of the field, it went in to a near verticle decent on approach and never pulled out. Both pilots were killed outright. A trainee Instructor and a Pupil.

It was a tragic day for the Club. The inquest verdict was accidental death due to not recovering from a stall.

60 Years Gliding (contd.)

Peter Brooks



Photo: Garry Cuthill

The club bought a new K13, after trying a Blanik and deciding as a new glider design it would be more suitable. I first flew the 13 in December 1967. Of course after the T21 it was very easy to fly and soar.

One advantage we had was access to our own tug. This was used to give aerotows out of an airstrip in Middleton Stoney which could be reached with a winch launch from Weston. The other good reason for this setup was the valuable field landing exercise as the strip was 200ft higher than Weston. Aerotows out of the strip were tight as the field was only 600m long, with a clearance of about 2m over the upwind hedge.

I carried on through the club fleet flying Skylark 2's and the Skylark 3 F.

I emigrated to South Africa in January 1969 and joined the Baragwanath soaring club just outside Johannesburg. The airfield was a strip mainly used for private aircraft only 20ft or so wide, dirt based, you can imagine on aerotow nothing was visible until you reached about 50ft. They only had 2 gliders, a K8 and a K7. After only one check flight I was solo in the K8. The airfield was 5700ft above sea level. Most days you would get thermals to 11000ft above site so 16700ft with no oxygen of course and still flying in shorts. I used to walk to the gliding club as I could not afford a car! Some members used to pass me on the walk about 8 miles and never even offered a lift! This was the attitude in South Africa. Because I was a manual worker I was treated like a coloured worker. Eventually a kind club member gave me an old Ford Prefect so I was able to drive there. Due to the Apartheid situation I returned to the UK, to my old job and back to OGC in early 1970.

In August 1970 I did a assistant Instructor course at Lasham with Bill Scull. He was 6ft 3ins, I was 5ft 2ins! The course was seven days using motor falke and Blanik.

In November 1970 I bought a third share in a K6e no 75. Lots of good flights, Gold Height in Vinon France, already Gold in South Africa but no recording devices!

In December 1972 I completed my full-cat instructor training, again at Lasham. I became CFI in 1973. This was due to the current CFI resigning and no replacement willing to take over.

By now the club had purchased another K13 thanks to an interest free loan from our President Malcolm Laurie. The club also had a Skylark 4 after selling a Skylark 2. Many members had bought into syndicates. There were 3 Phoebe C's which was an early glass ship with a balsa sandwich construction. The down side were pathetic airbrakes much like the Standard Libelle.

We now had the benefit of a decent winch built by club members, much the same winch as today, it has been re-engined a few times but basically the same. I bought into a Phoebe syndicate, and eventually sold it and bought an Astir CS a mistake as it was only a £200 less than a ASW 19, but we were talked into the deal by the then secretary Peter Pratelli.

In 1985 The new hangar was opened by The Rt Honourable Douglas Hurd MP. The next changes of any significance was the MT extension and the Purchase of the DG505 to replace the written off Acro. this happened just before the "Juniors in 2000" This event was very controversial by some, but thanks to Cris Emson and others was very profitable for the club.



Photo: Garry Cuthill

Chairman's Corner

Paul Morrison

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times" said Charles Dickens in the opening to a Tale of Two Cities. Whilst clearly he was not thinking of OGC when he wrote these words, looking back, as is customary at this time of year when your thoughts tend to be reflective, it occurred to me that this is a good summary of my ten years as OGC's Chairman, particularly so as this has now drawn to an end.

Thinking back, I am struggling to recall how my predecessor Paul Rogers persuaded me that it's an easy job and nothing ever happens – when weeks after the AGM, the then Housing Minister Caroline Flint (boo, hiss!) announced the concept of 'Eco Towns' and that one of these was to be built on Weston-on-the-Green airfield and surrounding area. For those who were around at the time you may recall what a battle this became with endless meetings with the developers and protest groups etc. and how the locals who previously may have complained about the noise, decided that an airfield was not such a bad neighbour after all! For those who were not or are perhaps too young to remember these times, have a look on Wikipedia etc. and have a laugh at how ill-conceived the idea of the Eco-Town truly was in this location.

Thankfully Eco-Towns came and went and Weston-on-the-Green was saved, due in no small part to the change of Government, but it set the tone for what has become a constant fight to try to protect what we have and to try and second guess where the next threat will come from. Unfortunately General Aviation is in decline in the UK and therefore airfields which are now rather conveniently, if you believe accidentally, classed as 'brownfield' rather than 'Greenfield' for development purposes are a potential source of high value housing land. As OGC is unfortunately not in the favourable position of owning the freehold to its site and neither does this ever seem likely (the MOD were offered £200M for the site for housing by the Eco-Town developer!) we do need to remain constantly vigilant and this is where all members can play a part. If you hear any substantive rumours about local plans that you think the Club needs to know about, then please let the Committee know.

Of course land is not the only finite resource under pressure – the same is true of airspace and with the BGA now describing the WOTG / Bicester area as 'the cross-roads of gliding in the UK' we will need to ensure that when the combined Brize Norton / Oxford Airspace Change Proposal goes out to consultation early next year, our voices are heard. This is but the latest airspace challenge the sport is facing and coming after Farnborough, Exeter, Leeds etc. it's easy to become blasé, but we can't afford to be so please when asked to help, do so if you care about having the airspace we need to glide in.

I have offered to continue supporting the new Chairman and Committee with the airspace role, so this won't be the last you hear from me about this.



Photo: Paul Smith



Photo: Paul Smith

If you let it, this can all become rather tiring and draining and therefore I think it is very encouraging that we have several new members on the Committee this year and others that have returned to take on different roles to give it new life blood and vigour. But of course none of these members whom you have chosen to represent your interests in the management of your club are any different to yourself, they are trying to do this part time on top of all of life's usual demands and while still

Chairman's Corner (contd.)

Paul Morrison

enjoying the hobby that bought them here in the first place. Please therefore, when the pleas for help go out, stop and think if there is anything that you can do to help the club that you are not already doing, maybe you have specific skills that are of value? I was left in no doubt several years ago that welding was not my strong point, so I have tried instead to help the club by using the skills I have and maybe you can do the same?

Those at the AGM will have heard the Club's Treasure Jon set out the challenges we face not just next year but the years' after as we strive to keep control of our mostly fixed costs whilst trying to increase membership and associated income. The club needs people with the energy and enthusiasm to help with Marketing and pursuing funding opportunities, so if you think you can help devote some time to the club, please step forward as many hands do make light work and I know my successor and the rest of the Committee will appreciate a hand. The Committee is there to help direct and steer the ship, not do all the rowing and at this point I must say a big thanks to all those Club Officers who have supported me and the Committee over the years, largely unseen by the majority until they stop doing it. Thank you and again I'm sure they'd all appreciate a hand if offered.

When I accepted your vote of confidence ten years ago it was daunting, but my underlying intentions were simply to ensure that there was still a viable club to hand over to my successor at the end of 'my watch' and that if possible, it was in better shape to survive the challenges ahead at the end. Hopefully you'll agree that I've been largely successful as like certain famous Ocean Liners and Captains, no Chairman ever wants to be the last one that club has!

In looking back it's very easy to focus on the challenges we have and continue to face, or what Dickens may have meant as the 'worst of times', but we've had some 'best times' too and I have every confidence that more lie ahead under Martin Brown's excellent guiding hand. We have had the 75th Anniversary Party, we have had several great Fancy Dress Parties (who is not still scarred by the mental images of the then Vice Chairman & Chairman being introduced to a club visitor whilst dressed as St Trinian School Girls!) and we have flown countless visitors all of whom speak highly of OGC on Social Media etc.

So in closing, thanks for all your support over the years – I hope I have repaid the confidence you showed in me and let's keep making OGC a fun, friendly and safe place to fly. So as the Two Ronnies might have said, 'it's goodnight from me, and it's over to him'.

Your New Chairman

Martin Brown

I can't say I had any particular aspirations to become Chairman of OGC before I was asked to consider standing for the role. I served nearly 3 years on the Committee in the past when I was treasurer so I knew what the job entails. With Paul stepping aside after 10 years he leaves some pretty big shoes to fill but I am fortunate to have him as our Vice Chairman so all his knowledge and experience are easily to hand.

Anyone who knows me well will know that I have a strong sense of fair play. I didn't accept the role out of any delusion of power or influence, merely to ensure that the best interests of the club and its individual members are met as fairly as possible. I have a great team in my fellow Committee members, all of whom have the desire to see the club grow and prosper. However, I would like to emphasise that it is YOUR club! Dave has drawn up a list of non-executive roles that exist within the club and there's nearly enough for 1 each! This club simply couldn't operate without the voluntary contributions of its members. We urgently need to increase that membership and this is something everyone can help with. Another area we would like to concentrate on is fund-raising. If you have any ideas for how to go about this please let the committee know. If you're able to help further by actually pursuing those ideas then that would be particularly welcomed.

The year ahead will bring its challenges. There is the Airspace application from Kidlington and Brize Norton for a start. I know Paul has already done a lot of work on this and he will continue doing so as the club's Airspace Officer. We have our ageing training fleet to consider as well. Hopefully our new CASC status will open doors that were previously closed to us on that front but there is still a lot of work to do.



Photo: Paul Smith

Thank you for your confidence in electing me as your new Chairman. I look forward to the coming year.

Weston Diamond Distance

Dave Bray - My Diamond Distance "How I dun it" or perhaps more importantly, WHY?

The 2nd of July 2017 was a day which had long been forecast to be better than the average summer day. It was one which unusually I also happened to have off from work. This meant that I'd already brought my supplies and got the glider prepared for a cross country flight knowing I wanted to make the most of enjoying the day when it came.

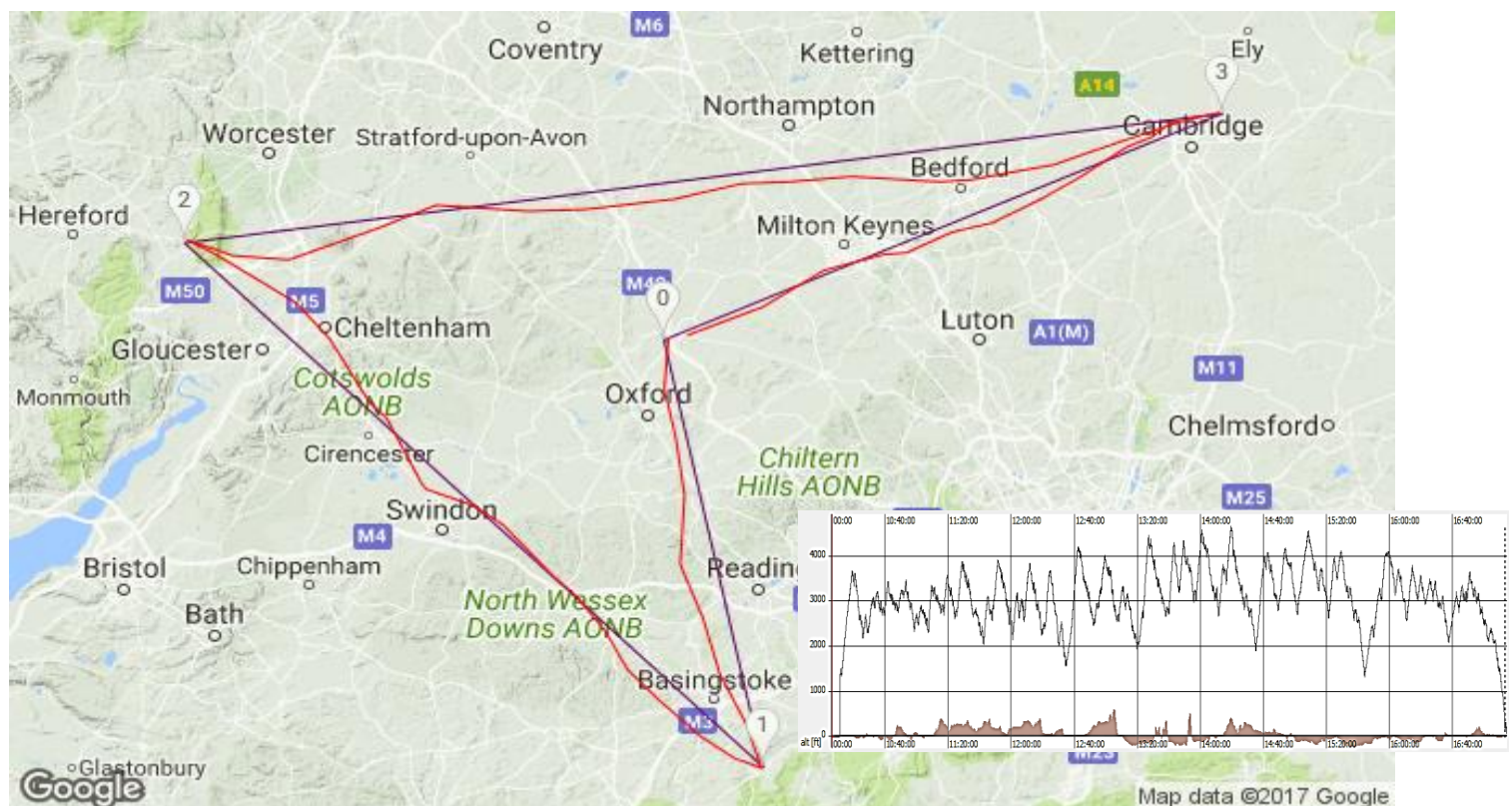
The wonders of the weather forecasting computers these days allows the websites to make much better predictions than even 5 years ago, so having set the alarm for an early wake up it is now possible to sit eating breakfast and mull over what to do with the day with increased confidence.

It was much quieter than I expected when I arrived at the club perhaps explained by having got there a bit earlier than I usually would – that extra time sorting everything out is far more important for getting things done BEFORE the thermals start popping!

Standard XC day tasks: Rig the glider, check the NOTAMS, transfer them onto the map to plan for the couple of narrow bits of airspace and it was off over to the launch point to get started.

Oddly, the flight itself was relatively unremarkable, taking off at 11:11 and pottering down toward the south coast in what were already reasonable conditions. The launch queue was still quite big on the ground at Lasham an hour later when I passed it on the way to Alton, then I turned into wind for the next leg. This leg contained the two of the three bits I'd singled out as "difficult" beforehand; traversing the airspace around South Cerney and transiting past the airfield at Gloucester. The plan for each was the same – get near the area at the same time as a big thermal appeared, get high and glide past each to another big obvious thermal.

My luck held and before I knew it I'd waved at Ledbury and was heading eastbound on my way to Cambridge. The clouds were forming in the task area but to the north of it, nothing. The weather man was getting it right! I arrived at Cambridge around 16:30 and turned around for home. I'd been having a blast so far, lovely views of the south coast, into Wales, the thermals all working as they were meant to, with good solid cores. However, this is where the day started to get a bit less enjoyable. My electric vario had a five minute period where it stopped making any noise! I can only describe it as an electrical gremlin hissy fit as it hadn't happened before and hasn't happened since. When this happened, I was at the final "difficult" place, the busy sky around Cambridge Airport, and worse, I was at a point of really needing to find a climb in what had become a sky with much fewer clouds! The result was the low point of my flight, marked at 15:30GMT on the Height trace.



The task and flown route for the Diamond Distance flight of 513km. The barograph trace – not many low points but from 15:30z the nicely spaced "saw tooth" look changes. A great learning point to take away for next time.

Weston Diamond Distance (contd.)

Dave Bray

I did find a climb though and nearing the top, the reassuring sound of the vario came back again as suddenly as it had stopped. Looking ahead I was seeing fewer and fewer clouds. That, combined with my first struggle of the day, really caused me some issues. I found myself sitting in very weak climbs, moving on, finding an ok one, then only leaving when they'd dropped to nothing, then taking another ok-ish climb before repeating the whole thing again. Looking back it still amazes me how much effort I had to go to convince myself that the day hadn't "died" and that I had to keep the discipline from earlier in the day of only accepting good climbs if I ever wanted to make it home. Once I'd managed this purely physiological challenge, the flight back to Weston was straight forward and I landed a little over 7 hours after I took off. Derigged and had a beer with those souls kind enough to still be there late on a Sunday night.

Reflecting upon my seven hour endurance test, I realised that even if I include my "other" flying, I've never actually flown a flight of that length of time. I started to ask myself why I'd wanted to do it in the first place? What reasons possessed me to attempt a 500km flight in a 49 year old glider and to sit there for 7 hours in what is quite a narrow cockpit!? It's not because someone told me I had to, it's not because it's straight forward to fly 500km, it's not because I haven't seen those parts of the world before and it's hopefully not due to some sort of mental complex!

The answer is of course fairly straight forward – I like achievement and memories. I hope I'll do many more cross country flights but like with so many of my gliding "firsts" I remember those far more readily than the second or third time I did them. Travelling to places and seeing them from a totally different angle without the noise of an engine is something which puts us all in a very unique position. I enjoy setting goals and attempting them, challenging myself and the sense of achievement in finding solutions to successfully complete them.

Here lies the main reason I still turn up at the gliding club 17 years after I first took my first trial lesson with John Hanlon (you must have left an impression). These opportunities to try something new and expand ones horizon, no flight is ever really the same.

So, wherever your gliding is taking you, hopefully you'll find the same support I've always had here, to keep stepping on to discover new wonders each time. There really are no barriers to what you can see and achieve – I look forward to congratulating you with whatever your next achievement is!



Photo: Paul Smith



Photo: Liisi Laks – Sunshine...



Photo: Unknown (Facebook) – ...and Showers!

Where Do the BBQ Profits Go?

Richie Hale

A few years ago looking around the club it became obvious even to the casual observer that things had become tired and in a state of disrepair, so over the last three or four years we have tried to improve the look and functionality of our cherished clubhouse. We started by giving it a fresh new look by painting the walls and ceiling which included painting over the much revered and almost iconic mural of a soaring K13. In addition to this, new pictures for the walls, new chairs, installation of smoke alarms and "modernising" the TV corner, which now also has the Notam computer and Log. These have all gone to make it a more pleasant place to be.

The Kitchen was the biggest task undertaken involving painting everything, re-tiling, replacing the flooring and removing old and defunct plumbing all of which took the best part of a winter of weekends, but since then the kitchen has looked cleaner and brighter and is a much more hygienic area in which to prepare your food. All the electrical white goods have been/are being replaced with more efficient and energy saving devices.



Photo: Jon Hunt

The latest improvement will go unnoticed to some of you as we have now had a good tidy up of the catering store, installed some proper storage racks, removed the old sink and installed a new worktop. For those not in the know this area was originally a photographic darkroom as back in the pre digital camera and GPS logger days cross country tasks had to be verified by photos of the turning points taken on film which were then developed in house – haven't we got it easy nowadays!

All the above has been funded by profits gained from the tuckshop and Friday night BBQ's; another good reason to support the Friday evening flying. Future projects include renovating the shower and gents toilet and if you see anything else that is in need of some TLC please let it be known. All of this work cannot be done without members mucking in so if you feel you can help out do speak up and just because the weather or the military stops us flying doesn't mean it's a waste of time going to the club, there is always stuff that needs doing.

One final thing, the efforts members have put in to improve the facilities can easily be undone if we don't all do our bit to keep things clean and tidy up together.



Photo: Paul Smith

12 Months On

Liisi Laks

I can hardly believe that I have now been instructing for the past 12 months. It still feels like it was just yesterday when I was learning all the different exercises and the patter to go with it. It took me around 11 months to learn it all and I couldn't have done it without the support and coaching of Neil, Cloudy and our other wonderful instructors.

My "D" module took place at The Gliding Centre and it was a 7 day course. I was very lucky to have had Stephen Male and Simon Adlard as the regional examiners during my course. They were both absolutely fantastic and such an asset to the BGA. If you ever decide to become an instructor yourself I recommend that you sign up with a course run by both of them. I was also very fortunate that Jon Hunt was on the same course with me – we learned a lot from each other. It was so nice to have somebody there with you who knows you and is going through the same thing. Thank you Jon for your support. I have to admit that it was a very difficult week and there were moments when I thought I really can't do it and I'd just walk away from it. However, I am so glad I didn't!



The main reason I decided to become an instructor was to improve my own flying skills. I can definitely say that this has helped enormously and I am now much happier to fly in different weather conditions, different gliders and also from different airfields. It has all been worth the pain and long hours of studying. Also, it is so nice to be able to fly with your friends and family members and pass on knowledge to others.

While instructing I have had some interesting, good, fun and OMG moments. I think it summarises every instructor's standard duty day. Students usually put themselves under so much pressure that we as instructors don't have to come up with much in order

to test how the student copes and flies under stress. We know that it's not easy to learn all the different aspects of flying and we don't expect you to get it all right the first time. That's why we are there to give you a change to practice it as much as you need so you can learn and improve your flying skills. We have all been there ourselves and if you think that we have stopped learning because we are now instructors you could not be further from the truth. Hopefully, every flight teaches something new to the student as well as the instructor.

I can still remember my first duty day. After 5 flights I was so tired it felt like I had just done 100 instructing flights back to back. As an instructor you are always following through on the controls (yes, even when you are flying with another solo pilot), making sure that the airspace around you is and will remain free, monitor what the student is doing (or not doing) and provide support and guidance where you can. As you can see a lot is going on and also as an instructor you have to think about your plan A and plan B when things don't always turn out as expected.

It's such a wonderful feeling when you have briefed and shown a student an exercise and then when they try it out for themselves they get it right. So, I'm sorry when I sometimes get carried away and give you a big hug after a flight. It's just so exciting to see you progressing. The golden saying that "more experienced the student is the more ways they find to catch you out on things" is also so true. I have definitely found this out for myself.

As students if you don't understand something please don't pretend that you do. Please come and talk to us. We are more than happy to explain it to you again in a different way, give you a mini briefing in the briefing room and give you hints and tips. We are here for you and keen for you to progress to a solo pilot. When you don't get it right at first don't worry about it and try not to beat yourself up about it. We all have good days and bad days and hopefully you will get it right next time.

I think gliding is a fantastic hobby to have and I wish more people would do it. It's a sport where you are always learning and improving and that brings its own enjoyment. Gliding gives you whatever you want to get out of it, be it cross country flying, aerobatics, instructing or just flying around your home gliding club. What a fantastic way to spend your weekends!



Adding a Power Rating

Barry Taylor

Before starting to learn, it is a good idea to decide what type of aircraft you intend to fly. There's little point wasting money getting a licence for a Group A aircraft (such as the ubiquitous Cessna 152, Piper Cherokee etc) if you only intend to fly motor gliders or microlights.

Forget any idea that microlights are purely powered hang gliders. Although basic weight-shift microlights remain popular, many have full three-axis controls and most of the comforts of a Group A aircraft. To qualify as a microlight, the Maximum Take-Off Weight (MTOW) must not exceed 450kg if it is a two-seat land plane. Other microlight configurations have different MTOWs.

There are two further specific weight classes above the microlight. The Light Sport Aircraft (LSA) category which has a MTOW of 600kg and the Very Light Aircraft (VLA) category which has a MTOW of 750kg. At the other end of the scale the Single Seat Deregulated (SSDR) category was introduced in 2007 for aircraft having a MTOW of 115kg. The term 'deregulated' refers to the maintenance; a licence is still required to fly it. In 2014 this privilege was extended to cover all fixed wing single seat microlights.



Photo: Paul Morrison

There are currently four types of non-commercial licence which can be used to fly fixed wing powered aircraft in the UK. These are the Private Pilot's Licence (PPL), The Light Aircraft Pilot's Licence (LAPL), National Private Pilot's Licence (Microlights) (NPPL(M)) and National Private Pilot's Licence (Simple Single Engine Aeroplanes) (NPPL(SSEA)). The PPL and LAPL are EASA licences and are valid throughout Europe. The NPPLs are CAA licences.

For the PPL, 45 hours of flight instruction are required, five of which may be completed in an approved flight simulator. The flight instruction must include 25 hours dual and 10 solo, including at least five hours of solo cross-country flight time and one cross country flight of at least 270 km which includes full stop landings at two different aerodromes. The PPL can be 'built on' with extra ratings and privileges. Holders of a gliding licence can get 10% of their P1 gliding hours credited to reduce the minimum hours requirement of a PPL up to a maximum discount of 10 hours.

The LAPL was introduced in 2012 to create a simplified licence with a shorter training course and less onerous medical standards. It is limited to aeroplanes with a MTOW of two tonnes and no more than three passengers. It is not possible to add extra ratings and privileges, but a LAPL(A) can be upgraded to a PPL(A) with additional training. For a LAPL at least 30 hours of flight instruction on aeroplanes or Touring Motor Gliders (TMGs), is required including at least 15 hours of dual instruction in the class of aircraft in which you will be taking your skill test - either a single-engine piston (SEP) aeroplane or TMG - and six hours of supervised solo flight time, including at least three hours of solo cross-country flying and at least one cross country flight of a minimum of 150 km with a landing at a different aerodrome.

Prior flying experience may be credited towards the LAPL flight instruction requirements listed above. The amount of credit is decided by the Training Organization, using a pre-entry flight test. The credit cannot exceed the total flight time as Pilot in Command (PIC), or 50% of the flying training hours required, and excludes the supervised solo requirements.

If you already have a LAPL(S) sailplane licence, it can be extended to cover a TMG. A minimum of six hours of flight instruction on a TMG is required, including four hours dual and a solo cross-country flight of at least 150km which includes a landing at a different aerodrome. A skill test will also be required, during which you will need to demonstrate an adequate knowledge of Principles of flight, Operational Procedures, Flight Performance and Planning, Aircraft General Knowledge and Navigation.

The requirements to convert a LAPL(S) with a TMG endorsement to a LAPL(A) or PPL are substantially less than those for someone starting from scratch, once you have completed 21 hours or 24 hours respectively. This can provide a cost-effective route to PPL for glider pilots.

To fly either a weight shift microlight, three-axis microlight or SSDR an NPPL(M) is required. The NPPL(SSEA) (Simple Single Engine Aeroplane) can now only be used to fly a small number of vintage light aircraft along with 'permit to fly' and kit-built aircraft. Unless you wish to be limited to these aircraft, the LAPL(A) or PPL(A) would be more suitable. None of these licences allow the holder to fly for financial gain, although cost sharing is permitted as long as the cost is split evenly.

Adding a Power Rating (contd.)

Barry Taylor

For the PPL, a Class 1 or Class 2 medical must be obtained. For the LAPL it can be a Class 1, Class 2 or the LAPL medical. You'll need to find an Authorized Medical Examiner (AME) for this. A list is published on the CAA web site.

In addition to the flying, there is a requirement to obtain a Radio Licence, officially known as a Flight Radio Telephony Operators Licence (FRTOL), although some glider pilots may already have this. If English is not your native language an English language proficiency test will also be required. There are eight further exams, all of which are multiple choice. The subjects are Air Law, Operational Procedures, Human Performance and Limitations, Meteorology, Flight Performance and Planning, Aircraft General Knowledge, Principles of Flight and Navigation. A skill test will be required when all the flying requirements have been completed.

It is likely that a glider pilot of Silver C standard would need no more than the required minimum hours, although student pilots with no previous experience generally require more. There are some aspects of power flying where gliding experience can be particularly useful, such as the Power Fail Landing (PFL) where the instructor simulates a power failure at height and an approach must be made into a suitable field. There's no need to actually land; at 500 feet, the power is re-applied. Similarly, the glider pilot will probably find it easier to judge a glide approach into an airfield than someone from a non-gliding background. Conversely, there are some exercises which a glider pilot may find difficult, such as the flapless approach, which is flown at quite a low angle, and at a higher speed than normal. Maintaining a constant altitude can also be tricky for those of us who have not been used to doing it!

The LAPL and PPL are non-expiring lifetime licences but there are biennial or annual requirements which must be maintained for the licences to remain valid. This is known as recency. For the LAPL at least 12 hours flight time as PIC, including 12 take-offs and landings; and refresher training of at least one hour with an instructor must be completed in the preceding 24 months. LAPLs have recency requirements as it is not possible to add class ratings to them. For the PPL, it's the class ratings which have to be regularly revalidated and the requirements vary depending on which ratings are held. To revalidate SSEA & TMG ratings on a PPL, at least 12 hours of flight time in the relevant class must be completed, including six hours as PIC, 12 take-offs and landings and a one-hour refresher with an instructor, all within the 12 months preceding the expiry date of the rating,

In addition to the recency requirement, it is good practice to remain current. If you are hiring an aircraft from a training organization, they will need you to have flown within their stipulated currency period. This period will vary depending on the organization and the level of experience of the renter. If you own or have a share in an aircraft, there is unlikely to be an official currency period unless stipulated by the insurer. However, to carry passengers it is necessary to have completed three take-offs and landings in the preceding 90 days.

If further clarification is required on any of the issues mentioned, the official and definitive source for information is CAP804 which can be downloaded from the CAA website, although it might be better to read it on-line as its 930 pages long!



Photo: Jon Christensen

CFI's Notes

Neil Swinton

Firstly many thanks for flying safely again this year. Although the weather has not been the best ever I do hope you made the most of the soaring weather.

Circuits

As instructors we see a wide variety of circuits being flown. Some good, some not-so. Of course, a circuit is very much a judgement skill, so one person's good circuit can be another's poor one. There is no one 'right' circuit for any given day, but there are certainly some that are worse than others! The BGA instructor manual (see below) has a whole chapter about circuits, and we certainly don't have the space, or energy, to revisit all that. You will hear many arguments why you should fly a good circuit. Examples such as allowing you to position the final turn, giving a good 'traffic flow', etc. However I always think that a good circuit just makes the whole end of flight that much easier, it is more controlled, measured and safe.

There are some key points in flying a good, rather than bad, circuit:

- 1) Make a decision to land, and execute a pre-landing briefing/check. See last year's Final Glide for my thoughts on those.
- 2) Enter the High Key area at a sensible height.
- 3) Fly a downwind leg, at cruising speed, an appropriate distance 'out', and parallel to the winch run.
- 4) In the Low Key Area increase speed to your approach speed.
- 5) Make a positive turn to fly a diagonal leg at an angle and position that will give you space for a base leg.
- 6) Maintain a very good lookout, and keep the speed constant
- 7) Fly the base leg at 90 degrees to the winch line. Ignore other features such as airfield boundaries.
- 8) Start your final turn in time to prevent you reaching and crossing the centre line.
- 9) Your approach should be flown parallel to the winch run.

I would recommend that you watch other people's flying when on the airfield – what do you think of their circuits? Can you spot the distinct 'legs' in the circuit or is it just one large oval shaped one? Do the people who end up with poor final approaches – often with an overshoot – execute a neat circuit or a wandering oval one?

EASA Pilots Licences

This has not gone away. You can expect to need an EASA pilots licence from 2020. For most people this will be a simple exercise of sending in your gliding certificate, a medical form and some money and getting an EASA licence in exchange. The BGA will be assisting everyone in doing this, so it will not be as daunting as first seems.



Photo: Liisi Laks



Instructors' Manual

Did you know there is an Instructors' Manual? This details all the things that need to be taught to student pilots, and is the instructors' primary reference manual. For many years the manual only existed as paper copies, and had to be bought from the BGA. It was intended mainly for instructors to use, but there was nothing to prevent other pilots from buying a copy, although few did. This has now changed, and the Instructors' Manual is now available on-line where it can be viewed or download or even printed.

I would encourage everyone to take a look at this document, whether you are a student pilot or an instructor. There is a vast amount of information held in this one place which deserves a wider audience. Students can use it to understand what the instructor was trying to teach them. Instructors can use it to remind themselves of what they should be trying to teach in the first place.

You can find it on the BGA web site 'www.gliding.co.uk'. Follow the 'Pilots and Clubs' Menu, then 'Library Search' and enter 'Instructor manual' as the search phrase. Or click the image to the left.

CFI's Notes (contd.)

Neil Swinton

Mutual Flying Rating

A change introduced this year is to add a 'mutual flying' rating, sometimes known at other clubs as a 'P1' rating. This rating is available to Silver C pilots, and allows the pilot to fly with other club members in the K13's. As to be expected, there are a lot of finicky rules, the P1 pilot must be current, have CFI approval, must fly from the front seat, P2 must be solo, rules like that. There is also a short course that must be sat through prior to permission being granted. If you would like more info please contact me and I can talk you through the requirements. John Mart has already achieved this rating, and I see that he is busy wearing out the K13's with his flying with P2's on board...



Safety

We have had a couple of worrying incidents this year involving the use of the Mitzi when towing out cables. This can most likely be put down to insufficient training so please expect a refresher programme on this, and other key airfield duties, to be produced and implemented next year. We did make a start on this a few years ago, so this will be reworked and reintroduced.

Glider Fleet

As the K13's continue to age, the search for a replacement continues. In the summer a few of us went to Lasham to fly the DG1001 Club Neo, which is the current DG training aircraft. The impression we got of the aircraft was good, so (given the available funds) the choice would still be between the Perkoz and the DG1001, with very little to choose between them. Each has their own strengths and weaknesses, and the choice will be a very difficult one. However the funding of the aircraft may give us a massive problem which will require full club involvement to satisfactorily resolve.

New Instructors

We are delighted to welcome Geoff to our instructing team who has joined us from Bicester. Our home grown instructors Jon and Liisi have finally been fully qualified now with the completion course last month. In addition we are delighted to have Paula, Alex and Lukasz join the team as BI's. Congratulations to all on achieving these ratings.



Photo: Peter Brooks – Sunset & Moon

Becoming a Backseat Driver

Alex Rose

Earlier in the year Neil asked myself and Paula Hastings whether we'd like to train as Basic Instructors – the BI rating allows the teaching of trial lessons, something I've wanted to do since I first started flying.

Learning to instruct starts with the famous "patter" that all instructors can recite from memory, "scan the field of view, pausing from time to time, looking both above and below the horizon, as well as on it...." Somehow over the next few months I had to commit this to memory, and so armed with my notes set about learning the trial lesson. This included, but wasn't limited to, giving myself mock lessons in the Skylark on the way home from soaring flights, listening to Barry Taylor on CD in the car, and sitting in the hangar on a scrub day with Cecilia, in a K13, taking turns as student and pupil! A surreal experience after Cecilia gave me my first trial flight several years before.

The next stage was to sharpen up our flying, and so we took to the skies with a variety of instructors playing Bloggs the pupil, which they seemed to enjoy! Cable breaks, spins, spiral dives and more followed, plus a few shortened circuits. Paula and I took turns flying with each other, the first time either of us had flown with somebody who wasn't an OGC instructor and so our first experience of "real" instructing.

Eventually the weekend of our course arrived, and we met Julian Bane from Windrushers GC early on the Saturday morning to get going. With the forecast looking less than perfect we decided to get as much flying done as possible on the Saturday, and so both of us went through the exerciess, without the luxury of an altimeter of course! The next day as expected the weather was far from ideal, so we postponed the briefings with the aim of getting all our flying done, both of us needed to complete some mock trial lessons before we could be signed off as having completed the course. We met a few different "students", and took them flying. I flew with a young woman who was very nervous, but well over 6ft, and had a suspiciously deep voice. Paula then flew with "Kim", who was visiting nearby Bicester Village. Despite our protests that he shouldn't do the accent...

I'm pleased to announce all the hard work from the other instructors training us paid off and we both passed the course and our acceptance checks. I've thoroughly enjoyed the course and the trial lessons I've flown so far – a big thankyou to Neil and the rest of the team for putting us forward and getting us through.



Photo: Jon Christensen



Photo: Paul Smith – Barry Gleeson enjoying some winter flying



Photo: Paul Smith – Drone over our site at sunset

Impressions from the 9th Women's Worlds in Zbraslavice

Claudia Hill

This year I was lucky enough to fly in my second Women's World Gliding Championship as a member of the British team, and with Nick as my super crew – the team comprised Ayala Truelove, Liz Sparrow and me, all three in the Club Class, plus our team captain Melissa Andersson, media manager Alison Randle and assorted crew. Unfortunately we didn't have any pilots in the Standard or 18-metre class.

But what a comp it was! We had 12 contest days and 4 practice days. And very varied conditions. On one day we would creep along in blue thermals up to a measly 3,200 ft above airfield height, the next day we had to break off our 9 kt climb because we were getting close to the ceiling of FL95.

In the beginning we flew as a team of three, which turned out not to be working all that well. In hindsight I think we might all have delegated some of the decision-making and responsibility to each other or spent too much time trying to agree on a plan, which slowed us down – especially in AATs. In straight racing tasks, where we were all heading to the same point, it wasn't quite so detrimental.

So after a few days we started flying as a more loosely connected team, which worked better – the stress of trying to get together and stay together in the start sector can be surprisingly distracting, and flying by myself was quite liberating!

I never look at results during a competition because there's absolutely nothing I can do about yesterday's flight, and if I worry about either keeping a good placing or making up for a less successful flight I get distracted and forget about flying to the best of my ability – and enjoying myself. So instead every morning I looked forward to a new day, a new task, a fun flight in a lovely glider, and I had faith in the organising team whose weather forecasts and tasks were spot on!

Ah yes, the organisation. They were brilliant. This was such a well organised comp, and it was done with a great sense of humour. And I can't remember ever having been to a gliding site with such great facilities. Plenty of showers and toilets, all modern, all working, all cleaned regularly! A pool! A restaurant with food and drink at extremely low prices! And thoughtful little touches like two fridges in the briefing marquee, one with free bottles of chilled water for the pilots, the other with fresh fruit. Zbraslavice is a large-ish grass airfield, and the launching operation went very smoothly with 8 tugs. (Ok, 7-and-a-bit, as one of the Zlins was a tad underpowered and kept giving its gliders a scenic tour of the surrounding countryside).

This was the first time the British Team had a dedicated media manager, which took a lot of the pressure off the pilots because we didn't have to worry about writing blog posts, and it enabled the folks at home to keep up with what was happening in Zbraslavice. Since coming back to the UK I've had lots of positive feedback on the media coverage, so a big thank you should go to Alison Randle who populated the team website, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube with real-time and post-edited content, and to Mel Andersson, who wasn't just our team captain, but also did live videos of the grid launches and of post-landing ice-cream deliveries. We also made our crews work all day by getting them to provide us with live weather updates and OGN tracking info, which were quite useful especially on AAT days. And then of course we had our very own Swedish chef and masseur Conny, whose services were much appreciated – especially after I pulled a muscle in my back when derigging the glider.

It's great when as a pilot you can fully concentrate on your flying – and the ground team the three of us had in Zbraslavice made this very easy by taking care of all non-flying stuff for us.



Photo: Alison Randle



Photo: Alison Randle

I felt the standard in the Club Class this year was quite a bit higher than the last time I took part (2013 in Issoudun, France). I found myself flying and competing with some top pilots, and my 9th place (plus one day win and one second place – beaten on that day on handicap by an incredibly light Libelle) in this comp feels like a bigger achievement than my 7th place in Issoudun.

Impressions from the 9th Women's Worlds (contd.)

Claudia Hill

Finally, I can thoroughly recommend the Czech Republic both for a flying and for a non-flying holiday. It's a breathtakingly pretty part of the world and people were very friendly.

And of course, a huge thank you to Claudia and Mike Pettican and Nick Kelly for lending me their LS1-f for this competition!



Photo: Alison Randle

So what were the highlights?

- Gaining about 2000 ft in height on the last 10-20 km to and from the turning point by zooming along a cloud street
- Watching Liz pull up into a 10 kt climb ahead and hearing her giggle on the radio
- Landing out (together with four others, on a mass land-out day) on a little airstrip 25 km from Zbraslavice and being greeted by the owner Miloš with offers of freshly brewed coffee and draught beer
- My first ever day win in any comp!
- Flying over a beautiful country
- Being in schnitzel heaven for three weeks



Photo: Alison Randle



Photo: Claudia Hill
Alison Randle Pictured



Photo: Claudia Hill

Safety & Incident Review 2017

Neil Swinton

This is the first year we have had a fully operational safety reporting system running at OGC, and it has been rewarding to see that people have been filling in reports on a variety of subjects.

In total, we have had 18 incidents reported to the system this year:

Date	Description	Risk Level
Nov 2016	Launch started with tail dolly on JSX	Medium
Nov 2016	Sticky altimeter CGO	Low
Dec 2016	Cushions obstructed stick	Medium
Feb 2017	Incorrect wearing of parachute	Low
Dec 2016	Noise from airbrake lever not reported	Low
Mar 2017	Steep climb and stall on Launch	High
Apr 2017	Cable Shackles loose	Low
Apr 2017	Dog walked in front of launching glider	Medium
Apr 2017	Airbrakes came open on launch	Medium
Mar 2017	Buggy dragged rope and rings over glider wing	Medium
Apr 2017	Strop hung up on JSX after weak link break.	Low
Apr 2017	JSX Launched with tail dolly in place	Medium
Apr 2017	JSX damaged by shock rope **	High
Apr 2017	Cable dropped near glider on tow-out	Medium
Jun 2017	Astir groundloop, tail bumper removed.	Low
Sep 2017	Rover driver ignored signals, moved cables without permission	High
Aug 2017	CCE Rudder cables worn and unwinding	Medium
Oct 2017	CCE Airbrake operating arm failure **	High

The two incidents marked ** were reported to the BGA as significant incidents.

Fuller details on each of these incidents can be viewed on the reporting system on the club web site under "Members' area-Safety".

What can we learn from these reports? If nothing else, please read them all again on the web site, and consider how the same might have happened to you, and how you might have prevented it.

If you know of any other incidents or concerns that happened in the last year that are NOT showing above, then please do consider why it was not reported. If you witnessed it, you should have reported it. It is very easy, just look at the safety pages on the members' area on the club web site. Unreported incidents just get quickly forgotten and the chance to learn from the mistake is lost forever. Thanks to:- Andrew, Tim, Paul, Eifion, Claudia, Alex, Oscar and John who did report incidents this last year.

Incident reporting

The form below may be used to report an incident OR a concern, anonymously if desired. Please enter the details in the boxes, then click on 'Submit Form'. The information will be sent to the Safety Committee, who may choose to pass it on to others, however if the form is marked as 'confidential' then only the Safety Committee will see it. If you would like to be contacted please supply your name. For some suggestions on what to write, [please view the examples](#).

There have been 27 reports to date. [You can view a summary of non-confidential reports here](#).



OGC Safety Report Form

Your name (optional)

Confidential?:

Incident Date: Incident Time (if appropriate):

Describe what happened (Including weather details if appropriate):

Doing the Bookings

Steve McCurdy

As many of you may know, I'm the bloke in the club who books in visitors who've been given a birthday or Christmas present of a flight with the Oxford Gliding Club.

So, it's mostly wives and girlfriends who ring up and say he's always wanted to do it and what does he get for the £45 we're charging. I tell them they'll be in the air for between 10 and 20 minutes, depending on the weather, and that gives them ample time to have a go on the controls and even if the flight isn't that long, it'll feel like a lifetime when they're up there. "Ooh" they say and then ask how long the flight will be again and I tell them that if he's really interested in flying then the trial flight extra of two launches might be better, not trying too much with the hard sell. Then they ask how long they'll be airborne with the trial flight extra? Er... it's two launches so it's twice as long.

Occasionally I get a couple wanting to book. "Can we go up together?" No, it'll be one of you and an instructor. "So the glider's just got two seats?" Yes. "There aren't any three seaters?" I tell them that the Americans built one. "Can we fly in that?" No, we haven't got one....

Few people who get in touch have much idea of what gliding is all about. They know gliders don't have engines and seem happy with the explanation of how we get them into the air, but then become a bit worried about how they come down. Don't worry about that I tell them; all our pilots know how to come down. "But what if there's no wind?" This is where it gets complicated as I don't want to get deep into Bernoulli's Law with an eighty-year-old lady who's buying a flight for her grandson, even though she may be totally gripped by the explanation. I say the wind doesn't make a great deal of difference, except to the launch height and if you think of a glider like a bicycle with no pedals always going downhill, and it's at this point I know by the echoing silence on the line that they wished they'd never asked.

And this is probably why, when the husband or boyfriend turns up at the launch point for his birthday surprise they often look a bit bemused. "Am I really going up in that?" they mutter as they look a little askance at a K13 and the bloke in an anorak or the bouncy blonde who's going up with them. Jokes about life insurance from their friends don't do much to settle the nerves of the visitor, but I always tell them I'm coming back safely, so they will as well. But they all enjoy it, I don't think I've ever had a visitor who's not had a big grin on their face when we've landed, well except the ones who've been sick but that's was when they were doing the flying, honest. Maybe they're just happy to be on the ground again? It's also a lot to do with what a great bunch of people OGC members are, notably the ones around the launch point calming the relatives and friends watching their loved ones getting catapulted into the air.

Unfortunately, weekend visitors very rarely come back and join the club. And it's the same with most gliding clubs apparently, hardly any new members join from being given a trial flight, new members just seem to appear from out of the ether. Which brings me to my other role as OGC's 'lean, mean, marketing machine'.....



Photo: Facebook – Liisi at Abingdon Air Show



Photo: Liisi Laks

I've never totally understood marketing except that you probably need a Porsche Caymen and very tight trousers to be successful at it. Getting the message of gliding out to the lumpen proletariat is not easy. Even as one of the BGA exhibition team with the lure of the glider simulator and corporate shirt, which o.k. makes me look a bit like a member of a darts team, real interest comes from about 2 percent of the visitors that come to the exhibitions we attend. On a smaller scale at OGC, we've done the Abingdon Air show regularly over the years and got a couple of new members from that, and supported the local fete at Kirtlington, but that village seems to have more 767 pilots per capita than anywhere else in Oxfordshire so there isn't the wonder about flying that you might find elsewhere.

So, as a club, how do we get the message of gliding out there. Tell your friends and neighbours, and anybody who'll listen without going into a fugue state, what a great sport and hobby it is and carry on being nice to the people who turn up at the weekends. You never know, they may even join the club!

Return to the Alps – Serres 2017

Jon Hunt text, photos Jon Hunt & Richard Hall

After a successful trip to the South of France in 2016, I was keen to return this year in the hope that The Alps had even more to offer. It didn't disappoint with the intimidating mountains of the Écrins, field landings and memorable retrieves all in store, The Alps were about to deliver again!

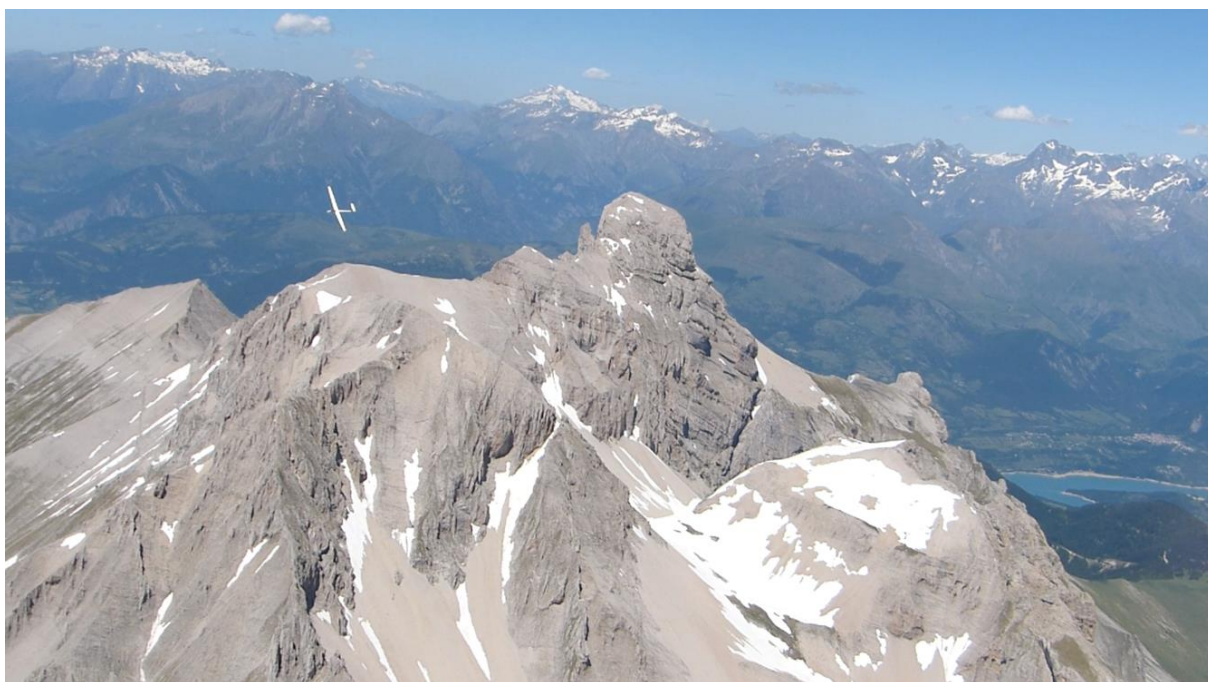


This year Serres was to be our airfield location. The atmosphere here is very good, relaxed but still professional. Typical days start at 10am with a comprehensive daily briefing, followed by fettling. Launching is after lunch (to do otherwise the French will tell you is uncivilised) and Lison's Cabanon (pictured at the end of the runway) is conveniently located onsite, virtually on the launch point. If a great café wasn't enough, there's also an enormous mountain behind it that generates some pretty awesome lift.

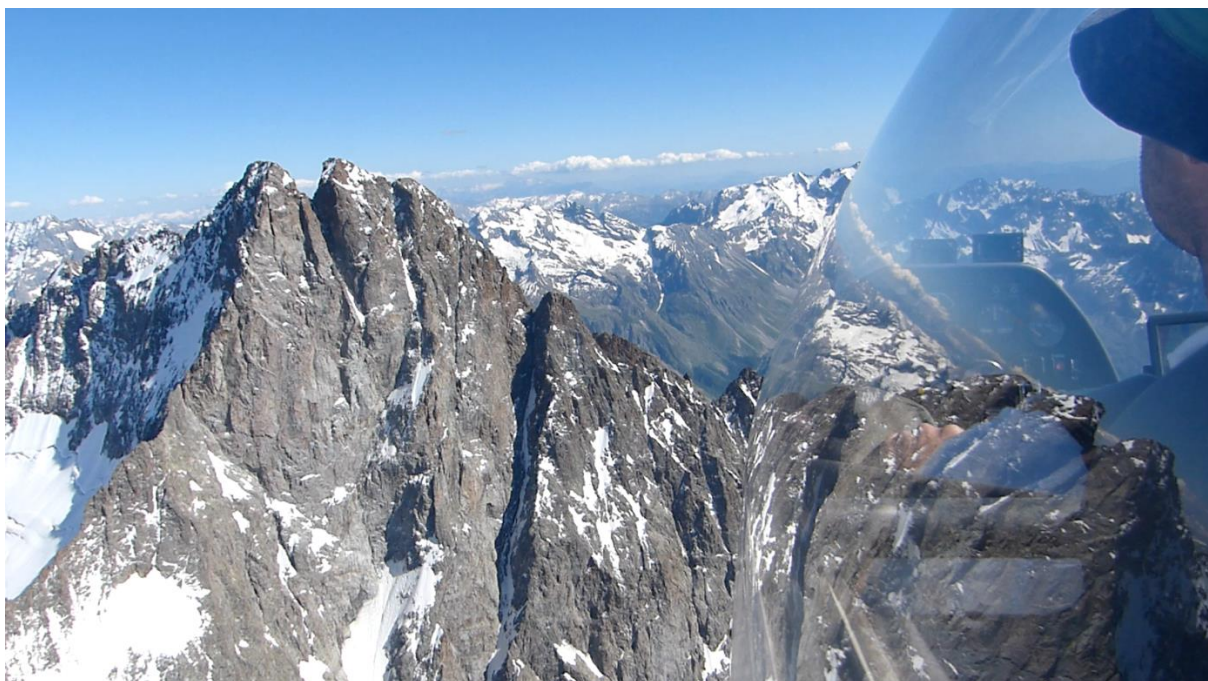


Return to the Alps (contd.)

Jon Hunt



Gliding in the Alps is outstanding and arguably the best in the world. Paul Smith climbing here in the thermodynamic lift. Richard Hall and I chose to leave our single seat gliders at home this year and fly two-up in the Janus CM. For me this was a great opportunity to fly with a highly experienced mountain pilot and a great chance for Richard to test his nerves with someone else flying him close to the rocks.



Into the Écrins

Some of the mountains in The Alps can make you feel small, but the Écrins range is just enormous. The sheer scale of the rock faces can be disorientating, and the lack of horizon means speed control is crucial. The challenges are very real, mountain flying will bite you hard if you get it wrong, but managing your risks will reward you with flying memories that last a lifetime. This is one I'll hopefully repeat, but if not, it's a flight I won't forget.

Return to the Alps (contd.)

Jon Hunt

It doesn't always go according to plan!

As we all know, landing out is all a part of gliding and here we have Paul in a field I'm sure he will always remember.

The problem with landing in little fields in remote areas, is they tend to have little villages with little roads. I think the pictures say it all here, but if not – never trust a satnav in rural France with an 8m trailer in tow.

Saint Bonnet en Champsaur



The customary meal out after the retrieve

Return to the Alps (contd.)

Jon Hunt



Turning finals, last flight of the trip

The Alps 2 was another great trip. Highlights were flying in the Écrins, thermalling in 10kts + off the side of Pic de Bure, and following a 40km energy line without turning... and then turning round and coming back down it! There were many other great moments and being in the company of two top pilots, it could only serve to improve my own flying.

My recommendation to those who want to fly in the Alps is to have access to your own glider which must be fitted with Flarm. There are options to fly in the local club's aircraft, but this can be an expensive and contended option.

Experience of mountain flying is also necessary and Talgarth is a great stepping stone to prepare you for what's in store further afield. I'm hopeful we can continue a regular expedition to these kinds of destinations and encourage others to prepare and join in the fun. Looking forward now to The Alps 2018.



2017 Interclub League Report

Dave Bray – ICL Captain

Having had a couple of years without a Midland Region Interclub League (ICL), Oxford with a couple of the other clubs in the region felt it was time we met up to try to change that. Originally we planned to have three rounds, Oxford starting off with Shennington and Windrushers following later in the year. However, bad weather meant cancelling the Shennington round and Windrushers were unable to produce the support needed to host the event. Therefore, the first and only round this year was hosted at Weston in early May.

I'm pleased to announce that not only did we have a contest day at Oxford, but the results from our pilots efforts put OGC in first place! The team flying for OGC were Pat Wallace, Krzysztof Kreis and Fran and Johnny Roberts on Saturday, with Alex Rose, Mark Brooks and Fran and Johnny Roberts on Sunday as Novice, Intermediate and Pundit respectfully.

Saturday was a weather write-off with club flying only, the longest flight of the day being a hard worked 20 minutes! However, Sunday turned out to be a lovely day, albeit with blue thermals over much of the task areas. The tasks were 57km for the Novices, 118km for the Intermediates, and 160km for the Pundits.

Launching into the blue conditions took some encouragement as we all like having some cumulus to aim for, but as is usually the case on blue days, the thermal triggers of brown fields and towns were working, so the tasks were on!

Result-wise, Oxford was in second place in both the Novice and the Intermediate classes, but the story of the day was the flights between the Pundits, with the flight from Fran and Johnny in the club DG505 completed at 73.77kph, the flight from the Shennington Pundit finishing at 73.59kph! A difference of 0.18kph!! Put into real terms it means that if the DG505 had done one more thermal turn of 20 seconds then they would have been in second place rather than winning the day!

Special thanks from me must go to weather man and task setter Paul Smith, winch drivers Andy Butterfield and Ben Vickers, as well as Lukasz Nazar and John Hanlon who launched the grid.

The results of the weekend are below:

Club	Novice	Intermediate	Pundit	Total
Oxford	2	2	3	7
Windrushers	3	3	0	6
Shennington	0	0	2	2

Having won the Modland round, Oxford headed off to Cambridge Gliding Club at Gransden Lodge the first weekend in September to take part in the National final!



2017 Interclub League Report (contd.)

Dave Bray

Mark Brooks, Jon Hunt and myself flew on the Saturday but no one from OGC was available to fly on Sunday so we only ever went to take part and have a good time! Both Mark and myself landed out. No excuses – not my finest task flight this year but still really good fun. Jon was the sole OGC finisher and then helped out with the late night retrieves! My thanks to him!



Photo: Jon Hunt

The cogs are already in motion to arrange the 2018 ICL rounds, if you would like to fly it then please let me know as it is a great experience to visit and launch from another site, sometimes even flying cross country on a day you usually wouldn't expect to!

Daisy Days

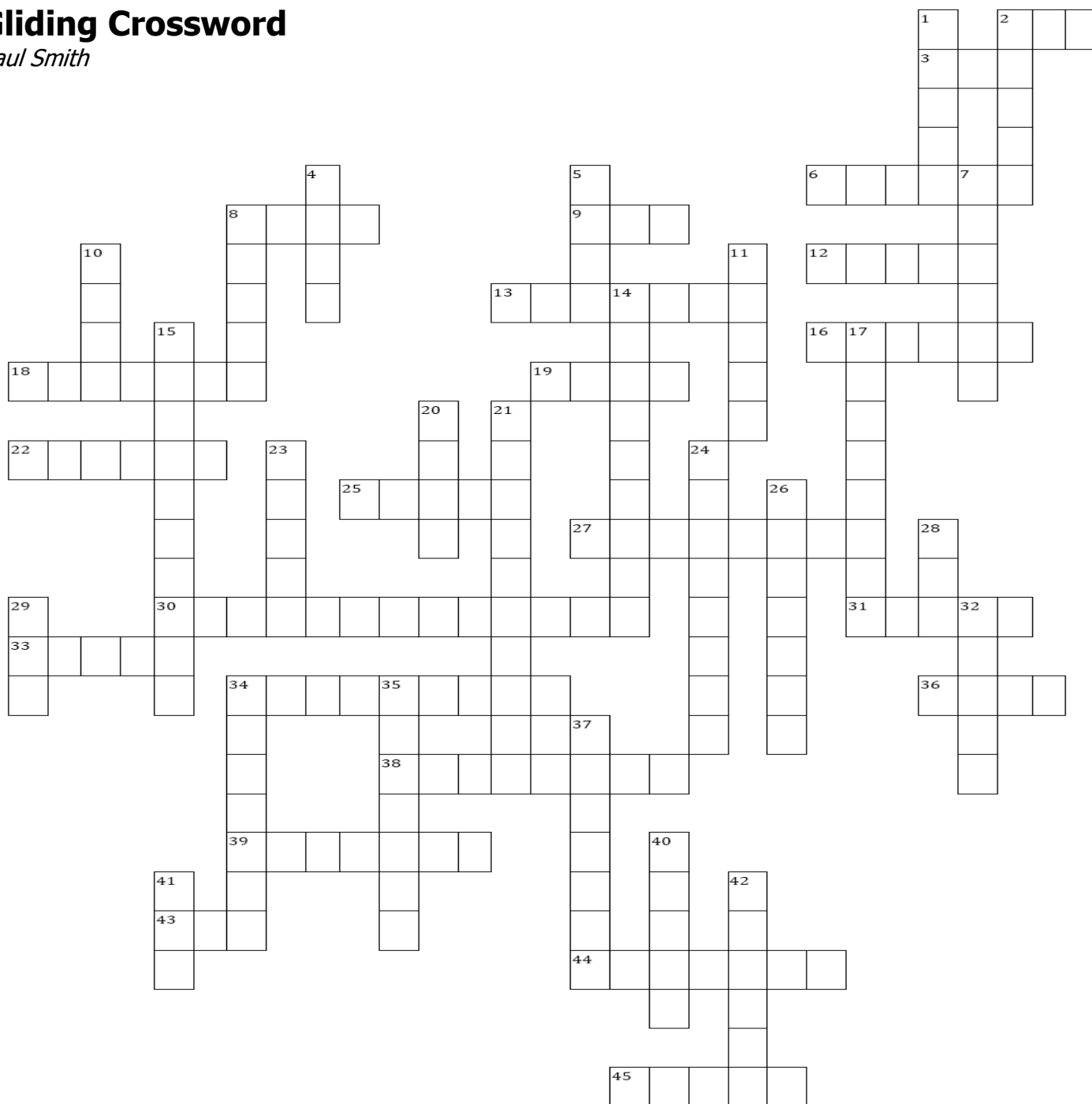
Paul Smith

During the summer I seemed to be the Duty Instructor on some of those hot and sticky days that make flying Daisy so much fun. Here are a few pictures of some of the P2s (ok and a P1 or two)...



Gliding Crossword

Paul Smith



Across

- 2.** Often overused in conversation (3)
3. Lags a bit (3)
6. Wave goodbye (3:3)
8. Brings you down (4)
9. Put together (3)
12. Operator (5)
13. Gives a heading (7)
16. Pre-aerobatics (6)
18. Orderly flow of traffic (6)
19. Opened the hangar (4)
22. Never leave unattended (6)
25. Winder (5)
27. Main body (8)
30. Prevents embarrassment (13)
31. Side-by-side (5)
33. Temporary restriction (5)

Down

- 1.** What's that beeping? (5)
2. Open tube (5)
4. Weather forecaster (4)
5. Take a little off (4)
7. Pre-landing (6)
8. Affects track (5)
10. Like a bird (4)
11. Concrete swan (5)
34. Climbing tight turn (9)
36. Gets you high (4)
38. Helps you roll (7)
39. Lesson one (7)
43. Flasher (3)
44. Maintenance night (7)
45. Collision avoidance (5)

Across

- 14.** The cushion (9)
15. Can be pulled or pushed (6:4)
17. Where we operate (8)
20. Generates lift (4)
21. Glide computer (4:6)
23. President (5)
24. Takes you to another level (8)
26. Provides stability (7)
28. Head honcho (3)
29. Altitude (3)
32. Has many symptoms (5)
34. Fluffy ones (7)
35. 500km (7)
37. Where the pilot goes (7)
40. Uncoordinated (5)
41. Friday favourite (3)
42. Saves you from adversity (6)

Happy Christmas 2017

Liisi Laks & Paula Hastings

