

From the home of the *Scottish Gliding Centre*

# Portmoak Press

**Editorial-Ian Easson**

Welcome to issue 3 of *Portmoak Press*.

The season is well under way, but our cross-country flying is currently on hold due to the Foot & Mouth epidemic. You should all be aware that the latest NOTAMs include exclusion zones of 2m radius and 1500ft around infected sites.

A big thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue – keep it up. Also, thanks to Bruce Marshall for additional clues for the crossword. Apologies to some of you who picked up a copy of the last issue which had the crossword without black squares.

Gremlins got in, but should be sorted out now. Future contributors please note the cut-off dates: end of June for July, end of September for October, end of December for January. Material can be sent to me either typed or hand-written and dropped in my mailbox beside the payphone in the clubhouse or you can e-mail me at [ian.easson@btinternet.com](mailto:ian.easson@btinternet.com). Don't worry if you don't fancy writing an article – just let me know what you have in mind and I will "interview" you. Your invitation to the Information meeting had a tear-off slip to let me know if you prefer to receive *Portmoak Press* by snail-mail or e-mail. If your needs change, please let me know via the club-house or e-mail. Unless we hear otherwise, you will receive future copies via the postman.

As usual, I make no apologies for repeating some information in this issue, like Board members' responsibilities and various rotas. I also make no apologies for plagiarising items from old issues of *Portmoak Press* as I found them interesting and hope you do too.



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- The usual list of Board members and their responsibilities is on the following page.



**Board Members.**

Chairman, with responsibility for the Winch and other Equipment.	Alan Bauld
Vice Chairman with responsibility for Buildings and Property.	Brian Cole-Hamilton
Secretary	Jim Provan
Treasurer	Alisdair Stewart
Chief Flying Instructor	Bob Jones
Safety and Glider Fleet	Chris Robinson
Tug and Walking-on-Air	Joe Fisher
Publicity	Fred Joynes
Cadets	Neil McAulay
Membership Communications	Ian Easson
Airfield and Duty Rosters	Eoin MacDonald

**CFI's Notes****Foot and Mouth**

I guess the big news this month is the effect of the foot and mouth outbreak on gliding. At the time of writing all cross-country flying by gliders including SLMGs and turbos has been banned by the BGA after consultation with MAFF and the NFU. The outbreak seems to be showing little sign of abating and by any assessment the ban is likely to be in place for some months yet. Some gliding clubs where animals are kept on the same field have closed voluntarily.

There are no official restrictions on the movement of glider trailers however we have asked pilots from clubs that have animals on their field or in close proximity not to bring trailers to Portmoak.

Clearly this is a situation that is being taken very seriously by the gliding movement. The general belief is that by taking action now we are avoiding action being enforced from outside the movement and maintaining vital relations with the farming community.

With few exceptions there is full support from pilots and I very much hope that we can keep that spirit of co-operation over the coming months.

**Accidents – how not to have one!****Instructors not taking over soon enough.**

An analysis of the last 12 months of accident reports by the BGA has just been published and makes interesting reading. One clear message is that about half of all serious accidents in gliders involve two seat instructional flights. The most common cause of accidents involving instructors was (you guessed it): Taking over too late - remember its better to take over a little bit too soon than a little bit too late when our students are getting things wrong!

**Weather**

We had our own serious accident involving an AEI flight last year when Mary landed very heavily during a squall. We believe that a strong gust of wind from behind temporarily stalled the glider during its final approach. Sometimes as instructors we are tempted to fly in weather conditions that are really not suitable for training. Perhaps we need to suspend any macho tendencies we might have and recognise that there are some weather conditions where we can't effectively teach even though it might be just flyable.

**Cart wheeling during take off**

Continuing a launch after a wing has touched the ground is something that you'll get away with 9 times out of 10, or perhaps even 99 out of 100. Yet it can result in an extremely serious accident – a cartwheel during take off. Classed as an avoidable accident it can be easily prevented. During any launch (winch or aero tow) keep your hand on the release throughout the ground run. In the event of a wing touching the ground release immediately. When flying aircraft that need flaps to be adjusted during the ground run, move your hand from cable release to flap lever and back to release.

This might seem a minor issue yet we had our own cartwheel accident last year with a discus and the pilot was very lucky to survive it!

**Back Injuries.**

The most common injury to glider pilots are back injuries. All SGU club aircraft now have impact absorbing foam fitted to the seat and recent

experience has shown that the foam is very effective in reducing



injuries after a heavy landing. There is a good supply of this foam available to all private owners from Chris Robinson, why not follow the example of the club?

### Adjusting your approach speed

In some wind directions, like south westerly, pilots need to be aware that they can experience turbulence on final approach even in quite light winds.

Pilots who select too low an approach speed may find themselves in difficulty.

Some weeks ago one of our juniors was approaching into the north field in a 15-knot south-westerly wind.

The approach speed selected was 58 to 60 knots.

That sounds fine albeit a little on the slow side for an average weight pilot. However the pilot concerned is rather heavy and may be tending toward the top end of the cockpit weight loading for the junior. During the final stage of the landing the glider encountered turbulence and the airspeed decayed to 42 knots and had a very heavy landing. The result was a back injury although the glider was not damaged.

The moral of the story is that if you are at the top end of the weight range for any glider you will need to approach a little faster than the general rule of thumb suggests. If you are not too sure about the best approach speed for the day make sure your briefing covers this point.

### Training

I have put together some proposals on how we can deliver a more organised approach to training up to solo standard. These proposals are intended to address a number of issues including the length of time taken to go solo, poor conversion of new members to solo pilots, and gaps in training. I have left a paper detailing my proposals in the clubhouse and would welcome feedback from anyone on the issues and questions raised.

If there is a consensus that the proposal to is going to be effective and workable, the next stage is to put together an implementation plan. I will start to address this issue through a meeting with instructors to see how we can move things forward.

I very much hope that we can all have a happy and safe gliding season despite the restrictions that have been placed on us. Good luck, and happy landings.

Bob Jones CFI

### UP, UP, but not away – Ken Stewart

*First published in Portmoak Press 1978*

Portmoakians be proud. Ours is probably the only gliding club in Britain which can boast that its pilots uphold traditions and still practice almost exclusively the ancient art of hill soaring.

The majority of SGU pilots spend hours beating relentlessly back and forth along Bishop or Benarty, or else climbing repeatedly to gold height.

Having achieved Silver Distance by reaching Arbroath on that "Fantastic Thermal" last summer, and then qualifying to the Portmoak elite by climbing to Gold Height, what now? As far as I can see, the majority of Portmoakians return to the relentless beating of hills or climbing to 15,000 ft and descending again.

In winter, such antics are envied by many clubs, from whom, sitting on flat sites, means circuits. However, even in the height of summer, when wave gives way to thermals, very few SGU members venture further than Milnathort, even when they know they can achieve at least another 50K if not more.

Excuses are plentiful, and if one repeats them enough, they become easy to believe. Let's look at some of them.

*Excuse No. 1* – "We don't get such good conditions here as they do in England." – while conceding that this fact is essentially true and that there may not be as many 300K days as there are down South, there must surely be a fair number of 100K days. But are they used? No. Unless those 100K days are used, the first 300K day that comes along will be wasted. Can you fly for six hours at 50KPH? That's what's required.

Even if you decide to travel to the far South for a week in the summer, and even if the weather is good, there's still every chance you're wasting your money – unless you start using the less good days as they present themselves. Why perhaps do you think the pilots from Lasham or Booker do so many 300K and 500K flights each summer? Mainly because they don't wait for the summer 300K days before they start practising those cross-country techniques round smaller triangles.

You may not have the weather, but don't forget that you can generally



keep in flying practice all winter; they can't.

*Excuse No.2* – “You need a glass-ship to do 300K.” I suggest to those people who use this excuse, that they tell this to Tony Shelton or Kenny Jamieson who took a K13 round in under 4 hours (While you are at it, ask them about Charlie Ross.).

Also as an exercise for those who might think glass means a certain Gold, compare the performance of a B4 with an Astir. Is there £3000 pounds worth of difference in performance? You can't buy skill.

So now you've got your glass bird and supposing at the nth attempt you've bought your Gold Distance, again, what now?

500K is probably but a dream and, if I take the defeatists' attitude, will need expeditions to a better cross-country site before it will be possible.

Remember how you bought your Gold Distance by buying glass, thus improving your performance, but NOT your skill. What are you going to do now?

Therefore, it may be worth a protracted struggle to get your 300K in a non-glass ship, and then after improving your skill enough to do your distance in a K6 or B4, or similar, you may have enough failures (and let's face it, the more failed 300s you have, the more kilometres you put under your belt, and experience gained) to realise the potential of a glass-ship.

*Excuse No.3* – “I don't have a retrieve crew.”

*Excuse No.4* – “I don't have to be a nuisance by landing out.”

Both of these excuses show the common frame of mind of the pilot who lacks drive. Retrieve problems are easily surmountable and shouldn't be a bother as long as the pilot makes some attempts to arrange his flight and return. Take Jimmy Luke for example, Jimmy blazed on while others (including myself) criticised him for his apparent lack of caution. He even competed in a major Regionals last year and although he didn't threaten the leaders, came away knowing more about cross-country flying than most Portmoakians of his experience.

Also on the question of retrieves, there might be reason to provide facilities for aero-tow retrieves, if pilots could justify the cost in terms of insurance. There are other excuses, but more worth considering.

Come the winter when thermal gives way to wave again,

and you're sitting above the site at 15,000ft, don't come down and boast about what height you achieved. Come and boast about where you go to with that height.

Don't let all Portmoak's kilometres be done by our visitors.

The last point came from an anonymous EUGC member who drives a red Marina. He claims that Portmoak would be a better thermal site if Loch Leven were filled in. Well, I can't offer much help with the task but I can suggest where you could get the earth to fill it ---- its called Bishop!

*Ken Stewart (1978)*

### Stories from our “men in the field”

I have enrolled various club members to act as “Our men (and women) in the field”. They will be on the lookout for stories and rumours overheard, or observed anywhere on the airfield. Here's the latest one from Slarty Bartfast:

#### Skippy at Portmoak

Unfortunately, since my last article I haven't heard of any recent newsworthy incidents so I have had to turn, in desperation, to a golden oldie as the Editor is a pain and keeps asking for copy.

Once upon a time, there was a ~~young~~ recent solo pilot with limited experience in the flying of club Polish single-seaters. In fact his solo experience (the ladies can relax now) in any form of single-seaters was not great and so it was his wish to “get his hours up”. To this end he stood adjacent to the Junior in the line up on a busy Saturday, anxious for the queue to move forwards so that he could get into the aircraft and get into the air. For once, Heather (we all love “Heather the Weather” – *Ed.*) had spoken with a straight tongue on the Friday evening and the weather was indeed good with no sign of rain and a decent, steady westerly wind. Eventually the last aircraft in front of him in his line was launched and so he pulled forward, put his parachute on and got into the Junior. As white mobile brought up the cables he went through his checks with the meticulous care, as taught to us all, noted that the Junior had already flown and sat waiting. Idle chit-chat with his fellow members

happily whiled away the minutes until the cables



arrived; the strop was changed and attached. Oh joyous day! Here we go! Close and lock the canopy, quick check of the airbrakes, run through eventualities just to be sure (slow down and really think about them, don't just mouth them off). TAKE UP SLACK – little heart singing “up there with the gaggle in a minute” ALL OUT – little heart singing “here we go, here we go, here we go”

The slack was took up and the all was outed the cable pulled firmly at the glider, which accelerated nicely for a few moments, flew off the ground and continued to accelerate with our pilot concentrating on events. However just as he was about to rotate into the climb the parachute fully deployed in front of the aircraft totally obscuring forward vision. This turn of events somewhat perplexed the erstwhile pilot who, being quick, like all Portmoak aviators, thought to himself that this turn of events was somewhat unusual. He soon noticed that the Junior was no longer accelerating and that he was maintaining a height above the ground of about 5 feet with the parachute continuing in front of him fully deployed. As nothing untoward appeared to be happening he kept the controls where they were, although he was becoming somewhat perturbed by the site of the ground rushing by when viewed out of the sides of the canopy with peripheral vision. Once things had settled down a bit, Portmoak's finest began to think about what to do next when the parachute suddenly deflated and sank below the aircraft. Our pilot could now clearly see that he was about one third of the way down the airfield with the winch straight-ahead. It was immediately obvious that the Junior had no intentions of sorting out the situation prior to its arrival at the winch with much the same velocity and height as was currently the case. This situation was wholly incompatible with the wishes and aspirations of the pilot who decided to empirically investigate the results of opening the airbrakes cautiously.

Perhaps the rush of adrenaline had been too much, or perhaps the pilot was simply stronger than he thought but a touch too much airbrake was applied and the Junior descended to meet the earth more quickly than intended. The bump on arrival encouraged the pilot

to immediately close the airbrakes and take stock of the situation, which was now: -  
 Two thirds of the airfield left, air speed same as before (about 45 knots) height 4' 6"  
 “Not the best moment in my aviation career” thought the pilot and decided to try his luck with the airbrakes again. Perhaps the second rush of adrenaline had been too much or perhaps the pilot was simply stronger than he thought but a touch too much airbrake was again applied and the Junior descended to meet the earth again. The bump on arrival encouraged the pilot to immediately close the airbrakes and to take stock of the situation, which was now: -  
 One half of the airfield left, air speed same as before (about 45 knots) height 4' 0"  
 Oh God! thought the pilot and decided to roll the dice again with yet a further application of the airbrakes. Perhaps the third rush of adrenaline had been too much or perhaps the pilot was simply stronger than he thought but a touch too much airbrake was applied and the Junior descended to meet the earth yet again. The bump on arrival encouraged the pilot to immediately close the airbrakes and to take stock of the situation that was now: -  
 One third of the airfield left, air speed same as before (about 45 knots) height 3' 6"  
 My, isn't the winch getting big!  
 Jings, crivvens and help-ma-boab! thought the pilot and decided to roll the dice yet again with a further application of the airbrakes. Perhaps the fourth rush of adrenaline etc. etc. but a touch too much airbrake was applied and the Junior descended to meet the earth yet again, again. The bump on arrival encouraged the pilot to immediately close the airbrakes and to take stock of the situation, which was now: -  
 One sixth of the airfield left, air speed same as before (about 45 knots) height 3' 0"  
 I didn't realise the winch was so \* \* \* \* \* big, or as solid looking.  
 Time for some firm resolution he thought, hauled out the airbrakes and kept them there. This time the Junior stayed on the ground and rolled to a stop.

The pilot got out somewhat shakily and after a very short walk



over to the winch was able to converse with the winch driver on recent events. What had happened was the weak link had broken and the chute had inflated in the early part of the launch, the winch driver realised this and had cut the power so that the chute deflated and sank. The winch driver had feared that the chute would not deflate and sink quickly enough for the Junior to clear it.

Despite several cups of coffee it was some weeks before this pilot could bring himself to have another launch in the Junior. Perhaps it is better to get back on the bike immediately after such an incident.

Like the Cat says, "always expect the unexpected".  
*Slarty Bartfast*

### **The Day the Cable Failed to Release**

This is a true story, which was first published in the *Portmoak Press* in 1980.

*Bob Thomson, a commercial artist from Edinburgh took up gliding at Portmoak in 1978. He was on his third solo when the winch cable failed to release!*

Portmoak airfield lay under a frozen blanket on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1979. The time was 15:30 hours. Large sheets of solid ice were all around the launch-point and landing areas. Undaunted, we glider pilots took it in our stride when lesser mortals would have stayed at home.

My sixth flight of the day – and my third solo – now loomed up so I kept my 'chute on and helped push the K8 back to the launch point. Haste was all-important, as we wanted to get this one in before the light faded. A cable lay waiting and my small band of helpers were eager to assist me.

In no time at all I was strapped in. A few words from Jim Woodley, the instructor, then the canopy was closed and locked, checks completed, cable attached and signals given. Fascinated, I watched as the cable snaked tight, caught at an angle by a large piece of ice over to port. This suddenly detached itself and shot across the front of the K8. The cable jerked tight, the glider lurched forward as the nose reared up and my head jerked back against the headrest. Off we sped, rumbling and bumping along the ground in my effort to maintain some equilibrium.

After a longer than usual ground run, the K8 leapt into the air and started climbing,

rotating into an alarmingly steep angle by 200ft. Speed rising, stick in forward position, I eased back, only to push it further forward as the angle became, to me, frighteningly steep. I was both apprehensive and puzzled by now, halfway up, near vertical and with the stick hard against the forward stop.

Was this just its natural mode? After all, I had observed the ability of the K8 to climb steeply and break cable in the hands of inexperienced pilots. My sum total was just two previous circuits on type. The glider and myself attained a more natural attitude as we approached the top, and with a final check outside to ascertain my position, 1,250ft on the clock, I breathed again, put the nose down and pulled the release knob.

Oh no! Just two little words but I will never be sure if I said them out loud or not. Nobody need ever wonder how to tell a cable hang up. I knew it on the first pull. The second pull was instinctive, made all the more so by a surge of fear. Looking back, I was too frightened to panic. Everything went slowly after that. I remember screaming at the cable release as I pumped away at it, then coming around in a steep right hand turn fearing that the cable might foul the lower wing.

I lost the clear vision panel when I pushed it shut and it fell away clanking down the inside of the fuselage, hitting me on the shoulder. As if to torment me further, the elevator control jammed. I managed to free it with a swift too-and-fro movement on the stick. – a process to be repeated several times accompanied by seizures of panic. After this initial turn, I levelled out and sat for a few moments looking out at the view, pausing and thinking some very personal thoughts of family and friends and the Hogmanay revelry which had been laid on at home that evening.

Brought back to reality by the elevator jamming again, I realised that I would have to try and circle the winch – so around I went again to the right. Sure enough, there was the winch, tiny and lonely but I could see no sign of the cable.

Straightening up, I flew on crosswind glancing continuously down at the winch. I was now over the ash runway and I decided, as I looked down at the

deserted clubhouse to my left, to move up that way with whatever cable



I had on board. As the elevator had not stuck for some seconds I plucked up courage and around I went. Straightening up on the clubhouse, the glider seemed to settle down a bit, with fewer jerks and tugs.

The idea of a further crosswind backtrack now seemed unnecessary, so I decided to try and land. I could see my circuit plainly laid out in front of me. I was on the downwind leg at about 500ft, there was my crosswind leg from the clubhouse to the ash strip, a nifty turn onto finals and a landing on the strip – remembering to aim between the two frozen puddles on either side. As I turned into wind my one remaining fear was that the elevator might jam again or the cable foul, as I knew that I must have been running short of play.

I watched the parked tug slip by under my port wing, I touched down spot on between the two ice pools. Mainwheel and tailskid touched together, a smooth ground run, brakes fully open and the stick right back. The K8 stopped, stood poised for a few seconds then slowly dipped her starboard wing, with a gentle “humph” then all was quiet. It was one of the best landings I had ever made and certainly the most satisfying.

I opened the canopy and leaned over the side, puzzled to discover that the cable was not attached to the belly hook after all. Taking a breather before climbing out, I noticed the cars coming up the strip towards me. Then I went cold as I saw the drogue ‘chute laid out neatly behind the glider with the cable stretching into the distance in a straight line. Only then did I realise that the cable had back released on the ground run at take-off and wound itself around the main-wheel axle.

I had been launched by the main-wheel, hence the steep angle of climb.

Back at the clubhouse, reports were written with special emphasis on the bashing that the controls had taken. Martin Grant took my statement and I signed it, being incapable of writing or drinking coffee, which I was spilling copiously from my shaking hand. After that, I seemed to remember buying the winch driver, who saved my life, a small whisky. To conclude, we found the clear vision panel on the airfield and also a small tear in the canvas of the

fuselage under the tailplane, where it could conceivably have come out after having temporarily jammed the elevator. I, for one, will be careful when closing a panel again.

Warning to ground handlers! At no time did it become obvious on the ground run that I had over-run the cable. So be warned, it worries me a little that it happens in a split second and if your attention is distracted .....! Wing tip holders, appreciate your responsibility here, and signallers too.

Whatever has happened to the good idea of the plastic tubing around the trace rope to keep it straight? Not lost I hope? (all have plastic tubing now – Ed).

One more thing, I feel lucky to have had a switched-on winch driver who knew what to do – and did it, a good aircraft, a good briefing, an unflappable nature and the good sense to have listened to all my instructors in the past. The rest will be just fear, sweat, a certain amount of native skill and a strong desire to survive.

My special thanks go to the instructors of Portmoak who by their dedication, expertise and patience were responsible for this happy ending. I make special mention of the following instructors that I have flown with: Jim Wales, Jimmy Hempseed, Malcolm Shaw, Roy Surtees, Roy Howse, Mike Mundy, Valerie Peddie, George Peddie, Andrew Wood, Andy Penswick, Terry Slater, Jim Woodley, Martin Grant, Bob Lyndon. Also a special thanks to those instructors whom I have not flown with but who have passed on much good advice.

*Bob Thomson – 1980*

The CFI in 1980, *Andrew Wood* added the following:

The cause of a cable getting caught up on a glider is some slack in the cable, which catches on some part of the glider, usually the wheel. The cause of the slack is most commonly a jerk at the start of a winch or aerotow launch, which causes the glider to run forward over the cable.

The cable may, or may not back-release as this happens. If the winch or tug driver feels a jerk on taking up slack, he should stop until he gets a fresh set of signals i.e. another “take up slack”. Also, the

glider pilot, wingtip holders, signallers and any bystanders must



shout “stop” if the glider over-runs the cable. Everyone at the launch point has a duty to his fellow club members to shout “stop” if they suspect anything is wrong. There will be no criticism if it is a false alarm. No one should be reluctant to shout “stop” even if an instructor is present; he may not have noticed what you. Shout “stop” first and ask questions afterwards.

Apart from a jerk as described above, a second but more unusual cause of a hang-up is if the winch slows down then re-accelerates during the ground run of the glider. This can cause the glider to over-run the cable; the drag on the moving cable normally would cause a back-release, but the cable can still catch in or around the wheel. This type of hang-up is less common because it takes a very bad piece of winch driving, whereas it is relatively easy to take up slack a little jerkily. On “all out”, the winch driver should steadily increase power until he sees the glider beginning to climb. If a glider pilot over-runs on the ground run he will see, feel and hear it, and the cable will normally back-release.

The pilot should release and if possible steer gently to one side.

When a glider is airborne, normally the chance of a hang-up is extremely small. When the release is pulled, the winch or aerotow rope will always spring away from the glider under tension, or just the weight of the winch cable. If the winch cable breaks very close to the glider under a lot of tension, the loose end may tend to spring up at the glider, and to reduce this the rope of the trace is non springy. If an aerotow rope breaks, it will spring back underneath the glider (assuming the glider is in the normal position).

It is worth mentioning one more special point to be careful of at Portmoak: the glider pilot must never try to fly level on a winch launch, otherwise our big parachutes may inflate in front of the glider. If the pilot is too slow to climb even gently, then he should not try to fly level, but should lower the nose and release the cable.

Concerning Bob’s incident, no one on the scene could say when the hang-up occurred, and we cannot know for sure what happened. The hang-up had occurred before the glider left the ground, because Bob

noticed the steep nose up attitude immediately on getting airborne (this was certainly caused by the glider being effectively attached to the cable at the wheel, further back than normal). Bob reports that “the cable jerked tight” at the start of the launch, and also mentions a “longer than normal ground run”. No-one at the launch point noticed an over-run on the initial jerk, and the pilot did not notice anything wrong on the ground run. However, the hang-up must have happened at one of these points. Bob had no option but to carry on up the launch. The advice to anyone fortunate enough to reach the top of such a launch is to fly moderately fast (about approach speed) in circles near the winch to build up slack in the cable, avoid flying over power lines or fixed obstacles, and land towards the winch. The winch driver should cut the cable or, if this is not possible, let the cable run out freely.

If a pilot can’t release after an aerotow, he should signal as described in “Laws & Rules”. The tug pilot should ensure the glider is in the normal position, then release his end of the cable. The rope will pass back under the glider and a normal landing can be made well into the airfield.

*Andrew Wood CFI (1980)*

### **Epic retrieve.**

Readers of the last issue will remember the epic flight from Portmoak to Ford by Tom Docherty in his Kestrel 727. He took an aerotow back to Lasham, to wait for Graeme Smith (Tweety Pie) with the trailer:

### **Wing Nuts and Glider Pilots – G.K.Smith**

Is it possible to tell the difference? Perhaps not until the wing nut becomes associated with a “pinch bolt”, and therein lies a tale. No doubt all glider pilots, sufficiently keen to obtain the necessary equipment, learn how to use it. Anyone who undertakes a flight such as Tom Docherty did to break that 17 year old record goal flight (H.C.N. “Nick” Goodhart 360 miles Skylark 3, 10<sup>th</sup> May 1959), must feel the pinch at times, and also must be “nutty” about gliding.

Yes Tom, Saturday morning 31<sup>st</sup> July 1976 was not too easy. We had said fond farewells to an excellent summer course until half past something or other on Friday evening.





Saturday turned out to be quite a day. I dashed around trying to get my Pye Bantam serviceable, until Roy Surtees pointed out that there was a radio set in the car. Unfortunately, it had also caught a summer cold. Having received Tom's radio message that the trailer should follow, I went out to connect things up. Cy Black (Arbroath) kindly offered to help, and I made arrangements for telephone contacts with Betty etc. Returning to the vehicle, all connections, hitch, lights and car controls were checked, and then away to an unknown destination. On the M9, I debated whether to take the East or West route South. Had we been in good radio communication I would have taken the Lanark-Abingdon road on hearing that Tom was making good progress to the Midlands. As it was, I had to allow for a retrieve from Yorkshire, which dictated the more tedious Peebles-Newcastle road. Outside Newcastle, Betty was able to tell me that Tom had been heard near Husbands Bosworth, so there was some motoring to do to catch him up. I filled up with petrol, checked connections and set off down the motorway again. The combination rode well at 55/60 mph. I did feel one kick, which I put down to a side-wind passing through a bridge on the A1(M), and the Daimler fairly purred along. Driving through Yorkshire I was receiving some garbled glider transmissions, and tried to get a message relayed on all channels, to no avail. Thirty gallons of petrol later, I pulled into a service area; Betty was now able to tell me that Tom had landed at Ford aerodrome, and would be aero-towed back to Lasham. The record looked as if it was in the bag, and all now would be plain sailing.

I was 50 miles or so off friends in Oxfordshire, where I decided to head for, to take a break before the final 1½ hours down the Abingdon by-pass to Newbury and Basingstoke. I pressed on round the Oxford by-passes, at about 11 p.m. Half way down the Abingdon bypass, probably at no more than 45/50 mph, there was just a slight clonk at the rear-end. I was reducing speed gradually, with a view to investigating if necessary, when a frightening white apparition appeared on my starboard side. Gradually widening its angle to the car, travelling at an apparently alarming rate, with a bow wave of sparks, this

apparition careered across the two carriageways (no central reservation). Mounting a slight bank, it kicked its backside up in the air before finally disappearing from view. My heart sank into my size 7's; but there was work to be done. Pulling over to the side, I checked the rear end of the car. The ball hitch and the front half of the tow bar, albeit with the electric cables pulled out of the terminal box, and a broken length of the brake cable were still attached. Crossing the road, I was amazed to find the trailer had run down a 45-degree incline into a 4ft high by 6ft wide gully running parallel with the road. The trailer was standing upright parallel with the road. A giant hand could very well have picked it up and placed it there. What a relief to find that there did not appear to be any damage. Some nice soft squashy grey clay had cushioned under and round the trailer, acting as a first class buffer. I debated whether to get a breakdown outfit out immediately, but as it was a pitch-black night, and being in an area where I have plenty of contacts, prudence suggested a delay until the morning. So, back to friends for the night, knocking them up well after midnight.

On Sunday morning, in conference with my very able friend Mr "Bob" Sommerscales (he is the chairman of the Upward Bound Gliding Trust at Haddenham), we viewed the job with a clued-up member of his staff. The trailer had in fact survived its wild passage in the night. The rounded nose helped and the robust construction had survived – a wooden trailer would most certainly have been damaged. A call to Tom with the good news and the bad news (he elected to hear the bad news first), then off to work we went.

A gentleman crippled with arthritis was prevailed upon to drive his Bedford flat truck, with Hiab loader, out to the spot some 15 miles. Three of us then worked with fireman's hoses, chains, wire, ropes and hooks. After about one and a half hours we finally recovered the trailer to road level, without even denting a mudguard. I am sure the only alternative would have been a crane, which would have cost the earth. There are some very decent folk about when you get into trouble, Bob

gave up his Sunday and provided the equipment needed and charged the



princely sum of £6.00 for his efforts. To avoid any damage to the Daimler, Bob tied the trailer to his Triumph and drove slowly back to his garage where a temporary repair was carried out.

On the Southbound carriageway, Bob found the offending pin that caused this incident. It is a fairly large diameter pinch bolt, which holds two halves of the trailer tow bar together, locking two circular serrations into mesh. The locknut is just a simple bar, which can be tightened with one hand. The "nut" was still in situ on the bolt, which had sheared at the weld in the trailer half of the tow bar. The nut was still tightish on its threads, due to the thread wear during its life. The bolt gave the appearance of having fretted for some considerable time before the failure occurred, maybe many months. As Tom pointed out subsequently, you cannot beat that intimate knowledge of combination behaviour acquired by the owner – he listens to every little squeak and knows where it is.

If you decide to use this sort of towing system, it is better to tap and thread the material taking the pinch bolt, and place the nut on the outside end of the pinch bolt, locking it up properly – do not rely on a weld only. If you have an expanding/retracting arm on your trailer, allowing the tow hitch to be lowered to the ground for tilting the trailer, make sure that the wing nut and pinch bolt threads are not being damaged. The wing nut loses its feel and you cannot tell if it is tightened or not. The next time you see that non-mechanically minded partner able over and give the wing nut and extra 20lbs/feet tweak, explain that they could be doing more harm than good. Better still, make it foolproof. Then there is the awkward question of "chaining" trailers or not. Provided you are in full control of the combination, and your faculties, precisely at the time of breakaway, there is probably a good chance that you will be able the combination in line. There are a lot of variables working against this; speed, loading, wind, degree of braking, none of which the chain has any control over. Food for thought.

Congrats Tom on a very good flight. Your excellent write up of the Edinburgh control crossing makes very interesting reading. Can we have a repeat and a channel crossing next year? As for that chap Justin,

somehow he will have to be nobbled in '77 – fancy not even letting your barograph dry before he was up and having a go!

*(First published in Portmoak Press – Spring 1977, G.K.Smith).*

### Cadet corner.

Our cadet membership is growing. Are you a cadet? Tell us about your experiences – good or bad. Do you know what progress our cadets are making? Anyone interested in the cadet scheme should contact Neil McAuley.

### Course Timetables.

#### Dates for 2001 courses

No.	Start	Finish	No.	Start	Finish
1	29-Apr	05-May	12	15-Jul	21-Jul
2	06-May	12-May	13	22-Jul	28-Jul
3	13-May	19-May	14	29-Jul	04-Aug
4	20-May	26-May	15	05-Aug	11-Aug
5	27-May	02-Jun	16	12-Aug	18-Aug
6	03-Jun	09-Jun	17	19-Aug	25-Aug
7	10-Jun	16-Jun	18	26-Aug	01-Sep
8	17-Jun	23-Jun	19	02-Sep	08-Sep
9	24-Jun	30-Jun	20	09-Sep	15-Sep
10	01-Jul	07-Jul	21	16-Sep	22-Sep
11	08-Jul	14-Jul	22	23-Sep	29-Sep

Anyone interested in attending these courses should contact Irene on 01592 840543. Details of course and accommodation costs are as follows:

#### Course Costs:

5 day £ 180 Includes 3 months trial membership, £80 of flying at club rates, a log book and Elementary Gliding textbook (Club members can access the same course at £80 including £80 of flying at club rates)

Accommodation - £135 - includes full board from Sunday dinner to Saturday breakfast.

### Friday evening lectures.

The winter lectures are coming to an end now, here are the last couple of dates:

6<sup>th</sup> Apr – Radio.

13<sup>th</sup> Apr – Getting home (trailer/rigging etc).



If you are interested in any other (gliding related) subject, contact Joe Fisher.

### Crosswords – answers for last issue.

**Across:** 1 Falke, 6 Diamond height, 11 Rotor, 12 I have control, 13 Spinning, 14 Aerobatics, 16 Daily inspection, 23 Aerotow, 24 Port, 25 Sailplane, 27 Cross wind, 30 You have control, 31 Starboard, 32 Sun, 33 Ballast, 34 Discus, 35 Kestrel, 36 Instructors, 37 Schneider.

**Down:** 2 Leicester, 3 High, 4 Soaring, 5 Variometer, 7 Turn point, 8 Down wind, 9 Canopy, 10 Navigation, 15 Air speed indicator, 17 Low, 18 Quebec, 19 Straps, 20 Parachute, 21 Stratocumulous, 22 Belly hook, 23 Aerodynamics, 26 Long Mynd, 28 Web, 29 Kirby Kite, 32 Sector.

### Internet updates.

If you don't already know, the club web site can be found at <http://www.scottishglidingcentre.co.uk>. The club also hosts an Internet Chat Forum, which can be accessed from the above "home page". This forum is only open to SGC members and covers many subjects. Check them out, or start a new one of your own. New users should follow the on-screen prompts and your details will be sent to Colin Hamilton, our resident web-master, who will set you up with access.

One of the existing Forum "threads" (subjects) is for feedback to the Board. The plan is to allow any member to raise any subject they want addressed by the Board. I will "close" the thread about one week before the Board meeting and collate all items for presentation to the Board. Decisions and comments will then be published within one week of the meeting via the same forum. After some initial interest, the number of hits has slowed down, No matter, I'll keep it open as long as possible.

If you have any good web pages to share with other members, let me have the URL and some words about the site and I'll publish them here.

Here's one for all you "anorak" air-traffic listeners (OK, I found it one night – *Ed.*) This link allows you to "tune-in" to live ATC broadcasts from <http://webevents.broadcast.com/simufly/index.html>. You'll need Realplayer Basic (free), a soundcard and at least a 14.4Kbps modem link. Full details are available

at the site. There are links to other ATC sites around the world (except UK – 'cos its probably not allowed here).

### BGA Soaring Course

Anyone interested in attending a soaring course at the Highland Gliding Club (Easterton) on 23<sup>rd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> April should contact Robert Tait: 07790 174892 or [Robert\\_Tait@hotmail.com](mailto:Robert_Tait@hotmail.com).

### Stories from Yesteryear By Frank Smith

Back in the early eighties – that's 1980's – myself and Ian, a fellow instructor at the Dumfries and District Gliding Club replied to an advert in S&G for instructors to help in running holiday courses at Booker Airfield. We thought it would be a lot of fun and help broaden our experience. So I contacted Brian Spreckley who was the manager of Booker Gliding Club and we found ourselves duly hired. So off we set, trailing Ian's Oly460 – something to do at weekends, for a couple of weeks in the south. On arrival we were quickly initiated into the ways of the Booker operation and after a check flight with Dave, we were let loose on the paying public. Booker in those days was fairly busy with various powered aircraft filling the skies, including a spitfire thundered round the circuit once in a while. There was also a helicopter outfit that did training and hire operations. I should imagine that it might be busier these days.

Despite all the traffic, things seemed to flow quite well. All launching was by aerotow and we were flying K13s on the courses, though we had a chance to fly K21s while we were there.

Day 1 was pleasant and relaxing.

The fun started on day 2. Coming in to land with a very early ab-initio pilot, I was just starting my roundout when the grip on the stick came off in my hand. I was probably much quicker in those days and just prevented the K13 from bombing into the ground. I remember telling one of the Booker pundits afterwards who replied, "That's probably where the saying came from."

"What saying?" says I.

"Sticky end!" says he, walking away laughing.

On day 3 things really started to buzz. The combination of tug and



glider was blissfully ascending into the blue and I was prattling on about how much more genteel this type of launching was than being hurtled skywards by a winch. All tows were to 2000 feet. We must have been flying at about 1800' with wings level when the tug tips over on a wing and dives away quite smartish like. I remember saying something to the pupil in the front seat, what – I'm not sure. I also remembered to release the rope – told you I was quick – and watching the tug disappear earthwards. This is the good bit, in diving away the tug has left me with a great view of this twin-engine beast powering its way straight through the circuit. Trouble is, that view is from head-on, and I do mean head-on. Yesterday's emergency stands me in good stead as I follow the tug down.

I didn't think twice about flying on day 4, in the widely held belief that everything happens in threes. The same guy who shared yesterday's thrills was first on the list to fly and I asked him if he was totally happy about going up. He couldn't wait to get on board, if anything the whole episode had fired up all his macho thoughts of how gliding should be. In his mind, the twin was being flown by the Red Baron and we were Biggles and his mate who had lost all power. I know it doesn't fit but you get the general idea. By the way, he was Biggles.

Anyway, off we go. Our main course instructor has briefed the tug pilot to drop us off at the Post Office tower near Stockenchurch on the M4 at 3000' – you might know the area. The exercise was to plan and expedite a glide back to Booker. No problem. After the past few days you would think I'd be more alert, or less naïve or something.

My excuse for completely fouling up is that "Biggles" in front is still talking about our "Near Miss" – what's the next term in words before ...collision? Or I could blame the briefing or even myself. The simple fact is, that by the time we leave on our way back to Booker we're way below the slope. I quickly inform "Biggles" that we might not get back and may have to land out. He was on to this like a shot. "Terrific!" he says, probably seeing another page of glory in his log-book. I'd stated to dislike him and that really isn't like me.

Strange how instructors go decidedly quiet at

times like these. Not so our erstwhile chum at the sharp end. There is, I feel, a distinct difference in forces here. While I'm willing the glider to stay airborne, the opposition is all for a forced landing. Needless to say, I've been at the controls for some time now. He's picking the fields, I'm peering into the haze for some friendly landmarks. It always amazes me how slowly mother earth creeps by on these marginal final glides.

We did get back, how I'm not really sure. I would like to think my skills had something to do with it but I feel it was more to thwart our friend with the silk scarf and goggles in the front seat that did the trick.

As we crossed Booker's powered runway I remembered to breathe again. The log showed a total flight time of 22 minutes but it felt like 22 hours. Later in the afternoon a powered aircraft failed to take off and ran through the hedge at the far end of the field, it was that sort of a day.

Day 5 was also interesting – involving a high, out of position rope break for real – pretty routine really. Then on the first weekend I landed out in the Oly460 near a pig farm. The retrieve was carried out by a guy who earlier in the year had gone through a hedge sideways, across a road and through another hedge, while landing out in one of the club's K13s during a snowstorm. That sort of made my aerial activities seem rather mundane.

What of the second week I hear you ask – I believe it rained - and Biggles? Last I heard, he was CFI at a rather large club in the south.

*Frank Smith*

### **Walking On Air.**

No items for this issue so come on all you WOA members, send me your news and views. Anyone interested in finding out more, or volunteering to help, should contact Joe Fisher via the clubhouse.

### **Publicity**

As the New Year gets under way, we are always looking for club members to help with various events that we hold or attend during the summer. If you can help in any way, please get in touch or add

your name to the sheet on the notice board.

*Fred Joynes*



**Uni News**February 01 - A week of shenanigans

What a week! A very promising weather forecast from [weatherjack](#) on Sunday led to much of the club abandoning work and home for the week. Andrew got his gold height, everyone nearly came a cropper jumping wave bars in wooden ships, Guy made a mad dash downwind over the sea and Gareth's inner demon came out to play.

Highlights

Guy making his Norway attempt, only to be saved by not being able to read a compass. What with the 18km crossing of the Firth of Forth from 4000' in the Pirat, it was a good job that Guy drew up his will on Monday night. At least fish can't get foot and mouth! [photos on guy's page](#)

Andrew getting to round out height above a lenticular without any working cloud-flying instruments doing 100 knots in off the scale sink before contacting lift. A bit of a "sphincter closed and locked" moment.

Andrew flying Snoopy for over 7 hours in thermal, went 25K into a 25 knot wind and climbed in cloud to 6000. Great fun - the first taste of summer.

Gareth deciding that bronze badges are for wimps and striking out across country in FVU. He even had a taste of life the wrong way up. 5 hours and silver height in about 15 solos. Not bad if he doesn't kill himself or the aircraft!

January 01 - David Allan - First Solo

We haven't had much first solo action recently, so our congratulations to David. Trained almost solely by Ian 'Trotsky' Trotter, and assisted by an envious amount of dedication! We will have to put him through a thorough 'wood conversion' so that he doesn't fly anything yellow into a hedge on windy days! Well done Dave.

January 01 - Tim Sands - Bronze Badge

The inevitable has finally happened, a day has occurred on which both Tim and the Falke were on the airfield and (more or less) serviceable (*very much less in my case - Tim*). Even the weather was being cooperative for once and a short time later Tim was dodging model aircraft on the other side of the loch. Presumably Bob was sufficiently scared that he signed Tim off on field landings in

order to avoid having to repeat the ordeal.

Now Tim's only problem is finding enough money to fly having signed over all his worldly wealth to the BGA for the advancement of the Cause.

*Andrew Bates*

**Photograph Archive**

As most members know, the club has a splendid collection of photographs of club activities - some of which are displayed in the clubhouse lobby. These cover from the very early days up to the sixties. However, we are very short of more recent material. Any members wishing to donate suitable photographs to the archive should contact Bruce Marshall or any Board member. We are looking for prints of things like launch point scenes, hanger packing, ditch digging etc., with dates and names members. Aerial shots of the tops of wave clouds or favourite turning points are not required, unless there is some historical significance to the flight in question. Ultimately, the aim would be to preserve the photo archive on CD ROM, and perhaps display a section on the club website.

*Bruce Marshall*

**Club News**

We are about to start a refurbishment of the front office and are planning to set up the new portacabin for our accounts department and flight planning/briefing room. You will see the changes being implemented over the coming weeks.

If you have an e-mail address, please pass your details to: [office@Portmoak.force9.co.uk](mailto:office@Portmoak.force9.co.uk) for admin database update. We are considering future communications via e-mail and the first part is to gather all e-mail addresses.

As mentioned in the last issue, Neil Irving is the man who sends the Club News stuff to S&G. Let him (and me) know of any new solos and badge claims. Here's the latest (as seen in S&G): At the club's Christmas Dinner, awards were presented to Kevin Hook, Steve Nutley, John Galloway, John Williams, Z Goudie, Tony Brown, George Turnbull, Andrew Bates and Neil Irving.

Awards for service to the club were presented to Joe Fisher and Chris



Robinson. We have not had as much flying as we would have wished this winter, but we are well prepared for when the weather improves. Chris Robinson has most efficiently organised Cs of A for our fleet, and our winch has come back from a service with significant performance gain. Congratulations to Peter Clayton on his Bronze, cross-country endorsement and Silver height, and to Tim Sands for competing bronze. Colin Hamilton, Eoin MacDonald, and Mike Ward are organising a Tuesday evening course for *ab initios* to run from the end of February over the summer.

*Neil Irving*

### Information Meeting

About 60 members attended the first Information Meeting of 2001, held at the clubhouse on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> March.

Alan Bauld started the meeting off and set the scene for the evening.

Alistair Stewart presented details of the five-year plan and this stimulated a healthy debate around winches and proposed training aircraft. Alternative suggestions were presented from the floor by Colin Hamilton and the Board agreed to give these consideration. Alistair also highlighted various flying statistics (copies now available on the clubhouse notice board).

Next on the agenda was Bob Jones' presentation of our cadet scheme. This too provided an opportunity for debate and most members agreed that the scheme should remain and that this was a strong response to a National problem of attracting new, younger, members.

There then followed a general debate on many subjects pertaining to club activities, including training, and the meeting closed after two and a half hours.

Here's a short poem I found in an old issue – I thought it was relevant to our pre-solo members:

### The White Badge Pilots

They are the White Badge Pilots,  
They're so unsure and shy,  
They're only sure about one thing,  
That they would love to fly.

They really don't  
demand too much,



Just recognise they're there,  
Remember, please your student days,  
When God was in the air.

For as we all get old and grey,  
And the spark it fades and dies,  
It's good to have enthusiasts,  
With thermals in their eyes.

They feel they're so inferior,  
To yellow badge and red,  
But if you face the facts, my friends,  
There's something should be said.

That if they did not join our Club,  
With Badges pure and white,  
Then we could put our planes away,  
And kiss our club goodnight.

So spare a smile for our new friends,  
Our Ab-initio,  
It doesn't cost an awful lot,  
To say a bright "Hello!"

*Bob Kennedy*

### Equestrian centre – the latest

This is the latest article published in a local newspaper:

#### *Airfield saga comes to an end*

*The long running saga over the plan to build a house near the runway at Portmoak Airfield looks to be over.*

*The Scottish Gliding Union has been contesting the plan on safety grounds for almost two years and at a meeting of Perth and Kinross Development Control Committee on Wednesday, councillors finally agreed with the Gliding Club.*

*Four years ago, permission was granted for the establishment of an equestrian centre near the airfield, despite opposition from the Gliding Club. They argued then that horse riding and gliding were incompatible but the plans were passed and then the proprietors of the equestrian centre asked for consent to build a house near the runway.*

*After protracted negotiations, the committee agreed what they considered to be a compromise by giving planning*

permission for a house tied in with a section 75 agreement restricting equestrian activities below gliding flight paths.

The proprietors declined this and instead appealed to the Scottish Executive over a previous refusal of planning approval but having lost that appeal in December, they turned to the council asking for a resurrection of the original planning application which had been approved subject to conditions.

This request was put to the committee on Wednesday but after discussion they decided to withdraw the compromise offer and refuse the application.

The refusal was made on four grounds. Firstly the house was prejudicial to public safety because of its close proximity to gliding activities; and secondly the house would be a development within an area of great landscape value that had not been justified on the basis of operational need.

In addition the house was contrary to the council's housing in the countryside policy and the erection of a new building would be detrimental to the visual amenities of the area.

### He Cheated!

Colin Golding brought to my attention a newspaper cutting from the Daily Express, July 12<sup>th</sup> 1977:

#### **High-flier gets his wings clipped**

*A glider pilot was branded a high-flying cheat yesterday. Mike Field, a 31-year-old computer engineer with British Airways, was stripped of his two British records. The British Gliding Association says his claims for altitude and gain-of-height records were fraudulent. He has been told no future claims for gliding achievements will be entertained from him. Mr. Field of Torfield Copse, Bracknell, Berkshire, made his attempt above the Cairngorm Mountains in Scotland last March.*

*He claimed to have ascended to more than 51,800 feet at the controls of his Skylark sailplane in a specially developed pressure suit and helmet.*

*But the BGA believes the evidence of the climb – a trace of a height recording barograph – was faked.*

*Association chairman, Mr. Roger Barratt, said last night "This is the first time in our 50-year history we have felt it necessary to take action of this kind against a pilot.*

*"We did so after receiving a forensic*

*report on the evidence from the barograph.*

*"When we told Mr Field, he alleged the trace we were examining was not the one taken from the glider and signed by the official observer.*

*"This allegation has also been fully investigated and we remain entirely satisfied that the claims were fraudulent.*

*After his flight, Mr Field said he would not be attempting any more record flights for some time.*

*"I am somewhat alarmed about the ozone layer. Nobody knows what would happen to a human being who breathed ozone," he said.*

*His air brakes, he added, froze up and failed on the flight and he only gained control after diving to a lower altitude.*

*He was not available at his home yesterday, nor at the High-Wycombe airfield where he normally glides.*

### Man's Best Friend

One day in early January, a small band of fierce sheep had found their way onto the South field and a merry group of faithful members could be seen "rounding them up". At first, they split into pairs (the members – not the sheep!) and ran this way and that. The sheep didn't look too perturbed and coincidentally ambled back to their field through a convenient gap in the fence. As our satisfied troop made their way back to the club-house, the "ring-leader" sheep could be seen keekin' between the trailers and as soon as the coast was clear led the rest of them back onto the South field. The troops trooped back and this time made loud noises of the sheep-scaring kind. Ah, this did the trick – the sheep ran all the way home. Or did they? Of course not, they simply used the far trailer as a low-level turning point and were back munching our grass faster than ever. The third attempt involved the use of a car, as well as the determined group. It all looked good fun but as usual, the sheep returned to finish their lunch.

Enter Adi Vonhontard and his dog "Max". Adi had found Max at the local dog pound and had picked him as a pet. It wasn't until later that he found out that this "rescue" dog was a highly trained, albeit

out of work, sheepdog. Over the months, Adi even purchased a few



sheep of his own so that Max could keep his hand paw in. What followed on the airfield was like something out of “One man and his Dog” (Sorry Adi, this is one of those BBC2 programmes we used to watch in the UK – Ed). Max, who a couple of minutes ago was just an eager pet dog, suddenly turned into an efficient sheep rounding-up pet dog. This was poetry in motion, yes – even better than the Ash in a tight thermal turn! As soon as the sheep saw Max, they knew this was the real thing – not a bunch of daft old folk. The boss-sheep immediately led the flock back to their field and they haven’t been seen since. Well done Adi, but especially well done Max.

**Rotas for Duty Pilots and Instructors**

The rotas on the following page are for guidance only – the clubhouse notice board will contain latest lists with last minute changes.

5 <sup>th</sup> May	Bob Jones
6 <sup>th</sup> May	Ray Hill
12 <sup>th</sup> May	Brian Scougal
13 <sup>th</sup> May	Alan Bauld
19 <sup>th</sup> May	Ian Dandie
20 <sup>th</sup> May	Graham Smith
26 <sup>th</sup> May	Kevin Hook
27 <sup>th</sup> May	John Henry
2 <sup>nd</sup> June	Ian Trotter
3 <sup>rd</sup> June	Jonathon Pryce
9 <sup>th</sup> June	Joe Fisher
10 <sup>th</sup> June	Chris Robinson
16 <sup>th</sup> June	Frank Smith
17 <sup>th</sup> June	Bob Petrie
23 <sup>rd</sup> June	Vic Blaxill
24 <sup>th</sup> June	Mike Carruthers
30 <sup>th</sup> June	Bob Jones
1 <sup>st</sup> July	Ray Hill

**AEI Rota**

7 <sup>th</sup> April	Ed Murphy & Neil Irving
8 <sup>th</sup> April	Douglas Barr & Adi Nongontard
14 <sup>th</sup> April	Brian Cole-Hamilton & Bruce Marshall
15 <sup>h</sup> April	George Turnbull
21 <sup>st</sup> April	George Ross & Keith Buchan
22 <sup>nd</sup> April	Neil Irving
28 <sup>th</sup> April	Ed Murphy & Neil Irving
29 <sup>th</sup> April	Douglas Barr & Adi Vongontard
5 <sup>th</sup> May	Brian Cole-Hamilton & Bruce Marshall
6 <sup>th</sup> May	George Turnbull
12 <sup>th</sup> May	George Ross & Keith Buchan
13 <sup>th</sup> May	Peter Gallacher & Neil Irving
19 <sup>th</sup> May	Ed Murphy & Adi Vongontard
20 <sup>th</sup> May	Jim Cook & Douglas Barr

**Duty Pilot Rota**

7 <sup>th</sup> April	P.Clayton & A.Ramsay
8 <sup>th</sup> April	I.Easson & J.Rice
14 <sup>th</sup> April	R.Rigby & C.MacIntyre
15 <sup>th</sup> April	S.Back & O.Smith
21 <sup>st</sup> April	J.MacMillan & B.Smallman
22 <sup>nd</sup> April	D.Higson & J.Kennedy
28 <sup>th</sup> April	D.Tait & A.Young
29 <sup>th</sup> April	R.Mackie & R.Smith
5 <sup>th</sup> May	A.Rougvie & I.Norman
6 <sup>th</sup> May	G.Campbell & A.Loening
12 <sup>th</sup> May	R.MacIntyre & J.McGouldrick
13 <sup>th</sup> May	A.Wilson & H.Eagleton
19 <sup>th</sup> May	J.Green & B.Adamson
20 <sup>th</sup> May	R.Mortimer & R.Birch
26 <sup>th</sup> May	R.Adams & I.Armstrong
27 <sup>th</sup> May	R.Spellacy & S.Hartley
2 <sup>nd</sup> June	R.Lucas & J.Miller
3 <sup>rd</sup> June	D.Aspey & E.Wilson
9 <sup>th</sup> June	S.Pearce & A.Mochar
10 <sup>th</sup> June	E.Melville & I.Melville
16 <sup>th</sup> June	P.Clayton & A.Ramsay
17 <sup>th</sup> June	I.Easson & J.Rice

**Duty Supervisor Rota**

7 <sup>th</sup> April	Ian Trotter
8 <sup>th</sup> April	Jonathon Price
14 <sup>th</sup> April	Joe Fisher
15 <sup>th</sup> April	Chris Robertson
21 <sup>st</sup> April	Frank Smith
22 <sup>nd</sup> April	Bob Petrie
28 <sup>th</sup> April	Vic Blaxill
29 <sup>th</sup> April	Mike Carruthers

Remember that if you need to change any of these dates, make appropriate arrangements and let Eoin MacDonald know.





**“I learned about gliding from that“**The Field Landing by *Sierra Bravo*

It had been a competition flight in weak and windy conditions, and for the last 15 minutes or so, I had been struggling to remain airborne, all the while being drifted further and further from the second turning point.

During this time, I had been giving some thought towards finding a field, which was not easy, as the harvest was not yet in. However, I had now selected a suitable one, a level cut field of decent size, bordered by woods and a small caravan site, but with good approaches. The only problem was that it seemed to be a long way from any road. As my weak thermal finally expired, I decided that it was time to get safely back on the ground, so resigning myself to a complicated retrieve, I lowered the wheel and set up my circuit into this remote field.

As I turned on to the base leg, another field came into sight, one which had been invisible underneath me up until now. A little further upwind than my first choice, just beyond one of the woods, it seemed to be long and flat, and although it was pasture, there was no sign of any livestock. Furthermore, it was right next to a farm and only yards from a main road. I hesitated for a second or two, but the thought of saving a couple of hours of hot and backbreaking work carrying the machine to the trailer was just too tempting. I put the brakes back in and lined up on the new field.

A second or two later, it became very clear that this was not a clever idea! With an additional hundred yards to run into the stiff breeze, and trees to cross, the approach was now very marginal, even without any brake. I had just enough height to clear the last of the trees with a few feet to spare, and let out my breath with a gasp of relief – but my problems were only just beginning!

Now that I could see the surface of the field at close range, it was clear that, although it was reasonably level, it was certainly not flat – in fact the first quarter of its length, where I was now committed to touch down, was more like the mountains of the moon! All I could do was to hold off high and try to float on until I reached a reasonably smooth bit. I actually touched down on an upward slope with a bang

which made my teeth rattle, and rolled to a halt, hoping that the machine hadn't suffered any damage. Then, as I opened the canopy, I saw the cattle, which had been standing in the shade of the trees at the edge of the field, and were now galloping towards me!

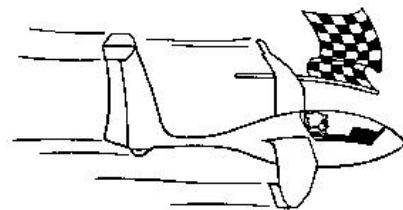
The next five minutes was a nightmare. While I was trying to shoo some of the animals away from the tail, one beast decided to take a short cut over the wing tip, giving it a hearty kick in the process. I rushed to the tip and held the wings level, only to see another jump over the fuselage, nearly snapping the brunswick tube off in the process. Mercifully, the farmer arrived at this point, and after a couple of yells from him, the beasts trotted meekly away, to trouble me no more.

I crawled around the aircraft, looking for damage. Apart from the hoof mark, which dented the wingtip, I could find none, and had got away with my heavy landing. As I waited for the trailer, I had plenty of time to reflect that I had narrowly avoided disaster no less than three times, and resolved that I would not abandon a perfectly acceptable field again.

And what of the inaccessibility of the first field? While I was waiting, two cars, with caravans, drove out of the little caravan site, along a track which passed through it! We could have towed the trailer up to the glider after all!

*Sierra Bravo*

Have you learned something from an “exciting” incident? Articles to me via the details on the front page.

**Club Ladder Update**

As of going to press there have only been a few flights this season, and, due to current restrictions on flights this is, unfortunately, likely to continue. Keep an eye out in the clubhouse and web-site for more frequent updates. The current leaders of



the club Weekend and Open Ladder are Kevin Hook and John Williams, respectively. Tony Brown flew a respectable 295km in November and John flew to Todhead Lighthouse and back at close to 90kph in February in his LS7, Z7.

After the last issue I said I would endeavour to explain some of the jargon and rules of flying cross-country flights using the current Federal Aeronautique Internationale (FAI) Rules. A good web site is run by the FAI (the governing body for all air sports) at [www.fai.org](http://www.fai.org), with links to downloadable files of the Sporting Code (SC). This document contains everything you need to know about badge, record claims and notes for Official Observers (OO's).

More and more pilots are using Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS) for navigating and logging their flights. This is a generic term used to describe the US GPS and the Russian GLOSNASS navigation systems. The International Gliding Commission (IGC) has approved certain flight recorders (FR) for badge and record flights. You must use an approved GNSS/FR combination if your flight is to be valid. An example of a GNSS would be a Garmin 12XL unit, an example of a FR would be an EW barograph. Some GNSS/FR come as one, i.e. the Volkslogger. If you use a logger for badge flying bear in mind the following to ensure success;

For a valid flight certain conditions must be met. You must ensure that your Geodic Datum in the GNSS is set to the WGS 84 standard. WGS 84 is the World Geodic System 1984, and is currently the most accepted spheroidal mathematical model of the earth's shape, and is the system the IGC has based it's current GNSS fixes and calculations on. The sampling rate must not be greater than one minute, otherwise the flight will be invalidated. A smaller interval is recommended, between 10 and 20 seconds is commonly used (I use 12 seconds as this allows adequate post-flight analysis of thermalling, and doesn't use up too much memory).

At or near turning points use the fast sampling feature if there is one. Some FR do this automatically but others require manual input. 1 second logging will be make you confident of valid fix within the OZ.

At least one valid lat/long must be in

the OZ or a straight line joining two consecutive valid fixes must pass through the zone. The observation zone (OZ) is defined as a 90 degree sector. Other competitions or the club ladder may use a cylinder or other shape. Only the SC Section 3 definitions are valid for badge flights. **DO NOT CONFUSE THESE AS YOU MAY TURN SHORT OF THE OZ ON A BADGE FLIGHT. MAKE SURE THIS IS SET CORRECTLY ON YOUR FLIGHT RECORDER BEFORE TAKING OFF.** Good Luck and Happy Flying for the rest of the season, if we get one!!

*Neil Goudie* Club Ladder Steward

Competitors and club members, please note the following details of this year's Scottish Inter-Club League fixtures (subject to Foot & Mouth):

Aboyne – 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> May

Easterton – 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> August

### **Could you be an Official Observer?**

Official Observers are a valuable resource to any club and we are always on the look out for more. These trustworthy individuals can make the difference between success and failure to your badge claims.

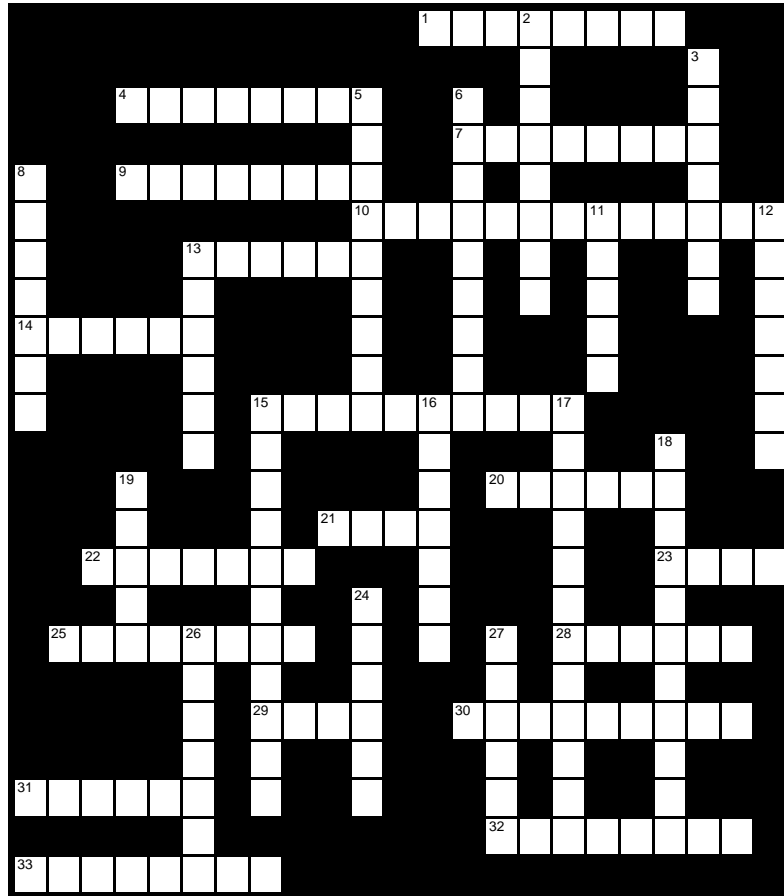
Minimum qualifications are: Silver badge, or current gliding instructor, or continuous connection with the active side of gliding for the previous 3 years.

If you meet the criteria and are interested, fill in the application form (copies in the clubhouse). You'll need signatures from the CFI and the Club Chairman, and a cheque for £7.50. On acceptance, you'll receive a copy of the FAI Sporting Code 1992 and the BGA notes for Official Observers 1992, as well as your Official Observer No. Next issue, I will publish a list of all SGC Official Observers.

Are you already an OO? Please pass your details to me and I will add them to the database.



**Crossword 2000-3**



- 28 The board has one, but the end is in the Aga! (6)
- 29 It made me wet, so I ran around. (4)
- 30 About to go for a spin? (9)
- 31 British Airways to US city. Turn here if you are on the ball. (6)
- 32 A dog without a tail, required if you don't get back. (8)
- 33 What, no wheel back there? (4,4)

**Down**

- 2 Left a thousand in front of a tree to find UK record goal. (8)
- 3 Winch waggle? (3,4)
- 5 The flying rucksack. (9)
- 6 A slowing down deployment. (4,5)
- 8 A feline, after a drink will get you high. (7)
- 11 This has flights - there could be a right row. (5)
- 12 A T59, or could be a wind-hover. (7)
- 13 Fee is hot - all mixed up in the Cairngorms. (6)
- 15 Don't let this allow you to slip into the turn. (7,4)
- 16 Pig outside the dike? One doesn't make it a summer. (7)
- 17 Increase in wind speed with height (4,8)
- 18 High technology? (7,4)
- 19 Sounds like a Vulcan. (5)
- 24 Have one in lunch. (6)
- 26 The green holder of words (3,4)
- 27 Room for the rigged. (6)

**SGC Crossword 2000-3 © Compiled by Ian Easson**

**Across**

- 1 Its wet up here. (3,5)
- 4 A downwind hole? (5,3)
- 7 Sounds like a car check for a chopper. (8)
- 9 The phonetic month. (8)
- 10 Pythagoras at war. (5,2,6)
- 13 Man-made or synthetic? (6)
- 14 Latin hair. May be standard! (6)
- 15 The effect of aileron drag. (7,3)
- 20 Cork east point for rubber rope. (6)
- 21 The dog's got one, usually. (4)
- 22 Nearly tartan outside vehicle - stick it in the cockpit. (7)
- 23 I hear you can throw these at Aberdeen Airport. (4)
- 25 A tender sausage, I hear. It has to be brown for an ASH25. (4,4)

**Do you have any good clues that I could use in future crosswords?**

