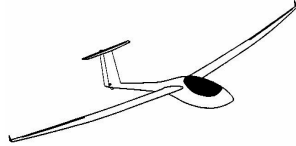


From the home of the *Scottish Gliding Union*

Portmoak Press

Editorial – Ian Easson

As I write this issue, I am reminded to change the clocks this weekend and that the dark nights will soon be upon us. This, of course, means the amount of daylight hours available for flying will be drastically reduced. My plans for those shorter days include getting my annual checks competed as well as the usual arm-chair cross-country planning. What about you? How do you plan for the year ahead? Drop me a note and I'll publish the best ones in the next issue.



A word of warning, from someone with first-hand experience! Like many pilots, I keep my gliding bag (everything from logger, maps, radio, cables etc.) in the car. I also keep my camera kit in the car – well, you never know when you might need a camera. Anyway, the point of my story is that I no longer keep those things in the car. In fact I no longer have those things to keep in the car! One night, at the end of September, the whole lot was stolen from my car in a London NCP. It appears that the thief was looking for my sat-nav. Apparently my screen-mount was a loud and clear signal that my sat-nav was in the car – it wasn't, I had it in my pocket. The thief, obviously disappointed that he couldn't find my sat-nav, managed to climb into the back of the car and lift everything else! I am currently in dialogue with the insurance people but probably my most valuable item cannot be returned. My log book with each flight noted and signed by various instructors, including Derek Piggott, will never be recovered. I can, of course, get a summary of flights and hours from the club system (a big thanks to Kevin for supplying that), and I may use a couple of winter evenings to re-write the details into my new log-book. I wonder how

many of you keep your valuables in the car even when you

are nowhere near the club. Just imagine how you would feel if someone relieved you of your gliding bag – especially if, like me, you have built up your collection of cables and brackets and connectors over the years. Anyway, just be careful and remember that there are a lot of bad people out there.

In this issue, I have included an article from an ex-instructor and his Harrier pilot pal who enjoyed one of Chris Robertson's courses at the end of July. Ricky Jackson reveals the fallibility of the windsock and John Williams becomes the first UK based pilot to win the European On-Line Competition (OLC). One last plea to all members, new or old, experienced or ab initio, regular contributors or not, to consider submitting material for *Portmoak Press*. Details of how to do this can be found below. Cut off dates are as follows: End of September for October, end of December for January, end of March for April and end of June for July. Material can be sent to me either typed or hand-written and dropped in my mailbox beside the payphone, or e-mail me at ian.easson@btinternet.com

In this issue:

Editorial – Ian Easson	1
Club News.....	2
Friday evening lectures	2
Changes to the Sporting Code.....	3
Scottish Glider Pilot Beats All-comers	3
It's almost like roller skating	4
The Windsock never lies – or does it?	4
Duty Pilot Responsibilities	7
Duty Rota (extract from on-line system)	7
Duty Rota (extract from on-line system)	8



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Club News

Wear Your Badge with Pride

At a recent meeting, the consensus amongst those present was that it would be a Really Good Thing if SGU members wore their badges, so that we all know who people are and what gliding experience they have. So this message is an attempt to encourage you to do just that!

If you have views on this subject please contribute to the "Shy Violets?" thread I've started on the Forum (<http://ccgi.portmoak.force9.co.uk/membersboard/vi ewtopic.php?t=449>) to discuss this and any other suggestion raised at the meeting.

Kate Byrne 16th Nov

Oban Radio

To all Falkers, Jodellers and any other itinerant glider pilots who may be interested:-
New frequency for Oban Radio at Oban Airport [Connel to you and me] is 118.050 Mhz, and their phone no. for PPR is 01631 710384

Bruce Marshall 14th Dec

Duty Roster

As a lot of you will already know the club have introduced a new online system (DutyMan) for managing the weekend duty roster. In order for this system to work efficiently it requires each member, who is currently on the Duty Instructor/Pilot rota, to have a valid email address. Therefore if you haven't already supplied the club with a valid email address can you please email me at

<mailto:sgcrosters@dsl.pipex.com> and I'll update your details.

Those of you who have already submitted a valid email address will have received a Welcome email from DutyMan with login details and instructions on how to use the system. If you have any questions please speak to me in person or send an email to <mailto:sgcrosters@dsl.pipex.com>.

Also, as well as using the new system to request duty swaps, could you please also use it to confirm that you are available to do the duty allocated to you.

Vic Leitch

Friday evening lectures

This winter's Friday evening programme is detailed below. While mainly designed for pre and post Bronze Badge Pilots, we hope that all members will find these talks interesting. Evenings will run from 7.30 to 10.30 pm with a tea break between subjects.

Pre bronze pilots are expected to attend these talks. Please bring log books and training cards with you. (Anyone wishing a meal before the start should contact Irene preferably a day before. Note that catering will not be available on two dates –as indicated below.)

16th Nov

Why and when you should use the Motor Falke (*Neil McAuley*) - (no catering)

Radio without a license – why you should get one (*Doug Tait*)

30th Nov

Theory of flight – how gliders fly (*Matt Stickland*)

Glider construction & maintenance (*Pete Williams*)

14th Dec

Becoming a Bronze and x-country pilot (*Kate Byrne*)

Meteorology theory (*Gareth Francis*)

Christmas & New Year Break

4th Jan

Aerobatics (*Neil McAulay*)

Aircraft limitations (*Joe Fisher*)

18th Jan

Forming and operating syndicates (*Peter Clayton*) (no catering) & Field landings (*Alan Boyle*)



Evening Lectures (cont.)1st FebStalling and spinning (*Kate Byrne*)Gliding in the Andes (*Carl Peters*)15th FebInternet met for wave flying (*Kevin Hook*)Task planning (*John Williams*)29th FebLookout and collision avoidance (*Tiny Irving*)Club oxygen systems (*Chris Robinson*)14th MarPortmoak airspace (*Kevin Hook*)Competition flying (*Carl Peters*)28th MarRigging club aircraft and using trailers (*Chris Robinson*)*Kate Byrne
Peter Clayton***Changes to the Sporting Code**

The following are the changes to the Sporting code from 1st October 2007.

They amount to a dark hint that cameras won't be allowed for badge claims from 1st Oct 2008 (but don't say anything about barographs not being allowed for height claims) and the removal of the rule about only one speed and one distance record being claimed from any one flight.

NOTE

It is expected that the use of photographic evidence for flight verification will not be allowed after 30th September 2008.

b. A SOARING PERFORMANCE may be claimed from any flight that meets the requirements of proof for that performance. (AL8)

*1.4.3 Free distance performances for records only
The WAY POINT(S) of free distance record flight performances may be declared postflight.*

Free distance courses may be claimed in conjunction with any other flight course

in 1.4.4, 1.4.5, and 1.4.6 using declared WAY POINT(S) if desired.

The free distance record types are: (AL8)

3.0.2 Records in any one flight

Any record or records may be claimed for which the requirements are met. (AL8)

*Basil***Scottish Glider Pilot Beats All-comers in European Competition**

Scottish glider pilot, John Williams, is the winning European pilot in a competition which has had more than 8,600 entrants across 22 European countries. Extraordinarily, all his flights were done entirely in Scotland for a competition which has never been won by the United Kingdom before.

He flies from Portmoak near Kinross and his flights have taken him to places where no glider has ever been before - as far North as Cape Wrath, West to Iona and Islay and even East out over the North Sea by Montrose.

For some years the German flying magazine "Aerokurier" has organised the competition where glider pilots submit their six longest flights each year to compete to be the OLC (online contest) Champion.

Until now the expectation is for pilots who fly in the large continental countries with their large land masses, strong thermals and high mountains to do the longest flights.

John has developed new gliding techniques which allow him to overcome the European advantages and break UK records in his efforts to fly further and faster than ever before.

On Easter Sunday he flew a total distance of 1200km, 200 km more than the then UK record. On September 10th he again flew more than 1,000km, this time at a record speed of more than 140kph (83mph) using only air currents flowing over the Scottish mountains.

Part of John's success is that he flies a revolutionary new glider – an "Antares" which has a fold away propeller and enough battery power to launch him into the sky before he sets off on air power only. It's the only one of its type in the UK.

(Press Release)

It's almost like roller skating

I have been away from gliding since 1978 when I left the London Club after almost fifteen years in the sport. I think I was tired of instructing ever more difficult pupils whose main aim seemed to be to kill me if they could. A couple of years back I discovered gliding simulators, and have derived great pleasure from flying my computer, where the weather is always good, and the planes are always new. I worked my way through several sims finding snags in all of them, till I came upon Condor. This is the best gliding simulator available right now and I have done about 600hours and 50000 Km of cross-countries. I am currently the leading UK pilot in their world ranking list! So much for the preamble.

I sing in a couple of choirs, and one of my fellow choristers Douglas Hamilton turned out to be a retired FAA Sea Harrier pilot with loads of fast jet hours, but only one gliding trip in his log books. I casually suggested to him one day that maybe we could have a week flying gliders together to see if flying really was like roller skating – something you never forget. He agreed and we decided that the nearest club which ran week long courses would suit us best, and we signed up for course 14 starting in the last week of July. Some of you may recall that this was about the only week in the summer of 2007 which contained five flying days.

We had a really excellent week. Chris Robinson our instructor, a club member Robert Furness (who was de-rusting after a break) and the pair of us made up our little team and we set about getting as much flying in as possible. The ASK21 which we mostly flew was a revelation to me as I had never flown glass before. My last two seater trips in 1978 were in ASK13s, though I had flown nearly all the two seaters from T31 through to the K13 in the ten years I spent as an instructor in four English clubs. The ASK21 seemed to float forever, and reaching the hill from our 1200ft launches seemed to cost no height at all. I was considerably rusty, and didn't get off solo, but I had nearly six hours of fun, soaring the local ridges, thermals and little bits of wave.

Douglas did get away solo on the Friday

but then he had only been away from flying for about six years. I think another couple of flights would have seen me re-soloing as well. I may return to complete this feat. Actually I wasn't really concerned about flying solo again – been there, done 2000+ solos, got Silver, so I don't feel I need to prove anything. I found that the skill all came back in about two flights and since gliding is about fun, and the scenery around Portmoak is so spectacular compared to the other clubs I flew with, just flying around with Chris chatting in the back was very pleasant indeed.

It was a pleasure to find a club as well organised as the SGU. Everything worked – the planes – the winch – the ground equipment (well maybe that dodgy Discovery we used for retrieves could do with some TLC!) and the support organisation, presided over by Irene, all went like a well oiled machine. Even the weather co-operated to make this a truly enjoyable return to flying. I'm pondering my next move.

*Alistair Wright (C462)
Melrose*

The Windsock never lies – or does it?

Does the windsock always tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

It was a warm and pleasant Tuesday evening in late July and I was one of the small team of instructors giving trial lessons to an enthusiastic group of around a dozen people.

There was a moderate Westerly blowing and Bob-the-Tuggie dropped us at the South end of Bishop at 1,500 ft QFE, making it fairly easy to give a 20-minute lesson by taking advantage of the easy soaring conditions.

Mrs Bloggs was next in the queue to fly with me and I gave her as much of the safety briefing as I could without having either an aircraft or a parachute to hand, both of which were still in the air and nearing the end of their flight. I pointed out the windsock, indicating that the wind was blowing on to the face of Bishop, thereby being forced upwards

and giving gliders the opportunity to fly in rising air and stay aloft. Mrs Bloggs was very



much looking forward to her first flight in a glider and waited excitedly for our aircraft to land. Shortly thereafter, HPV was on final approach and the K21 touched down gently in the North Field, to be retrieved by one of our excellent team of Tuesday evening assistants. Mrs Bloggs and I were soon securely strapped into the glider and Bob-the-Tuggie wound up the big elastic band – rope attached – take up slack – all out – and we were off!

Shortly before reaching our release height, I offered Mrs Bloggs the opportunity to pull the bung, which she gladly accepted. At 1,400 ft on the clock, I told her to pull the release, checked that the rope had gone, good lookout, followed by a climbing left turn to soar towards the North along the face of Bishop. The hill was working well and we quickly gained 200–300 ft. Visibility was good and Mrs Bloggs really appreciated the magnificent scenery. She was one of those ‘naturals’, who managed to do everything right first time and loved every minute of her first gliding lesson.

After teaching Mrs Bloggs ‘Lookout’, the effects of the elevator, ailerons and finally the rudder, a quick glance at my stopwatch told me that it was time to start planning a circuit. By this time, Mrs Bloggs was sufficiently proficient that she was able to fly with coordinated aileron, rudder and elevator, leaving me to tell her where to point the glider, whilst I kept a good lookout and planned the circuit.

Prior to arriving at High Key somewhere North of St Serf’s near the edge of Loch Leven, I silently began my pre-landing checks:

Wind – wind shadows on the loch in front of Castle Island are clearly Westerly – no waves on the surface, but clear shadows – estimate perhaps 10 knots Westerly – consistent with the fact that we’ve been soaring Bishop without much difficulty for the last 10 – 15 minutes. Check the windsock to make sure. Hmmm – not so sure – doesn’t look quite right – looks like it might be a light Easterly. That’s a bit strange! Check the wind shadows on the loch again – no, definitely Westerly! What’s going on? Can’t be seeing the windsock properly. I think I’ll ask

Portmoak Base what the wind’s doing down there.

Me: “*Portmoak Base, Hotel Papa Victor*”

Portmoak Base: “*H? &el P\$&a V£o*r mes” * &age*”
The wing tape on the K21 was not in its best state of repair and the ambient noise in the back seat was rather high. To make matters worse, the signal from Portmoak Base was poor, making the response only partly readable – Readability 2 – 3.

Me: “*Please advise surface wind, Hotel Papa Victor.*”

Portmoak Base: “*Hotel P^*& Vi7t&r Wind &^& &(* &%” £\$ £ *() knots *7y&78 ... &**”

Me: “*Readability 2 – say again – Hotel Papa Victor*”

Portmoak Base: “*Hotel P^*& Vi7t&r Wind &^& &(* &%” £\$ £ *() knots *7y&78 &* ^%(&* &^&^* ^”*

Me: “*Unable copy – say again – wind strength and direction only, Hotel Papa Victor*”

Portmoak Base: “*Hotel P^*& Vi7t&r Wind &^& &(* &%” £\$ £ *() knots *7y&78 &* ^%(&* &^&^* %^”*

OK...enough of this nonsense – I’m on my own!

Check the wind shadows on the loch again – yes, definitely Westerly. However, just in case, Plan-B is that I’ll check the windsock again when I’m on the downwind leg. If it really is Easterly, I’ll make a U-turn followed by a left-hand circuit into the North Field, landing towards the East.

Mrs Bloggs is taking us nicely towards High Key and I continue with my pre-landing checks.

Undercarriage – fixed in this aircraft

Landing area – North Field is clear

Flaps – none in this aircraft

Straps – “Are your straps tight and secure, Mrs Bloggs?” “Yes.” “Mine are too.”

Speed – 55 knots approach speed

Trim – Trim for approach speed

Airbrakes – quick check to see that they’re working correctly – warn Mrs Bloggs first!

Landing area – North Field is still clear

Lookout – good look around for traffic outside the circuit, traffic in the opposite circuit, on long final – everywhere – all clear

Me: “*Portmoak traffic, Hotel Papa Victor, downwind, right*”

“I have control.” ...

“You have control.” Mrs Bloggs relinquishes control and relaxes to



enjoy the scenery while I take over for the circuit and landing.

About half-way down the downwind leg, heading East toward Scotlandwell, I now have a clear view of the windsock. Yes, the wind has definitely swung around to the East at about 3 – 5 knots. It's time for Plan-B!

Me: *"Portmoak traffic, Hotel Papa Victor, wind changed Easterly. Changing landing direction. Joining downwind, left, North Field, landing towards the East."*

Good lookout, 180 degree turn to the right, heading downwind toward Loch Leven again.

Quick thinking required here ... Is Bob-the-Tuggie likely to want to change ends? Mrs Bloggs was near the end of the queue. By this time, there will probably be only one or two more left to fly. Best guess is that, despite the light tailwind, Bob will choose to launch from the West end of the airfield in order to save time. No problem – I'll land long, coming to a stop with around a quarter of the length of the North field in front of me to ensure adequate safety margin.

Turn left and left again on to base leg and left again on to final approach. Deliberately leave the brakes closed and cross the threshold at around 300 ft, selecting my reference area at about half-way along the length of the North Field. Open half-airbrake. Nose goes down a little, but I'm clearly overshooting my reference area. Open two-thirds airbrake. Nose lowers a little further, but I'm still clearly overshooting my reference area. Open full airbrake! Nose lowers a little more, but I'm STILL overshooting!

Glance at the vario – sink rate is only a few knots!! What's going on?! I've opened full airbrake and this beast is barely coming down! Take another look out the window at the fast-approaching windsock and two words come to mind – the second of which is, "smelly brown stuff" – starting to think about some more serious options now.

Decision – full brake/full sideslip – if that doesn't make her fly like a grand piano, nothing will!

Full right rudder, stick near the rear left corner – Mrs Bloggs immediately turns her head round towards the back seat, as if to say,

"What on Earth's going on? Why are we flying sideways?!!!"

As part of our instructor training, we were taught that when the flying gets tough, SHUT UP and concentrate on the flying! That's exactly what I did. I ignored Mrs Bloggs altogether and focussed entirely on holding that sideslip for as long as possible. The K21 was now descending, but not as steeply as one might expect with full brakes and full sideslip.

Holding the sideslip for as long as I dared, I straightened up at around 50 ft and plonked her down, applying full wheel-brake immediately after the main wheel made contact with the ground and coming to a halt with about 100 metres to spare!! I remember releasing a huge "Phew!" almost at the same instant as Mrs Bloggs turned around to say, "THAT FLIGHT WAS ABSOLUTELY BRILLIANT! THANK YOU!!" I just smiled weetly and told her how well she had done!

So, what was going on here and why did I have so much trouble landing a K21, which, after all, is not a difficult glider to land in a field that's half the length of Portmoak's North Field, even in nil-wind conditions?

With the benefit of 20-20 vision in hindsight, here is the answer:

There was indeed a moderate Westerly wind of around 10 knots. That's why we were able to soar Bishop so easily and is also why the wind shadows on Loch Leven agreed. However, from the time I was planning our circuit, the sea breeze was approaching from the East. The sea breeze was stronger than the prevailing Westerly and must have been around 12 – 15 knots. The front formed by the convergence of these Westerly and Easterly winds just happened to be over the airfield at that time, giving a 2 – 5 knots Easterly wind at the windsock, with a 10 knot Westerly wind at the other end of the airfield!

To make matters worse, the convergence of these two air masses created lift over the centre of the airfield, where I had chosen my reference area! Not only did I have a 10 knot tailwind, but I also had to contend with lift on



my final approach! As if that wasn't enough, I had deliberately chosen to land long and shorten my runway by 50%!!

The moral of the story –

- If you're in any doubt at all about the wind direction, never attempt to land long. Just in case there may be surprises in store, always aim to approach low over the fence.
- Be aware of your groundspeed on the downwind leg of your circuit. If it appears to be slow and you've checked that your airspeed and attitude both look correct, the only explanation is that you're flying upwind, not downwind. If you have a GPS on board, a quick glance will tell you whether your groundspeed is less than your airspeed, if so, confirming that you're flying upwind.
- If you're in any doubt about the wind direction (i.e. is it Westerly or Easterly?), consider landing crosswind. For example, with traffic and other safety considerations permitting, I could have chosen to land in the South Field towards the Southeast. In so doing, I would have given myself a longer descent path and would have eliminated most of the tailwind component. The resulting crosswind landing would have been easy and the actual direction of the crosswind – whether from the left or from the right – would have hardly mattered at all.
- If you're a solo pilot, give yourself an honest answer to this question, "Am I really competent and confident at slide-slipping, with or without airbrakes?" If the answer is no, then consider asking an instructor to revise side-slipping with you. You never know when it may save you from having to explain to the CFI why you landed in the field beyond the airfield! Incidentally, beware of side-slipping some single-seaters, such as the Discus and Pegase, with full airbrake. The turbulent airflow aft of the airbrake on the forward wing washes over the tailplane and causes it to stall, making the elevator ineffective and causing the nose to drop with no way of lifting it with the elevator. The recovery action is

to close the brakes, which unstalls the tail and resumes normal control. Try this only at height!

- If the windsock indicates that the wind has changed direction, don't assume that it has changed direction over the full length of the airfield. Whilst this may be true, there may be occasions where you could be in for a nasty surprise! Consider a crosswind landing and don't attempt to land long.

Remember, the windsock may not be telling the whole truth!

Ricky Jackson

Duty Pilot Responsibilities

Please check the attached the Duty rota to see whether you have a duty. I have tried to take account of known preferences for Saturdays or Sundays. Note the new on-line system (see page 2). The feedback from Duty Supervisors is that Duty Pilots are sometimes not turning up. This leads to slower launch rates and slower retrieves, and everybody loses out. Please, please, if you find that you are not available, arrange a swap with someone else. Phone numbers and email addresses are available in the Members' Directory.

For ease of reference, I have included a copy of the CFI's briefing notes for duty pilots after the Duty Rota.

Alec Stevenson

Duty Rota (extract from on-line system)

DP = Duty Pilot, DS = Duty Supervisor

Sat 10 th Nov	DP	Scott Kennedy
	DS	Joe Fisher
Sun 11 th Nov	DP	Donald Cowan
	DS	George Ross
Sat 17 th Nov	DP	Gary Donachie
	DS	Gerry Marshall
Sun 18 th Nov	DP	George McKay
	DS	Bob Petrie
Sat 24 th Nov	DP	Jeff King



	DS	Ian Norman
Sun 25 th Nov	DP	John Galloway
	DS	Mike Carruthers

Duty Rota (extract from on-line system)

DP = Duty Pilot, DS = Duty Supervisor

Sat 1 st Dec	DP	Garry Simpson
	DS	Ian Dandie
Sun 2 nd Dec	DP	David Coats
	DS	Chris Robinson
Sat 8 th Dec	DP	Peter Williams
	DS	Gerry Marshall
Sun 9 th Dec	DP	Vic Leitch
	DS	John Hendry
Sat 15 th Dec	DP	David Gardiner
	DS	Neil McAulay
Sun 16 th Dec	DP	Scott Hardie
	DS	Bob Jones
Sat 22 nd Dec	DP	Colin Hagerty
	DS	Andrew Bates
Sun 23 rd Dec	DP	David Hyde
	DS	Kate Byrne
Sat 29 th Dec	DP	Christian Maclean
	DS	Alan Boyle
Sun 30 th Dec	DP	Ron Mackie
	DS	Willie Laing

SGU DUTY PILOT BRIEFING NOTES

These notes are not a comprehensive guide to flying procedures, but merely a guide to the responsibilities of the Duty Pilot. All solo pilots with more than 10 hours in the last year should have sufficient knowledge of Airfield organisation to carry out the role of Duty Pilot.

The Duty Pilot is the person responsible, under the direction of the Duty Instructor, for the efficient running of the Launch Point. (S)he is not required to do all the work, but needs to make sure there are sufficient competent



“volunteers” to keep the Launch Point running safely and efficiently. With the co-operation of other members, there should be an opportunity for Duty Pilots to fly on their duty days.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Arrive early and make yourself known to the Duty Instructor, who will guide you as to the Initial Tasks – typically these could include:

- ensuring that the caravan contains the flying list, log sheets, ballast weights, seat backs, weak links etc.
- disconnecting the caravan from the battery charger and taking it to the launch point
- with suitable help, unpacking the required club gliders from the hangar
- cleaning the gliders and canopies as necessary
- ensuring that the full complement of batteries and parachutes is put in the gliders.
- organise carrying out the Daily Inspections;
- organise moving the gliders to the launch point. **[obvious, but true – the earlier these things happen, the earlier flying commences!]**
- Flying List:
 - Monitor the list and TRY to prevent queue jumping!
 - The flying list is also useful for identifying new members and visitors, and you should help them get the best from their time at the club. Make sure that newcomers are given a safety briefing, and monitor what they are doing.
 - You should recruit competent people from the list waiting to fly to help with tasks at the launch point.
- Log Keeping:
 - Accurate log keeping is essential. It is a safety requirement, for monitoring the “landed” or “flying” status of each glider. It is also a legal requirement, and the Treasurer becomes deeply unhappy if he does not get the correct information to charge for launching and flying fees!
 - Make sure that the log is competently manned at all times, briefing each new log keeper on the duties if needed.

- Pilots' names, membership numbers and glider numbers must be entered in the log BEFORE launching takes place.
- Record the launch time from the watch attached to the log, and keep a good lookout around the field to record landing times.
- Log sheets should record out-landings, if the information is available.
- If a glider is not logged down at the end of flying, the Duty Instructor MUST be informed. [Although, if a glider lands back on the Airfield and is not logged down, it is the pilot's duty to check the entry in the log.]
- Glider Queue:
 - We use a two-drum winch, so gliders should normally be organised into a queue of two lines, one either side of the cones between which the cable retrieve vehicle drives.
 - Pilots approaching the front of the queue should be encouraged to complete cable release checks and positive control checks before reaching the front of the launch line, so that they are ready to launch as soon as the cables arrive.
 - Normally, use the downwind cable first to reduce the risk of tangles – unless the winch driver confirms that the upwind cable can be used.
 - If a pilot is not ready for the cable, give it to the next pilot who is ready, if this is practicable. Leave the first pilot to complete checks, etc. Do not try to “hurry up” any launch – safety comes first!
 - Do not let anyone handle the second cable until the first is fully drawn in, and the amber light on the winch has stopped flashing.
 - As soon as the two launches are complete, move up the next two gliders and ensure that the pilots are ready to launch. Good organisation at the launch point is a habit that should be practised even when things are quiet.
- Signalling:
 - This should only be entrusted to someone who fully understands the launch procedure.
- The wingtip holder and signaller MUST have a clear view of each other, failing which a third person MUST relay the signals.
- Visual signals must be used.
- When briefing someone on signalling, ensure that (s)he fully understands both (1) the Stop signal, and (2) that ANYONE may stop a launch if they perceive a safety hazard.
- Weak Links and Cable Handling:
 - There should be at least two weak links of each colour at the launch point, on the rack on the caravan. If any are missing or broken, ask the winch driver to send a replacement.
 - The correct weak link should be waiting with each glider before the cables arrive. There is a table at the back of the red ring binder describing the colour of weak link required for various glider types.
 - Make sure that when weak links are swapped, they are returned to the rack on the caravan and not left lying on the airfield.
 - Be vigilant in preventing anyone from handling the second cable while the first one is still live.
- Parachutes etc:
 - Parachutes and other ancillaries such as batteries, ballast weights and seat backs provided for use in club gliders are SAFETY-RELATED items and must be carefully looked after and returned to safe storage at the end of the day.
 - Parachutes must be treated with great care at all times – never lay them on the ground or let them get wet. They must be bagged and returned to the store in the hangar at the end of flying. Your life may depend on this procedure. If you have any doubts about a parachute, take it out of service until it can be checked.
 - Similarly, batteries must be returned to the store in the hangar at the end of flying, and connected to the battery chargers.
 - Seat backs and ballast weights must be returned to the caravan.
- Cable Retrieve:
 - Anyone who can drive can learn to retrieve cables,



although they will require a demonstration of the process before going “solo”.

- Ideally, the retrieve vehicle will be on its way back to the winch before the first cable is used, but make sure it stays clear of the launching glider in case there is a launch failure. Return trips to the winch should use the ash track or farm road where practicable.
- Brief the drivers to bring the cables in a straight line from the winch to the cones adjacent to the caravan.

- Glider Retrieve:

- This is a very important part of the launch point organisation. Landed gliders causing an obstruction will halt launches, and landed club gliders left out on the airfield cost the club money and deny members the opportunity to fly.
- Retrieve of club 2-seaters takes priority.
- Make sure the retrieve drivers know where to look for approaching aircraft, and behave predictably. They should go around the edges of the field and then straight to the glider, returning straight to the launch point.
- **THEY MUST NEVER DRIVE ACROSS THE PATH OF A LANDING AIRCRAFT – IF IN DOUBT, STOP!**

- Clearing Up:

- During the summer months, flying may go on late into the evening, and the Duty Pilot is not expected to remain until the end of the day. However, if still on duty at the end of flying, ensure that the following actions are taken:
 - duty instructor **MUST** be informed if any pilot is not accounted for.
 - tyres cleared away to the edge of the field (but not stacked up into piles)
 - club gliders returned to the hangar
 - club parachutes returned to the hangar store
 - batteries removed from club gliders and put on charge in the hangar
 - caravan returned to the old hangar, master switch turned off, and connected to the battery charger

- log sheets returned to the clubhouse. Like everyone else at the club, the Duty Pilots are here to enjoy themselves. Don't treat the job as a chore. Take pride in running a friendly, efficient launch point and make sure that you get some flying of your own.

Neil McAulay, CFI

