



Issue 17 - November 2022

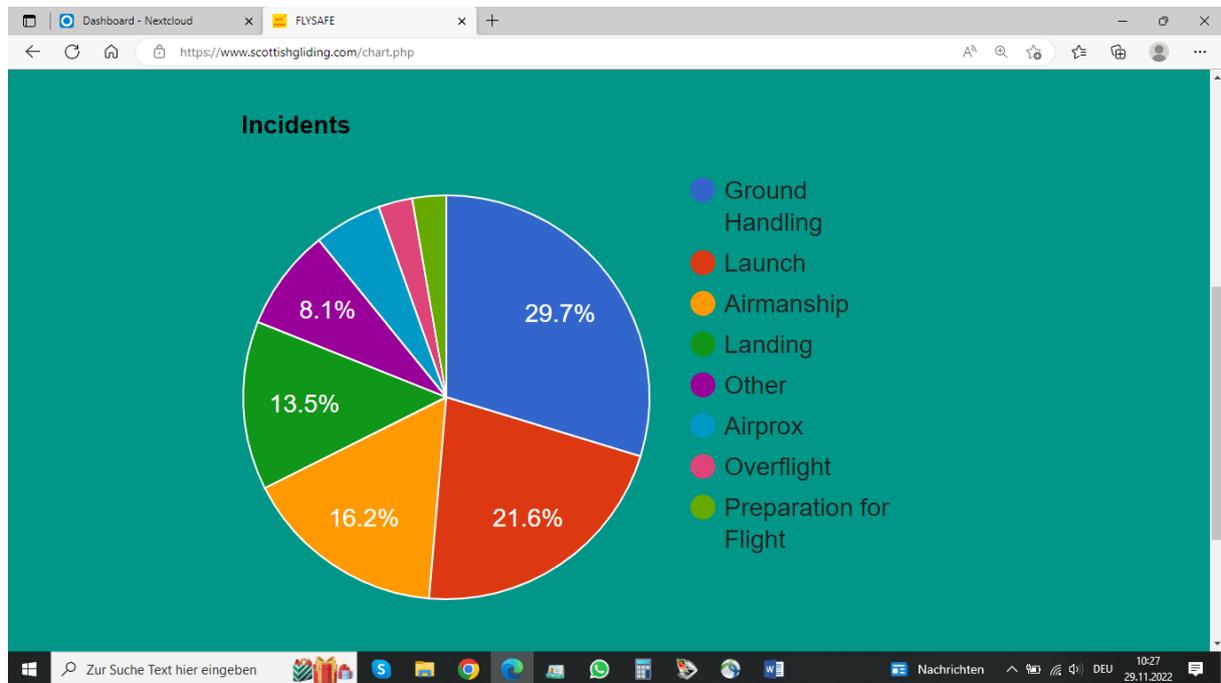
Foreword

As winter approaches we all need to be aware of the winter ops limitations. Nonetheless we should take every opportunity to fly to stay current. A few issues with winter ops will be addressed in this newsletter.

Accidents and incidents since last Newsletter August 30th:

The incident overview shows the most in the category "Ground Handling". Three are double entries (GH 1, Airpr. 1, Airman.& Land.), that's the reason for the percentage and numbers not adding up correctly. The total number of reported incidents is 34, thereof:

Ground Handling 11 (10); Launch 8; Airmanship 6 (5); Landing 5; Other: 3; Airprox 2 (1); Overflight 1; Preparation for Flight 1.



Basic analysis and conclusions:

These are only the incidents I was made aware of through FlySafe or by personal reports from members.

This brings me to my first point:

I may sound like a Tibetan prayer mill:

Please !! All incidents should be reported on FlySafe. Nobody should fear any repercussions, but reporting may save lives! We all can learn from incidents!

Only the description, the date and any included pictures are visible to other members for privacy reasons. Everything else is only visible to the CFI team and the Safety Officer!

In FlySafe we have now an additional category: "Ridge discipline". The last point in this SN explains the need for it.

Next point: Situational awareness

This needs to be emphasized over and over! As a repetition from the last SN here the topics as bullet points again:

- **Always assume that there are aircraft around that might want to land**
- **NO phone calls while driving on the field or helping in any capacity.**
- **Listen to radio calls!**
- **Always assume the winch cables are lying out!**
- **Lead Instructors: Please define the landing areas**
- **Pilots: Please vacate the landing area ASAP**
- **Retrieve: Cross the field perpendicular to the respective track and drive along the track, also when towing.**

Additional points to Situational awareness

Please make sure that the mule is in line with the glider when starting a tow. A mule was at about 60 degrees to the alignment of the glider which was connected to the nose hook. Normal slow taking-up of slack on the rope. As soon as the rope tightened and the mule started pulling, the turning moment brought the held wing very smartly backwards sending the instructor flying across the grass unable to hold it. Luckily without injury. Especially when the ground is soft this could also happen with belly hooks. On top of that the result to the surface is like turning the glider on the spot, a deep hole made by the main wheel.

And take care that the glider is far enough away from the bushes when towing along the dirt track to the west end of centre field. We had one incident with a wingtip touching the bushes, thankfully without damage.

Thirdly: Glider damage on Ground handling

Of the GH incidents 4 (!!) resulted in Glider damage, two of those ending in the respective glider being offline for a while (one still is!).

- Canopy open will pulling out => Canopy damaged
- Junior tail lifted by the handle provided but then wings levelled by pushing on the top of the fin => overstressing of the fin root with repair necessary
- Aircraft wingtip struck hangar door whilst being put away => chip to trailing edge gel-coat
- Letting the release button go from the fully extended position when releasing the mule rope (Perkoz) => The release handle cracked the glass of the altimeter.

Again and again I the need to emphasize the necessity of handling our kit with care!

The fourth Point: Winter Operations



We all enjoy flying all year round but in the colder months there are a few things to be aware of:

- Canopy misting: One can mitigate the misting by putting hot water bottles on the instrument panel cover already in the hangar before briefing, covering the canopies then and keeping them covered as long as possible up to launch. And using the covers on retrieve after landing.
- Moving the gliders: Never turn gliders on the spot to avoid unnecessary surface damage.
- Short days: Take daylight hours into account when planning to fly
- Visibility impaired: If possible avoid landing towards the sun. A cross wind landing is safer than a landing into the wind without actually seeing the area. Beware of sudden fog patches developing towards sunset.

Penultimate: Airprox

We had an airprox incident roughly in the position of the picture below!



Luckily this incident didn't turn into a mid-air-collision. The lessons learned are:

- Everyone should avoid talking too much on the airfield frequency so all can listen to and understand radio calls,
- We need to review our procedure of transmitting our winch launch commands via air band,
- Even in higher windspeeds stick to the standard circuit procedure and avoid curved approaches.

A couple of Mid-Airs happened worldwide in the last months, not only, but also including a glider. The BGA has asked all Safety Officers to remind their clubs pilots to refresh their knowledge and awareness:

"Each year there are several near misses between aircraft where if it wasn't for a bit of good fortune they would have collided. As well as all other types of aircraft, gliders are involved in some of these very near collisions. In most cases, disaster was avoided by seeing the other aircraft at the last moment. How do we know? The UK Airprox Board, including its gliding representatives, looks into 'airprox' to try to understand the detail.

Glider on glider collisions are rare. FLARM helps us to look in the right place at the right time (we know that because there is a correlation between widespread FLARM equipage and a sharp reduction in collisions). But in recent years there have been several very near collisions between gliders. Again, very late sightings have saved the day.

Being proactive to mitigate collision risk is very important. Everyone who flies at our clubs needs to understand how to exploit several attributes that are available to support effective lookout. And those who are experienced may need reminding too.

To help raise awareness, please bring this news item to the attention of all your pilots and instructors

<https://members.gliding.co.uk/2022/11/10/avoiding-mid-air-collisions/>

Kind regards

BGA"

And finally: Ridge Soaring

At Portmoak we are in an enviable position of having the opportunity to use ridges in different wind directions. I'm fully aware that not all our visitors come with a good knowledge of soaring a ridge, therefore as locals we should always keep to the ridge rules. To enable us to analyse the ridge soaring discipline and translate this into good ridge briefings we have added the respective category to FlySafe. I would like to encourage everyone to report on ridge discipline incidents on top of talking to the respective pilots!



Because ridge soaring brings gliders not only in close proximity to each other but also into head-on situations and keeping in mind the last point, I would like to remind everyone to remember that there are international rules of aircraft movements with respect to each other. These air laws translate into the:

Rules of ridge flying

- ★ *The glider having the ridge on his right has priority*
- ★ *The glider having the ridge on his left must veer to his right when he sees the other glider facing him, at a similar altitude.*
- ★ *Overtaking is always done into wind, paying great attention to the overtaken glider. This one has priority.*



Stay safe, be focussed and vigilant and have fun!

Cheers,
Reiner

