



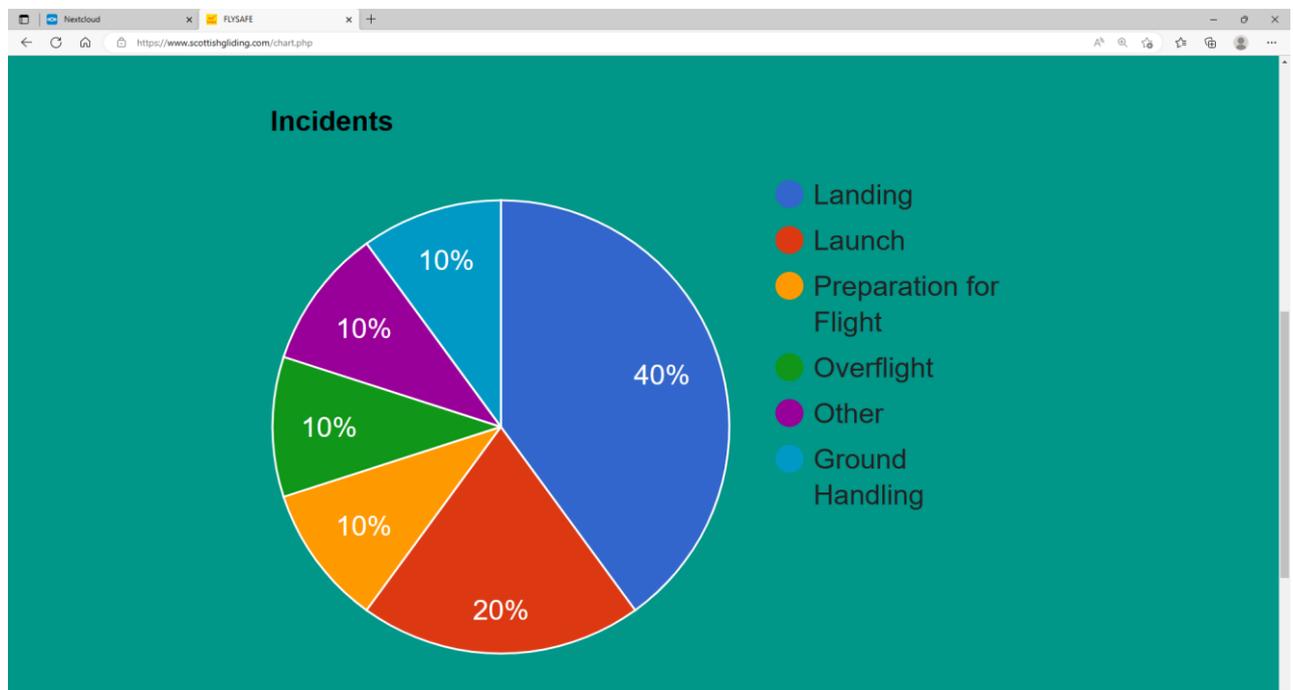
## Issue 18 – February/March 2023

### Foreword

As the new summer season approaches we need to enhance awareness of all operational possibilities and the associated risk. This newsletter will not only contain our own analysis, but also the areas of special awareness as identified by the BGA Safety Committee.

### Accidents and incidents since last Newsletter November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022:

We had 10 reports on Flysafe, the “Ground Handling” report included more than one incident of the same nature connected to launching. Taking that into account the total number of reports is 12 and bringing the category “Launch” to the top over the category “Landing”.



### Basic analysis and conclusions:

All of the launch incidents were connected to the handling of cables. Together with the rather high number of wing drops during the last summer season **all seems to be connected to the wing running.**

First Point to note: Wing runner (but not exclusively) situational awareness

- The winch cables should only be moved when the amber light on the winch is not flashing!
- The parachute of cable to be used next should be laid out in front of the glider, not only the strop to ensure a safe distance from any remaining cable!
- Wing runners need to be trained and supervised when still inexperienced!
- Emphasize the importance of keeping the wings level.



Interestingly, the BGA Safety Committee sent an email and a newsletter to CFI's and SO's notice in December highlighting exactly the same topics. The mail and an excerpt from the newsletter here:

## Wing tip runner knowledge and awareness

**Von:** "BGA Information (Unattended EMailng Address)" <nowhere@gliding.co.uk>

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**Datum:** 13.12.2022 09:37:22

To Club CFI's and Safety Officers

Experience of supporting gliding clubs with risk management reviews has identified that whilst most clubs provide some kind of ground training, in many cases that can be ad-hoc. As a result, there are gaps in knowledge and awareness, including re safety critical tasks.

The BGA Ground Training Record Card template published on the BGA members website provides helpful direction and a club record of ground training. One of the items is 'Wing Running'. Wing drops at the start of a launch continue to be a significant hazard and can result in a fatal accident. A glider that cartwheels following a wing drop while still attached to a winch cable has a 50% chance of ending up inverted, with what have been fatal results.

The BGA's established Safe Winch Launching guidance states:

*If you are the WING RUNNER*

- *Ensure that you have been trained before taking on the task*
  - *Stop the launch if you are resisting an up or down force at the tip*
  - *Run with the tip while holding the wings level*
- Why stop the launch? Because most wing drops occur immediately after the wing tip runner lets go.*

*Note to CFIs: the responsibilities of the wing tip runner make this a safety critical task.*

The wing runner's task is to keep the wings of the glider clear of the ground and the glider running straight until the pilot has sufficient airspeed to get both aileron and rudder control. There are several considerations, including:

- The gliders alignment with the planned runway, ie not pointing left or right (the pilot is responsible for aligning the glider).
- The pilot's preference for holding the into-wind wing in the event of a crosswind (the pilot will decide).
- Vertical forces on the wing tip. This is often aerodynamic and can be resolved by the pilot. It can also be caused by an imbalance of water ballast. However, the pilot is totally unaware of this potentially dangerous force and the glider will roll the instant the wing tip runner lets go.

**Please emphasise during wing tip runner training that only the wing tip runner will be aware that the wing tip force exists, and if a wing tip runner is resisting an up or down force at the tip, stop the launch.**

We hope this is helpful.

Kind regards

BGA



## CLUB SAFETY OFFICER NEWSLETTER

December 2022

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The general priorities as we see it are:

1. Safe winch launching – in addition to reiterating the advice on how to fly a safe winch launch, we need to focus upon wing-drop prevention by training
  - a. Ground crews to set things up avoiding long grass, soggy ground, crosswind and cable bow
  - b. Wing runners to stop the launch if there's a significant wing imbalance
  - c. Reinforcing awareness of the need to release if you can't stop the wing dropping. Some clubs claim to have checked that pilots can recognize a wing-drop, and
  - d. Sloping ground if that affects you (as it does me)

<https://members.gliding.co.uk/bga-safety-management/safe-winch/>

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With best regards

John Hull  
BGA Safety Committee

### Second point to note:

As already explained at the information meeting we now have a risk register, of which the “flying” part is complete. The document is a “living” document under the supervision of the CFI-team. The current version will be published internally within the next few days. Please give any comments, or topics that you think need to be included, to the CFI-team.

### Penultimate point to note:

Originating from our risk register and taking into account the FlySafe incident list, the board, in cooperation with CFI-team and SO, has decided to address particularly striking topics by launching the “Topic of the month” initiative as announced at the info meeting.

This will be included in the daily morning briefing to raise the general awareness. Starting with March the first

### **“Topic of the month”**

will be **“wing running”**. The bullet points for the daily morning briefing will be on an additional slide. This slide will also be printed and a copy distributed to the briefing room, clubhouse and launch point.

#### **Wing Runner**

- **Only move a cable when the winch is not active (flashing light)**
- **Make sure the cable used is aligned in front of the glider**
- **Ensure “All clear above and behind” (also: south field or north diagonal approaches!)**
- **Hold the wings level**
- **Try not to exert any up or down pressure on the wing tip. When in doubt about balance, stop launch!**
- **Keep the glider straight, i.e. aligned with the cable run by steering at the wing tip**
- **Run with the wing as long as possible without holding it back and thereby misaligning the glider**

#### **Pilots**

- **Take care that your glider is aligned, i.e. pointing directly at the winch**
- **Make sure that your glider is not longitudinal imbalanced, e.g. by water ballast**
- **Ask the wing runner to use the wing of your preference**
- **In case of a wing drop release the cable before the wing touches the ground!**



#### **Last point to note:**

The FlySafe reports in the category “Landing” (see beginning of this SN) are all connected to spot landing ability. So we kindly ask all instructors to have an eye on spot landings, when in serious doubt please take over early enough! Both South field and North field diagonal need the pilots to be able to spot land. On top of that it’s a jolly good ability for field landings!

Have a good start into the main flying season, be aware of the whole operations environment and stay safe!

Cheers,  
Reiner