



Foreword

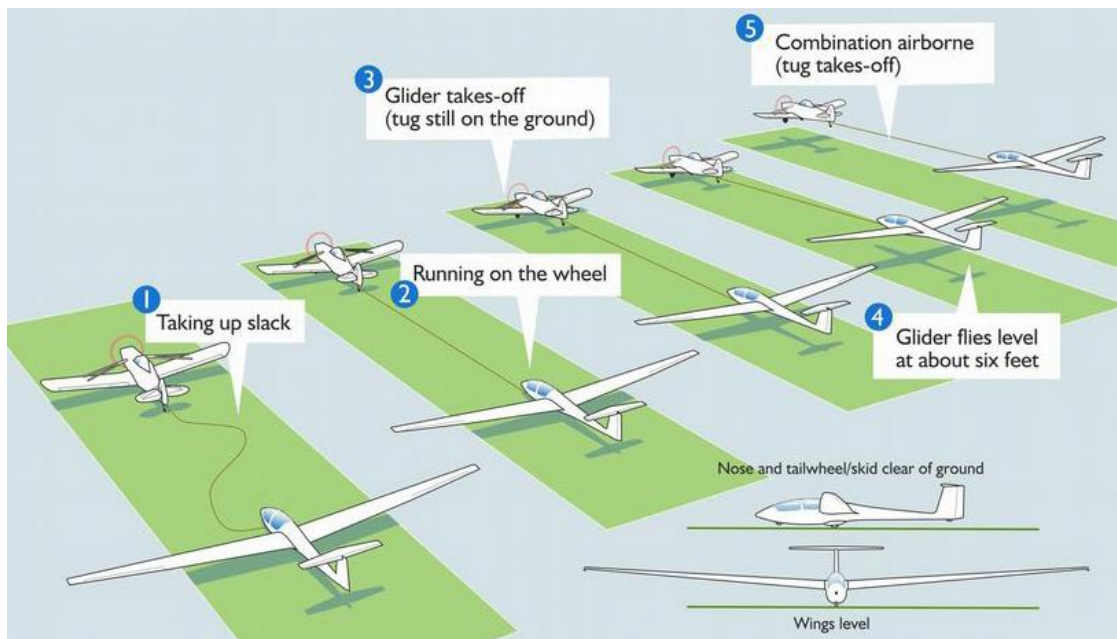
Topic of the month: June 2023

With a FlySafe entry regarding the positioning of a glider on aerotow, and a few verbally reported “position errors” of gliders on tow, the next topic presented itself.

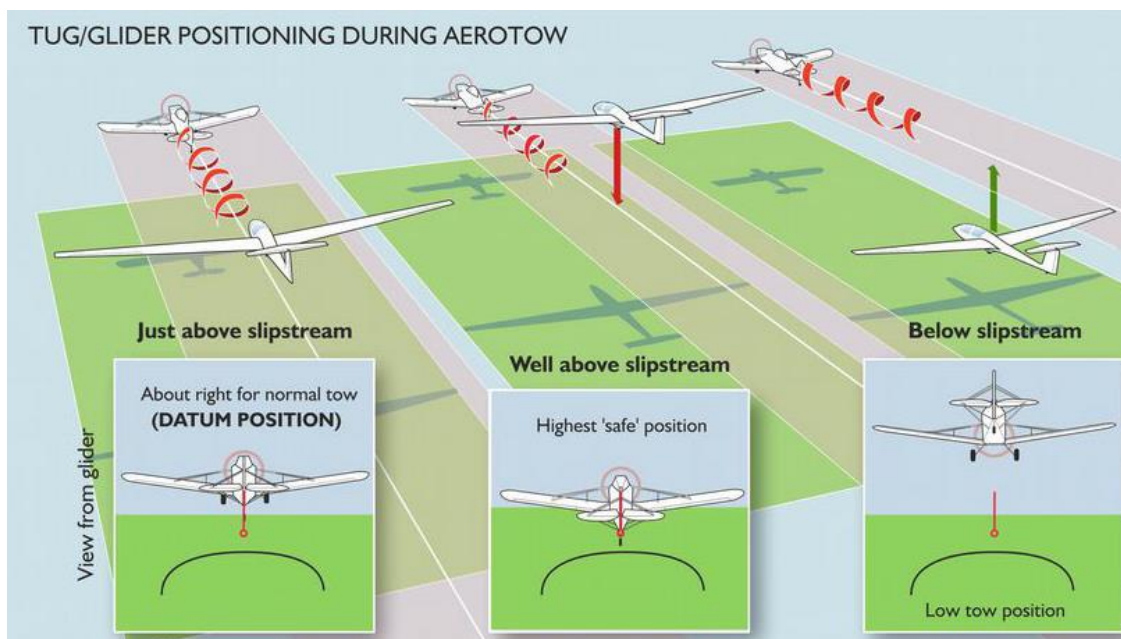
Topic of the Month, June 2023: “Safe Aerotowing”

Let’s have a look at some figures from the “BGA Instructors’ Manual”

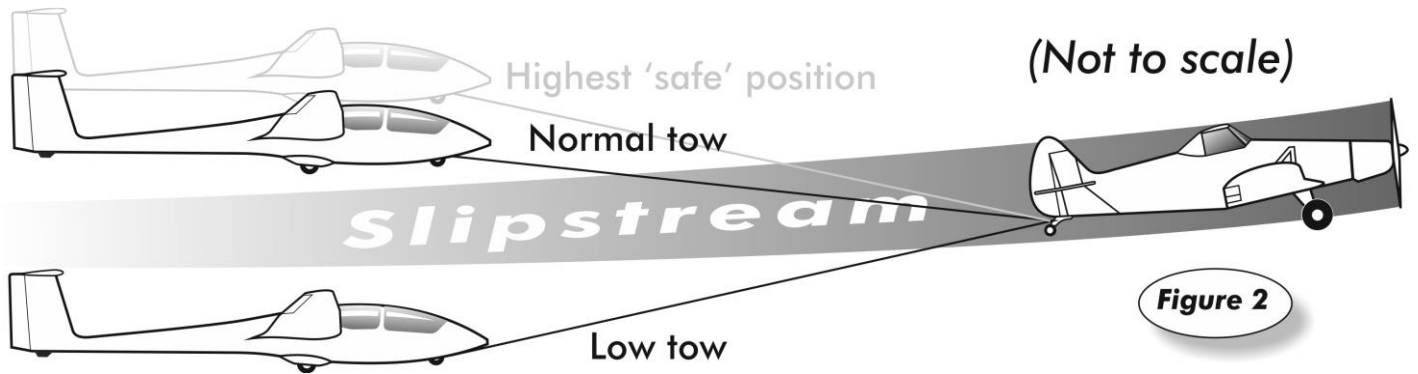
A good Aerotow starts with a good positioning before “take up slack” and a stable ground run.



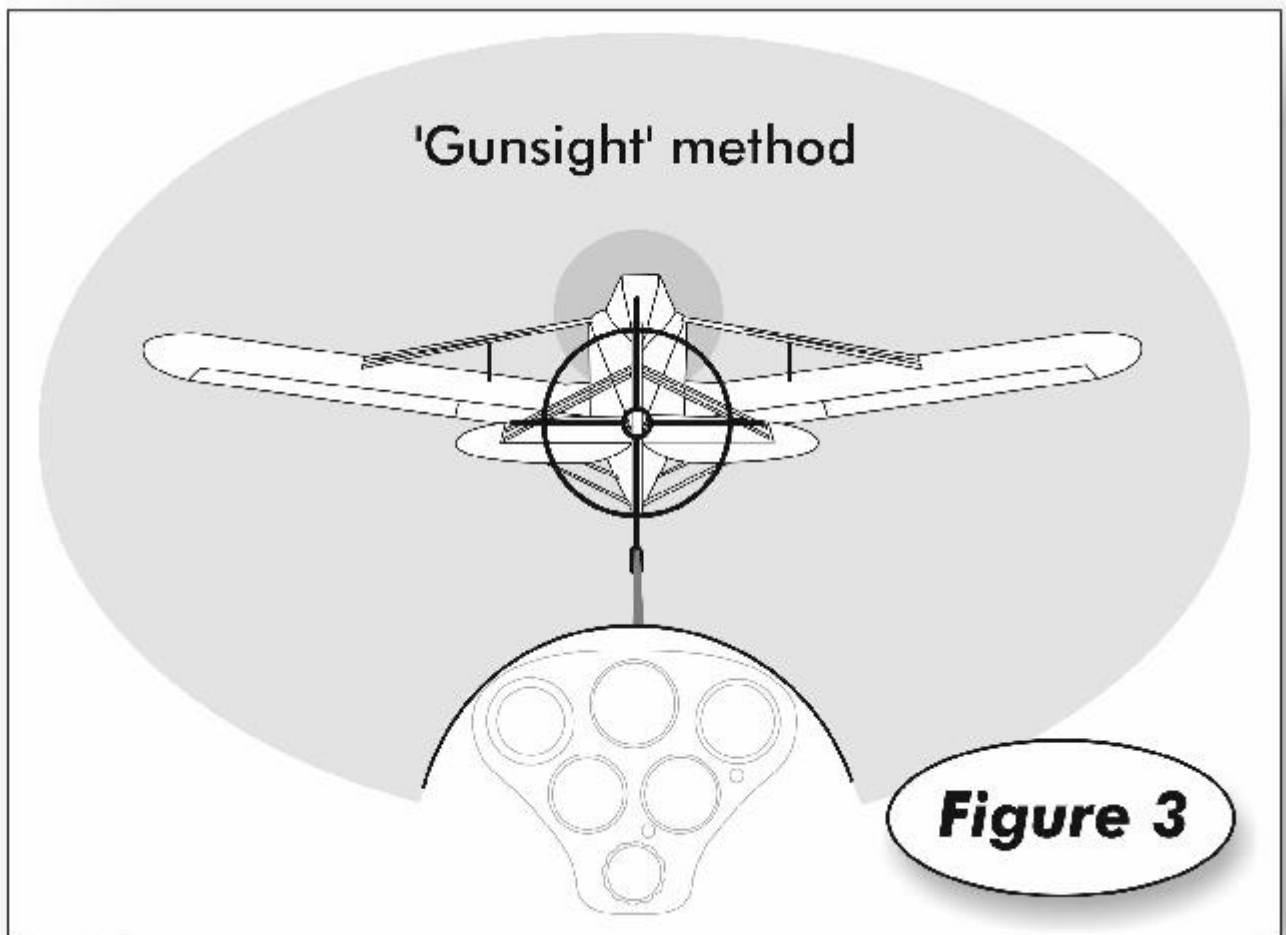
If at any time during the ground run a wing drops, **release immediately**. It’s part of your “eventualities” briefing!!



As a reminder a few diagrams:

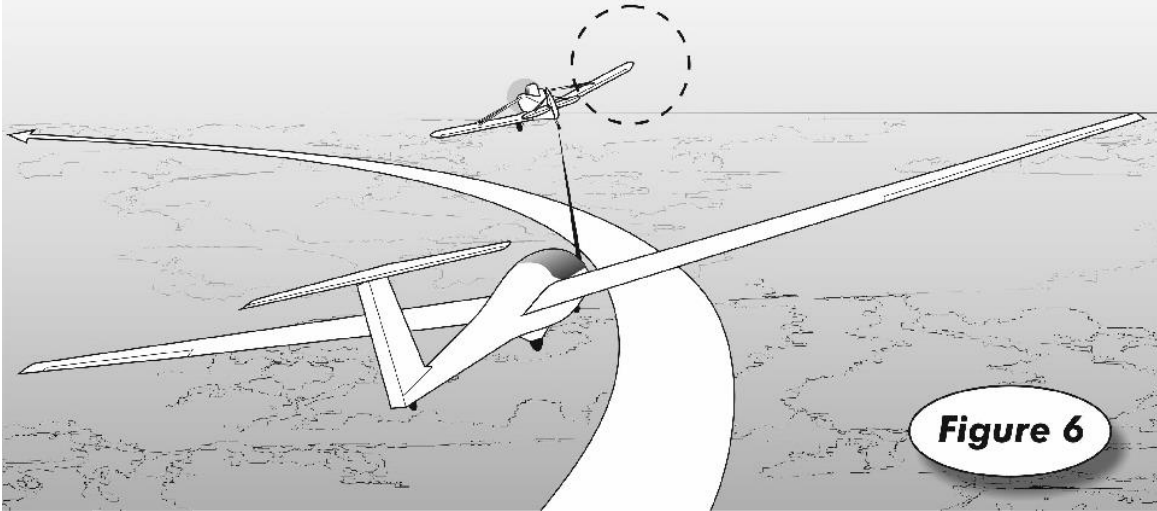


It's rather easy, unless you are distracted and try to do other things during tow.

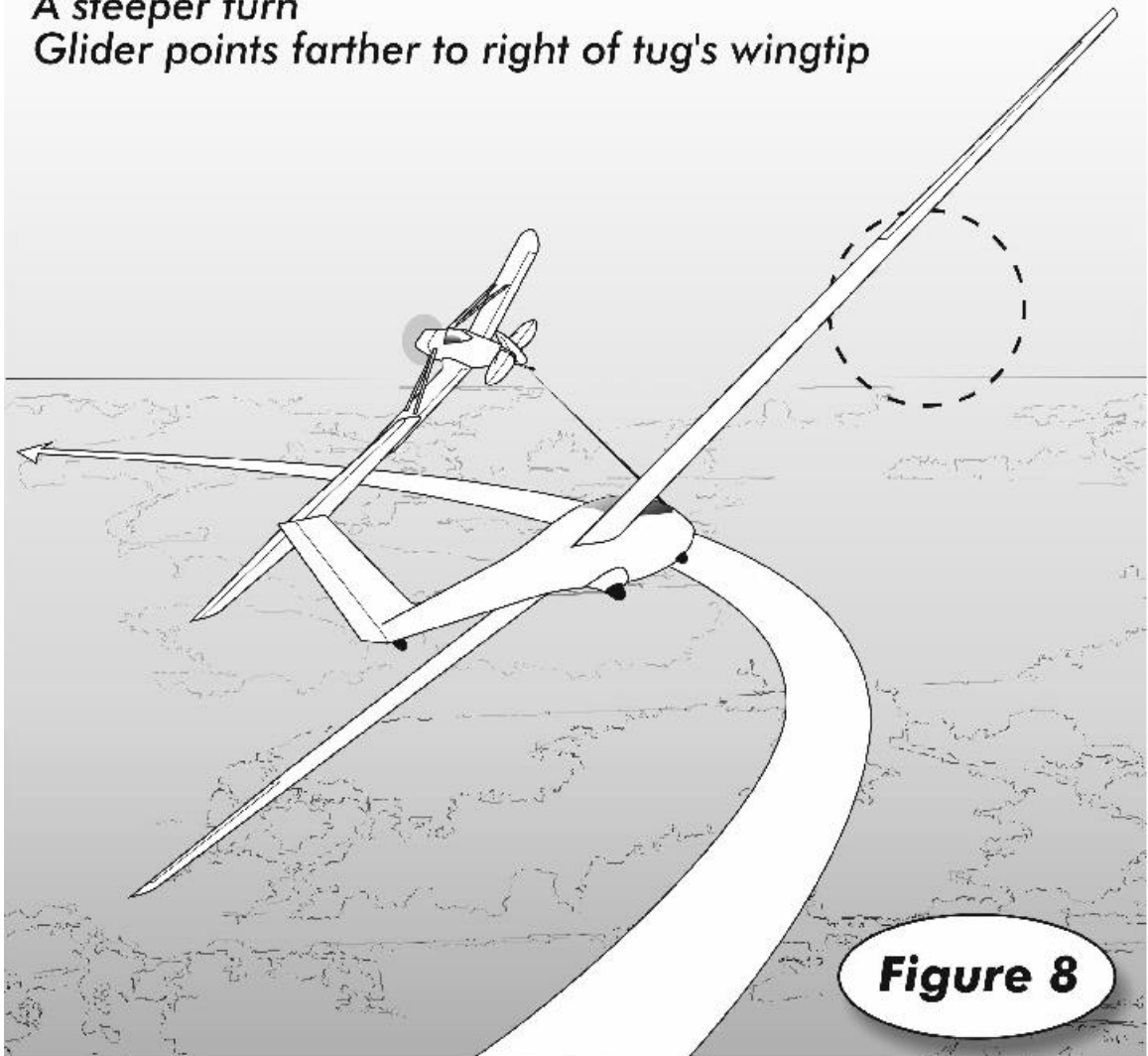


Turns on tow

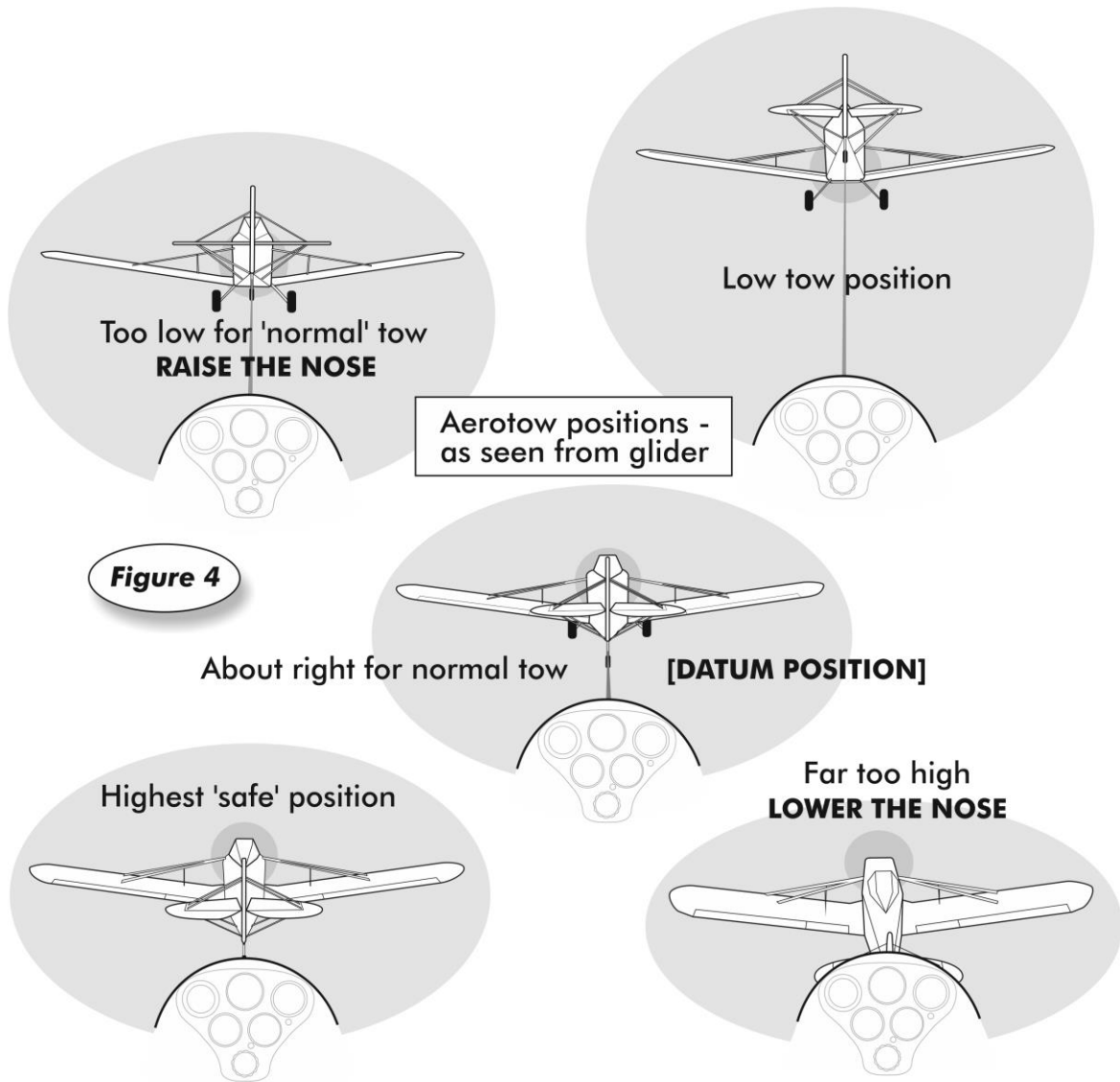
*A shallow turn
Glider points at tug's outer wingtip*



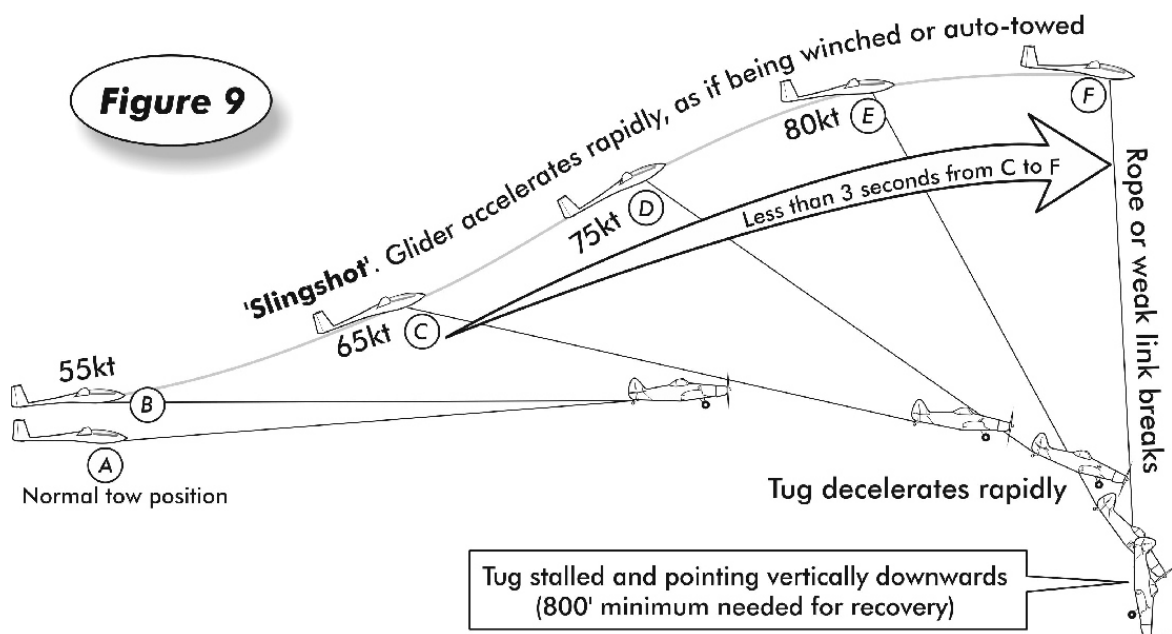
*A steeper turn
Glider points farther to right of tug's wingtip*



Different positions and remedial action



Tug upset



Emergency signals:

The tug waggles its rudder:

A signal to indicate that there is a problem at the glider's end of the rope. The usual problem is that the glider's airbrakes are open, but if the glider has a braking/tail parachute, that could have deployed. If the combination is in difficulties as a result, and the tug pilot doesn't have time to signal and wait for a response, he will probably wave you off or simply release the rope from his end.

The tug rocks its wings (EMERGENCY WAVE OFF):

The glider **MUST RELEASE**. You may not know why you have been waved off, so immediately after releasing check that the airbrakes are not open.

If the glider is UNABLE TO RELEASE:

If in a two-seater, try the other release first. If you are in radio contact, talk to the tug. Otherwise, fly well out to the left of the tug (to a position where the tug pilot can see you) and rock your wings positively from side to side. Rock left first and furthest, or you'll end up swinging back towards the middle. While out to the left you may need a small amount of airbrake to keep the rope tight. The tug pilot will tow the glider back to the airfield and there release his end of the rope.

A few bullet points to remember:

- A tow starts with the tug starting to move to take up slack and ends with you releasing
- Concentrate on your tow, don't let yourself be distracted e.g. by talking to your passenger!
- Wing drop on ground run => **release immediately !!**
- If you are going to be or are already out of a safe position => **release immediately !!**
- If you lose sight of the tug => **release immediately !!**

- Remind yourself of the **Emergency Signals** during your "eventualities" briefing before take off !

- If in doubt about your currency or abilities => ask an instructor for an aerotow check flight.

Thanks to the BGA for the Instructors' Manual figures!

Have a good flying season, keep the older "TotM"s in mind and stay safe!

Cheers,
Reiner