



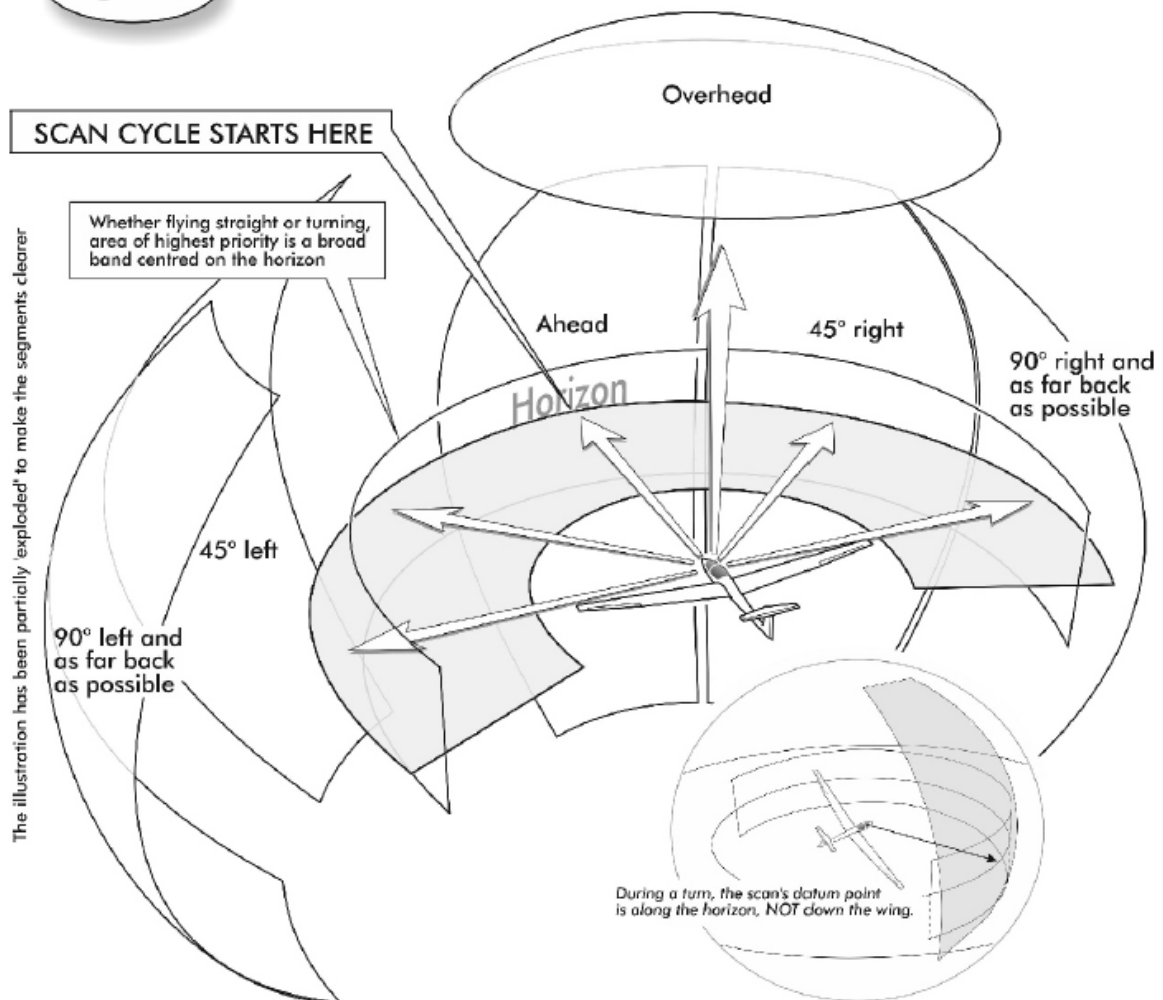
Topic of the month: August 2023

With a recent reminder from the BGA and also an Airprox at Portmoak, this month's safety topic is all about situational awareness and lookout, especially in the circuit.

Situational Awareness and Lookout

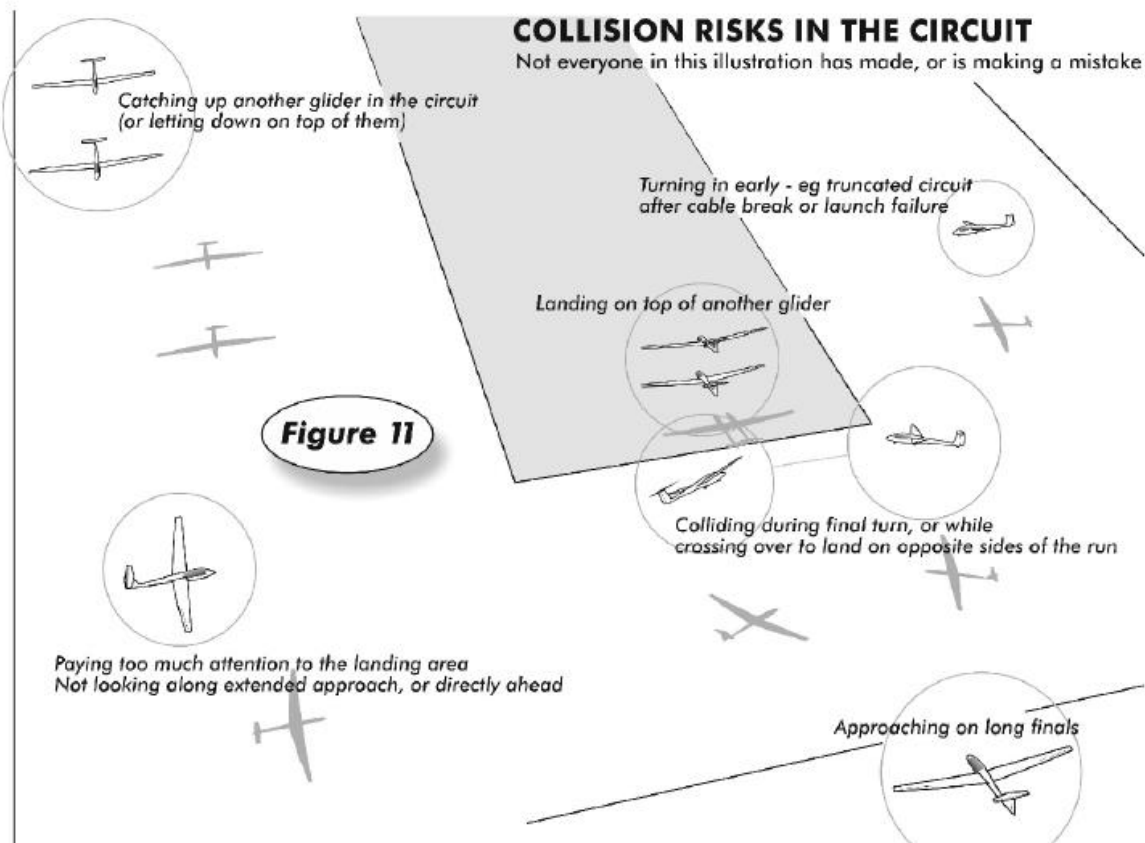
First, here is a reminder of the Scan Cycle

Figure 9 THE SCAN CYCLE: Lookout Attitude Instruments



Lookout and situational awareness are important during the circuit.

The chief errors during the circuit are **Head in Cockpit** and **Fixation on the Landing Area**.



At Portmoak we don't usually enforce a particular circuit pattern or direction. The layout of the airfield and location of the ridges often result in opposing circuits.

The BGA sent out a reminder last week on the risks of opposing circuits (see [Managing Flying Risks](#)):

Opposing circuits (also known as mirror circuits) to the same landing area involve gliders and/or tugs potentially approaching each other on the base leg at a relatively high combined speed when the attention of both pilots is inevitably concentrated on positioning their aircraft in relation to the landing area. Opposing circuit traffic will be difficult to detect. As such, opposing circuits to the same landing area represent a potentially significant hazard that pilots need to be aware of.

In the circuit, remember to

- be aware of other aircraft.
- listen to the radio.
- If you hear a call, but haven't understood it, call for clarification and make sure you see the other aircraft.
- announce your intentions over the radio.

An added risk is in opposing circuits that cross over on the base leg.

In west to southwest winds, we usually land in the north or centre field.

In northwest winds we usually land in the centre or south field.

In easterlies we usually land in the centre field.

All these landings could be from left- or right-hand circuits.

To avoid crossovers on the base leg, it is strongly recommended to avoid the following circuit patterns:

- landing in the north field from a right-hand circuit to the east
- landing in the north field from a left-hand circuit to the west
- landing in the south field from a right-hand circuit to the west

The base legs that can result in crossover in the circuit are shown in red:



A few bullet points to remember:

- Always keep a good lookout
- In the circuit, be aware of other traffic
- Listen to the radio
- Announce your intentions on the radio
- Avoid flying the width of the airfield on your base leg, i.e., avoid potential crossovers

Depending on the day there may be additional circuit or landing restrictions given by the supervising instructor in the morning briefing.

Thanks to the BGA for the Instructors' Manual figures!

Safe flying and keep the older "TotM"s in mind.

Cheers,
Wolf