

## Topic of the month: August 2024

### Ground Handling

Although ground handling incidents rarely lead to injuries, they can be very costly in terms of damaged aircraft.

Ground handling covers all aspects of taking aircraft in and out of the hangar, towing and moving aircraft and securely parking them. It also covers general awareness on the airfield when walking or driving.

#### ***Moving gliders in and out of the hangar***

- Ensure that all involved know what to do. For the Perkoz we need a minimum of 3 people with one at the tail.
- Make sure the hangar doors are fully open.
- Never rush, take your time.
- Take out weights before moving a glider into the hangar (the extra weight will leave the tail high).

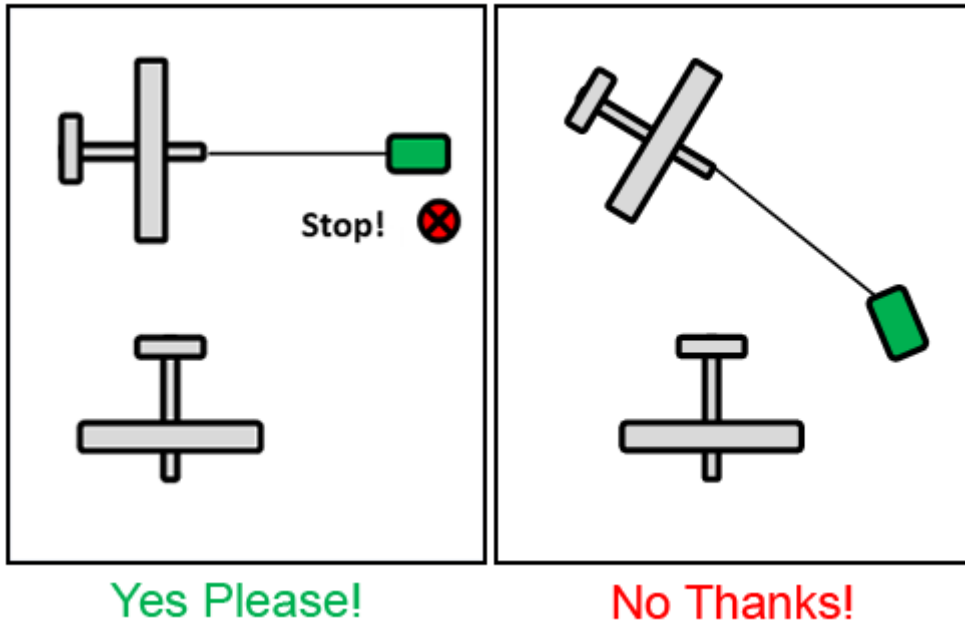
#### ***Parking gliders***

- Consider the weather. Gusts or strong winds can easily move and even lift aircraft. Gliders are particularly vulnerable. Also consider that the wind can get stronger while nobody is near the glider.
- Always close and lock the canopy.
- Removing the tail dolly will help to prevent weather-cocking.
- Parking gliders with tyres under the nose, at the tail and on a wing helps to prevent unexpected movement.

#### ***Towing gliders***

- Close and lock the canopy.
- Consider using a second person to prevent the glider overtaking the rope. This is particularly important where there is down-slope or a hard surface.
- Ensure that all involved have been adequately trained.
- Keep a good lookout at what is happening on the ground and in the air.
- Ensure that all involved including the driver can hear instructions or warnings. That includes winding the windows down and not using phones or other distractions.
- Drive at walking pace.
- Keep an eye on the glider and the wing walker when driving the tow vehicle.

- When approaching a potential obstacle, steer by holding the wingtip nearest the obstacle – that way, the obstacle’s proximity to a wingtip is obvious.
- Don’t tow onto the launch line, tow at right angles and turn the glider by hand. While it may be ok to tow to onto the launch line when there is no other glider there, be aware that the launch caravan and parked mules are additional obstacles that can easily be hit by a wing or tailplane when turning a glider.



### ***Bullet points to remember***

- Make sure everyone involved in a ground handling activity is adequately trained.
- Always keep a good lookout at what is happening around you, both on the ground and in the air.
- Always secure gliders when parked, the wind may pick up.
- Always close and lock canopies.
- When towing gliders, don’t get distracted and keep an eye on the wing walker.

*Thanks to the BGA’s Managing Flying Risk for some of the bullet points*

*Safe Flying  
Wolf*