



SCOTTISH
GLIDING CENTRE

Issue 4
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THE GLIDERS

newsletter

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UK Junior Winter Series at Portmoak

Over 3 days (25-27 Oct) the first leg of the Junior Winter series was hosted by Portmoak.

62 Pilots came to fly at Portmoak that weekend. They flew a total of 130 hours, with 135 launches.

One pilot managed to get his silver duration and quite a few got into wave. Sunday especially was a



good wave day with 2 of our local pundits flying 500km and getting to 20000ft.

This was a very successful Round of the 2019/20 Winter Series for UK

Junior Gliding and also a great weekend for the club.

Thanks to all club members who helped on the ground and in the air.

Wolf Rossmann



Air Experience 2019

With the onset of winter and the reluctance of the sun to stay above the horizon the club has come to the end of our air experience evening flying for this year. At the start of the season there were a few less than full evenings however the latter half of the season picked up, seeing us utilise the entire two seat fleet and even roping in WA1 to have five aircraft and crew who managed to get eighteen flights off on one evening. A successful season saw us fly over 300 people with a revenue to the club of some £25,000 and we even managed to enthuse six people enough to sign up as new members or take advantage of our learn to glide package. All of this effort helps keep your membership fees down.

A major effort made the experience more inviting, efficient and professional for our visitors. A welcoming booking in system, thanks to Andrew Wilson, and the air experience briefing video enabled the flight briefing to be in the comfort of the clubhouse. This kept waiting times and delays to a minimum for our visitors.

The success is shown by a host of thank you cards, emails and compliments that are posted on the club noticeboard and on our Facebook page.

Our practice stood us in good order and was put to the test on our club open day. We did not fail. Booking in, voucher issue and briefing video was carried out at the clubhouse. Visitors were shuttled to the launch point in a mini bus where five glider and two tugs whisked them off into the sky. Fifty visitors managed to get into the air.

Into the mix was also added air experience group flying. We flew a group of ladies from Pitlochry and ten firemen from Edinburgh Airport, who were suitably unimpressed by our firefighting truck so Alan Gillanders has taken on the task of rebuilding it. Group flying is a great way to introduce people to gliding, so if you have an office or club that may be interested, why not get your own group together and get in touch with Martin in the office to schedule an evening dedicated to flying your colleagues.



The variety of our visitors stretched across a wide band of age, ability and enthusiasm from as far afield as Australia and India but also with many locals who had seen our gliders flying around for years before they (or more likely one of their relatives) bought a voucher to try it out. We flew Henry Mitchell, a 97 year old "Dessert Rat" veteran who wanted to fill one on his bucket list, Andy Cann, an 11 year old who was desperate to get his flying career off the ground. The time taken by the ground crew and instructors to pass on their enthusiasm and knowledge provoked many an interesting question and hopefully we managed to give the right answer. Including the lady who, seeing her husband's glider being released from tow said "Oh dear, how are they going to get down again?" Not one we glider pilots have to think about often. The most common question was "how long can you stay up?" or "how far can you go" which we were able to call upon some of John Williams exploits, which may have got slightly exaggerated, (as if there was any need) to



enthrall our visitors.

It is only through the good will and generosity of the loyal band of volunteers that your club is able to carry out air experience flying. Their only reward is the enjoyment of passing on to others their love of our sport and seeing the beaming smile on the visitors face when they land and of course the free cup of tea provided by the club.

The sale of vouchers for next year is well under way and will build with run up to Christmas so why don't you take the opportunity to get involved next year, helping out on the ground or even getting qualified as a BI.

Many thanks to our BI's Mike Foster, Dougie Wilson, John Thomas, Mark Bradford, Matt Roberts, Sant Chervantes, Jamie Dickson, Fred Bull, Mitch Skene and (Ass Cat) Peter Sharphouse and let's not forget the ground crew without whom none of our flights could have happened – Andrew Wilson, Bill Fuller, Eric Kuhlwillm, Christian MacLean and all the others who helped out.

Thanks also to tug pilots Alastair Mutch, Tony Brown, Kerrin Dutton, Colin Hamilton, Lewis and Ashley.

*Ken Robertson
Air Experience Duty Instructor*

Me, a gliding instructor? Pull the other one ...

I've always wanted to fly, but the furthest I had got before 2015 was solo in a T-21. My life went other directions, but apart from dreams I never thought it could become reality for me.

A trial flight at Feshie, and a day course at Edensoaring changed that.

Many soggy, often disappointing weekends later Charlie Romeo finally said the magic words. First circuit was just as Chris had planned, uneventful with a good landing. Then came weekends with more tedious check-flights, and finally, "you'd better get in a Junior, John and stop blocking up the two-seaters".

Someone must've noticed the hours were building up and suggested the Basic Instructor course... inside my head "I barely believe you allowed me to go solo and fly my own ship, you think I could fly members of the public who've never flown before??? What medication are you on, and can I have some?"

Despite some shocking weather and a chronic inability to demonstrate an emergency landing with a Regional Examiner behind my head, I got through the course. Soon a certain University instructor had some spare trial flighters and more interesting things to do with his time. I didn't mention to the students that I'd never flown in a two-seater without someone at least as competent as me before...

In one season I've done 62 Air Experience flights including one with my eldest daughter - a real high point for me. She enjoyed the flight - though not too much. (Not such a bad thing, expensive hobby this gliding malarky.)

Other memorable flights included a 94-year-old, Henry. He'd flown in gliders before. RAF gliders heading for Normandy. I did the standard demos, but all he wanted was to stall the glider and recover. Given the circumstances, I gave him the stick and let him get on with it for as long as I could.

Then there was the 98-year-old with two grown-up children who could only attend that Friday night. Rubbish weather and the tug was U/S but this was the only time the flight could happen. A great shame when I had to bring the second flight to an early end, ducking out of the rain coming across the loch. I felt privileged to be flying some of these people for their special occasion, and I told them so.

Another great privilege was flying the young woman whose "Dad bought me the voucher because I was afraid of flying". On the ground after landing, she said she burst into tears on airliners. This was therapy! (I had ruled out conducting the stall demonstration before we launched.)

Also the St Andrews student who, unlike 6 of her colleagues, condemned to a quick descent from 2000ft, got caught up in wave and boosted to 4000ft leaving me struggling to get out of the lift over the loch towards the end of the 20 minutes.

I've learned some local history while in the air - St Mary's Island where Mary Queen of Scots was imprisoned. "The sleeping Indian" is another local name for Benarty. Who knew?

You learn to become very self-critical, even about some of the landings the "punter" thought was great.

The best thing about BI flying? I still haven't had enough of the thrilled feedback you get once safely back on the ground. One retired nurse even offered me a tip! (Note to any other BI's who read this far, I should have told her Walking on Air welcome donations.)

I also like the fact "Bloggs" can't kill me. The rule book says I must have control below 500ft. If I can't recover from anything a punter can do with a K-21 above 1000ft, I really don't belong in that back seat...

John Thomas

Can't afford FLARM, but want to be seen

You may already have seen the discussions on the club forum and gliderpilot.net about a device that can send and receive Flarm compatible data.

Alastair and a few other club members have been playing with the "Soft-RF" project boards to see how well they work as a "Flarm alternative".

The units appear to be fairly compatible with Flarm when set up correctly (Legacy mode on 868MHZ version). They can be seen by Flarm units and the ground OGN receivers. The board correctly picks up and reports Flarm transmissions from other aircraft. Linking the board to an Oudie via Bluetooth to see Flarm traffic or via Wifi to a tablet PC running SkyDemon - both work well. A Flarm receiver will give correct collision warnings when an aircraft using this board approaches a Flarm equipped glider.

The basic board uses GPS altitude, so add a Barometric sensor board and fit this to the board at which point it uses Flarm compatible pressure altitude.

It can be powered by a Lithium battery which lasts about 8 hours and it also has a USB socket that can be used for power.

The software claims that it has an algorithm to give collision warnings, but how well this works remains to be proven.

In summary, if you can't afford Flarm but want to be

seen by other gliders with Flarm, it's a cheap way to do it. It also means that you appear on "Spot the Glider" and the Flarm logs.

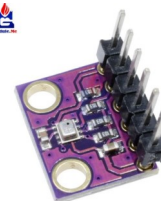
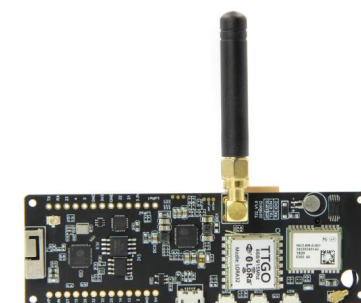
My only concern is that connecting it to a display (Oude or similar) to see other gliders may be detrimental to your lookout.

Lookout must always be the main method to avoid other aircraft.

The board is about £25 and the sensor is pennies, there is also a 3D printed case, but other options may be simpler.

Available at <https://www.aliexpress.com/item/32875743018.htm>, the sensor is at <https://www.aliexpress.com/item/32672362743.html>.

Full details are available at <https://github.com/lyusupov/SoftRF/wiki/Prime-Edition-MkII>



Alastair Mutch, Wolf Rossmann

For your Diary

Some upcoming events for your diary:

The Information Evening of the Scottish Gliding Centre will be held on Saturday, 23 November. Come along to hear what's been happening and what is planned for the future of the club.

The Lecture series for Saturday evenings is starting on the 9th of November with the following dates confirmed:

9-11-2019 Sant Cervantes - Working and Flying in the Antarctic

14-12-2019 Gerry Marshall - Tephigrams

18-1-2020 TBD

22-2-2020 TBD

And finally

I am always looking for interesting content for the newsletter. If you had an exceptional flight, why not write it up and share it with other club members. But it doesn't have to be just about flying. Anything related to club activities is welcome. And don't worry

about grammar, spelling etc., I will do some editing.

Send your contributions to
wolfrossmann@gmail.com

The Editor