



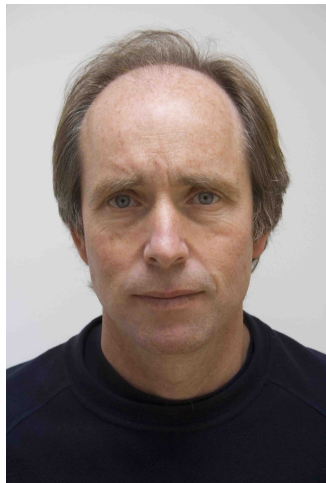
NOVA

The Magazine of the Avon Hang Gliding and Paragliding Club

March 2009

Cover Photo: Neville Almond high above the snow fields of Westbury. Winter 2008/9 was one of the snowiest, and coldest, on record and for those who managed to get airborne some magical flying was to be had. More fun in the snow later in this edition.

Editor's Bit:



This being my first magazine I would like to start by thanking Jon Rose, the previous editor, for all of his hard work, and for so enthusiastically and efficiently handing everything over to me – thank you! As you may quickly discover I've never actually edited anything before (unless you include my kid's school course work), but I hope to keep up the very high standard of the publication.

Writing this in early March I already note that people are clocking up large XC distances, whether on hang glider or paraglider, and that Avon members are at the forefront of this as usual. The Avon club is by far and away the most active club, for its size, in the UK and people should tap into the wealth of experience that exists, and this will be helped by the large number of coaches that the club now has; get to club meetings, meet up on the hill, ask for help and advice or just make a nuisance of yourself (I know I do)!

In this edition we give a round up of access and competition plans for 2009. Nick Somerville brings us some very welcome news about a 'new' club site (well it was flown in the 70's), and gives some simple guidelines so as to avoid losing it. Meanwhile Ken Wilkinson outlines how people can get involved in the BCC paragliding competition for this year, thus hopefully ensuring that the trophy returns to its rightful home in August 2009!

Ian Anslow describes a XC flight in the flatlands of the UK, rather than in his homeland of South Africa, not 500km but epic none the less. Also in this edition Ben Friedland, our new librarian, who has been putting in long hours watching long forgotten (as opposed to long lost, of which there are many) club videos, reviews some of the more 'interesting' material on offer.

I hope you enjoy it!

Rob Kingston

Chairman's Chunter - March 2009



Well, the recessionary gloom continues, but the skies are certainly getting less gloomy – the clocks have gone forward, the sun has been shining, and seven Avon pilots have already logged 286km in the league. The British Club Challenge (BCC) is under way and eight rounds have been run already (and Avon is top dog so far). Quite a few Avon pilots gave their reserves some airtime at the Big Fat Repack last week, and I heard my first skylark of the season at Talybont last weekend.

So spring is sprung, and I hope everyone is managing to get out and do some flying. If not, you need a good excuse!

If your excuse is that you're new to the scene, and you're not sure where to go, or how to judge the conditions, please do let us know. Iain Mackenzie is the PG low-airtime contact, and he would be glad to hear from you. Alternatively, contact any member of the committee, and they should be able to point you in the right direction. Contact details are on the website (look for the "The Club" link on the home page).

As I've said before, we're working to inject more life into the coaching scene. It's taking a bit of time to get things organised, but soon we should have the details of all the coaches on the website. Then it should become easier to contact a coach who flies the sites within your reach. But here's the important bit – please don't expect us to contact you and ask if you need coaching. There's been quite a lot of discussion in recent issues of Skywings about how coaching and the school-to-club transition should work in an ideal world. But I'm afraid you really do have to take the initiative and shout when you need help!

So please do speak up if you need some advice, whatever level you're at. I really mean it – we'd be glad to hear from you. (And if you're at the point where you want to try your first cross-country flights, the BCC is for you – see Ken Wilkinson's article in this issue.)

Even though the winter has been gloomy, there's been plenty of non-flying stuff going on. Ali Lees has continued to bring us a fantastic selection of speakers at the club nights –we've had Jocky Sanderson, Aidan Toase and Tim Emmett all since Christmas, and all of them were fantastic talks.

Ali has also renegotiated the fee that the Compass Inn charges us. By pointing out what their competitors could offer, she has obtained a reduction in the room rental and free use of a projector. (You'll see in the summary of the last committee meeting that we had decided to buy a projector because it was getting very difficult to borrow one when we needed it. But that's probably not necessary now.) Unfortunately she couldn't get a reduction in the beer prices...

And talking of people who've been working hard behind the scenes, you'll also see in this issue that Nick Somerville has negotiated the use of two more bowls at White Sheet Downs. So well done Nick – he's only been Sites Officer for a few months. (Can we expect one or two new sites every year from now on, I wonder?)

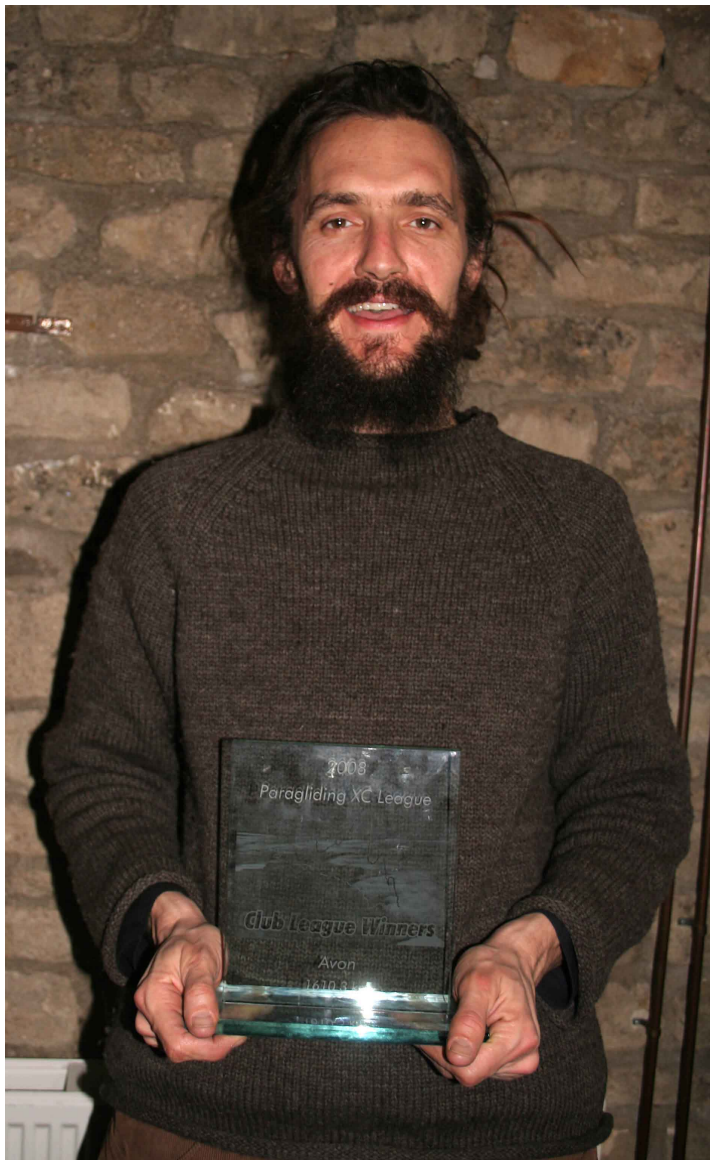
There's a lot more to read in this issue too. This is Rob Kingston's first issue as Editor, and he's done a great job. (As you'll see in this issue, Ben Friedland thinks I had him lined up as Editor. But what he doesn't know is that I just threatened him with Editor so that he would feel relieved at agreeing to be Librarian!) And don't forget to help Rob with the next issue by writing about your flying exploits, or anything else you think your fellow members will be interested in, and by entering the caption competition.

I hope your season is getting off to a good start,

Richard

A Review of the 2008 Paragliding XC Season and outlook for 2009

Avon won the Club prize of the 2008 UK paragliding cross-country league, with nineteen pilots (out of a national figure of 128) entering flights which totalled a staggering 3981.5km. In terms of numbers entering the competition Avon were second only to The Derbyshire club, but despite this Avon still managed to beat their total by nearly 400km. Of course it is the top four pilots who make up the 'team' for the overall trophy, and this consisted of Jim Mallinson (491.8km), Alex Coltman (414.1km), Gary Sandell (400.3km) and Ken Wilkinson (304.1km) who just edged out Wayne Seeley. Ken also picked up the trophy for the longest flight on a DHV1/2 (94.8km), and for the highest placed pilot in that class. Good work! There were also those club members who flew impressive distances throughout the year but did not enter any of their flights – you know who you are!



Pictured above – Jim Mallinson (with the trophy), Alex Coltman, and Ken Wilkinson (with the nuts). Apologies to Gary for not having a photo of him.

Ken Wilkinson is again the Club PG Competitions contact, and so please talk to him about any aspect of competition. As you read this Avon has already completed in several rounds of the BCC for 2009, and below Ken outlines how the BCC competition operates and how to get involved in it.

The Airwave British Club Challenge (BCC), the way to progress as a pilot Ken Wilkinson

This is mainly directed at newer pilots, as I am sure regulars have heard me go on about this, (and I am not talking about Ubley this time!)

The competition series is paid for by the club, and offers a gentle introduction to the art of XC flying. I organize the series nationally, and am the club competitions secretary, so no conflict of interest there then!!

Any flyable weekend up to the middle of July is likely to result in a competition being declared, often in S Wales, but hopefully the Long Mynd Club will host a few rounds. This is done by captains entering teams in the www.flybcc.co.uk website. All of the scores and round data can be seen there. For the record, we won the last years qualification series, in which the top six clubs gain entry to the final. The website has an automatic scoring system that reduces the score of more experienced pilots on hotter wings. This works very well, and XC guru Richard Westgate (World record holder for tandem XC, and 2 times XC league winner) often flies for the Wessex Club. At first it seemed a bit 'off' but he brings such ability to the competition, others can see just what can be done in marginal conditions. At its heart, the Airwave BCC is training for higher level comps like the BP Cup, or the Nationals.

Rule changes this year mean that competitions can be run between 2 clubs, with a reduced score. The main task is automatically XC, with scores over 5km counting.

Last year we had some memorable weekends, at Hundred House Hill, near Builth Wells. It's a bit far normally, but with a BCC round in prospect, everyone just shares lifts and we all work together for retrieves etc. We had 3 great tasks from there that resulted in XCs of over 50k by many.

The final this year is again at the Long Mynd, at the start of August. I intend to do the same format, cheap beer, free BBQ on Friday, free Hog Roast, on Saturday, and fly as much as you can! Sadly bad weather last year meant a very sketchy result, with the Dales winning the final, but all had a great weekend.

Airwave did us an excellent set of 'freebies' for the winners, and are promising serious discount vouchers for Airwave wings for the winning team. Discounts of 40% or 50% were talked about by Markus Villinger and Bruce Goldsmith, when I spoke to them at the NEC show. I'm not sure if the credit crunch will affect this, as I'm sure they will be struggling next year. I also have the funds to do some nice trophies, as mementos.

The club enters 2 teams, and there is almost always space, so if you have a lust to expand your envelope, and learn XC skills from some excellent pilots, then come along!! The season will start when the weather gets good!

Correction and an apology

Pete Waters should have won the 'most improved pilot' category for 2008 which was awarded at the annual club dinner in December, but there was an administrative error! Pete improved by approximately 50 km over his 2007 total and was a worthy winner. So well done Pete!

Congratulations to Ben Friedland and Ian Anslow for gaining their Paragliding Pilot ratings in February, and a big thank you to Martin Nichols for invigilating.

Stop press

A new competition has been established called The North East Winds cup for flights (of over 25km) from any site that takes a NE'ly and is located within 20 miles of Bristol. It should be made clear that The Avon HGPGC is in no way associated with the organisation or running of this competition.

Just a reminder that with Easter fast approaching the Dave Yeandle Shield is up for grabs as usual. The prize is awarded for the longest flight made during the four days of the Easter weekend (i.e. Good Friday, Saturday, Easter Sunday and Easter Monday). The flight must be made from a site within a 50 mile radius of Bristol city centre (defined as J3 of the M32). If no flight is claimed, then the award is made available for flights made in the three days of the following bank holiday weekend. If the prize is still not claimed, the award continues to "roll over" to successive bank holiday weekends, the late August bank holiday being the last occasion. If your flight also happened to be from a NE'ly site within 20 miles of Bristol then you might just be doubly lucky!

Site News



Westbury – a useful new website

www.wingsoverwestbury.co.uk is available (not Avon HGPGC). Apparently this view is going to change, but I don't believe the horse is going to be turfed over.

Below Nick Somerville, the Club's Sites Officer outlines details of some new club sites ... read on!

Club to secure two new flying sites Nick Somerville

Over the past year the club has been in negotiations with the National Trust to secure permission to fly 'Spencer's Bowl' and 'Morgan's Ridge' on the White Sheet Downs close to the Rifle Range site at Mere. Both of these sites have for many years been off limits to hanggliders and paragliders, with only the model fliers having a licence from the National Trust to fly them.

Spencer's faces a South Westerly direction and is larger than its adjacent Coward's Bowl. It has excellent potential for XC flying and with just a little tracking north of a downwind course significant distances could be achieved. Morgan's is just around the corner from Spencer's and is a slightly lower NW facing ridge with an airspace free downwind route of some 70km to Swanage.

The National Trust have been supportive over the clubs request to use the sites and they see their role clearly as having a responsibility to provide access for recreation for all members of the public within reasonable bounds. This includes, walkers, cyclists, kite fliers, horse riders, model fliers, etc. Their priority is safety for all members of the public and the preservation of the quality of the nature in the area. To this end they have agreed to give us a license to fly at both of the sites with certain restrictions to minimise our impact. Without these restrictions an agreement would not have been possible.

So here's the deal. Full Avon club members with Pilot (and above) rating may fly both sites midweek between the hours of 11.00am and 5.30pm for the purpose of XC flying. During these times we shall have a priority over the modellers who will retain their exclusive flying rights at other times (evenings and weekends). The National Trust will issue helmet stickers that must be displayed when flying the sites.

The model fliers were not surprisingly resistant at first but as they have come to understand the position of the National Trust they have become more cooperative. Model fliers and free fliers co-exist at many sites across the UK and it is in our best interests to work hard to develop a positive relationship with the model fliers at White Sheet.

The final steps to producing the license, for our chairman to sign, is currently in progress and it is hoped that we will be able to commence flying sometime around the beginning of April. If you are interested in flying these sites please be sure to wait for an announcement that they are open. There will shortly be details of both sites on the club 'Sites Guide'; be sure to read them. Details of how to obtain your helmet sticker will be announced as soon as they are ready. If you do not have your pilot rating yet then this is an added incentive to get cracking on swatting for the exam.

Now a quick round-up of other local club sites and access:

TVHGC Club sites – the following update is from Richard Bungay

Note that Avon has a reciprocal membership agreement with The TVHGC, BUT..

Rybury - Due to the issues we had last year leading to the site being closed we have had to re-open Rybury this year as a members only site, no reciprocals (including Avon)

Tan Hill - This site is open to reciprocal (inc Avon) members.

Milk Hill, Milk White Horse - These two sites are open to reciprocal (inc Avon) members. Do remember though that you need to have the £5m top up insurance from the BHPA to fly these sites. The requirement for Pilot rating to fly on The White Horse has been removed. For the 2009 licence Natural England will require pilots to have £5 million Public Liability insurance cover and this extra top-up (normally we have £2M) must be obtained through the BHPA.

Golden Ball – is TVHGC full members only, and they must be Pilot rated.

Combe Gibbet is open (it closes between September 1st and the end of January each year).

SE Wales

Pandy – Is an open site but is closed between 1st-21st May to allow stock to be settled on the hillside. Just to be clear this means closed at W/E's as well during this period.

Hay Bluff - SEWHGPGC members only/Welsh Free Flight Federation. The site is closed from 1st-31st May for lambing, but may be flown at weekends during this time.

Blaenavon – SE Wales club members only, is closed for lambing 1st March to Mid May

Cwmbran, Cwmparc, Fochriw, Machen, Nant-y-Moel – SEWHGPGC members only/Welsh Free Flight Federation

Malvern Club

Pinnacle Hill (Kettle Sings) or Black Hill are open sites but Hang glider and Paraglider pilots must be CP rated and have at least 15 hours experience since qualifying, and must be registered with the Malvern Hang Gliding Club, and display a yellow helmet sticker which has to be purchased from and registered with the Malvern club. The registration gives the MHGC a way of vetting pilots, letting them know the rules and helping to avoid incidents. Registration is shown by the MHGC Helmet Sticker.

Note the new landing field which was introduced in early 2008.

Worcestershire Beacon (westerly) is only open to full Malvern club members.

D and S Condors

Charmouth is D+SC members only (and then limited during school holidays), but **Eype** is an open site.

Beer is an open site, but **Branscombe** is a members only site. Remember if parking for Beer (to fly that is!) to park in the Pay and Display carpark, and not to go to the top of the lane – even for dropping kit/people off.

Wessex

Portland sites and **Barton on Sea** have now had their classification changed from 'members only' to 'open sites' If flying as a visitor at any of these sites please ensure you have read and fully understand all details given in our 'Sites Guide' which is available free on line.

WHITE HORSE MARQUEES (Sponsors of the Mere Bash)

Why not try flying something different in 2009 like Bertie's new open-cockpit microlight (below left)?

Full training up to NPPL given in this fantastic fun flying machine!
Or how about flying on water with a Sky Ski Hydrofoil (below right)?
Trial flights by appointment.



Tel. 01985 840705
whitehormarques.co.uk
foilflyer.co.uk



Club Meetings



Ali Lees the club social secretary has been working flat out to line up some outstanding club meetings over the winter months – and these have been very well attended. Thanks Ali.

Here is just a collection of pictures and notes from the talks.

First up in January was **Jocky Sanderson**, who talked about motivation and planning for flying, and just about everything else including locked in stalls. A standing room only evening with every one getting their money's worth. As only Jocky could have summed it up:

'The best pilot is the person having the most fur [sic]' - Jocky Sanderson.





Next up in February was **Aidan Toase** talking about his experience in the Red Bull X-Alps in 2005 and 2007. He showed some fantastic slides and video of his adventures – and proceeded to escort us from Austria to Nice via The Marmolada, The Eiger and Mont Blanc.

His kit weighs in at 11kg – including the reserve, and features an Ozone Mantra M2 Lite. I think it is virtually impossible to get to grips with just how tough this race actually is, as Aidan thinks 'nothing' of walking continuously for 100km and only sleeping for 4hrs, and then keeping this going for 14 days. In fact he walked more of the course in 2005 than any other participant (supported by his Mum), still finishing in an amazing 6th place! Of course he flies pretty well into the bargain.

He's entered for this years race, starting on July 17th with turn points of The Matterhorn and Mont Blanc. Good luck!



Aidan Toase complete with all his flying kit (11kg total) and his insole – note the hole!



Aidan explaining to club members that it is indeed possible to walk all the way to the top of Talybont – that is if you put your mind to it, and take your diet and training seriously.

Then in March we had **Tim Emmett** who is one of those guys who when he looks at a cliff – is thinking 'what's the hardest way up?', and then how to throw yourself off it. His talk was predominantly about climbing and BASE jumping, and was truly inspirational.

BASE stands for Building, Antenna, Span (i.e. bridge), Earth (i.e. cliff), these being the broad category of objects you jump off, and during the evening 'we' jumped off the Old Man of Hoy and had a particularly gripping jump off a building in Manchester. My hands are still sweaty thinking about it now. He also introduced us into the wacky world of wingsuit flying.



Tim Emmett telling (and selling) lots of 'Preposterous Tales'.

A proper flight for me - My first XC in the UK, and a taste of Summer Ian Anslow (ex South African)



SUMMER is finally here and I am loving it, I have even been in shorts and T's a few times AND I have finally got my fat ass in this beautiful SKY YEEEE HAAA. My Mistress (paraglider) was just nagging to get out of her bag so I said to the Wife and Kids that I wanted to go practice at this local common (Selsley) on the Saturday. Running around like a mad man giving Shev and the Kids a good laugh - I was absolutely loving it, not caring that I looked totally ridiculous, it made me confident and I now needed to get in to the Sky.

A flying mate (Ben) from the Avon Club said to come flying on Sunday as it's going to be perfect (Easterly and 27deg C) for a place called The Malvern's. So after a 1hr30min lonely drive later, then another 45min, 30kg of kit lug up the hill - I swear I nearly shot a kidney. Wow! What a hill though. It is so pretty. There was blue bells covering one side, with this fantastic aroma coming off them as I walked up and I just stopped a few times to take it all in, everything is just so green. At the top you can see right over the town - sort of like being on the top of Barberton hill in SA and if you fly out you can go right out over the town. The take off is green grass with a few loose rocks so I had figured if I was going to get dragged it will not hurt too much. And to give myself time to kill my Mistress I would set-up way down in the front.

Now for those that have been to the top of Hartebeesport Dam (A big Mountain in SA) and watched the folks fly off there – but here the spectators and gliders were greater by a factor of ten. I was absolutely bricking myself, but laid her out and climbed in my harness. On the way there I had only set myself two goals 1 - if it's flyable take off and 2 - if there is any chance of lift get as high as possible.



Waiting for the wind I got my wing perfectly set up then it all just happened, I was in the air, like I had been here before and done this a few hundred times - wait I have and that's what took over. A series of instinctive, albeit rusty reactions. Looking at my wing comparing it to everyone else's, making sure it's flying with rusty feelings of the air bumping the wing around and sending signals down the lines to my hands on the toggles and my ass in the harness, I felt this awesome sense of elation and strangely, a sense of relief but fully concentrating on trying to find some lift.

I did not see too many folk turning any thermals so I thought, okay, a good boat around the sky will do just fine thank you and that's what I was doing - dodging all the other dudes in the sky at the same time. Some guys had managed to get way high and I kept going in and out of lift and I thought to myself, I know what these are and took a chance and turned one and kept climbing through the 360, now I was certain these were thermals - I was like some one trying to find their way around a dark room, only here trying to figure the sky out.



I flew out front a little and set myself up where I thought the next one would come through and there it was; that familiar kick of the wing and a steady climb rate taking me up to 850m (2789feet) above the hill - a chance of both goals! Smiling to myself and loosing concentration for a while I lost the thermal and was now drifting over the back of the hill not sure I should do a x-country as I did not know the area. Who should come bombing over to me but my mate Ben, who had said to come fly, so now the XC was on. We went on the hunt for a thermal and found one, me being really unfit though my neck started to ache from leaning over to one side with the crash hat on - I looked like one of them nodding dogs that you see in car windows.

Tired and sore I pointed my Mistress down wind and just revelled in looking around at this pretty country side. At one point a small plane to my left took off a grass runway as I was trying to turn a thermal that a bird pointed out. He flew around me just having a gawk, I waved but I will never know if he saw this as a friendly gesture. Gliding downwind some more, I was picking landing spots off all the time as there are not too many of them here and I heard you do not want to land on a farmer's crop or you will get an ass full of buckshot (a generalisation, methinks?). I landed in this open grass field, killed the glider and just sat there for quite a few, quiet, surreal moments.

Sharing my elation with Shev at how far I had flown, 13km (8.1miles) in a straight line, it was now time to figure out how to walk the 15 miles by road back to the car. Luckily I was on a bus route and one was due in 30min, so I could just keep walking from bus stop to bus stop until it came but today luck was on my side and another paraglider picked me up and took me back to the hill. Another walk-up and the other kidney shot I managed another 20min boating around the sky before a top landing and a smug drive back - it was truly a great welcome into the UK skies.

A scenic landscape featuring a paraglider in flight over a coastal area with a town and a large cliff. In the foreground, a person wearing a hat stands on a rocky outcrop, looking out over the scene.

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Ssshhh (it's the library) Ben Friedland

The call

Richard Danbury needs someone to edit Nova and has me lined up, but I don't know that yet. He calls and commences a barrage of pleasantries, their unusual duration creating a growing feeling of dread. Eventually, as neither of us can bear the tension, he broaches the issue and I decline. This does present the opportunity to volunteer for librarian, a role which I've had my eye on for a while. The librarian has access to all the DVDS of course, and being a committee member, free membership.

We all have our skills Ali Lees (social secretary) is fun, Graham (financial officer) is diligent, Ken (competitions) likes to win, but I'm the best at watching telly.

Not a bed of roses

I expected a small box of DVDs which I could stick in a cupboard and view at my leisure whilst considering my good fortune. Instead an overjoyed Mike Humphries presented me with two huge suitcases, one being 35kg. Rather a problem as I live in a small top floor flat.



An inventory revealed that people had been hogging videos for up to 3 years and more than 40 videos (£700) had gone missing.

Mail order idea

To sort out these problems and help those who can't attend meetings, I wanted to make the library mail order. I thought it could work like "Love Film" with a rule that a items must be returned within a given period.

The committee rejected the idea on the grounds that current system encourages people to attend the meetings. They did put aside £200 for new stock though, and "ruled" that items must be returned within 2 months either in person or by post.

Storm in a suitcase

The library can only be a good thing can't it? Well that's what I thought initially.

Marcus King (XC magazine) made me think though. He was concerned that our members would not buy Jim Mallinson's "Temples in the clouds", for example, because they could borrow it instead. He suggested in a friendly way, that it might also be illegal.

The committee decided that we should not worry about it. Independently Mike Humphries suggested we should compensate the film maker by buying an additional copy each time a film is viewed 5 times, an idea also rejected.

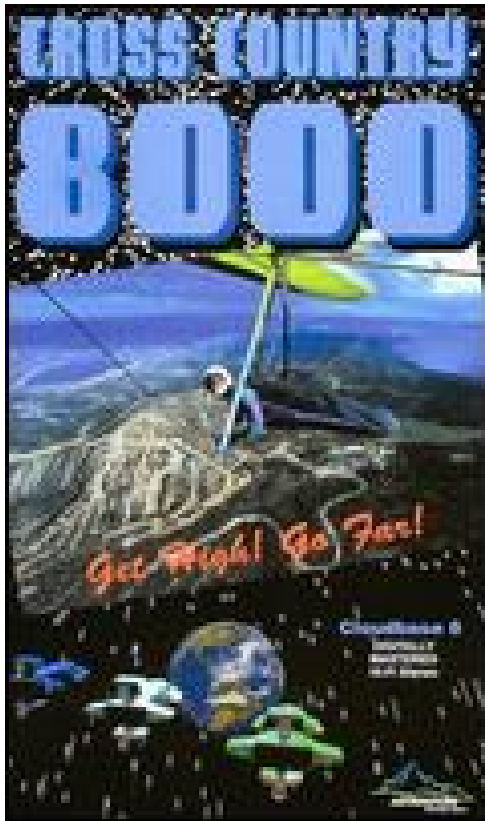
The situation got quite "Faulty Towers" when Jocky Sanderson came to talk. Its not easy to hide a very large suitcase, and secretly lend copies of his excellent videos. It did get embarrassing when asked what the suitcase contained. Manuel's "I know nothing" came to mind.



Video nasties

I have reviewed 60 videos so far, my goal being to find utter drivel. Utter drivel could be tossed direct into the attic and two suitcases reduced to one. Some drivel was so bizarre that it became quite interesting:

Parasol World Championship	The first ever world PG championship in 1991, won by Robbie Whittal, featuring Bruce Goldsmith. It is strangely fascinating to see people dressed in pink & green spandex doing XC at a snails pace on ancient gear. Held in St Andre and environs. Interspersed with some truly bizarre adverts for paragliders which are a treasure. Comes complete with site guide on a bit of paper. 1 hour.
Cross Country 8000	VERY odd – starts with a “Star Wars” style sequence telling you that it is the year 8000, then some badly animated (on a ZX81?) characters appear and move into space ships.



Pick of the best

Amongst the videos I think are worth watching are:

From nowhere to the middle of nowhere	*****	Paragliding, XC	Best pg xc video. Totally committed flying in the high himalaya. Super cool John Silvester & worried looking passenger Alun Hughes, on amazing adventure. Landing in villages probably never visited before. Hardcore fun, even for 1998! 40mins
East Wind	****	Paramotoring, adventure	Three Germans set out to fly to the Black Sea on paraglider trikes. A fun film and admirable adventure. They battle bad weather, bureaucracy, mechanical failings, and a couple of accidents, but show great perseverance. By the end one of their machines is flying only with the aid of duct tape. Features an "emotional ending" as they say.
Temples in the clouds	*****	Paragliding, XC, travel	<p>Jim Mallinson (Avon club) and Chicco Patruzzi attempt a difficult flight from Billing to the Himani Chamunda temple in the Indian Himalayas.</p> <p>Things don't start well for them. A religious man explains that by flying over temples with leather footwear, they are upsetting the gods, but does his advice pay off?</p> <p>This is not simply a paragliding film, but a great story enriched by the people, events and tales encountered on the way. This unique adventure is only possible because Jim speaks the language and understands the culture.</p> <p>The flying footage is good, but certainly less scary than in "From Nowhere to the Middle of NoWhere". The music choices are first class and enhance the changing moods. There is even a comedy sequence. 56 mins.</p>
Extreme Lives (parts 1 & 2)	****(*)	Skydiving Paragliding XC	<p>Two separate programs taped from the BBC.</p> <p>Part1: This is about an English guy developing a wing suit and going for skydiving records with it. An interesting program, with a lot of energy. 40 mins</p> <p>Part2: Bob Dury and Robbie Whittal attempting to cross the Western Himalayas by paraglider.. A great program, with happy people, only bettered by "From Nowhere to the Middle of Nowhere". 40 mins. Oct 2000.</p>
Redbull X Alps 2008 (or 2005)	****	Paragliding XC	<p>A super slick film of double hard bastards, flying and walking between Austria and Monaco (something like 800km)</p> <p>It alternates between great flying in wonderful scenery and tramping in the rain on dual</p>

			<p>carriageways. Some competitors get so exhausted they just fall asleep on the hard shoulder.</p> <p>The progress of the race is explained well enough and there is some suspense on the point of who will win it. 100 mins, 1998.</p>
Paragliding ground handling	****(*)	Paragliding Instruction	<p>Split into a number of menus (theory, take off, exercises) and submenus, covering hopefully everything there is to know about ground handling. Includes 3d animations to clarify certain points.</p> <p>Regardless of level you should take something away from this film. 70 mins (including interviews) 2007.</p>
Performance Flying	*****	Paragliding, Instruction	<p>The best instructional DVD there is. Covers SIV, Acro and XC with Jocky Sanderson and Ozone.</p> <p>Contains in very detailed running commentaries of every manoeuvre, including all types of thermalling.</p> <p>Although everyone will enjoy the film, the instructions are intended for more advanced pilots, unlike Jocky's previous videos "speed to fly" and "security in flight" which are for pilots of all levels. Produced in 2006, so very up to date.</p> <p>Take this and a old lifejacket on your next trip to Annecy, it will save a fortune on those costly and unnecessary SIV courses. Then again...</p>
Acro Base	****(*)	Paragliding, Acro, BASE Jumping	<p>Great stunts many original. The wonderful and distinctive French attitude is that makes it a winner with me. Don't forget to watch the extra clips, not all stunts go smoothly!</p>
SAT: Elements	****	Paragliding, stunts	<p>9 mins, acro, BASE jumping, launching from balloons, D bag, early speed riding, extreme ground handling. Packs a lot in, good filming & music, a bit short and dated perhaps</p>
Future Style	****	Paragliding, BASE jumping, Acro	<p>Probably the best short (15 min) acro DVD that we have and a promotional free bee too. Features top dare-devil stunts that are reasonably up to date for once, all done on Ozone gear of course. Good music and very engaging. There is also some stuff about kiting that I did not watch. Its probably on youtube somewhere. Dated 2004.</p>
Play Gravity	****	Acro / Speed riding / snow-boarding /	<p>Covers a number of different, but related "gravity sports". Amazingly clear and spectacular filming of state of the art stunts, often in great scenery. The paragliding acro is</p>

		kitesurfing	superb and looks effortless which it probably is when you are brilliant and have worked on it for years and years. Probably more enjoyable if you have an interest in winter sports (e.g. snowboarding), hence it does not get maximum stars from me. Make sure you watch the outtakes! 52 mins, 2007
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New additions

- Temples in the clouds
- Play Gravity
- Redbull X alps 2008
- Ground Handling
- Performance Flying (a second copy)

- 50k or bust (book)
- Thermal flying (book)
- Propeller Head (book)



Ben Friedland (right) the new club librarian explaining the finer details of DVD operation to Paddy.

Appendix - Summary of the 16/12/2008 committee meeting

The club committee met on 16/12/08. The following is a summary of the meeting.

New committee members – Ben Friedland, Rob Kingston and Nick Somerville were welcomed to the committee as Librarian, Nova Editor and Sites Officer respectively.

Library – Improvements to the running of the library are planned, and a budget of £250 was set for new purchases in 2009.

National PG XC league prizes – It was decided that Avon's top four pilots should decide how the prizes for Avon's national PG XC league win should be distributed. The prizes are:

- 3 x £500 vouchers for new Niviuk gliders.
- 3 x XC handles from Niviuk
- 3 x Blueray sunglasses

Projector – It was decided that the club should buy a digital projector for use at club events because it is often difficult or expensive to borrow or hire one.

On-line administration of membership – The system for administering membership on-line will continue to be enhanced.

Cash reserve – It was decided that the cash reserve should be preserved and, if possible, increased in future years as a contingency for the future needs of the club.

Membership fee – It was decided that the membership fee should remain the same as in 2008, i.e. full membership will be £25.00.

Budget for 2009 – Expenditure will be higher this year than in previous years due to the following additional costs: subsidy for the club coach course, provision of a buffet at the 2008 AGM, purchase of a projector, increased spending on the library, increased cost of venue hire, and increased spending on speakers at club meetings. It is expected that no surplus will be made this year.

Rules for the photograph competition – It was decided that the rules for the photograph competition should be modified as follows:

"Photographs are displayed at the Christmas party. The winner is decided by a vote during the party. Photographs must have been taken by the member in the preceding 12 months. Editing in the form of cropping, colour/brightness/contrast adjustment is allowed, as is stitching to provide a panoramic image. Pasting/montage is not allowed."

Flying competition rules – It was decided that the prize for the longest flight during the Easter Weekend should include glassware for the winner to keep. It was decided that the rules for the Most Improved PG Pilot should be modified to exclude any pilot who had flown 300km or more in the top 6 flights in any previous season. The rationale is that any pilot capable of averaging 50km per flight is experienced enough not to need the encouragement of the Most Improved prize.



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As promised at the outset here are some photos of flying in the snow - these are courtesy of Sarah Ward and taken from the <http://wingsoverwestbury.co.uk> website. Photos by Sarah, apart from the one of her which was taken by Dave McCarthy.

Where were you?





March Caption Competition.

The grand total of funny captions from the December Nova was two, both by the same person, and so the winner is Ian Anslow. So take your pick from:

"Err Dunno if that's what they meant by DIY speedwing.", and ***"It's the only way I can get it in my car honest..."***



This month - just what was Tim Emmett saying to Rich Harding?

Send your witty captions for the picture below to editor@avonhpgg.co.uk



And Finallycourtesy of Lydia Richards (Graham's daughter)

