

NOVA

July 1994

AVON



**Hang Gliding and
Paragliding Club**

The committee

chairman

Pete Corcoran
9 Wallace Road
Bath BA1 6QQ
(0225) 335301

secretary & treasurer

Paul Ellis
Blindmans Cottage
Brickyard Lane, Wanstrow
Shepton Mallet BA4 4TH
(0749) 850674

membership

Fiona Macaskill
Churchill House
Vicarage Lane, Olveston,
Bristol BS 12 3DP
(0454) 613788

novice contact

Paul Guilfoyle
(0272) 551346

Information

senior coaches

Chris Jones (0225) 319052
Simon Buckley (0452) 814114
Jason Board (0934) 510404

sites

Mere Rifle Range (0747) 860201
Lulsgate (0275) 474441
Crooks Peak: Phone (0934) 732730
Mr Croft to check
bottom landing field

paragliders: competitions

Marcus King
19A Leigh Road, Holt
Trowbridge BA14 6PW
(0225) 782516 home
(0225) 703101 ext. 7745 work

sites and club coach

Chris Jones
20 Blenheim Gardens
Fairfield Park
Bath, BA1 6NL
(0225) 319052

editor

Paul Davies
41A Grosvenor Place
Bath BA1 6BA
(0225) 338676

novice contact

Dave Garbe
(0272) 246504

club coaches

Mike Bowring hg (0272) 444129
Dyan Ahado hg (0249) 660611
Nigel Fovargue hg (0793) 643748
Nick Romanko hg (0272) 248722
Jon Buckingham hg (0272) 698708
Marcus King pg (0225) 782516
Fiona Macaskill pg (0454) 613788

weather

Avn, Gls, Wilt, Som 0891 500405
Glamorgan 0891 500409
Dyfed and Powys 0891 500414
Airmet South 0891 500693

Chairman's bit



A bank holiday weekend with three flyable days, and I didn't have to work any of them. I've finally remembered why I like this sport. Saturday at Pandy was an 'Avon goes to Wales' event, I'm sure we were massively out numbered the locals.

While flying Coombe Gibbet on the bank holiday Sunday I found out a few things:

- Its too ***** crowded.
- Our Thames Valley neighbours have brought in an associate membership scheme similar to ours.
- Within some ranks of the T.V. club there is a belief that we don't care too much for them. I know we had a few problems with visiting pilots breaking site rules last year but on a number of occasions I've explained that this has not led to full scale hostilities breaking out. (I suppose friendly rivalry is only to be expected as they are bound to want to improve to our level)

The vast majority of visitors to our sites are considerate pilots who want to enjoy their flying without causing any hassle. So, next time you meet a visitor on one of our sites say a friendly hello; check that they know the site rules; and then get £5 off them for associate membership. At the last club meeting Chris Jones gave an interesting talk on flying, and driving, in America. If you've been somewhere that you think the rest of us would be interested in why not put a few slides together and give us a short talk. If you have only got photographs then the club will pay for them to be converted into slides.

Pete

Editorial

Hello again, yes I'm back from California, land of sun, sea, surf and Mexican food. Many thanks to Chris and Helen for looking after this noble organ while I was away, producing huge bumper editions with lots of good stuff in.

I shall be contributing an article about flying in America to the next edition; I'm afraid I just haven't got round to writing it yet. In the meanwhile, another plea for more material by people other than the usual contributors; drag your memories and opinions into the open air and write them down.

Paul

Sites

Frocester

Whilst the low airtimers and other members of the club were at Westbury some pilots got to Frocester early and flew XC, avoiding the temporary airspace restrictions. Barry Seely and Nick Romanko flew to Wantage.

Unfortunately we have had yet another accident. This time a hang-glider pilot tried to fly there in very gusty northerly conditions. He mis-judged things and hit the trees. Thankfully he was uninjured, but his glider was not. Please, please be careful, especially when conditions are far from perfect.

Rumour has it that the farmer who owns the land behind take-off, has been asking the farmer who owns the take-off to ban us from the site. Fortunately the take-off and landing owner is very pro-flying.

Ubley

There have been a few flyable days, mostly with very light winds. JM has got way but hasn't flown far.

Westbury

We were all on the ground in time for the Notam to start on the 5th of June, but Raff cut it a bit fine. We didn't expect to see any aircraft, but we were wrong. I counted 17 Hercules and over 25 jets. One Tornado came over the ridge at about 300'. Planes flew back and forth around us for the entire notification period. Not a bad airshow really.

Those of us who flew had height gains of up to 1800', but it was a bit too windy to be much good. Later in the day when things calmed down, things became more fun; then it rained.

Following D-Day it was flyable at Westbury for the best part of two weeks off and on. No days were epic, but flying was had by some. The ever present two Daves, Underhill and McCarthy have been clocking up the hours.

People had been going down in droves (even I went down!). Please do not take-off if you think you may go down. A few people had been seen launching when their chances of staying up were very low. Next time we'll publish names!

On the subject of names, Tony Hughes has been abusing the rules by side landing. A letter has been sent to Tony and the BHPA.

Mere

On the 1st of June a few hardy souls flew the rifle range for a few hours before being drenched by a thunderstorm.

Later in the month JM managed to break an upright on top landing, but thanks to the loan of a new one from Ron Smith, he managed to get in a decent flight to out beyond Mere Village. Utilising the same the same initial thermal Helen was the one Paraglider to get away from the hill. Unfortunately she soon came down after only 6km.

Draycott

After his disastrous first visit - when he went down twice, Paul Guilfoyle had the ridge to himself and soared for over an hour.

Chris

Please send me your anecdotes for this section!



Nick has been in two minds recently as two which of his excellent flights he is going to write about!

Ever thought of flying the PWC?

(Paragliding World Cup for the uninitiated) ...

Read on ... and BE PREPARED. I say this because I certainly was not, but have come back from two the wiser and, hopefully, a better pilot than before.

The point is, if you decide to pay the £100 entrance fee and drive/fly what feels like (and possibly could be) 1,000's of miles you will be flying with the best in the world - no one else is committed enough to do that. I decided to 'go for it' this summer because certain people had enough confidence in me to offer me a place in the Nationals and seemed to think the PWC was something I should have a go at. If my description of the first leg of the Nationals in Wales left you with the impression there was a degree of stress involved - forget it! - compared to the PWC that was a picnic - the atmosphere at the PWC was electric!

Marcus King, Kat Thurston, Tim McDonald, Richard Westgate and I drove out to Grindelwald for a one week comp. followed by a second in Zillertal, Austria. In all we travelled over 2,000 miles and were away 17 days - that is, barring Marcus who unfortunately found the combination of new wing, site, comp, valley winds, audience, stress etc. too much and ended up on his side and not on his feet on landing and thus in hospital. He is now, thankfully, on the way to a full recovery but has been advised that a compressed vertebrae takes 6 months to fully repair.

My prevailing memory of the PWC is BIG - Mountains, take-offs, tasks, wings - 'larger than life' people and achievements. The fact that almost everyone carried not only their crunchy new hot ships but 10kgs of water ballast to take off made me think ... this is SERIOUS ... Some people were weighed to check they were not over 30kg above normal weight. Apparently last year people were flying ridiculously large wings with equally ridiculous large amounts of ballast. There is no doubt in my mind (speaking as someone who has opted to fly safe and buy a small wing within my weight range) the larger the wing and heavier you are the higher and faster you can fly ... it is largely a question of nerve and how many risks/how seriously you are prepared to try and prove you are the best in the world - to get to the top you clearly have to be very committed. The picture I am painting may convey a fairly extreme scenario - well, PWC is, by its very nature, just that.

The tasks we were set were extremely difficult given the conditions - typically 40-50km along mountain ranges, into valley winds, across valley floors (10km+ wide) round almost impossible to find turn points (is it that hut or the one 500m further along/up/down one of the 3 roads below me?) and back to a very well marked (thankfully) landing field and onto - would you believe it - a 'barrel' 2m wide and 3m high. Landing on it gave you extra points so of course we had to try! I did skim the top once but my accuracy training almost worked against me as I found trying to land 3m above ground level did not 'work' in my mind somehow! Having said that about 10 people (out of 150) did succeed and one lucky person (name out of a hat) has won a cruise for 2 round the Caribbean - Did I mention the prizes - yes, they are big too!

In fact, the weather, although perfect in England at the time, was by no means perfect by Alpine standards and although 5 tasks were possible at each of the 2 competitions we only flew 2 in Switzerland (one qualifying) and one (qualifying) round in Austria. This could be described as a wash/blow out - storms and wind prevailed and despite the enthusiasm of the PWC committee to set incredible tasks, (all of which had to be thought about very carefully, planned, turnpoints had to be sketched etc. etc.) knowing full well cloud base was sometimes only 200ft above take off. We were then 'retrieved' from impending storm clouds three times. This meant that we all set off and after about 30 minutes of fighting against increasing winds/turbulence, recovering from tucks, spins etc. the emergency frequency on the 2 meter radios told pilots to land immediately - since I did not have a radio all I could see was an ever increasing big black cloud and 100 pilots spontaneously turning 180 degrees and head for the valley floor (2000 ft below). By this time the lift (suck from big black cloud) was battling with my large big ears and speed bar - thankfully my wing won not the cu. nim. Small wings do sometimes have their merits after all! As each pilot finally made the valley floor those who had already landed acted as catch crew and assisted pilots who were trying to land (backwards) - within 2 minutes of my landing the gust front had increased wind speed to 30-40 mph and it had started to rain - I was glad to be back on terra firma.

Extreme circumstances can produce extreme emotions - 2 weeks of PWC has left me exhausted but exhilarated - an experience I will never forget or regret. And the future? Why have I signed up to compete in the Spanish leg of the PWC? Well, once bitten, forever smitten (maybe). Seriously, its not for the faint hearted but if you go well prepared (unlike me) you will experience flying of a life time with the best in the world. And the future? Whether my husband, children and I are prepared to expose ourselves to another year of extreme is being discussed over the breakfast table right now!

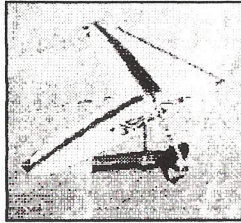
Fiona Macaskill

**STOP PRESS:
2ND LEG OF NATIONALS AT THE DALES:
ALL 4 DAYS BLOW OUT!**

Klassic thoughts

Still in my quest for a new glider I borrowed a Klassic 14.4 from Simon Murphy. For those of you used to real measurement it was a 155, the same size as a K4.

Same as a K4, would be a good summary of what I thought. It felt different to my current K4, but then it should, as everything on it was tighter. So what's new?



- The most obvious difference is the new uprights, similar in size to the Wills Wings ones, but with better looking fittings at the top and bottom. They felt fine to hold, but could be easily flexed. I doubt whether they will be as robust as the current Airwave design. For years pilots have been complaining about how difficult Airwave uprights were to hold, lets hope they don't start complaining that the new ones are too easy to break. I think they will prove on par with the Solar Wings ones when it come to crash resistance, although I did not test this ☺.
- The Klassic sees the return of the tip-rod. They are made of carbon fibre, just like the tip battens. We were told that the K4 did not need them as the luff lines extended out further than on the Kiss. The luff lines still extend out as far as the K4, but have been moved to the inside of the battens.
- There is a new pulley attached at the top of the upright to make the VB smoother to pull on. It didn't seem to make any difference to me, but looked like it should.
- Tip bags come as standard. This has to be a good thing, although I'd have liked them to be a little bit larger and made of tougher material.
- Pip pins are used to connect the base-bar. Some pilots like this and others don't. Solar have been doing it for years.
- The padding at the top of the control frame comes with a pocket into which the swan catch can be placed when the glider is packed up. Neat.
- The strengthening on the trailing edge has been extended in by an extra panel and now comes in a contrasting colour.
- The final thing I noticed was that the under surface battens now go right out to the leading edge. They go so far they can be felt under the mylar insert.

That's all I noticed. There may be a different sail cut and batten profile but I didn't check.

Generally the finish was what you'd expect from Airwave, excellent.

I flew the glider at Mere and at Pandy, the same two sites at which I flew the small RamAir. Other pilots had said that the Klassic was stiffer than the K4, but I didn't find this one to be (the tips had been adjusted for lighter roll). In general, I'd describe it as a very positive, crisp

K4. Nothing new, just excellent. Pilots flying them in the league say that they will out glide K4s, but this could be because the K4's are all older. I didn't notice any better glide, but that's not to say it didn't have one.

For some reason I found it easier to de-rig on the A-frame than my K4, I've no idea why.

Overall I'd say it was like a very good K4, but not significantly better or different enough to make me sell my K4 and buy one. If I was in the market for a new glider to replace a Kiss I'd probably get one. Personally I still have a liking for the RamAir. Having flown both at the same site in similar conditions, the nervousness I attributed to the RamAir was probably my own nervousness, as I felt the same on the Klassic (and have felt since then on my K4). Maybe I'm getting too old for all this? (Thank God Bill can still get above me!)

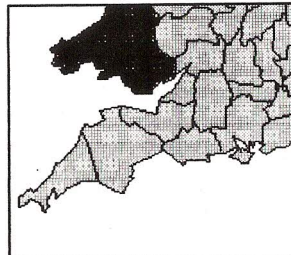
Chris

Low Airtime Pilots
There is now a fly-in every first Sunday of the
month
Contact Dave Garbe for details
Don't miss out!
Be there!

Hot Gossip

- ⊙ After another "barely flyable" LAP weekend, Gary Bond suggested that we run a series of articles entitled, "there I was...I thought I was going to fly."
- ⊙ One well known club pilot was heard recently to complain how easy the battens on his new glider were going out of camber. He blamed this for the fact that he could no longer out thermal another well know club pilot - who flies the same type of glider. Personally I think they are in the League together.
- ⊙ Sorry to disappoint all the French ladies, Marcus King - para-stud, is no longer playing the field, he has recently announced his engagement.
- ⊙ Over the end of May bank holiday, Simon Lawrence (an associate member) flew from Combe Gibbet to land close to Somerton, south of the Mendips. His flight was 98 km, measured in a straight line, although his actual track was nearer to 140km as he flew along the north side of Salisbury plain. He did this on a paraglider!
- ➔ Dave Wallace, ex-editor of Nova has moved from Bristol to Winchester. Hopefully though he'll still be popping up to Avon sites now and again.
- ⊕ Steve Wills and Chris Jones are going to be giving another set of XCPC lectures this autumn. Steve is arranging the venue, so it will probably be near Bridgewater.
- ⊙ The rumour are true! Bill "King of Westbury" Niblet has bought another glider and has been seen high in the skies over Westbury. Also back is Nigel Higgs.
- ⊙ Hot news! Raff was seen to land on his feet at Westbury!
- ⊙ Nigel Chivers please note; Rule number 1: on light days - if you get up, stay up!
- ⊙ Dave "don't fly behind me" Pilkinton, has finally decided on his next **giant** canopy. He's yet another Trekking convert.
- ⊙ While on the subject of Mr Pilkington, congratulations on passing your paragliding pilot exam (and to Helen). Any other club members about to be 'certified'?
- ⊙ It looks like the Thames Valley has decided to drop their sites at the Deverils.
- ⊙ Thames Valley now has associate membership!
- ‡ Most of you will know that two hang-glider pilots were killed whilst flying XC over the New Forest at the beginning of June. The latest *hearsay* on how they died is as follows: Both pilots deployed their chutes after colliding quite high up. One pilot was ejected from his harness as his chute opened, when the rope connecting his shoulder straps snapped! The other pilot descended OK, but broke his neck as he was dragged along the ground in the fresh and gusty winds. This obviously highlights two major safety areas:
 - Check your shoulder straps if you have a harness that uses rope to connect the shoulder straps. Consider adding a backup rope. Make sure you use the same kind of rope that was originally fitted.
 - Carry a bridle knife capable of cutting away your parachute bridle. Make sure you can access it in an emergency.

I guess we'll find out exactly what happened soon. Following on from this, I checked my harness and noticed that I had routed the parachute bridle down the left hand side. This is a pretty dumb move, as if I did throw with my right hand (as is likely), the bridle would be pulled tight across my body. I've now moved it to the right hand side. Lets hope if I do have to, I'm able to use my right hand to deploy it. If you are left handed, things of course work the opposite way! - CJ
- ⊙ Mark Drake has been pioneering paragliding cross-country flights from North Avon sites. Recently he has flown two flights to Tetbury from Selsley, and one from Leckhampton.



Don't forget that the club has a sizeable collection of Ordnance Survey maps for fixing XC co-ordinates. They are available at club meetings or from Chris Jones on the hill.

You could of course do what Mark Haycraft does, and use an ordinary map to get a rough fix and then phone Chris with a description, for an exact grid-reference and distance calculation. Chris also has a rough and ready QBASIC MS-DOS program to calculate the distances between two grid references. (Available to anybody who wants it, free.)

"Once you have flown, you will walk the Earth with your eyes turned skyward, for there you have been and there you long to return."

Leonardo de Vinci

Bullet Proof ?

Towards the end of last year the French free flying federation carried out tests on four leading Paragliding safety harnesses for shock absorption, the Scorpio Sandwich Systems (constructed of specially prepared layers of foam) easy came out tops, however the Kevlar back plate systems gave slightly better protection against penetration. With this in mind, Scorpio have developed their Sandwich System a stage further. Using a material similar to that found in Bullet Proof Vests, they have applied the new material to the existing safety system. The results in recent tests have shown this new material to be more effective than Kevlar with the awkward preformed base. Owners of the Sandwich Mk 1 may like to know that they can update to the new system (Sandwich Mk 2) for approximately £100. It can also be used in most other types of safety harness. For further details, contact the UK distributor:

Colin Lark's H.G. & P.G. Hut.

West End, Coaley, Glos. GL11 5DX

Tel 0453 890767 or Fax 0453 890075

Off the NET



More stuff from the big wide world of free flying. If you don't wanna read it let me know. I reckon it's good reading and very informative.

From: "brent (b.) harsh" <cnc291@bnr.ca>
 Subject: Moore Mtn. Annual Stewart Smith Memorial Fly-In
 Date: Tue, 3 May 1994 17:23:00 -0400

The annual fly in at Moore Mtn, NC was held this past weekend, and since I was back in NC to take care of some business, I decided that would be a fine way to spend a weekend.

We got in late Friday night and camped at the top of this 1050' AGL (or so) mountain. Nice camping site (amidst an apple orchard), and the launch is very wide and smooth. A big slab of rock sloping ever steeper provides the main takeoff. To counter the good launch, the tight LZ makes a tricky mid-day landing. The local club has claimed the old maxim "There are two kinds of [Moore Mountain] pilots: those who have been in the trees, and those who will be" as their own. It's a slot LZ, trees on one side and power lines on the other, with a sink-inducing creek at the mountain end which turns and runs along the middle of the LZ. At least it's fairly long!

Saturday dawned bright and clear, yet chilly - good omens for NC! The first few pilots were the rather inexperienced ones who wanted few sled runs before the day picked up, launching around 9 to 10. By 11 there were some people soaring, and by noon or so most of the "contenders" had taken off. Winning durations were in the 6 to 7 hour range, thermals up to about 2500' or so. I heard of a few short XC's but nothing like last years 70 miler. Several sailplanes came over from Wilkesboro, flew with us and performed loops and other stunts. They were getting much higher than the HGs were.

Unfortunately, the day was marred by *5* tree landings! The first, a visiting pilot from Ellenville, suffered multiple breaks in a leg: the femur went when she hit the tree, the fibia (or tibia, one of them...) when she hit the ground. I never did hear her name, sorry. She was on a downwind leg over trees, turned onto base over a little pocket of clearing, and then kept going around for a full 360. Not having enough height to clear the trees, she flew right into the trunks of the stand of pines. If she had not done the extra 360, she would have missed the spot, but probably been just fine landing long.

The next 3 tree landings I did not see, but there were no injuries among them. Some might have been local pilots, I really don't know.

The last one was the worst. An (reputably) excellent pilot (Chris ?), also from Ellenville, was over the LZ, getting low enough to drop a "bomb" into the target (which was also the spot). Obviously, he was concentrating entirely on this task. He made a good drop (I actually heard Bubba Goodman say "Nice drop, let's see if it was worth it" with hints of forboding in his voice) and then turned to go downwind. At this point he was level with and next to the trees, inside the very narrow LZ, and still flying very slowly. As he neared the end of the treeline, instead of turning left onto base, his left wing and glider lifted, turning him right over the tops

of the trees, then into the trunk of the tallest one. He spiraled around this, my last impression as he disappeared was of the top of the glider with the left wingtip pointed directly toward the ground - the loudest crunching I've ever heard. He suffered seven broken ribs, a collapsed lung, and concussion. He was definitely lucky to escape with this little damage. Scary...

After this, I opted not to fly. Having sold my Sport, I only had access to a borrowed HP-AT, but this LZ was definitely not the place to learn to land it! I'd flown them before, at an airport, with tons of room, but this... I do kinda wish I'd demo'ed the Klassic that was there, though (Claire Pagen's from the East Coast Championships).

Sunday came with lots of rain, so we went home - as the day went on, I wish we had gone towing or something: it looked like some awesome thermal conditions...

Reflections: contest flying, where do you draw the line between being competitive and being safe? This was just a fun meet, no national points on the line, nothing to prove... I think both accidents were caused by pilots concentrating on the point tasks (spot & bomb) rather than flying. In hindsight, I wish the meet hadn't even offered a bomb drop task (at least not in the LZ - why not have it up on top of the ridge somewhere?).

--
 Brent Harsh - KD4PBO Bell-Northern Research
 Hang III - CL FSL AWCL TUR AT PA FL TOW Ottawa, Canada
 Apex, NC, USA -and occasionally- My Opinions, Naturally
 Ottawa, ON, Canada -and soon-to-be-
 Beijing, PRC

From: "kevin (k.c.) caldwell" <kevinc@bnr.ca>
 Subject: A story.
 To: hang-gliding@lists.utah.edu

Something I wrote after a summer that involved 10 days in a hospital from a flying accident, to winning the Chelan XC Classic. A year of real flying ups and downs.

Fly Free

kevin caldwell
 November, 1992

It is hard to describe what it feels like to someone who has never experienced free flight, flight unencumbered by engines, control sticks and enclosing structures. The weight shift control of a hang glider makes flying a direct physical experience, with the air becoming a tangible force that you must work with and sometimes must fight. Being out in the airstream lets you feel the speed, from the near silence of a 30 kph stall to the roar of a 120 kph screaming dive. Flight with a hang glider comes close to the flying of my dreams, and maybe a little more: the struggle with the air to remain aloft and in control adds a spice that keeps flying interesting.

There is so much symbolism and deeper, more primitive things involved with running off the edge of a hill than just the mechanical reality of flight. Flying dreams becoming real, fear of

being suspended in thin air, and the god like power of the wind and sun, all combine to tinge each moment with a sharpness and reality that escapes the everyday world. The ritual of setting up the wing, checking the equipment, and putting on the harness are part of the ceremony of flight. The slow building of the anticipation, the calming influence of performing the familiar steps, are all part of something very much like a religious ceremony building up to an important event: the ceremony to become a bird, to make those dreams of soaring through the sky come true.

I pick up the glider and carry it over to launch, hot and awkward. I am still part of the ground, with too many clothes on and a recalcitrant wing buffeted by the fluky winds behind the lip of the hill. I set the glider down on the edge of the take off, one last check of the harness straps, a quick check of the wind conditions. My mouth is dry. My senses both narrow to the few critical steps of launching, and expand to see each little wind gust in the leaves. I try to feel the changes in the temperature and velocity of the air flowing past my face, and attune myself to the chaotic rhythm of the thermal driven gusts to find the optimum moment to leave the earth safely, and also launch into that elusive, invisible rising air I need to carry me skyward.

I hold the glider and we begin to fuse. I feel each little gust against my fabric, each small change in the angle of the flow across my carefully curved wing. Finally I am balanced with the wind. I run down the hill, each step getting lighter, each step taking me closer to being a creature of the air. And then I'm flying! I forget about the glider, the mechanical steps of getting into the harness and the whine of the vario. Another part of me deals with all those mundane things. I am flying, feeling the surges and dips of the air, the swirls and bubbles. The sky is alive with movement, its seeming uniform blueness a disguise.

Ground bound souls will never know the velvety softness as the last of the day's warmth rises up the cliffs out of a forest, or the almost willful violence above sun beaten rocks on a high mountain slope. The air has an infinite range of moods, some of which can be fatal to my small craft and I. We must feel so carefully, anticipate and know the changing sky. To tease out the hidden currents of rising air and steal a few hour's ride where only bird creatures can go is magic.

I have hovered over icy slopes where few have ever been. I have danced the oily smoothness of an evening wind. I have shared a winged moment with eagles, and raced beneath dark cold clouds all alone. I have slipped the bonds not just of earth, but of life itself, and become something more, if only for those special moments when I do just fly, and all the cumbersome paraphernalia of modern magic recedes to insignificance. I have been part of the crystal blue sky: I will carry a stolen piece of it with me always.

From: Chris Northcutt <chrisn@crl.com>

Subject: Re: PG Wing Loading

Date: Mon, 18 Apr 1994 22:03:12 -0700 (PDT)

> I'd like to start a discussion among PG pilots of the factors they
> consider when choosing wing size. In case it matters, I'm looking at
> intermediate-advanced gliders, not competition models.

My primary concern is stability. I had the good fortune of witnessing a pilot of comparable experience complete all the advanced maneuvers on the exact model and size I ended up buying. A pilot skilled in these maneuvers can probably make a twitchy wing look relatively docile. In this case, I knew I wasn't being fooled. I was more concerned with how easy it was to recover a wing, than it was to enter the "situation".

I then test flew this wing against others known for stability, comparing performance characteristics. For coastal ridge soaring, I would look for speed and min sink. L/D is secondary, but usually if it has good min sink, the L/D is also good. For flying out of mountains, or for XC then I suppose L/D will become much more desirable.

Being higher in the weight range makes a wing more stable, and faster. Lower in the weight range gets a better sink rate, but more susceptible to collapse, and slower. Some of the very experienced pilots at the coast here used to carry extra ballast (sand) on days where it was blowing 20+. They now have faster wings, and usually keep it in the bag when it's that strong.

I pretty much lucked out. My Edel Space 27 is very stable, has excellent min sink, and seems fast enough. It works very well for pilots in the 190-215 range, naked weight, which is low to mid range. I get pretty high in the lift band, and I've never had any problem penetrating, especially with using the speed bar and big ears at the same time. I've also had some incredible mountain thermal flights. Generally stable, I had one frontal collapse that only required a bit of brake to clear it, and a 50% asymmetrical was very easily controlled, with one good pump to clear it out. I strongly advise practicing these recoveries in controlled conditions before going out in strong convective conditions.

My advice? Don't rely just on the word of dealers and distributors, or on ACPUL and DHV ratings. Restrict your choices to wings that you have confidence in their stability, and if possible try these recovery maneuvers while kiting the wing on the ground. Observing wings at an advanced maneuvers clinic is ideal. Barring that, try and look at home videos of one of these clinics, and observe how the different wings perform. After that, just fly them. A lot of the choice is personal preference with the handling, in the end.

Good luck.

Chris Northcutt
San Francisco, CA

NOVA

From: "MORTIMER B [STAFF]" <BMORT@norton.ctech.ac.za>
Subject: A paragliding intermediate competition
Date: Tue, 19 Apr 1994 16:29:32 GMT-2

Herewith my story of pre-election jitters in SA and the politics of being a meet-director.

The Parapente Easter Classic (II)
Arthur's Seat
Drakensburg Natal
South Africa
1994
Bruce Mortimer

The Drakensburg is a range of mountains stretching from north to south as a natural border between Lesotho and Natal. Towering 3000 m above sea level it is a basalt edge that drops away to rolling hills. It was these hills that Alan Paton wrote about in his book "Cry beloved country", and it is on these hills that the country is currently fighting a political and social war on a scale that makes a strange contrast between the beauty of the land and the violence of man.

But far from the violence, yet not so far from the towering cliffs of the escarpment, there lies a 450 m hill, with ample launch and landing areas, an a wonderfull spring of wide thermals in the valley. Yes, a perfect flying site, with the campsite in glide of the launch, and a valley release that can move even the sea-soaring ridge hogg's to enjoy an hour or two's airtime.

A perfect venue to hold our anual intermediate pilots challenge. A competition where the "sky-gods" are not welcome, where the tasks are within reach, where instructors control the launch, where "psycho attitude" is not welcome and where everyone can compete without hating each other.

Just in case, I wrote the rules, in very fine print, with several clauses refering to annexures and including buzz words such as "hereinbefore" and "the decision of the meet director shall be final". Then I found myself wearing the meet directors hat, and glasses.....

It took over sixteen hours to drive from Cape Town to Arthur's Seat. The minibus was painfull, and the night drive meant I would have no sleep before the competition. Seven people, eight guns (of different bore and size).....we were ready (for the trip and the New South Africa).

Arrived on the slope just in time to set the first task and watch the 50 pilots thunder off the gentle grass slope to try and perform a spot landing in the turkey patch below. Thermals triggering off the mown landing field made the spot landing task exceptionally difficult, with few pilots managing to score on the banner. Many pilots explored the over six foot heigh grass fields around the landing zone (try fold your glider above your head - upside down !). Pilots who used unconventional areas of their anatomies to assist in their landings were not scored.

The horde was back in time for a second afternoon task. This time, the thermals were cooking and I could set an out and return. A marshal was rushed to the turn point and the goal. With efficient radio communication between the marshals, we could keep track of who had rounded the turn point without the pilots having to take pictures.

NOVA

The evening rewarded us with a wonderfull (but taskless) valley release. Piles of smooth air, and a lift band that extended for several hundred meters infront of the ridge. My duties for the day were over so I borrowed a nes Swing Minoa and enjoyed the performance and stability of this glider. To escape the crowds, I glided to the campsite in time to bath in wood-fire heated water.

Day 2. Sunshine, instability and thermals. A race to goal via a turnpoint turned into a race to goal for the marshals trying to beat Ion Williams trying the Minoa for the first time. He beat them by about 800 m, ariving to claim his task some 10 km from the launch. What made the race wonderful was that the whole competition was in view of the launch, so all could "admire" the progress of their peers. David Hartley also trying his new glider, a Nova Phocus managed an exceptional flight in lighter conditions to be the only other person to make goal, though he was nearly two hours later than Ion.

Day 3, the final day, with weather as good as before. Time for a technical task. A triangle - Two turnpoints and a goal. Again the use of marshals and a hiddent 'secret' banner allowed pilots to fly without using cameras. Again David Hartley and his Phocus dominated, after an exceptional flight he landed a few hundred meters short of goal, clear of his nearest rival Ion (who just experienced sink after the second turnpoint). A Cape Pilot, Rob Love had some excitement 200 m above turnpoint 2; he decided to deploy his reserve, or rather the reserve decided to deploy for him ! After hearing a curious velcro sound, he realised that his speed bar was pushing more than the front risers ! Looking down he saw his reserve, un-opened at the end of his bridle. With no thoughts on controlling the glider, he used both handes to gently pull in the bridel. As the explosive package arrived in his hands it burst, streams of rip-stop nylon trying to inflate. Quickly he stuffed hand over hand the meters of material behind his chest strap. With one hand keeping the reserve down, and the other grabbing the neglected brake toggels, he had no choice but to land where he was, probably not scoring as well as he should have, but still scoring more than he would have, had the reserve inflated !

With perfect flying conditions, there were two bad landings resulting in bruises, and a parachutal stall landing by a very experienced pilot on a prototype with 0.4 mm lines. He was winded but unhurt. We suspect the lines (which are old) have stretched - the glider has therefore been grounded.

First place went to David Hartley on a Nova Phocus. He won the intermediate category and the overall category. Ion Williams on his Swing Minoa was second overall, but first in the Advanced section (since the glider he was flying is rated performance).

A wonderful competition and a wonderful site. The best thing was that the competition was over for me, and I coupld take out the Sphinx and enjoy the site for a further three days, taking the glider to 1000 m above launch.....but that is another story.

Cheers
Bruce

BMORT@Norton.ctech.ac.za

Proposed Development of Rifle Range, Mere

Mi amigo,

The information you asked for is not available. Most definitely not! Even the Minister is complaining that he can't get to the files. I guess there's big names and even bigger money rolling! Everything is 'Restricted Circulation', therefore anything which you may publish will attract 'official' attention. At least one landowner has been served with a Security of Information Order!

Your guess that it is a wind farm wasn't far wide of the mark. As you will gather from my rather hasty sketch and the snippets of text the project is to do with research into thermal energy sources. The Yanks have a station up and running which has aroused great interest here in certain quarters. A large multi-national is lobbying hard for this and future contracts worldwide. We are playing with the big boys here

Atlanta

Extracts from elsewhere.....

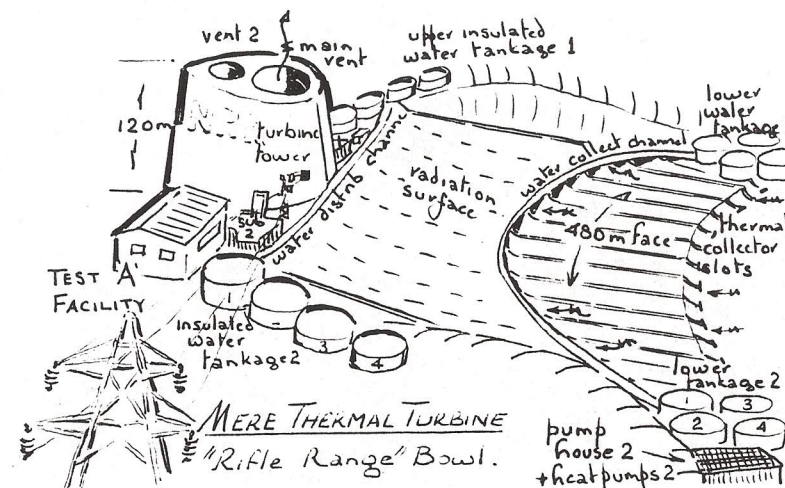
.....Chile's Butte thermal turbine experiment is expected to begin construction of a small scale trial facility at Mere in Wiltshire, England in the near future. This installation will be situated in a natural south-facing bowl set into a low chalk escarpment, providing an almost perfect trial site.....

.....Over the past two years the NRR team has monitored several possible locations but the Mere bowl proved to have the edge.....With a site acquisition budget of 218.8 Bn ECU it is expected that at least two more situations will be negotiated before next year's lease-back moratorium ends.....

Constructors ----- worked on the Nantes project in conjunction with the French Government BCMF and if awarded the Mere contract expect to complete Phase 1 (ie test Complex 'A' and all deep excavations, roads, etc) in under nine months.....

.....A design engineer with the Chile's Butte project highlighted many interesting aspects.....exhaust velocities at peak hours seldom exceed 8m/sec and thus offer no risk to aviation although under certain conditions Cu Nimb clouds have been triggered. Pilots from nearby ----- airbase regularly use the updraft whilst sailplaning and commonly gain 40000m.

Just knew you'd be interested in that last bit! (There's talk of an exclusion zone, though). A.



Gliders for sale

Magic 4, 133 Full Race. Built by Airwave in 1993. Excellent condition, good performance and handling, nice colours. Suitable for low airtime or advanced pilots. £950. Pod Harness, £100. Davron Vario/Alti, £125. Parachute £150. Small flying suit £10. Contact Steve Wills, (0278) 452813

Airwave Race 2 harness, suit 5'10" pilot, as new, £250. Ray Bass (0934) 84684

Magic IV Half Race 166, excellent condition, low air time, blue leading edge, rainbow under-surface, £650 ono. Rob Cook (0275) 879126

Magic IV 166 including Pitchy. Good condition, flies well, £325 ono. Mark Joyce 0380 830195

Sky Systems Supp Harness including Apco parachute. Good condition, parachute as new. Sensible offer considered. Mark Joyce 0380 830195

Ace 160, excellent condition, low air time, v.b., white with lime green double surface, batten profile £500 or offers. Romer open face £15, phone Shaun O'Neill on (0453) 822187

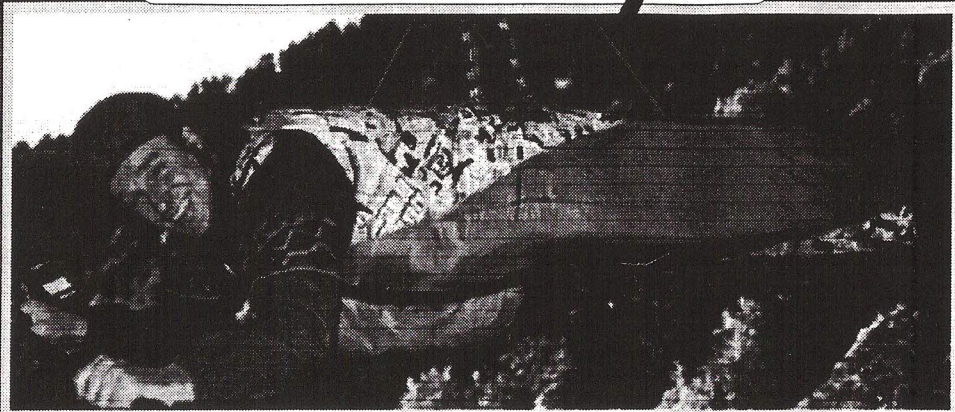
Bits for sale

Thunderbird Mk 3, still the best vario on the market, £120. Neil Atkinson (0225) 754152.

Liquipak for sale, 1.5 Litres, like Camelbak, used twice only, £20. Fiona Macaskill 0454 613788

Adverts will automatically come out after they have been in three issues of NOVA. If you sell your stuff before then, let the editor know so your advert can come out and you will not be hassled by thousands of eager buyers!

The Hi-Life harness



*Go up with, Stay up with, Keep warm in,
Come down in, Sit down in, Get on with,
Fly and enjoy,
the Hi-Life*

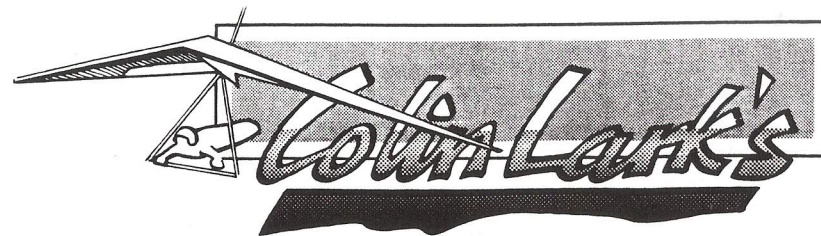
**The tubeless harness from Flylite.
Individually made to order. Price £360 inc.**

For a leaflet and colour chart just phone-

**Colin Lark's HG & PG Hut
West End Coaley
Glos. GL11 5DX
Phone: 0453 890767 Fax: 0453 890075**



Pilot Suspension Systems



HANG GLIDING & PARAGLIDING HUT

NEW & USED HANG GLIDERS - PARAGLIDERS - FLYING ACCESSORIES

Solar Wings Fever Mk 2	£2966	Rumour 3 13 & 14mtr	£2966
Solar Wings 15mtr Rush	£2966	Avian Amour Large (159)	£2350
Harley Sirocco's		From £1745 - £1945	
Polaris Small	£250	Med S4	£200
Wills Wing Spectrum	£1250	Vision 5 Large (as New)	£999
Calypso	£1150	Whisper	£1450
Ace 160's	from... £375	Ace 150	£400
M4 155 FR	£550	M4 166's	from £400 - £750
M4 177	£400	Santana	£600
Rumour One 14.5's	from... £600	Kiss	£750
HP AT 158	£1100	K2	£1000
K2 Composite	£1200	K3	£1000
		Used Paragliders	
Harley Typhoon	£500	Hot Dream Small	£800
		Hi-Life	£360
New Harnesses		The Edge by Solar Wings	£465
Flylight	£295	Paragliding Scorpio Sandwich	£365
The Design by Scorpio	£464		
		Used Harnesses	
Skysystems pods	From £125	Airtime Pods	From £125
Scorpio 90 5'7"-8"	£180	Bullett Side chute 5'7"	£160
Keller Mk 1 5' 5"	£180	Scorpio Design 5'8 - 5'10	£375
		New Parachutes	
Apco Mayday Pulled Apex 16'	£337	Metamorfoosi P/A H.G & P.G	£359
PARACHUTE REPACKING	£15	Apco Mayday Pulled Apex 18'	£352
		New Instruments	
Mini Vario Worlds smallest	£115	Fairhaven AV10 vario/alti	£199
Davron 200/600 Range From	£99	Davron 801/808 Range from	£385
Skywatch A.S.I.	£49.95 & £79.95	Wind Wizard A.S.I.	£33
		Weather Monitor Wizard Mk 3	£188
		Cross Country Magazine (keep up to date with the rest of the World)	£24
		Flying Suits Odds & Ends... Gloves & Glasses	
Scorpio Gloves	£27.50	Scorpio Flying Glasses	£32.50
Scorpio Aerosleeves	£26.50	Scorpio Flying suits	From.. £143
Ozee Flying Suits From £61 -	£165	Anabatix Flying Suits	£205
In Flight Liquid Pack	£23.95	Eglar Radio Head Sets	£105
Padded Bar mits	£23.00	New style H.G. map holders	£12
Tow Release H.G. (Webb)	£69.00	Paragliding Tow release	£36
Glider Rider Single/Multi	£35 & £50	Spinning Wind Socks	£12
Airspeed Wheels	£30	X.C. Glider Bags	£33
Karabiners	from £9 - £12	Glider Ties	£3
Roof Rack Ties	£3.00	Back up loops	from £5
Air Maps (laminated)	£10.50	Ball Compasses	£30
		AUTHORISED SERVICE CENTRE FOR SOLAR WINGS - WILLS WINGS - AVIAN	
		If your buying a used glider be sure to know it's service history, if not, make sure you have it fully serviced. £60 + parts.	

*Members of B.H.P.A.
An authorised service centre*

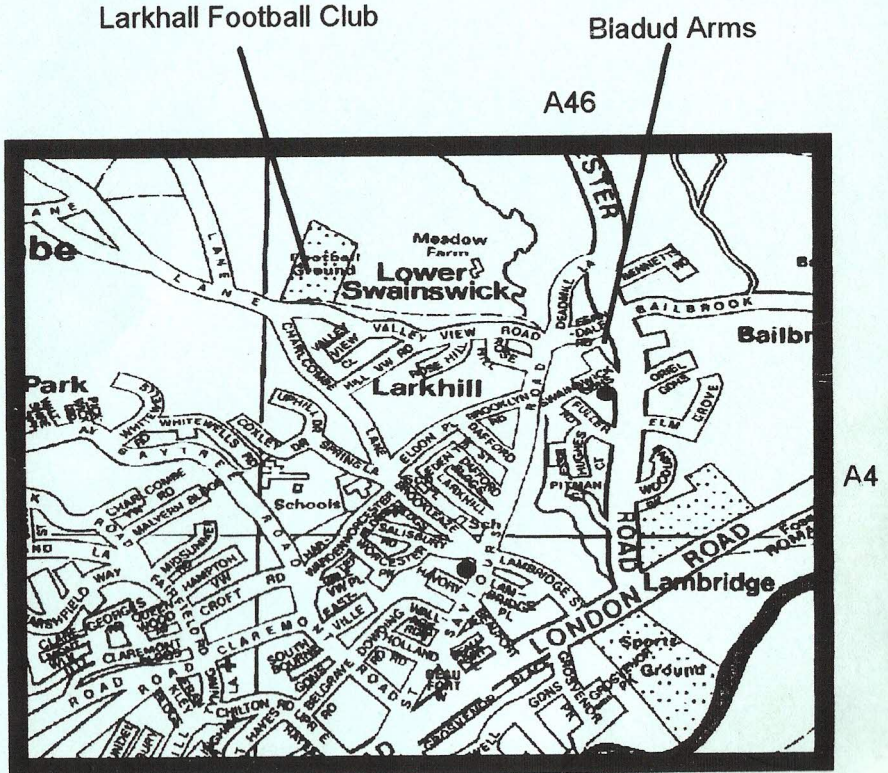


**The Hang Gliding Hut, West End, Coaley
Nr. Dursley, Gloucestershire, GL11 5DX
Tel: 0453 890767/0860 670605
Fax: 0453 890075**

V.A.T. No. 484 6742 08

How to find the venue for the monthly meeting, held on the first Wednesday of every month at 8.00pm.

- From the A46, turn into Ferndale Road by the Bladud Arms pub.
- Go straight across the junction into Valley View Road.
- Go up the hill for about 300 yards until the road narrows by the derestricted speed limit signs.
- The football club is another 100 yards on the right past the signs.



NOVA

NOVA MAGAZINE, 41A, GROSVENOR PLACE, BATH
BA1 6BA. TELEPHONE: 0225 338676